

THIJS WESTSTEIJN [ED.]

The Universal Art of Samuel van Hoogstraten

(1627–1678) Painter, Writer, and Courtier

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(1627-1678)

Painter, Writer, and Courtier

Edited by Thijs Weststeijn

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PREFACE

Approaches to a Multifaceted Master

Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678) was one of the most distinguished of European artists, according to the Swiss abbot Gabriel Buzlin (1599-1681). Buzlin included him in a list of 166 painters of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, *Pictorum Europae praecipuorum nomina* (c.1664).¹ This judgment may have been colored by the abbot's own collection: his Weingarten monastery contained Van Hoogstraten's only full-fledged altarpiece, *The Vision of Saint Benedict*.² And later scholars did not share his praise of the self-styled 'painter of His Holy Imperial Majesty [Ferdinand III]'.³ The literary historian Peter Schull, writing in 1833, asserted that Van Hoogstraten's poetic qualities greatly surpassed his talents in the visual arts.⁴ Even nowadays, the painter is probably better known for a set of cumulative factors rather than for the quality of his figurative works: as one of Rembrandt's pupils, as a key author in the seventeenth-century theory of art, and as a social climber who achieved success through a combination of prolific painting, poetry, optical experiments, and European travels.

As the discipline of art history has increasingly highlighted the socio-economic context of paintings and other interdisciplinary issues, scholarly interest in Van Hoogstraten's multifaceted career has caused his position to shift from that of a marginal figure in Rembrandt's studio to someone central to the art of the Dutch Golden Age. In the last two decades, not only museums and departments of art history but also historians of literature, science, and even the new media have increasingly paid attention to the Dordrecht master. The closing of the millennium produced six monographs about the artist and his work, most of which consist of more pages than his own treatise on painting.⁵

The present book, resulting from a symposium in Amsterdam in 2009, is the first collective effort addressing Samuel van Hoogstraten. Nine scholars explore different facets of his life and work: his theoretical treatise, artistic terminology, still life and genre paintings, perspective boxes, as well as his travels, novels, and reputation. The different vantage points extend the analy-

sis to Van Hoogstraten's teacher, Rembrandt, as well as his own best-known student, Arnold Houbraken, and other members of the Van Hoogstraten family. Furthermore, not only does the present book confront divergent scholarly backgrounds, it is also the first time that some of the authors have published their work in English, coming originally from Dutch, German, and French academic traditions.

The present anthology thus intends to do justice to the works of, in his own words, the 'universal master' from Dordrecht (*universeel of algemeen meester*).⁶ Echoing a sentiment formulated most cogently by Leonardo da Vinci, who may have served as his example especially when pairing artistic and scientific interests, Van Hoogstraten advises his readers to practice 'universal art' or even 'universal knowledge' (*algemeene wetenschap*).⁷ This ideal not only joins painting to poetry. His treatise enumerates the manifold particulars of the visible world that are the object of the painter's knowledge. Van Hoogstraten's statement that an artist's ambition should know no limits within the sublunar realm responds to the ideal of the polymath current in the scholarship of his day. He refers to the Dutch Republic's foremost *Universalgelehrter*, Gerard Vossius, to argue that:

It is harmful to think ... that one would not be able to understand everything: because is there anything that can satisfy our mind completely ...? Put so much science in it and fill it with so much knowledge of things as you can, it will only grow in desire and the more it holds, the more it seeks, being given neither a headache nor bad stomach by this. Our cupboards, says Cassiodorus, cannot hold more once they are filled: but *this* treasure-house is never overloaded. When it has taken in very much already, it still yawns constantly after more, all the more so, says Cicero, since all liberal arts have a common linkage and are joined together as if through a kind of parentage.⁸

Do we hear an echo here of the young Samuel who set out, after being trained in Rembrandt's studio with its encyclopaedic collection of natural and artificial curiosities, to see the world?

Where are we now: Van Hoogstraten's writings

In 1924, the historian of European art theory Julius von Schlosser leveled his criticism at Van Hoogstraten's writings, concluding that the Dutch Republic was 'vastly uncommunicative in its main utterances': its masters 'painted diligently in their studios; they did not talk, and any literary aspirations were alien to them'. The German scholar's verdict illustrates how Van Hoogstraten's treatise, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderconst, anders de zichtbaere werelt* (Introduction to the Academy of Painting, or the Visible World, 1678), played a role in the still-topical division of the history of art into national schools that would reflect specific qualities. As late as the 1980s, Svetlana Alpers quoted from the *Inleyding* to argue for the 'descriptive' essence of Dutch art – leaning towards science rather than literature – in contrast to the 'narrative' Italian one.⁹ Eddy de Jongh, on the other hand, found the treatise a useful source to argue for the contrary thesis: the

presence of disguised symbolism in Dutch painting.¹⁰ Van Hoogstraten's book, which Jan Emmens described as a 'not uncongenial amalgam' of different viewpoints, may therefore be interpreted as reflecting contradictions inherent to the Dutch Golden Age itself. (The most profound paradox, perhaps, was expressed in those still lifes that focus on the most ephemeral aspects such as reflections and surface qualities, relishing the pleasing appearance of the visible world while at the same time highlighting its transience).¹¹

In any case, the variety of views expressed in this treatise has made possible four different readings: Celeste Brusati (1995) has explored how the *Inleyding* showcased Van Hoogstraten's artifice in the service of his personal, social ambitions. Hans-Jörg Czech (2002), by contrast, highlighted the book's more general aim of founding the art of painting on international theoretical standards after the Dutch art market's collapse following the *Rampjaar* ('disaster year') of 1672. Jan Blanc (2008) has called attention to the profoundly practical import of Van Hoogstraten's theory, while the most recent analysis (2008) extended to the treatise's rhetorical premises.¹²

The possibility of different views towards Van Hoogstraten's art theory highlights precisely that the author took the project of writing a comprehensive theory of art more seriously than his Dutch contemporaries. He aimed at an encyclopedic work: his 'visible world' – the treatise's subtitle – in book form is conceived as a microcosm. Each chapter is associated with one of the nine Muses and one of the planets, governing all visible things, the works of nature and man.¹³ The treatise reflects not only his experiences with Rembrandt in Amsterdam but also his work in Germany, Vienna, Rome, and London. What is more, compared to his colleagues in the Netherlands and elsewhere, Van Hoogstraten was a much more avid reader. As the data collected by Blanc have revealed, the *Inleyding* draws from more than 130 different literary sources, while other authors of painting treatises such as Karel van Mander, Joachim von Sandrart, and Gerard de Lairesse used only two or three dozen. Few works in the European tradition of art theory refer to a similarly broad range of literature as the *Inleyding*, from drama and poetry to moral philosophy, history of the church, travelogues from the Far East and the New World, and texts about archaeology, law, gemstones, and Anglo-Saxon history – many facets which still remain to be explored.¹⁴

The master's encyclopedic ambitions extended to practical knowledge, which explains the book's enduring capacity to yield information about painting technique and style: Ernst van de Wetering's most recent work on Rembrandt's art theory, in *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* (2011), continues to use Van Hoogstraten as its main source, while Paul Taylor's and Ulrike Kern's analyses of individual stylistic concepts also depend on the *Inleyding*.¹⁵ In effect, the present book proves the treatise's continuing topicality as all contributions derive theoretical and practical information from it.

Despite the *Inleyding*'s display of erudition, how much of Van Hoogstraten's ideas were based on more than superficial literacy remains a moot point – whether he went to Dordrecht's Latin school, for instance, is unclear. An open question in this respect (broached by Michiel Roscam Abbing in 1993 and again by Czech) relates to the treatise's projected second volume, *De onzichtbaere werelt* (The Invisible World), which may suggest that the painter's interest in

the seventeenth century's 'new philosophy' went beyond his experiments in mathematical perspective and acquaintance with members of the Royal Society. In the present book, Hendrik J. Horn discusses this issue in connection to Arnold Houbraken's intellectual outlook. Some of the other contributors address Van Hoogstraten's wider literary production: his drama, novels, and courtiers' manual *The Honest Youth*; one issue that comes to the fore is the painter's knowledge of literature in English (addressed by Roscam Abbing).

The lettered network of the Van Hoogstraten family has recently been illuminated by Gijsbert Rutten's 2006 study of Samuel's nephew, David van Hoogstraten (1658-1724).¹⁶ The social and scholarly ambitions of the Van Hoogstraten family involved a brisk rise in status without any setbacks, moving from humble beginnings to a central position in the European Republic of Letters within a mere three generations. Whereas Dirk van Hoogstraten (1596-1640) had been a craftsman – a goldsmith and an immigrant from the Southern Netherlands – his two sons Samuel and Frans became writers in addition to their chief professions of, respectively, painter and publisher. Frans's son David then became one of the foremost academics of the Dutch Republic. The intertwined careers of the family members demonstrate how closely the worlds of art and letters could be related in the Netherlands. This also makes it highly unlikely that literature, for Samuel, was merely a means of advertising his qualities as an artisan. We should probably take his literary ambitions just as seriously as those of his brother and nephew: the painter may even have been the first Dutch novelist, as Marijke Spies suggested in 2002.

Van Hoogstraten's paintings

'Van Hoogstraten is incomparable to any other seventeenth-century master for his variety and versatility of styles', according to the 1998 *History of Dordrecht*.¹⁷ This observation has not yet resulted in a monographic exhibition. As early as 1994, a symposium in Dordrecht first addressed the diversity of the master's artistic production,¹⁸ but the state of research concerning the figurative works lags behind the scholarship on the treatise. Research on individual paintings has progressed as various works by or attributed to Van Hoogstraten were included in at least seven exhibitions in Europe and the United States between 1999 and 2009.¹⁹ The oeuvre catalogue established by Brusati has remained largely in place; Blanc added sixty paintings, including references to lost works and some extant works, bringing the total to almost two hundred [Fig. 1].²⁰ In the present book, Brusati discusses the recent find of a *trompe-l'oeil* of 1663 [Fig. 20]. A very different work that surfaced in 2012 is the *Self-Portrait Wearing a Turban* that graces this book's cover.²¹ Furthermore, Jonathan Bikker attributed two paintings to Van Hoogstraten that had earlier gone to Rembrandt's pupil Willem Drost (1633-1659).²² One portrait, whose historical value Brusati denied (although she identified it as an authentic Van Hoogstraten), has a particular afterlife: historians of philosophy keep identifying the sitter as Benedictus de Spinoza, even though Rudi Ekkart has confirmed that the identification is misguided.²³

As for Van Hoogstraten's studio, the precise identity and activity of his pupils remains to be explored. Studying the relationship with Drost, Bikker even suggested that Van Hoog-



Fig. 1 Samuel van Hoogstraten (attr.), *An Elegant Couple Playing Cards*, private collection (formerly with auctioneer Christie's Amsterdam, October 13th, 2009, Lot 64, nr 2829)

straten had his own independent studio in Amsterdam for a few years: 'The parallels with Van Hoogstraten's oeuvre suggest that Drost perhaps received instruction from the older artist. This would have probably occurred in the mid-1640s'. This went contrary to the older scholars who argued that Van Hoogstraten continued in Rembrandt's studio after his apprenticeship, which was concluded in 1644 when he produced his first signed work. 'In that case Van Hoogstraten might have supervised Drost during his early days in Rembrandt's studio. The possibility that Van Hoogstraten set up shop for himself in Amsterdam in the mid-1640s and that Drost was his pupil cannot, however, be excluded.'²⁴

Of Van Hoogstraten's students, Aert de Gelder's (1645-1727) reputation is most firmly established.²⁵ Nicolaes Maes (1634-1693) has recently moved to the background in comparison to his former glory,²⁶ while Godfried Schalcken (1643-1706) has come somewhat to the foreground;²⁷ Cornelis van der Meulen (1642-1692) features briefly in the present book. Arnold Hou-

braken remains essential to art historians because of his biographical writings, made more accessible through Horn's 2000 analysis.²⁸ In addition, John Loughman suggested recently that the Dordrecht master Abraham van Dijck (1635?-1680) was one of Van Hoogstraten's students.²⁹ Exploring the master's relationship to his disciples might be a particularly revealing topic of further research, as arrangements in his studio may have reflected those of his own teacher, Rembrandt. Currently, Rembrandt scholarship seems to benefit in particular from the analysis of his pupils and their role in the workshop.³⁰ Van Hoogstraten may have imitated his own training in Amsterdam when he returned to Dordrecht; moreover, for his students, moving from basic training with him to additional experience with Rembrandt seems to have been the logical thing to do. The most recent volume of *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* has demonstrated to what extent Van Hoogstraten's treatise may be the basis for a reconstruction of Rembrandt's teaching, even though it seems that the Dordrecht master did not mention his training in Amsterdam to his own students.³¹

A major lacuna in the state of research is Van Hoogstraten's drawings. Numbering almost two hundred, many of which are signed, they form a sizeable part of Sumowski's *Drawings of the Rembrandt School* (1979-1992).³² Blanc added nineteen works to this corpus.³³ Yet the images have only been studied in the context of Rembrandt's teaching of draftsmanship.³⁴

By contrast, some more idiosyncratic aspects of Dordrecht's 'universal master' have increasingly attracted attention from historians of science, visual culture, and the new media – in particular, the perspective boxes and his performance of shadow figures (the so-called 'shadow dance') as an early instance of the projection of moving images.³⁵ A 2010 exhibition in Berlin, for instance, suggested that Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz adopted an idea from Van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding* when he included shadow projections in an ideal palace of Baroque inventions and scholarship.³⁶ Such interest has not been confined to academia; in 2009, the cinema set designer Christopher Hobbs (who worked with Derek Jarman and others), expressed his indebtedness to Van Hoogstraten's perspectival experiments for creating optical illusions.³⁷

Two contributions to this aspect of the master – that may herald his increasing relevance for contemporary visual artists – came from Japan. One was the 2009 exhibition by the Musée du Louvre and the DNP Museum Lab in Tokyo, entitled *Samuel van Hoogstraten, 'The Slippers': Experimenting with one's Gaze*.³⁸ A sizeable digital reconstruction allowed one to virtually enter the painting, while multimedia features highlighted contextual matters such as the London perspective box and the treatise on painting. The second project was a movie about Van Hoogstraten's life and work in Dordrecht and Amsterdam, for the televised series *The Great Masters of Art*.³⁹ The lineup of other European artists is worthy of note. For 2008/2009, it included Caillebotte, Corot, Degas, Dufy, Ernst, Géricault, Van Gogh, Holbein, Khnopff, Millet, Modigliani, Picasso, Rembrandt, Sisley, Titian, De la Tour, Turner, Velazquez, Vermeer, and Leonardo da Vinci. Was Samuel van Hoogstraten the odd one out in this group, which would otherwise have been completely familiar to any mid-twentieth-century art historian? Or is he tentatively assuming his place as a canonical figure in Western art?

This book

Our [first chapter](#) asks a fundamental question: what, to Van Hoogstraten, was the ‘theory of art’? Jan Blanc observes that the master was the first to use the term theory in Dutch artistic literature. Broaching this matter obviously involves the notion of the ‘rules of art’. An exploration of Van Hoogstraten’s response to the classical sources and to French academism highlights that he saw rules as practical solutions that facilitate the fabrication of convincing images. As the example of decorum demonstrates, Van Hoogstraten himself broke with the issue of antiquarian exactitude for the sake of the image’s spatial legibility. Blanc’s chapter underscores the learning behind the master’s ideas that allow theoretical reflections on a meta-level, while otherwise the artist’s focus on practice comes to the fore, as precisely the element setting him apart from the literary tradition.

The strong interrelationship between Van Hoogstraten’s theory and his painting practice emerges more clearly in the next chapter. Celeste Brusati focuses on his use of frames. After a summary of the manners in which Van Hoogstraten’s own work has been framed in the later scholarship, she analyzes a variety of works, from an early self-portrait to an architectural view, the London perspective box, the large ‘threshold paintings’ and a newly discovered *trompe-l’oeil* in order to argue that Van Hoogstraten used feigned frames to set up visual equivalences, create spatial sequences, and pace the act of viewing. These perceptual experiments stimulated the imagination in terms of thinking about what was absent in the painting and in terms of the temporal experience of the work. This insight leads to a new interpretation of the *Inleyding*’s statement that painters should include accessories (*bywerk*) that covertly explain something: Van Hoogstraten’s works offered visual prompts that invited speculation in regard to optics and perception rather than merely providing answers to questions of literary meaning.

The next chapter explores the foundation of Van Hoogstraten’s art: training in Rembrandt’s studio. Ben Broos studies the provenance and qualities of a document dating from Van Hoogstraten’s apprenticeship in Amsterdam. The master regularly required his students to study their own faces. A drawn self-portrait by Van Hoogstraten, which belongs to his earliest known work, testifies to teaching procedures: the chapter identifies pen strokes correcting the figure’s anatomy as carried out by Rembrandt. The drawing was the basis for a painted self-portrait of around 1650 which demonstrates the long-term impact of Rembrandt’s pedagogy.

Van Hoogstraten’s theory of art also expressed his reaction to his master. Paul Taylor studies the lines from the *Inleyding* that have been quoted most often in the literature on Dutch art: the characterization of Rembrandt’s *Night Watch* as *zwierich van sprong* (sinuous of step). This chapter pairs stylistic insights – relating Van Hoogstraten’s expression to the original shape of the *Night Watch* – to an analysis of the semantic field covered by the term *zwier* in the seventeenth century. *Zwier* was constantly being used in extended senses: loose graceful curves could lend themselves to all kinds of metaphorical applications, and few authors applied these metaphors as eagerly as Van Hoogstraten, in connection to figure drawing, composition, and brushwork.

[Chapter 5](#) extends the analysis of Van Hoogstraten’s thematic and stylistic choices to a social factor: his ambitions of a courtier’s career, expressed in his manual *The Honest Youth*.

Michiel Roscam Abbing focuses in this context on the painted ‘personal’ letter racks. The traditional view towards the paintings that included objects belonging to Van Hoogstraten himself is that these works were alternative self-portraits. However, as the original owners, intimates or acquaintances of the painter, were in a position to appreciate the objects’ personal nature, the letter racks may also have been gifts. Ultimately, these highly personalized tributes developed into a separate genre, demonstrating how the Dordrecht artist’s creative solutions to individual problems sparked wider imitation.

A perspective box in the National Gallery in London is arguably Van Hoogstraten’s masterpiece. Herman Colenbrander couples biographical data with a detailed visual and iconographic scrutiny for a new interpretation. Asking the question of the *raison d’être* of this work, [Chapter 6](#) begins by observing that Van Hoogstraten depicted rooms that contain no human beings in the foreground – one of its themes, similar to the empty space featured in *The Slippers*, is absence. Without ignoring the erotic aspect that earlier interpretations of the box have highlighted, the argument results in a personal interpretation, supported by the work’s dating and signature: that it was a marriage gift for the artist’s wife, Sara Balen.

Fatma Yalcin casts a fresh look at Van Hoogstraten’s travels through Central Europe and Italy which ultimately inspired his extended stay in England, exploring the impact of these journeys on his works. She asks why, after first trying to sell his British patrons *trompe-l’oeil* painting harking back to his career in Vienna and Dordrecht, the master soon chose to focus on an entirely new topic in his oeuvre: architectural scenes. He adapted the works to his patrons’ tastes, as appears from stylistic and iconographical elements in the depicted architecture which may be related to the attitude of religious reconciliation favored by the British monarch, Charles II.

Van Hoogstraten’s novels are a neglected aspect of his universal art. [Chapter 8](#) addresses how his literary ambitions may make it possible to consider him the first Dutch novelist. His two works of pastoral fiction, *Beautiful Roselijn* and *Haegaenveld*, expressed his rising social status among the Dordrecht establishment but diverge in style and content from his figurative art. The elements of horror, magic, and violence make them stand out among contemporary Dutch experiments in the pastoral genre. This inspires a new consideration of the validity of an integrated analysis of Van Hoogstraten’s painted and written works.

Finally, Hendrik J. Horn brings into focus Arnold Houbraken, who may have been Van Hoogstraten’s last student; he was also his oldest student and a kind of prefect to the others. Combining new biographical findings with a theoretical approach, the chapter explores similarities in the two masters’ careers as well as in their ideas. This involves looking to the lost supplement to the *Inleyding* and to the other Van Hoogstratens: Frans and his sons, Jan, and David. Houbraken’s judgment was conspicuously ambivalent: Van Hoogstraten apparently ‘possessed a great intellect in almost all matters; he particularly well understood the rules of Art so completely in all aspects that I do not believe that anyone after him understood them better; but he was therefore no high flyer in the practice of the same.’⁴⁰

Notes

- 1 On this list see R. Schillemans, 'Rimprant, nostrae aetatis miraculum', *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 1 (1991), 17-20.
- 2 In fact a co-production with Nicolaes van Rosendael (1636-1686): *Saint Benedict of Nursia Contemplating the World and the Soul of Germanus, Bishop of Capua*, oil on canvas, dimensions unknown; M. Roscam Abbing, *De schilder en schrijver Samuel van Hoogstraten 1627-1678: eigentijdse bronnen en oeuvre van gesigneerde schilderijen*, Leiden 1993, cat.no 5; C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Chicago 1995, cat.no 44, 49; J. Blanc, *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVIIe siècle: la théorie de l'art de Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Berne 2008, cat.no P20.
- 3 Inscription on Van Hoogstraten's letter-rack painting in Kingston Lacy, The Bankes Collection (The National Trust), inv.no KLA/P/203; cf. Michiel Roscam Abbing's essay in the present book. As Roscam Abbing remarks, there is no conclusive proof that Van Hoogstraten was ever in the Emperor's service.
- 4 P.S. Schull (ed.), *Dierijk en Dorothe, of de verlossing van Dordrecht: dramatisch dichtstuk van Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Dordrecht 1833, 2-4.
- 5 Roscam Abbing 1993; P. Thissen, *Werk, netwerk en letterwerk van de familie van Hoogstraten in de zeventiende eeuw: sociaal-economische en sociaal-culturele achtergronden van geletterden in de republiek*, Amsterdam & Maarssen 1994; Brusati 1995; H.-J. Czech, *Im Geleit der Musen: Studien zu Samuel van Hoogstraten Malertraktat Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst (1678)*, Munich & Berlin 2002; Blanc 2008; T. Weststeijn, *The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age*, Amsterdam 2008.
- 6 *Inleyding* 71.
- 7 *Inleyding* 70, also 'algemeene Schilderkonst', p. 13, and 'algemeene geleertheit', p. 89. Cf. T. Weststeijn, 'This Art Embraces All Visible Things in its Domain: Samuel van Hoogstraten and the Trattato della Pittura', in: C. Farago (ed.), *Re-Reading Leonardo: The Treatise on Painting across Europe, 1550-1900*, London 2009, 415-439.
- 8 't Is schadelijk te denken, zeyt eender, datmen alles niet zoude kunnen bevatten: Want wat is'er dat ons verstant verzadigen kan? zegt Philips Mornay, brengt'er zoo veel wetenschap in, en vervult het met zoo veel kennissen der dingen, als gy kunt, het zal in begeerlijkheit verwakkeren, en hoe't meer houdt, hoe't meer zoekt, krijgende daer door noch hoofdzeer noch quaede maeghe. Onze kleerkassen, zegt Kassiodorus, kunnen eens vervult zijnde, niet meer bergen: dit tresoor wort noit overladen. Maer als het alreede zeer veele heeft ingenomen, zoo gaep't het gestadich nae meer, te meer, gelijk Cicero zegt, dewijl dat alle vrye konsten eenen gemeenen band hebben, en als door maegschap aen malkanderen verbonden zijn', *Inleyding* 69. Reference to Vossius on p. 70.
- 9 J. von Schlosser, *Die Kunstliteratur: ein Handbuch zur Quellenkunde der neueren Kunstgeschichte*, Vienna 1924, 559. S. Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch art in the Seventeenth Century*, Chicago 1983, 77-78.
- 10 E. de Jongh, *Zinne- en minnebeelden in de schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, s.l. 1967, 22, 90.
- 11 J.A. Emmens, *Rembrandt en de regels van de kunst*, Amsterdam 1979 (ed. princ. 1968), 98.
- 12 Brusati 1995; Czech 2002; Blanc 2008; Weststeijn 2008.
- 13 **Chapter nine** is devoted to the fixed stars.
- 14 Blanc has noted that the extent of Van Hoogstraten's implicit indebtedness to French art theory merits additional study in particular. J. Blanc, 'Review of T. Weststeijn, *The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age*', *Simiolus* 33 (2007-2008), 276-282, esp. 282.
- 15 E. van de Wetering, 'Towards a Reconstruction of Rembrandt's Art Theory,' in: *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, Vol. V: The Small-Scale History Paintings*, Dordrecht 2011, 3-140, with criticism of Weststeijn's

- book on pages 25-28. See also E. van de Wetering a.o., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, Vol. IV: The Self-Portraits*, Amsterdam & Dordrecht 2005, 303-309. P. Taylor, 'Composition in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art Theory', in: P. Taylor & F. Quiviger (eds.), *Pictorial Composition from Medieval to Modern Art*, London & Turin 2000, 146-171, and 'Flatness in Dutch Art: Theory and Practice', *Oud Holland* 121 (2008), 153-84. See also U. Kern, 'Light and Shadow, Clouds and Sunrays: The Concept of "Reddering" in Netherlandish Art', *Oud Holland* 124/4 (2011) 209-230, and 'Samuel van Hoogstraeten and the Cartesian Rainbow Debate: Color and Optics in a Seventeenth-Century Treatise of Art Theory', *Simiolus* 36/1-2 (2012), 103-114.
- 16 G. Rutten, *De Archimedische punten van de taalbeschouwing: David van Hoogstraeten (1658-1724) en de vroeg-moderne taalcultuur*, Amsterdam & Münster 2006.
- 17 W. Frijhoff, H.P.H. Nusteling & M. Spies (eds.), *Geschiedenis van Dordrecht van 1572 tot 1813*, Hilversum 1998, 390.
- 18 3 December 1994, Dordrechts Museum.
- 19 A. Chong and W. Kloek (eds), *Still Life Paintings from the Netherlands, 1550-1720*, cat.exh. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) & Cleveland (The Cleveland Museum of Art), Zwolle 1999; C. White & Q. Buvelot (eds.), *Rembrandt by Himself*, cat.exh. The Hague (Mauritshuis) & London (The National Gallery), Zwolle 1999; W. Liedtke, M. Plomp & A. Rüger, *Vermeer and the Delft School*, cat.exh. London (National Gallery) & New York (Metropolitan), New Haven & London 2001; P. Schoon a.o., *The Golden Age of Dutch Painting from the Collection of the Dordrechts Museum*, cat.exh. Athens (Alexandros Soutzos Museum) 2002; S. Ebert-Schifferer a.o., *Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe-l'oeil Painting*, cat.exh. Washington (National Gallery of Art) 2003; AA.vv., *Rembrandt et son école: collections du musée de l'Ermitage de Saint-Pétersbourg*, cat.exh. Dijon (Musée des Beaux-Arts) 2003-2004; A.M. Giusti, *Art and Illusions: Masterpieces of Trompe-l'oeil from Antiquity to the Present Day*, cat.exh. Florence (Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi) Florence 2009.
- 20 Blanc added to Brusati's catalogue mostly by studying auction inventories dating from after the seventeenth century, but also making his own attributions: Blanc 2008, cat. nos P1, P4, P5, P6, P8, P13, P30, P33-4, P36-8, P42-3, P45, P53-55, P60, P65-7, P69, P75, P85/2, P95-8, P99bis, P102-7, P113-121, P123, P125-6, P129-30, P133, P145, P147, P153/1-2, P156-8, P166, P174, P180, P184, P187. In addition, Ilkido Ember ascribed a *Trompe-l'oeil with a Genre Painting* to Van Hoogstraeten, see I. Ember, 'Some Minor Masters on the Peripheries of Rembrandt's Circle: Newly Attributed Paintings by Rombout van Troyen, Jacob van Spreeuwen, Willem de Pooter and Samuel van Hoogstraeten', *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 90-91 (1999), 97-111, 203-210. *An Elegant Couple Playing Cards*, also attributed to Van Hoogstraeten, was sold October 13th, 2009, Christie's Amsterdam, Lot 64, nr 2829.
- 21 Oil on canvas, 65 x 50 cm, Private Royal Collection, Qatar. All specialists whom I consulted about this painting pointed out that, besides being unsigned, the painting has been heavily restored. Michiel Roscam Abbing called attention to a reference in a 1666 inventory in Dordrecht (Vijgenboom) of 'Den conterfeysel van Hooghstraten met eenen tulbant om thooff', Roscam Abbing 1993, 90, but he also pointed out that this may allude to Samuels brother Jan van Hoogstraten and that it remains unclear who was the painter. The Art Institute in Chicago has a similar work (Sumowski nr. 844); Blanc 2008, cat.nr. P33, mentions another one with different dimensions, sold in Amsterdam in 1970.
- 22 J. Bikker, *Willem Drost (1633-1659): A Rembrandt Pupil in Amsterdam and Venice*, New Haven & London 2005, cat.nos R21 and R23.
- 23 The portrait adorns D. Garrett (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza*, Cambridge 2007 (ed.princ. 1996) and C. Huenemann (ed.), *Spinoza: Critical Essays*, Cambridge 2008. On the identification see R. Ekkart, 'Spinoza in beeld; het onbekende gezicht', in: M. Rive & B. Heijne, *A Stone in Flight: Artistic Explorations Inspired by Benedictus de Spinoza*, Amsterdam/Rijnsburg 1997, 129-162.

- 24 Bikker 2005, II.
- 25 P. Schoon a.o., *Arent de Gelder (1645-1727): Rembrandts laatste leerling*, cat.exh. Dordrecht (Dordrechts Museum) & Cologne (Wallraf-Richartz-Museum), Ghent 1998; more recently, D. de Witt, 'Aert de Gelder, Jan Steen, and Houbraken's Perfect Picture', in: Kofuku Akira (ed.), *Rembrandt and Dutch History Painting in the 17th Century: Proceedings of a Symposium at the National Museum of Western Art*, Tokyo 2004, 85-94.
- 26 Two recent studies are W.M. Schaller, *Children Borne Aloft: Nicolaes Maes's Ganymede Portraiture and the Context of Death and Mourning in the Seventeenth-Century Netherlands* (Diss. Ohio State University) 2001; L. Krempel, *Studien zu den datierten Gemälden des Nicolaes Maes, 1634-1693*, Petersberg 2000.
- 27 S. Schnackenburg, 'Studium und Inspiratio: Godfried Schalckens Gemälde "Kunstaberachtung bei Lampenlicht"', um 1680-85, im Spannungsfeld ikonographischer Tradition und zeitgenössischer Kunsttheorie', *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 54 (2003), 183-217; P. Hecht, 'Art Beats Nature, and Painting Does so Best of All: The paragone Competition in Duquesnoy, Dou and Schalcken', *Simiolus* 29/3-4 (2002), 184-201.
- 28 H.J. Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*, 2 vols., Doornspijk 2000.
- 29 See J. Loughman, 'Abraham van Dijck (1635?-1680) a Dordrecht Painter in the Shadow of Rembrandt', in: A. Golahny, M.M. Mochizuki & L. Vergara (eds.), *In His Milieu: Essays on Netherlandish Art in Memory of John Michael Montias*, Amsterdam 2006, 265-278.
- 30 This is one of the main perspectives of the conference series organized by Queens University, Kingston, in Herstmonceux (UK) in 2009, 2011, and 2013.
- 31 Van de Wetering 2011, noting that Houbraken had to learn about his master's time with Rembrandt from reading the *Inleyding*. He only knew about Rembrandt's role 'because on page 257 of his book on the art of painting [Van Hoogstraten] calls him his "second Master after the death of his father Theodoor"'. See the Appendix that concludes the present book, p. 247.
- 32 W. Sumowski, *Drawings of the Rembrandt School*, New York 1979-1992, 9 vols.
- 33 These are mostly the works sold as by Van Hoogstraten at recent auctions. Blanc 2008, cat. nos D10, D33, D67, D76, D77, D90, D121, D135, D136, D140, D175, D179, D180, D181, D182, D184, D186, D187, D195.
- 34 The most recent studies are M. Plomp, 'Rembrandt and His Circle: Drawings and Prints', *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 64/1 (2006), 3-48, and B. Binstock, 'Samuel van Hoogstraten's Westertoren', *Master Drawings* 45 (2007), 187-200; some of the master's drawings were exhibited in *Rembrandt en zijn navolgers uit München*, Amsterdam, Museum het Rembrandthuis (7 September-17 November 2002) and Munich, Alte Pinakothek (5 December 2001-10 February 2002).
- 35 The discussion in H. Belting, *Florence and Bagdad: Renaissance Art and Arab Science*, Cambridge & London 2011, 247-251 is particularly elegant: the author relates Van Hoogstraten's work to the Baroque 'crisis' in the Albertian 'window view' of linear perspective. For two other examples of Van Hoogstraten's work being mentioned in the context of the history of science cf. M.L. Jones, *The Good Life in the Scientific Revolution: Descartes, Pascal, Leibniz, and the Cultivation of Virtue*, Chicago 2006, 187, and S. Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture*, Oxford 2007, 109. See also G. Kieft, 'Galileo, Van Hoogstraten and the Optics of Sun and Moon', in: A.W.A. Boschloo, E. Grasman & G.J.J. van der Sman (eds.), *Aux Quatre Vents: A Festschrift for Bert W. Meijer* Florence 2002, 325-328.
- 36 *Anders zur Welt Kommen: das Humboldt-Forum im Schloss*, exh. Berlin, Altes Museum, 9 July 2009-17 January 2010. The shadow dance is mentioned in G.W. Leibniz, 'Drôle de pensée, touchant une nouvelle sorte de représentation', in: AA.vv., *Wunderkammer des Abendlandes: Museum und Sammlung im Spiegel der Zeit*, cat.exh. Bonn (Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik) 1994, 122-124.
- 37 Hobbs referred to a fantastical trilogy for the BBC. URL: <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/what/film/essays/chrishobbs.htm>. Accessed May 27, 2009. Studies on the history of the new media increasingly in-

- clude Van Hoogstraten's shadow dance, cf. B.M. Stafford, F. Terpak and I. Poggi, *Devices of Wonder: From the World in a Box to Images on a Screen*, Los Angeles 2001, 30, 66, 107 a.o.; S. Burns, *Painting the Dark Side: Art and the Gothic Imagination in Nineteenth-Century America*, Berkeley 2004, 142-143; and J.D. Anderson, B. Fisher Anderson & D. Bordwell, *Moving Image Theory*, Carbondale, Ill. 2007, 22, 25.
- 38 French title: *La Place du spectateur réinventée*. The exhibition took place in DNP Museum Lab, Tokyo, 6 December 2008-16 May 2009. URL: <http://museumlab.jp/english/exhibition/05/index.html>. Accessed 1 March 2011.
- 39 Literally 'Giants of Beauty', Nexus Producers, aired on TV Tokyo. The movie features a life-size, three-dimensional reconstruction of *The Slippers* as the stage for a cinematic narrative.
- 40 A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols, Amsterdam 1718-1721, vol. III, 137-138.



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PROLOG

Samuel van Hoogstraten and the Golden Age of Dutch Art, Literature, and Science: The Present Book and Future Research

The one connecting factor in the different chapters in this book is obviously Van Hoogstraten himself: there was a single personality – although our knowledge of it may be shifting with each new historiographical focus – that linked art, literature, and scholarship during a foundational era of Dutch cultural history. Even though getting to know the ‘real’ Samuel van Hoogstraten may be beyond our ken as historians, it is a legitimate ambition to try to sketch the conceptual and ideological framework which implicitly connected his varied efforts. Four major themes surface throughout the present book’s chapters and determine the surplus value of the sum of the parts: 1) training in Rembrandt’s studio; 2) the theory and practice of art as deceit; 3) Van Hoogstraten as a courtier; and 4) his ambitions in the context of the history of knowledge. These themes illuminate the paintings as well as the writings, and may also indicate avenues for future research.

Rembrandt’s studio

Van Hoogstraten’s training in Amsterdam demands interest if only because Rembrandt, of all painters of the European Baroque, has probably received the most substantial amount of scholarly attention. From the 1960s onwards, attempts have been made to ‘normalize’ Rembrandt by putting the spotlight on the wide range of works and minor masters in his background. Yet in the twenty-first century, he exerts again the centripetal force in the historiography of Dutch art. According to Mariët Westermann, the relative decline of European hegemony has renewed attention to ‘the extensive but no longer assured history of painting as a unique resource of European culture’, engendering a ‘return to the major contributions of Dutch seventeenth-century art’ and Rembrandt in particular.¹ The master-pupil relationship will therefore continue to dominate research about Van Hoogstraten, even though he is undoubtedly coming into his own as a canonical figure and historians will increasingly understand the master through his pupil.

Studying the Dordrecht painter seems, in fact, a promising approach in Dutch art history: his cosmopolitanism, intellectualism, and the ‘betrayal’ of his master’s manner – which made him such a suspect figure for earlier scholars – provide an alternative model for the traditional image of the Rembrandt circle as centered on a dark, unlettered, provincial, and lonely genius, while at the same time it is evident that Rembrandt remained a worthy example for Van Hoogstraten throughout his career.²

The present book confirms this latter insight in particular. Broos, for one, highlights how Rembrandt was literally looking over his students’ shoulders. The fact that a drawing documenting a teaching procedure survives and that Van Hoogstraten’s painted work returned to it in later years, illustrates not only Rembrandt’s pedagogy: the insight that the master made direct changes in the students’ work also deserves the attention of scholars who try to establish the amount of cooperation in the studio, and inspires a more nuanced position towards the ‘degrees of authenticity’ by which workshop products should be judged.

It comes as no surprise that Van Hoogstraten relied on his master for one of his most ambitious self-portraits. Rembrandt’s large self-portrait production in different media, poses, costumes, and types was a historically exceptional phenomenon, as Van de Wetering has explained.³ Van Hoogstraten must have recognized this aspect of his master’s ambitions when in the self-portraits identified by Broos he presented himself as an artist, drawing attention to the process of making art and thereby heralding the self-referential aspects of his later *trompe-l’oeils*. What is more, the young man drawing from life looking out not at the viewers, but at the visible world, presents himself as that budding artist who would later feature in the *Inleyding*, devoted to ‘the riches of nature, and what is in it: the heaven, the earth, the sea ... the flat fields, hills, springs and trees provide work in abundance; the cities, markets, churches, and a thousand riches of nature call out to us’.⁴

It is likely that Rembrandt did not just hold Van Hoogstraten’s pen for him when needed, but also spoke words of advice. The pupil probably cherished the sketches while noting down remarks just like students were wont to do in the Dutch Republic’s Latin schools. A collection of these quotations seems to have been the basis for his volume on painting published towards the end of his career. Such a procedure would explain the treatise’s many sideroads which indicate that it was not intended to be read from cover to cover in a linear fashion. Taylor’s analysis singles out one such element that may have been among the master’s advice: the term *zwier* was essential to describe and instruct in the art of figure composition. Complete understanding of this word’s meaning arises only out of scrutiny of the visual material, whereas the term is also an important addition to the vocabulary in which to discuss our looking at seventeenth-century art. Word and image, theory and practice, the master’s teaching and the student’s reflections were complementary.

Taylor’s analysis of vocabulary through images is suggestive of a manner of reading. Indeed, Van Hoogstraten’s ambiguous stance towards *liefhebbers* (art lovers) without practical knowledge, to whom he addresses the book but who are also the butt of frequent criticism in the treatise, makes clear that his treatise was not intended to be fully understood just by reading.

His focus on the artist as the best judge of art was itself a literary commonplace. Yet the present book's chapters by Blanc, Brusati, and Taylor point out that doing justice to the treatise involves reading complemented with action – making art. This may seem like an obvious remark, but it explains why the *Inleyding*, in many cases, does not prescribe an unambiguous, clear-cut theory: the kind of ‘thinking’ that it propagates automatically involves the ‘doing’.⁵

This performative element is, in fact, relevant on various levels besides technique. *Zwier* was related to the physical movement of figures on a stage. Van Hoogstraten's ideal of painting as evoking a virtual reality should in many cases be interpreted literally rather than figuratively; ideally, scenes from history were to be used in a performative context: curtains in front of paintings were pulled aside to reveal a scene in a longer narrative, relevant texts were read aloud, and perhaps music accompanied the looking at art.⁶ Moreover, terms such as *zwier* suggest how intricately painterly style was supposedly linked to the artist's corporeality: being *zwierich* of brush reflected an artist's physical elegance (which, according to early modern physiology, was closely related to his temperament that was in turn a product of his country of upbringing's climatic circumstances).

The art of deceit

One of Rembrandt's experiments in ‘thinking outside the box’ concerned frames – the most striking is the 1641 *Portrait of Agatha Bas* (Royal Collection, London) in which not only the sitter's fan is depicted sticking out of the picture plane, partly overlapping the frame, but she is actually holding the frame with her left hand; likewise in the printed *Portrait of Jan Sylvius* (1646), the sitter's face and fingers throw cast shadows outside the oval frame [Fig. 2]. When Van Hoogstraten emulated such playful conceits – which Brusati identifies as the artist's abilities to at the same time simulate (i.e., suggest the presence of three-dimensional spaces and living figures) and dissimulate (i.e., call attention to the painting as a framed canvas or paper) – it becomes clear to what extent visual illusionism had been a chief concern. Painters from Rembrandt's generation had accomplished much; one way to emulate perfect illusionism – one's own or the work of others – was to consciously puncture the illusion.

Brusati points out how for Van Hoogstraten, the device of the painting-within-the-painting was a means of articulating his theoretical concerns. Here we find a first parallel with his novelistic writings. These contain many frame narratives, which, as [Chapter 8](#) argues, typify Van Hoogstraten as a novelist. His convoluted texts are made up of stories told by the books' main characters, stories which, in turn, often involve passages in reported speech, enabling the narrative to move quickly to remote locations. This element, together with the hybrid combination of prose, poetry, and fictional letters quoted in full, is precisely what made Van Hoogstraten such an original writer in Dutch. Roscam Abbing's chapter highlights how this novelistic procedure is replicated in some of the paintings that depict letters and Van Hoogstraten's own writings (the books, not their content). The pictures-within-pictures, stories-within-stories, and stories-within-pictures bring to the fore not just Van Hoogstraten's ‘conscious devising’ of artifice, in



Fig. 2 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of Jan Cornelisz Sylvius*, 1646, etching, 28 x 19 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

Brusati's words. They rather point out the master's emphasis on the power of art and literature to transport the viewer into other realities. In the case of a painting's 'speaking' likeness, art was even supposed to evoke a complete virtual reality – more literally than literature did.

If we assume that Van Hoogstraten's ambitions were shaped during the period when Rembrandt took hold of his drawing pen when needed, the essays by Brusati, Roscam Abbing, and Yalcin suggest that what the master imparted on his pupil was not the 'Rembrandt style', the specific brushwork and clair-obscur that was his most explicit trademark. More essential was the ambition to give pride of place to 'deceiving the eye' (to use Van Hoogstraten's own, famous formula), a central issue in rivalry between artists and demonstrations of painterly virtuosity. Van Hoogstraten came to identify his social success with the art of painting's deceptive powers. As Colenbrander argues in the present book, the *Perspective Box* in London must be linked even more closely to the master's personality and intimate life than was previously thought.

One way to try to connect Van Hoogstraten's focus on illusionism to his ambitions as a writer is the theory of rhetoric. The ancient rhetoricians had taken pride in describing their art as deceitful – they even allowed not telling the truth if this would make an argument more persuasive; they also indulged in some measure in the comparison between oratory and sophistry. These remarks underly the praise of deceit in the Early Modern theory of painting, and are also the literary foundation for Van Hoogstraten's comparison of the painting to the mirror – that most vain and superficial of human attributes, associated, moreover, with feminine fickleness.⁷ The London perspective box itself seems to be a tribute to the deceitful possibilities of the medium of oil paint, which suggests that the seductive Venus/Danaë depicted on the lid was closely related to the 'love of art' that was defined as the painter's greatest reward: form and content were closely related (the female figure shares some essential qualities with *Pictura* herself whose qualities were deemed alluring and dangerous, as Eric Jan Sluijter has demonstrated).⁸ *Dame Pictura* was obviously a woman desired by artists and *liefhebbers* alike, who were especially attracted to the fraudulent sheen of oil and varnish: had Van Hoogstraten not identified the invention of oil paint as the result of alchemy, echoing Giorgio Vasari who called Jan van Eyck a 'sophist'?⁹

Van Hoogstraten as a cosmopolitan courtier

Another aspect of Van Hoogstraten's art that can probably be only addressed in full by taking account of his origins in Rembrandt's studio is his European career. At first sight, the master and the pupil harbored opposing ideas in this respect: Van Hoogstraten's cosmopolitan ambitions contrasted with Rembrandt's reputation, based in part on the fact that he never left his home country. Constantijn Huygens's (1596-1687) biographical note on Rembrandt highlighted how this painter, allegedly from a needy and uneducated background, derived his talents purely from the native soil. The account suggested that not going to Italy was Rembrandt's conscious choice to underscore his Batavian roots (Huygens heaped implicit praise on the master when he called not going abroad his single defect).¹⁰ Yet in reality, Rembrandt's workshop was internationally oriented, attracting students from the German states and Scandinavia; more importantly, it was

positioned in an emulative relation towards Rubens and Titian. The studio was a springboard for Willem Drost and Monsù Bernardo (Bernhard Keil, 1624-1687) to seek successful careers in Italy. In the present book, Yalcin's analysis of Van Hoogstraten's experiences in Britain begs the question whether it is sensible to talk of the 'Dutch School' in connection to these pupils. Perhaps Van Hoogstraten should be seen as exemplary of a category of travelling Europeans for whose works the notion of *Kunstgeographie* – 'artistic geography' which interprets works in relation to origin – is irrelevant. Yalcin and Roscam Abbing remind us that throughout his artistic career, Van Hoogstraten obeyed the courtier's main rule. *Decorum* – or *buygsaemheid* (flexibility) in his own original and instructive translation – signified adapting his works to his public's desires, incorporating subtle iconographical details that could be understood only in a local context. (Obviously, exchanging the Rembrandtesque manner for a smoother brush and brighter palette testified to the same flexibility in a stylistic sense.) The chapters by Yalcin, Roscam Abbing, and Weststeijn make clear how his international orientation and willingness to change his approach for specific publics resulted in Van Hoogstraten being a founding figure in new genres: the 'letter rack' painting, the *trompe-l'oeil* with Palladian architecture, and, perhaps more epochal, two of the first Dutch novels.

Yet *buygsaemheid* in manifesting one's own artistic identity could only go some way. In the novels, Van Hoogstraten presents himself not only as a learned artist but also as someone who took pride in his native language. His efforts to 'transpose Holland in Latium' included a few references to the Batavians, the ancient Dutchmen praised by Tacitus himself. When Van Hoogstraten adapted the genre of the novel – that had originated in Italy, France, and England – to the Dutch context, it seems that his international outlook was motivated by the desire to ultimately single out the United Provinces' unique cultural qualities. It is significant in this respect that even when the master arrived in the center of European civilization, Rome, he was given the nickname 'The Batavian' upon joining the local artists' confraternity. In the novels, he paired his energetic use of the Dutch language with a choice of topics that was far removed from ancient Rome: the far North and the Eastern fringes of Europe. It is hard to establish to what extent he also tried to 'embrace the vernacular' in his art and whether his works, be they portraits of Dutch sitters or demonstration pieces for foreign buyers, expressed a purportedly 'Dutch' self-image. Brusati, Yalcin, and Colenbrander remind us that some of Van Hoogstraten's most accomplished works, such as the perspective box and a number of architecture paintings, depict domestic interiors with the signature Delftware tiles that may have been associated with purportedly 'Dutch' virtues.

One complication when studying 'Batavian' factors in Van Hoogstraten's painted and written work is that the novels feature such an idiosyncratic subject matter. They involve horror, magic, and violence which are wholly absent in Van Hoogstraten's ambitions as a painter or even a draftsman. Perhaps the term *schilderachtig* (painterly or 'picturesque'), which in the treatise on painting relates to the concept of 'beautiful ugliness', may be stretched to explain some of the exoticism in the books. For some examples the author refers to Johan van Heemskerck's (1597-1656) novelistic description of a boorish theme and Adriaen Brouwer's (1605-1638) paintings of similarly rustic topics. This begs the question, to what extent were picturesque topics in art related to a specific 'vernacular' painting style?

The present book also gives rise to another question: whether there might be ‘Baroque’ concepts with which to thematize Van Hoogstraten’s idiosyncracies – both the exoticism of the novels and the artworks’ *trompe-l’oeil* effects. Terms come to mind that are often used in relation to the interests of seventeenth-century scholars such as ‘the curious’ and ‘admiration’, words that expressed the viewer’s confrontation with the unexpected or unknown. The Spanish Jesuit Balthasar Gracián (1601–1658), for instance, spoke in this regard of *ingenium* as the artist’s ability to express relationships in an innovative manner – putting old things in a new light. As Horn’s chapter reveals, Gracián’s ideology was used by Houbraken to situate Van Hoogstraten’s artistic ambitions in an ideological context. A vernacular term (in Italian) to denote this ideology was *argutezza*, sharpness of mind, which was apparently the basis for conceits such as metaphor: only a sharp wit would be able to discover the third term through which two, highly dissimilar objects were related.¹¹ Van Hoogstraten’s paintings that explicitly expose the conceit of simulation – by calling attention to an image’s real identity as a framed canvas – may have been intended to evoke admiration, highlighting the artist’s ability to establish similitude between a layer of paint and a three-dimensional object or even a human being. In the Dordrecht master’s novels, the weaving together of divergent frame narratives which allowed for the introduction of exotic and ‘unheard-of things’ in the civilized domain of Holland youngsters, may have been a somewhat less intellectually challenging attempt at demonstrating ingenuity.

Moreover, curiosity and admiration (*verwondering* in Van Hoogstraten’s Dutch) were terms often used to describe objects in scientific collections. The works by the painter’s own hand that demonstrate knowledge of optics suggest that he was interested in other objects evoking *admiratio*. Brusati points out that in Vienna, he saw a camera obscura with the Jesuits; Yalcin highlights his contacts with London’s Royal Society and the Vauxhall Association in which other scientific experiments were discussed. It is probable that Van Hoogstraten, imitating Rembrandt, had his own small library and collection of man-made curiosities and exotic natural objects. His treatise mentions not only Saxon antiquities, Japanese lacquerware, and Amerindian feather images but also shells, gems, suggestively shaped rocks, bezoar stones, and mandrakes.¹² These were typical items in scientific cabinets: the visitor’s *ingenium* was essential to identify the unusual objects’ meaning in the framework of the Creator’s design. Furthermore, Van Hoogstraten’s collection may have included material things similar to those featuring in his novels: hyperborean magical accoutrements, Ottoman scimitars, ‘Scythian’ arrows, and others revealing the existence of elephants and Egyptian cults. In this context, we should perhaps pay more attention to the global dimension of Van Hoogstraten’s statement that artists should comprehend ‘the entire visible world’. He praised Rembrandt’s *The Preaching of Saint John*, for instance, for the multiplicity of men ‘from different states’ depicted in the audience; in fact, the painting contains more than seventy figures including two wearing Japanese armor and Amerindian garb [Fig. 3].¹³

If ingenuity (*geest* in Dutch) was indeed an overarching concept to explain Van Hoogstraten’s artistic and literary ambitions, it is important to analyze how it was rooted in ideals that he encountered at the courts of Vienna, The Hague, and London, explored in more detail in the present book by Roscam Abbing and Yalcin. These environments provided the stage for civilized



Fig. 3 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Preaching of Saint John*, 1634-1635, 62.7 x 82.1 cm, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

demonstrations of ingenuity that were needed to attract attention in a rigidly hierarchical social context. Not only did Van Hoogstraten understand how a court artist's *geest* should be essentially flexible, correctly judging each new social situation and constantly adapting one's behavior in a seemingly effortless manner; he even appears to have made the courtier's ideal of simulation – the indispensable play-acting involved in this social flexibility – so much his own that he came to comment on it in his writing and painting. Roscam Abbing's and Brusati's essays in tandem suggest that works which thematized both *simulatio* and *dissimulatio*, like the framed letter-racks, were intended as objects for civilized conversation, which increased their value as commodities and sophisticated gifts. The emphasis on the function of artworks as conversation starters in a courtly context draws attention to the limits of economic history as an interpretive framework in the study of Dutch art. Van Hoogstraten's financial success in the Netherlands – he became a rich man towards the end of his career – demonstrates that he knew how to operate in the world's most markedly capitalistic art market at the time. Yet it may have been social as well as economic insights that helped him come so far. Making paintings as gifts did not yield him money – he knew that ultimately human capital was his best investment. In this sense the Dutch Republic,

in spite of the unprecedented blossoming of a free market for art, had not broken with its Burgundian tradition and with the ‘honor economy of the court’, in Brusati’s words. Roscam Abbing draws attention to the fact that the same continuity held true for Van Hoogstraten’s writings.

We should also, perhaps, not forget that many of the paintings, besides serious matters of emulation and self-reflection, express an element of humor. The procedure of masking and consciously demasking involved a moment of irony that was probably not lost on Van Hoogstraten’s courtly contemporaries; irony may also have played a role in an iconographical sense in genre paintings such as *The Doctor’s Visit* (discussed by Brusati in the present book). What is more, *trompe-l’oeil* could be intrinsically humoristic; didn’t Houbraken describe how Rembrandt’s pupils poked fun of their master’s avarice by painting coins on the floor, observing how he reached out for them in vain?¹⁴ Van Hoogstraten’s *Inleyding* contains precious little explanation on the topic of humor. Did anyone laugh when the ancient master Zeuxis deceived Parrhasios: when the latter tried to draw aside the curtain only to discover that it was painted? We have to look at the Italian and Spanish tradition of art theory to find how terms such as *cappriccio*, *grillo*, and *scherzo* (joke) were associated with the illusionistic depiction of everyday household objects, foodstuff, animals, and people from the lower classes. Gianpaolo Lomazzo (1538-1592), Federico Zuccari (1539-1709), and Francisco Pacheco (1564-1644) explicitly associate the Netherlandish masters’ focus on everyday life with the intent to provoke laughter: the realistic mode of representation is apparently a requisite for the public to recognize humorous situations (and in effect, any modern cartoonist will agree that few things are as fleeting as humor). For the Italians, the obvious implication is that the Northern artists themselves are similar to the simpletons they depict so convincingly.¹⁵ Finally, in the context of Van Hoogstraten’s ambitions, it is even harder to establish to what extent his novels were intended to be funny. Was the swordfight between two women that concludes *Haegaenveld* intended as a carnivalesque reversal of values? The present book argues that a certain conception of the picturesque (*schilderachtig*) infuses Van Hoogstraten’s books. Bringing these varied painterly and literary elements in relation to the Bakhtinian notions of laughter and the grotesque might be a fruitful line of future research.¹⁶

An even more speculative element in regard to how Van Hoogstraten’s art related to ‘low’ culture should be taken account of especially in the light of Eric Jan Sluijter’s studies of the painted female nude in Rembrandt’s circle. Optical illusionism was combined with eroticism in Van Hoogstraten’s perspective box with its depiction of a nude Venus or Danaë. The mythological and scientific connotations cannot fully obscure the fact that there is a voyeuristic element involved in this peculiar kind of peepshow, in which the woman’s frontal nudity appears only after the spectator has bent over the box in a peculiar physical pose. Herman Colenbrander called attention to this aspect during the 2009 conference on Van Hoogstraten, pointing out that in the eighteenth century in particular, pornographic subject matter was often rendered in anamorphic form: the optical distortion reduced the image’s literalness while at the same time it heightened the pleasure of the viewing process.¹⁷

The history of knowledge

Finally, the present book brings to the surface aspects of Van Hoogstraten's work that are relevant to the history of science. Perhaps it is better to speak in this context of the history of knowledge, as this term captures more adequately how Van Hoogstraten's different ambitions were interconnected. The English word 'science' does not adequately translate *wetenschap*, the term Van Hoogstraten uses to qualify his ambitions as an artist; when he calls the art of painting an *algemeene wetenschap*, he means a universal discipline encompassing different branches of knowledge. Obviously, it would not be correct to call Van Hoogstraten a scientist; yet his writings and paintings give reason to assume that among Dutch painters, he was extraordinarily concerned with establishing how the insights acquired by artists' daily attention to the visible world were related to knowledge as it was understood by the scholars and practitioners of natural science of his day. In this context, it is important to note that Van Hoogstraten's treatise on painting is silent about mathematical perspective, while it devotes an extraordinary amount of attention to coloring with its different optical, psychological, and material connotations (an emphasis the author shares with his predecessor Karel van Mander but which is otherwise rare in the tradition of art theory).¹⁸ The kind of knowledge that Van Hoogstraten's art could pre-eminently transmit was apparently related to physical phenomena such as color and light, which no other medium than oil paint could record so accurately. In the context of the history of science, Van Hoogstraten's perspective box did not just demonstrate the geometry involved in the making of an anamorphosis: it catalogued effects of direct and indirect natural light, how it was filtered or reflected by various materials in an interior.

The present book highlights that Van Hoogstraten's treatise, with its emphasis on optical deceit, was likewise a repository of knowledge. Yet we should realize that the precise meaning of *wetenschap* in Van Hoogstraten's book remains, for now, elusive: it had many different aspects. Antiquarian knowledge, for instance, was central to the author's ambitions; references to ancient dress, armor, and the habits, of the ancients, even when they do not relate to the visual arts, take up much space in the treatise. Obviously, transmitting pedagogical knowledge was essential too, which could be complemented with artworks such as the drawing presently identified by Broos: this may have come down to us precisely because it documented not only the correct manner of rendering anatomy but also a teaching method. Furthermore, as Taylor highlights in the present book, a specific term such as *zwier* expressed the painter's efforts to manipulate his figures as if moving on a stage. Art theory apparently crossed between media: in this case, the dancer or play-actor's knowledge was applied to that of the artist.¹⁹

Seeing Van Hoogstraten's art and writing in the context of the history of knowledge seems to bring us full circle to what first gave rise to scholarly interest in the master's ideas on pictorial representation as distinct from the Italianate tradition: Svetlana Alpers's take on Dutch art as aimed at inventorying (or 'mapping') visible reality.²⁰ This idea seems to have lost less of its original appeal than the original iconological approach; in fact it stands in need of being revived after filtering out the noise engendered by the anachronistic application of twentieth-century literary theory. The ideological framework that gave Dutch art its intellectual significance may

have had more to do with the history of knowledge – in relation to perception in particular, color theory, and the rendition of optical properties and surface textures that may be subsumed under Van Mander's term *reflexy-const* – than with the history of literature.²¹

In any event, Van Hoogstraten's art confronted his viewers in most cases with a twofold intellectual challenge involving both optical and literary connotations. Perhaps only an approach based on the history of knowledge does full justice to his art's formal qualities, but this does not mean that the traditional iconological scrutiny should be relinquished. Yalcin demonstrates how some of the master's architectural scenes deploy mathematical perspective and the atmospheric qualities of the oil medium for a *trompe-l'oeil* effect while at the same time referring to a specific and complex iconographical issue. Colenbrander points out that even in the perspective box, his consummate demonstration of mastery of linear perspective and painterly optics, Van Hoogstraten introduced interpretive clues in a straightforward fashion: individual signs to be 'read' as elements that together constituted a single and unambiguous message. As Brusati argues in the present book, the *Inleyding's* plea to furnish paintings with *verklarend bywerk* – explanatory visual details – should be interpreted in this broad sense: comprising both emblematic meaning and commentary on the perceptual insights that the art of painting provides.

In conclusion, the chapters collected in this book offer various arguments for overcoming the binary thinking that has determined the study of Dutch art when it pitted practice against theory, form against meaning, or a 'modern' Dutch conception of visual description versus an old-fashioned emblematical approach. Obviously, Van Hoogstraten's cosmopolitan outlook was the living evidence against the Schlosserian dichotomy featuring silent Dutch craftsmen versus garrulous Mediterranean painter-intellectuals. Furthermore, in regard to the issue of the 'modern' we should note that even though the Van Hoogstraten brothers were involved in the most modern ideological debate of their age, namely that related to Spinoza and his circle,²² Frans van Hoogstraten's edition of the Dutch mystic Thomas à Kempis (c.1380-1471) expressed another side of his interests (and in fact, mysticism inspired many of the seventeenth century's efforts to establish the 'light of reason'). Hendrik J. Horn's chapter brings to the fore how Arnold Houbraken's ideas on Samuel van Hoogstraten's art and life straddled modern and traditional conceptions in a similar manner. Although Houbraken's ideas were certainly influenced by the secularizing trends sparked by Spinoza, ancient Stoicism pervaded his theory of painting even more markedly. The Stoic notion that the artist could 'see God in Nature', which Horn associates with a Deistic trend in Houbraken's thought, must have been a predominant theme for Van Hoogstraten too. The conception of nature as a 'second Bible', that inspired so many investigations in natural science in the Dutch Republic,²³ should remind us that analyzing Van Hoogstraten from the perspective of the history of knowledge does not necessarily involve an interpretation of his art as a 'modern' or secular one. After all, the Dordrecht master famously quoted Calvin that even though there was a 'more direct and certain way' to obtain virtue – namely reading the Bible –, the art of painting 'in the continued mirroring of God's wondrous works, brings its sincere practitioner, through his sublime contemplation, closer to the Creator of all things.'²⁴

Notes

- 1 Regarding the recent *volte-face* towards Rembrandt see M. Westermann, 'Back to Basics: Rembrandt and the Emergence of Modern Painting', *Perspective: La Revue de l'INHA 4 (Les Pays-Bas)* (2011-2012), 723-737: 729.
- 2 Cf. T. Weststeijn, 'Rembrandt and Rhetoric: The concepts of *affectus*, *enargeia* and *ornatus* in Samuel van Hoogstraten's Judgment of His Master,' in: M. van den Doel, N. van Eck, G. Korevaar, A. Tummers and T. Weststeijn (eds.), *The Learned Eye: Regarding Art, Theory, and the Artist's Reputation*, Amsterdam 2005, 111-132.
- 3 Westermann 2011-2012, 733.
- 4 'Leer vooreerst de rijke natuer volgen, en wat'er in is, naebootzen. De Hemel, d'aerde, de zee De vlakke velden, heuvelen, beekenen geboomten, verschaffen werx genoeg. De steeden, de marten, de Kerken, en duizent rijkdommen in de Natuer, roepen ons, en zeggen: kom leergierige, beschouw ons, en volg ons nae', *Inleyding* 18.
- 5 In fact, Van Hoogstraten highlights this aspect of his book when he stresses that his readers should become more adapt at expressing visually rather than verbally ('vaerdiger tot uitbeelden, als tot uitspreken'); they should become 'meesters in de kunst' rather than 'meesters in de mont', *Inleyding* 46, 18.
- 6 Weststeijn 2008, 140-154, and elaborated more fully in an as yet unpublished lecture, 17 October 2008, 'The Dutch Reception of Franciscus Junius: Painting as "Reall Performance"', Symposium *Kunsttheorie rondom Rembrandt*, Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam.
- 7 Weststeijn 2008, Chap. VI.
- 8 E.J. Sluijter, *Seductress of Sight: Studies in Dutch Art of the Golden Age*, Zwolle 2000.
- 9 *Inleyding* 338; cf.: 'Giovanni da Bruggia ... si mise a provare diverse sorte di colori; e, come quello che si dilettaua dell'archimia, a far di molti olj pe far vernici, ed altre cose, secondo i cervelli degli uomini sofisticati, come egli era', Vasari, *Le vite* (ed. Milanese, 565-66), quoted in P. Torresan, *Il dipingere di Fiandra: la pittura Neerlandese nella letteratura artistica di Quattro e Cinquecento*, Modena 1981, 17.
- 10 C. Huygens, *Mijn jeugd*, C.L. Heesakkers (transl.), Amsterdam 1994.
- 11 Discussed in Weststeijn 2008, 283-285.
- 12 *Inleyding* 232, 341-344.
- 13 Van Hoogstraten's remark on the 'toehoorderen van allerleye staeten', *Inleyding* 183, may also refer to the listeners' emotions (mental rather than geographical states).
- 14 A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols, Amsterdam 1718-1721, vol. I, 272.
- 15 Lomazzo writes that 'Flemish' paintings of everyday subjects and *scherzamenti* are fitting artworks to decorate taverns: 'Negli alberghi et osterie, dove d'altro non si ragiona che di mangiare, bere, barattare, giuocare, si ricercano ubriachi, come fanno tra loro certi Todeschi e Fiamenghi, ruffiani che conducano fanciulle di partito, giochi, furti, pazzie, istrionerie, scherzamenti', G.P. Lomazzo, 'Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura', in: P. Barocchi (ed.), *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, Milan 1971-1977, Vol. III, 2505-6. Zuccari condemns the genre paintings introduced by Pieter van Laer and other Dutchmen in Rome because they only incite laughter: 'alcuni pittori di buon mercato, che imbrattano le mura e le tele facendo scartafoni e bamboci che muovono a riso i riguardanti per gli atti e per le lor forme sgarbate', F. Zuccari, 'L'idea de' pittori, scultori et architetti', in: *Scritti d'arte di Federico Zuccaro* (ed. D. Heikamp), Florence 1961 (ed.princ. 1607), 1037. Pacheco defines the function of still lifes and scenes of everyday life as 'provoking laughter': 'Otros se han inclinado a pintar ... figuras ridiculas con sugetos varios y feos para provocar a risa y todas estas cosas, hechas con valentía y buena manera, entretienen y muestran ingenio en la disposición y en la viveza', referring generically to 'un nuevo pintor flamenco inclinado a estas cosas', Francesco Pacheco,

- El arte de la pintura* (ed. B. Bassegoda y Huegas), Madrid 1990, 'de la pintura de animales y aves, pescaderías y bodegones y de la ingeniosa invención de los retratos del natural', 517.
- 16 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, Bloomington 1984; for this book's importance for the study of Dutch art cf. various publications by David R. Smith, most recently the edited volume *Parody and Festivity in Early Modern Art: Essays on Comedy as Social Vision*, London 2012. Van Hoogstraten uses the term grotesque (he speaks of 'grotissen') only in the context of decorative detail, especially flowers and fruit: 'zwierige festons ... veelverwige ruikers in potten en vazen; en Wijntrossen en schoone Pers en Abrikoos, of Meloen en Citroen, en een helderen Wijnroomer op een zwangeren Dis', *Inleyding* 75; he defines 'gro-tiseeren' as 'schilderen van kruiden en biezen, vogelen en dieren', *Inleyding* 334. Yet a variety of terms such as 'kodderyen', 'hedendaagse speeltjes', 'rariteyten', 'snorrepijpen' and 'snuysteryen' denote paintings of the category that merely aims at the public's delight, rather than their edification or emotional engagement, *Inleyding* 77. 'Grol' is a similar term that reminds of the grotesque and of Lomazzo's term 'grillo', *Inleyding* 234; G.P. Lomazzo, *Trattato dell'arte de la pittura*, Milan 1584, lib. IV, cap. I, 280; lib. VI, cap. 48, 422.
- 17 For two eighteenth-century examples see F. Leeman, *Anamorfozen: een spel met waarneming, schijn en werkelijkheid*, Amsterdam & Cologne 1975, 142-143. Modern scholars have failed to discuss pornography in Dutch visual culture, probably due to the dearth of extant material. For the written documents cf. I. Leemans, *Het woord is aan de onderkant: radicale ideeën in Nederlandse pornografische romans 1670-1700*, Nijmegen 2002.
- 18 In contrast to the differentiation in modern Dutch between *verf* (the material) and *kleur* (the optical or psychological phenomenon), Van Hoogstraten's term *verw* could refer to all the different aspects.
- 19 Obviously, the exchange could also be the other way around: the play-actor Johannes Jelgerhuis stated that 'de Lairese and Van Mander enabled me to be what I am'. Quoted in Ann-Sophie Lehmann and Herman Roodenburg (eds.), *Body and Embodiment in Netherlandish Art. Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek/Netherlands Yearbook for the History of Art* 58 (2007-2008), 8.
- 20 S. Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch art in the Seventeenth Century*, Chicago 1983.
- 21 Cf. S. Dupré, 'The Historiography of Perspective and "reflexy-const" in Netherlandish Art', in: E. Jorink and B. Ramakers (ed.), *Art and Science in the Early Modern Netherlands: Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 61 (2011), 34-61.
- 22 Bert van de Roemer has recently called into question the feasibility of connecting Van Hoogstraten's contacts with philosophers such as Willem van Blijenbergh to any 'Spinozistic' elements in his theory of art: G.M. van de Roemer, 'Regulating the Arts: Samuel van Hoogstraten versus Willem Goeree', in: E. Jorink & B. Ramakers (eds.), *Art and Science in the Early Modern Netherlands. Netherlands Yearbook in Art History* 61 (2011), 184-281.
- 23 E. Jorink, *Reading the Book of Nature in the Dutch Golden Age, 1575-1715*, Leiden & Boston 2010.
- 24 *Inleyding* 346.



CHAPTER 1

Van Hoogstraten's Theory of Theory of Art

JAN BLANC

Nowadays, it is quite common to remark that theory and practice are two different things. For many artists – and art historians – theory is nothing more than mere speculation. Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) considered his paintings and ‘ready-mades’ the practical productions of a theory that he was thinking about and working with.¹ In 1972, Joseph Beuys (1921-1986) outlined this modern conception of theory by exhibiting his *Plastische Theorie* on a blackboard, as if his ‘theory’ was in fact a kind of schoolroom course [Fig. 4].² In this context, theory describes first of all an intellectual and abstract quality, that serves the purpose, according to Arthur C. Danto, of legitimising soap boxes as a work of art, like the *Brillo Boxes* (1964) by Andy Warhol (1928-1987).³

In our modern and post-modern world, it seems to be possible to understand the theories of works of art without seeing them, as if the theory was the prerequisite of the practice. But was this always the case? And was it especially true for the seventeenth century? What did it mean for a painter like Samuel van Hoogstraten to write a *theory* about art – and, especially, about *his* art? He is one of the first in the Dutch artistic literature to use the word ‘theory’:

In order to answer this question (is art supported more by nature or by teaching?), we must know that nature without teaching can do a lot, whereas teaching is vain and useless without any assistance of nature; but also that, when teaching fortifies some common gifts of nature, these gifts seem to grow and give more than the understanding may grasp. ... We speak of the same kind of difference when we think of theory (*Theory*) and practice (*practijk*). If we were asked if art is principally supported by teaching or by practice, we would answer that teaching without practice is vain and that, even if practice without teaching may sometimes be promising, art cannot rise to perfection if it is not often put to practice and if one does not devote oneself to the infallible rules of the lessons.⁴

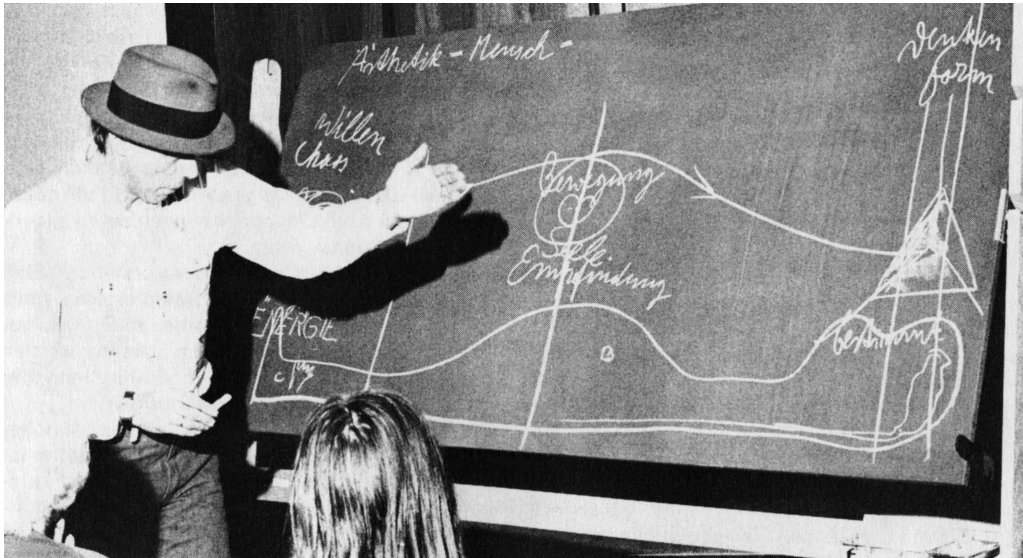


Fig. 4 Joseph Beuys: *Plastische Theorie*, 1972 (Photo by J. Blanc)

Why does this Dutch painter and art theoretician choose to use the term *theorie*? What meaning does he give to it? And is it possible, as Ernst van de Wetering recently suggested, to regard this theory as a kind of ‘Rembrandtesque theory’?⁵ These questions will be the main purpose of this paper. We will see that Samuel van Hoogstraten does not want to evoke the ideal image of an erudite and literate painter but rather that of a perfect and brilliant craftsman. His theory of theory is structured around this ambition, pointing out the necessity of extrinsic learning – involving poetry, philosophy, science, etc. – while at the same time giving pride of place to the artistic profession’s technical and mechanical parts. In this view, as I would like to show, Van Hoogstraten’s theory of theory could be interpreted as an anti-aesthetic conception of art.

Problems

Did Samuel van Hoogstraten develop a personal and elaborate theory about his own artistic theory? Surely, the question is not easy or simple. After Van Hoogstraten’s death and the publication of his magnum opus, the *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderconst*, in 1678 [Fig. 5], Arnold Houbraken (1660–1719), in the biography he dedicated to his former master, developed the legend of a painter who had ‘great understanding in almost all the fields of art’ but was unable to ‘put it to practice’. This statement strengthened the idea that Van Hoogstraten was a mere theoretician and that his book had nothing to do with the reality of seventeenth-century artistic practice, an idea put forward most authoritatively in one of the first books where the *Inleyding* was carefully described, read and analyzed: Jan Emmens’s (1924–1971) *Rembrandt en de regels van de kunst* (1968).

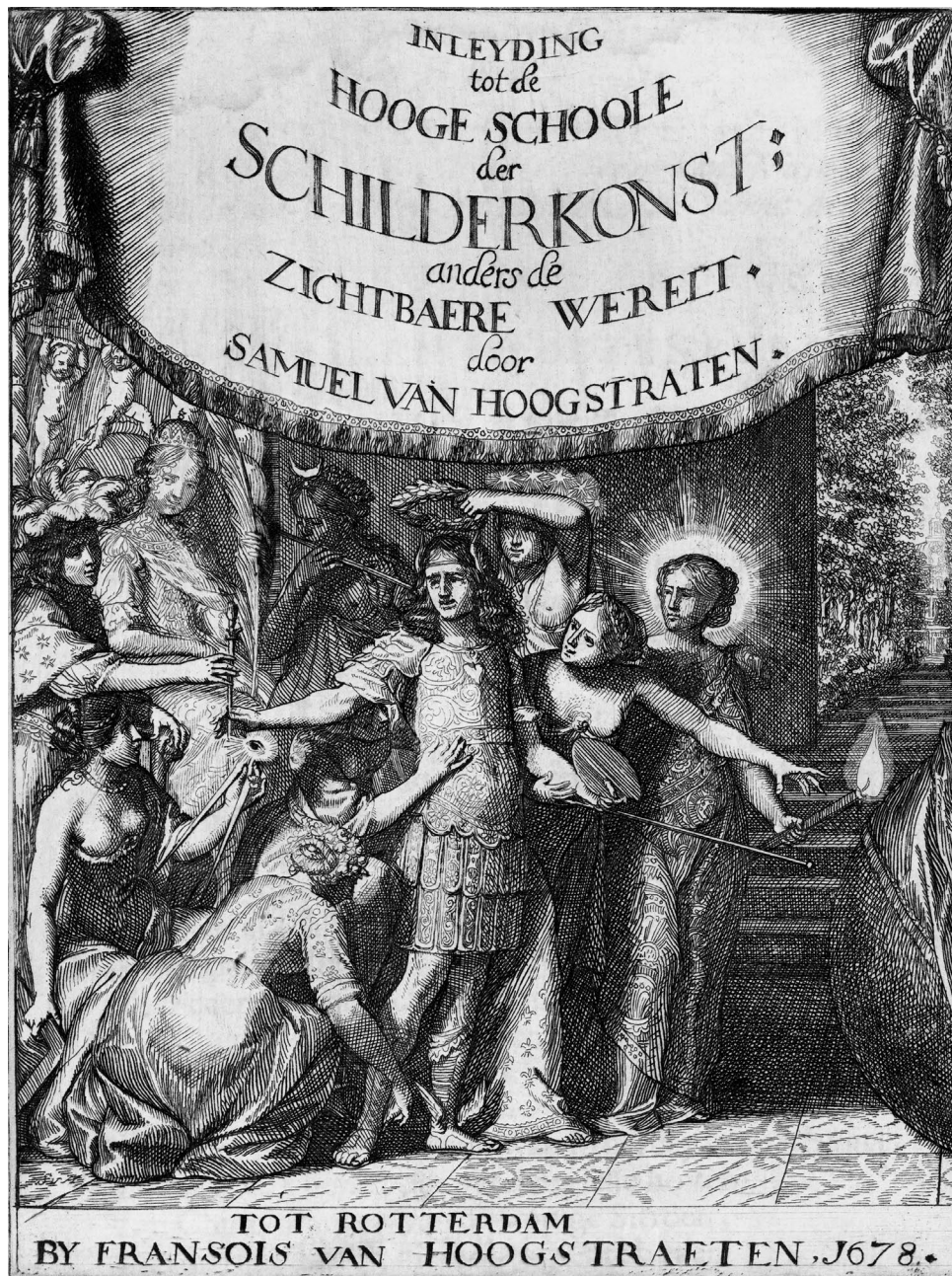


Fig. 5 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *The Young Painter Surrounded by the Nine Muses*, from *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst*, Rotterdam 1678, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam

Indeed, Van Hoogstraten's book, published at the end of a versatile artistic career, was built on many *topoi* borrowed from the literary, philosophical, theological, and rhetorical traditions.⁶ And it is certainly not without great efforts that some contents of this book can be linked with some real and concrete pictorial practices of the Dutch Golden Age. However, these remarks and limits are not extraordinary for a book about art published during the seventeenth century. As Ann Moss and Terence Cave have explained in their major contributions regarding conventions of early modern writing,⁷ the borrowing of commonplaces was the only manner for an author to write and think about an art or practice. Moreover, for a painter and poet like Samuel van Hoogstraten, who wanted to keep his profession within the circle of the liberal arts, it would not have been possible, and even thinkable, to write and think about his art without including the formal and conceptual frames of his discourse in the traditional rhetorical and literary traditions of the art treatise.

In this context, our business is not only to know *what* Van Hoogstraten knew, but also to understand *how* he knew it and – which could be more important – how he makes it possible to be *understood* by his readership.⁸ It is necessary to not only read the lines of the *Inleyding*, but also to explore what lies between and under these lines, without projecting our own preconceptions on the text and attributing to the artist our own bookish and anachronistic education. And for that, it is an essential preliminary task to understand the historical and original significations of the word 'theory' (*theorie*) in seventeenth-century Dutch and in Samuel van Hoogstraten's language.

'Theorie'

Unfortunately, the word *theorie* appears in only one passage of the *Inleyding*. In this passage, which I quoted at the beginning of this article, Van Hoogstraten denounces those artists who boast of never having had a master. As usual, the Dutch painter begins his argumentation by quoting an authority: the *Institutiones oratoriae* of Quintilian (ca. 35-100 CE), which he may have discovered via Franciscus Junius's (1590-1677) *De schilderkonst der oude*:

I am aware that it is also a question whether nature or learning contributes most to oratory. This inquiry, however, has no concern with the subject of my work, for a perfect orator can be formed only with the aid of both, but I think it of great importance how far we consider that there is a question on the point. If you suppose either to be independent of the other, nature will be able to do much without learning, but learning will be of no avail without the assistance of nature. But if they be united in equal parts, I shall be inclined to think that when both are but moderate, the influence of nature is nevertheless the greater; but finished orators, I consider, owe more to learning than to nature. Thus the best husbandman cannot improve soil of no fertility, while from fertile ground something good will be produced even without the aid of the husbandman; yet if the husbandman bestows his labor on rich land, he will produce more effect than the goodness of the soil of itself. ... In a word, nature is the material for learning; the one forms, and the other is

formed. Art can do nothing without material, which has its value even independent of art; but perfection of art is of more consequence than perfection of material.⁹

This reference enables Van Hoogstraten to prove, with major *auctoritas*, that theory is an intentional construction, to use Edmund Husserl's terms – that theory is the direct result but also the corrective agency of practice. By producing artworks, the painter learns at the same time the rules of art and to build his own artistic theory.¹⁰

Rules

Since *theorie* is an abstraction and a generalization of *praktijk*, it is necessary to have a middle term between these two realities: it is what Van Hoogstraten calls, in the *Inleyding*, the 'infallible rules of the lessons' (*onfeylbaere regels der leere*) or, elsewhere, the 'rules of art' (*regels van de kunst*).

What is a rule? The question is quite complicated since the signification of this term has drastically changed during the centuries. These rules are different from the restricting norms meticulously described by Ernst Hans Gombrich (1909–2001)¹¹ and Jan Emmens.¹² These *regels* are rules in the most literal sense of the term: rulers, tools that aid in the correct depiction of forms, colors and proportions. Also, metaphorically speaking, they are the 'tools' related to the intellect, perception, and the body that help to paint right. We could say, with Ludwig Wittgenstein, that these 'rules' are 'infallible' not because they are always accurate, but because they are necessary to succeed in specific actions. In this understanding, rules cannot be judged by their adherence to an absolute norm, but only by observing their efficacy in specific instances.¹³

Many examples could be mentioned in Van Hoogstraten's theory of this definition of *rules* – I would like to quote a significant one: the rule of decorum (*gevoeglijkheit*).¹⁴ It is necessary, says Van Hoogstraten in a somewhat Aristotelian passage of the *Inleyding*, to 'be strongly attached to the truth or the verisimilitude, and only to represent what exists or, at least, what can exist'.¹⁵ To corroborate this remark, Van Hoogstraten explains, for example, how the Ancients used to recline at a table: on beds instead of chairs.¹⁶

What are the sources that Samuel van Hoogstraten did use to make this observation? He certainly wrote this passage by compiling extracts from Flavius Josephus and from the Old and New Testaments.¹⁷ It may also have been inspired by other books published on the subject of the Roman *triclinium*, like those by Petrus Ciacconius (1525–1581), Johan Wilhelm Stucki (1542–1607), Johannes Rosinus (ca. 1550–1626), Jerónimo de Prado (1546–95), and Juan Bautista Villalpando (1552–1608).¹⁸ It is furthermore possible that Van Hoogstraten studied an engraved version of the famous *Eucharist* painted by Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665) for the Roman scholar Cassiano dal Pozzo (1588–1657)¹⁹ or read Philips Angel's *Lof der schilderconst*, where the author praises Rembrandt's painting *The Wedding of Samson*,²⁰ and that he understood how his former master tried to find a sort of compromise between archaeological exactitude and *welstand* – the visual effect of his work.²¹

The rule of *gevoeglijkheit* demands a perfect adequacy between the literary or discursive

sources, the iconographical traditions, and the visual representation. Whereas some painters try to be as truthful as possible to the sources and textual evidence, like Philippe de Champaigne (1602–74) who, in his *Feast in the House of Simon*,²² chose to follow Ciacconius’s advice concerning the forms and uses of the ancient *triclinium*, Rembrandt’s picture presents only the figures in the foreground lying on a kind of *triclinium*, in order to make the background and the figure of Samson more clearly visible. A similar choice can be observed in the variant of Rembrandt’s *Supper in Emmaus*, engraved in 1634 by one of his pupils, Constantijn van Renesse (1626–80).²³ And Van Hoogstraten seems to have made the same pragmatic choice. In two of his drawings, illustrating the theme of ‘Abraham and the Angels’, he tests two different spatial configurations. He derived the first directly from the picture painted by Rembrandt in 1646.²⁴ Yet, in the second drawing, Van Hoogstraten chose to use the motif of the *triclinium* to distribute the different figures around the table, even though the overall design of the work remains quite close to Rembrandt’s painting; the inverted position of the figures may result from the use of a mirror or from a first sketch on a paper that was then turned over for drawing on the verso.²⁵

In these different instances, the rules are respected in as far as they can be adapted to produce a beautiful picture. For Van Hoogstraten, *gevoeglijkheit* is an essential rule of art, which every serious painter must know, but it cannot be considered to be a universal law. Like any *regel*, *decorum* is first of all a practical solution that facilitates the fabrication of a convincing image. If Van Hoogstraten stresses the importance of the ‘rules of art’ he is therefore aiming less at legitimating the liberal art of painting than at censuring improper rules or, to speak more precisely, the improper nature of their use. Whereas Quintilian (and Junius) promote the idea of universal yet flexible rules, Van Hoogstraten explains more clearly that these rules are meant to serve the practice of art since these rules are only possible on that condition.

‘*Teorica*’

This empirical and experimental conception of theory is not entirely new. The word *theorie* appeared in Dutch during the second half of the sixteenth century and probably derived from the French *théorie*, which comes from the Greek *theoria*.²⁶ This word is itself derived from the verb *theorein*: to behold attentively, to contemplate, to survey. The *theoros* is a special witness who gets to know the secrets of the world, as if he were outside the *antrum platonium*. This etymological tradition has been followed by the great majority of art theoreticians. In his *Due trattati* (1568), for example, the Italian sculptor Benvenuto Cellini (1500–1571) discusses the use and manipulation of furnaces for the fabrication of bronze casts and explains that ‘it is necessary that sculptors should be aware of all this advice and informed of the nature of metals and of many other things which are taught by the theory (*teorica*) and practice (*prattica*)’. Cellini adds: ‘It happened many times that I saw men with a great experience in our art (*praticissimi*) men who, after having made various marvellous casts, spoiled their works due to a little accident, the origin of which they did not know’.²⁷ For Cellini, the ‘theory’ of a sculptor is not only a direct offshoot of practice; it is also the only route to get to ‘know the causes’ (*conoscere le cause*) of every one of his choices.

Like Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), who says that ‘practice must always be grounded on a good theory’,²⁸ Giorgio Vasari (1511–74) emphasizes also the importance of ‘practical theory’:

Who is not aware that one must be able, in whatever work one is seeking to carry out, to reject or adopt everything for oneself after mature consideration, without having to depend on help from someone else’s theory (*Teorica*)? Since theory, when separated from practice (*pratica*), is generally of very little use; but when the two happen to come together, there is nothing that is more helpful to our life, both because art becomes much richer and more perfect when helped by science, and because the counsels and writings of learned craftsmen have in themselves greater efficacy and power of persuasion than the words or works of those who know nothing but mere practice, whether they do it well or ill.²⁹

As we can see here, Van Hoogstraten refers to the traditional meaning of theory, and the manner in which he uses his reference to Quintilian does not come as a surprise. The quotation appears in the second paragraph of the [first chapter](#) of his *Inleyding*, where he tries to deconstruct traditional theories concerning inborn talent.³⁰ Shortly after citing Junius, Van Hoogstraten refers to personal experience: he tells how he had to curb his younger brother Jan, impatient to go to Italy without having consolidated the foundations of his art, by ensuring him that his practice was too deficient to provide a consistent theory. Along this argumentative line, the distinction of *theoria* and *praxis*, proposed by the authoritative reference to Quintilian, is ultimately collapsed in order to construct another theory of theory:

Things which need a high and contemplative understanding are thus useless for untrained and obscure eyes. In this case, they are trampled without being remarked. I have likewise taken note that those who, with their sharp judgment, tried to get involved too early in the most subtle quarrels of great art, got lost so much in literary knowledge that they then were unable to put to practice the smallest element of their knowledge. The practical sciences must be exercised and they require action as well as understanding.³¹

For Van Hoogstraten, the science of art is both contemplative and practical. To him, there is no use, like there was in more ancient and traditional philosophies, to distinguish the *vita activa* from the *vita contemplativa*, since the art of painting cannot be considered as a purely liberal and intellectual art.

In this context, the chief business of a painter is to concretize the visual content of his ideas and perceptions, since theory, as a sort of mental seeing, does not precede practice but follows it. In this traditional meaning, that Van Hoogstraten refers to, *theorie* could be explained as a form of intimate and almost intuitive understanding based on a visual model. The concept *theorie* conveys the idea of the priority of sight over the other senses and reveals that sight may be a metaphor for knowledge itself or even that sight is a way of attaining visual and practical knowl-

edge. We can therefore note that, for Van Hoogstraten, theory is not necessarily a written or oral discourse but essentially a non-verbal kind of knowledge, produced *with* and *by* artistic practice.

In the passage quoted above, Van Hoogstraten actually expresses an implicit condemnation of learned criticism that interprets painting as a solely intellectual activity. Elsewhere, Van Hoogstraten mocks these ‘authors who have never handled the brush but have written a lot, and are unable to speak about this subject [i.e., painting] and, whereas they have sometimes succeeded in attaining their goal through brilliant expressions, they often make one laugh: the pupils of Apelles, for instance, laughed at Alexander [when he tried to speak about art]’.³² For Van Hoogstraten – and this expression is very significant – painting is essentially a ‘practical science’ (*werkdaedige wetenschap*), a kind of theory of practice.³³

‘*Lucri causa*’

In this short chapter, it is impossible to give all the characteristics of Van Hoogstraten’s ‘practical theory’. I will only highlight the most striking aspect: his theory of money.

In the fourth, fifth, and [sixth chapter](#) of the *Inleyding* and in the frontispiece of the chapter devoted to the Muse Urania, Van Hoogstraten describes what he calls the ‘three fruits of art’.³⁴ The phrase *amoris causa* refers to the loving feelings that an authentic painter has for his art. The phrase *gloriae causa* regards the pursuit of fame and glory. And the phrase *lucri causa* has to do with the pursuit of money. This trilogy has been borrowed from a passage of *De beneficiis* where Seneca quotes a statement by the sculptor Phidias.³⁵ The two first terms are perfectly traditional in the context of laudative discussions of one of the liberal arts. The third one, however, is more interesting, as it breaks a theoretical taboo. Van Hoogstraten tells us that an artist must not only love his art and strive for glory, but must also seek substantial retribution.

For modern readers, this idea is certainly a cliché. But it is necessary to recall that, in early modern art treatises, money – and notably the love of money – was usually associated with merely mechanical craftsmanship and with bad painters. At the same time, it was seen as a kind of deprivation of the absolute and abstract purity of love. Yet Van Hoogstraten does not seem to be so convinced by the ideal of the *vir bonus pingendi peritus* – that a ‘good painter’ ought likewise to be a ‘good man’. The example of Adriaen Brouwer, whom he quotes in the beginning of the *Inleyding*,³⁶ demonstrates that a bad man can be a very good painter indeed. And in his famous *perspectiefkas*,³⁷ where Van Hoogstraten represents the above-mentioned three fruits of art on the three exterior sides of the open box, the statement ‘*lucri causa*’ occupies a good place, on the external longitudinal side, as if the artist wanted to show that the richness and the beauty of his representation partially depends on the successful resources of wealth. This ‘love of money’ is also compared, through the *cornucopia*, to the notion of abundance (*copia*), one of the major qualities that artists or writers could demonstrate in their work.

Van Hoogstraten’s theory of art does not pretend that the market or the social and economical realities of the artist’s craft does not exist. Contrary to Van Mander, he does not accuse the guilds of being responsible of the so-called decline of the arts or the attitude that painting is

a menial rather than a noble and liberal craft.³⁸ He even speaks of his century as a new 'Golden Age', comparable to the *aetas aurea* of Hesiod or the 'Pericles Century'.³⁹ And he encourages the States-General of the United Provinces to be more active in the control and the regulation of the art market and their support of export, speaking of the French example of Henri IV.⁴⁰ Van Hoogstraten does not seem to be a liberal like his countrymen Dirck Graswinckel (1600-1666), Pieter de la Court (1618-1685), and Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), but rather a mercantilist, similar to Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-83), minister of Louis XIV (1638-1715).⁴¹

Craftsmanship

Van Hoogstraten is not afraid of saying – or showing – that one always paints for money, to allude to the title of David Solkin's brilliant book.⁴² And he provides evidence for this state of affairs through his attitude towards the question of fashion (*mode* in Dutch). For most of the Dutch art theoreticians, like Arnold Houbraken⁴³ and Gerard de Laïresse (1640-1711),⁴⁴ but also for some foreign authors, like Abraham Bosse (1604-76),⁴⁵ fashion is similar to an infectious disease.⁴⁶ It compels painters to follow short-lived fluctuations in taste and not the timeless rules of art. Yet Van Hoogstraten is more pragmatic and realistic. He does not believe in permanent rules of art or in universal beauty. As a result, he blames fashion (*moode*), since it is a major component of contemporary artistic life:⁴⁷ painters cannot ignore the *goût des nations* without being condemned to paint like blind men or bad artists, ignoring the principles of competition or – and this may be the worst aspect – by painting pictures that remain unsold. Van Hoogstraten put this belief to practice in his own career. His pictorial and iconographical versatility was certainly the result of a personal choice, rather than the mark of a capricious or curious character. After having left Rembrandt's workshop, he decided to adopt his former master's manner (*handeling*).⁴⁸ At the court of Ferdinand III (1608-57) in Vienna, he imitated local successful painters like Frans Luycx (1604-c.1688) and included in his work references to pictures from the imperial collections, painted by Hans Holbein (1497-1543), Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), and Hans Vredeman de Vries (1527-1606). In London, Van Hoogstraten painted in the manners of Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641) and Peter Lely (1618-80). In The Hague, he created portraits and history pictures similar to those of Adriaen Hanneman (c.1603-71) and Jan de Baen (1633-1702). And at the end of his career, Van Hoogstraten relinquished the notion of having his own manner: he could paint with the fine touch of Jacob Duck (c.1600-67), Gerrit Dou (1613-75), and Caspar Netscher (1639-84); imitate the genre scenes of Cornelis Saftleven (c.1607-81) and Willem Kalf (c.1622-93); mimic the great portraits of Ferdinand Bol (1616-80); and paraphrase the still-lives of Gabriel Metsu (1629-67).

Rhetoric

As we can see, Van Hoogstraten's theory does not shun posing some tricky questions. Actually, he is not afraid of saying things even when it is difficult for him to find the right words for the right concepts. Is this the reason why, as has been remarked above, his vocabulary partially follows the topical language of philosophy and rhetoric? This is certainly no obvious conclusion.

Among the numerous examples that could be quoted, I will mention the more illustrative. Trying to give the best description of the difficult notion of *houding*,⁴⁹ Van Hoogstraten does his best to follow the traditional interpretation of the Latin terms *tonos* and *harmoge* that he found in Pliny and Plutarch: ‘Art differentiated itself [from monochrome painting] and invented light and shadow, the varying differences of color making them stand up together. Later, highlights were added, which is something quite different from light. The specific relations between light and shadow they call *tonon* and the measured transitions of colors they called *harmogen*’.⁵⁰ Although he mentions these concepts, Van Hoogstraten is aware that his definitions are too general. He therefore tries to be more specific and proposes another, far more original analogy.

In the frontispiece of the [eighth chapter](#), Van Hoogstraten represents Glycera, a famous weaver of flower wreaths [Fig. 6].⁵¹ The Greek legend says she was loved by the painter Pausias because of her ‘art of matching colors’ (*tuiling*) when she ‘weaved his little crowns, his festoons and her bouquets’.⁵² Through this topical example, Van Hoogstraten tries to make it obvious that the mixing (*vermenging*) and adding (*samenvoeging*) of colors are the principal conditions for a good *houding*.⁵³ To further explain this statement, he refers in several parts of his book to weaving, as a kind of model or metaphor for the chromatic construction of a painting. This metaphor allows him to introduce another complementary notion, again borrowed from workshop jargon. Van Hoogstraten describes the concept of *binding* – what we may call the ‘chromatic linkage’ – as the ‘softness of the harmonious masses’ that plays a formative role as the ‘thread’ of the work.⁵⁴ The notion of *binding* refers originally to the texture of a textile, that is to say, to the criss-cross pattern of the warp and weft threads. The concept of *binding* refers to a color that, repeated in several places of a composition, contributes to the whole chromatic unity and consistency, like the red, white, and black tints in Van Hoogstraten’s painting *View of the North Transept of Westminster Abbey*,⁵⁵ and like the golden and yellow tones of his *Two Women Leaning on a Cradle*.⁵⁶

In these terminological *bricolages*, to use the term coined by Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908–2009),⁵⁷ Van Hoogstraten undoubtedly explores the theoretical tradition of his art by using or translating ancient concepts. However, this tradition does not seem to be sufficient for him: it is too general, too imprecise, and maybe too far removed from the actual practice of a Dutch seventeenth-century painter. The vocabulary of the *Inleyding* – old and new at the same time – allows his theory of art theory to connect to intellectual authority as well as to sever these connections. Van Hoogstraten goes certainly *ad fontes*, yet also *adversus fontes*. This is intertextual piracy: the tradition is taken up in order to be hijacked.

Conclusion: a practical and personal theory of art

When we enter into Van Hoogstraten’s theoretical and practical world, we may be surprised when we discover what made him similar to his contemporaries; but our surprise may be even greater when we perceive what made him different. It is true, in accordance with the historiographical tradition, that the *Inleyding* was conceived in order to enhance the author’s reputation as an artist, to consolidate his social network and give a new legitimacy to painting. Yet it is also



Fig. 6 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Self-Portrait*, from *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst*, Rotterdam 1678, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam

essential that we understand that this theory was written to express the personal experience of a single painter. Van Hoogstraten did not have the pretension to embody the entire century's opinions about art theory and practice. On the contrary, he criticized his colleagues, even the most famous ones such as Rembrandt,⁵⁸ in order to give himself, to quote a concept coined by Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002), a noteworthy place in the 'social field' of his craft and a prominent position in the history of his art.⁵⁹

His book epitomizes his own textual erudition that was probably superior to, or in any case different from, Rembrandt's cultural background,⁶⁰ as well as his personal conception of artistic practice that was partially predicated on the rules he learned in Rembrandt's workshop – yet only partially, as I pointed it out in relation to the concept of *gevoeglijkheyt*. In this regard, it seems awkward, if not simplistic, to read and analyse the *Inleyding* as nothing more than a version of 'Rembrandt's handbook' and suppose that its every idea and artistic concept could be associated unproblematically with the pictorial experience of the famous Amsterdam master. Concluding that 'Rembrandt's presence in Van Hoogstraten's book is much greater than has hitherto been assumed', Ernst van de Wetering grants that 'Rembrandt's practical/theoretical ideas are found side by side with passages that reflect Van Hoogstraten's own quite different ideas'.⁶¹ Nonetheless, Van de Wetering's recent and enlightening studies within the Rembrandt Research Project seem to have excessively 'Rembrandtized' Van Hoogstraten's ideas, whose paintings – especially the late ones, produced during the conception and the writing of the *Inleyding* – cannot be easily compared with Rembrandt's works of or those by his most faithful followers.⁶²

In fact, Van Hoogstraten's theory does not entail a revolutionary development, but rather a dialectical one. His conception of the theory of art is certainly intelligent and refined, but it is not a merely intellectual project. For him, what makes painting specific in regard to the other liberal and mechanical arts is the 'doing' (*het doen*), the meaning of which is not far from the French eighteenth-century *faire* or the Italian *fare*.⁶³ Van Hoogstraten might have said, like Annibale Carracci (1560–1609) allegedly said to his brother Agostino (1557–1602): 'We, painters, have to speak with our hands' (*Noi altri dipintori habbiamo da parlare con le mani*).⁶⁴ It is true that in his own engraved self-portrait Van Hoogstraten does not depict himself explicitly as a painter [Fig. 7]. Yet the pen he holds is an ambiguous sign – a tool for writing *and* for drawing. He signs and dates the sheet of paper in front of him in the same manner as he signed and dated some of his letter-rack and perspective paintings, as if he were not writing his book, but instead drawing it. And if the small statue beside him, representing the *Atlas Farnese*, permits Van Hoogstraten to convey the idea of the 'visible world' (*zichtbaere wereld*), it is also a figure represented in action, and it was considered in this time, maybe with the *Borghese Gladiator*, to be one of the best examples of the representation of physical and muscular exertion. Even in this scholarly and idealized picture, Van Hoogstraten did not forget to recall that there cannot be a real theory of art without the artist's hands and without the human body.

His ideal painter is, therefore, not a *pictor doctus* but a *pictor faber*. In his treatise, Van Hoogstraten expresses the necessity that painting and philosophy should communicate and exchange ideas. However, he also points out the singularities of two different kinds of artistic activity: a *peintre philosophe* is a bad painter and a bad philosopher. This anti-aesthetic theory, which opposes some ideas from contemporary treatises in Dutch, calls to mind the letter written by Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) to Franciscus Junius in 1637. In this long text, the painter expresses his admiration for the scholar's erudition but also his wish that another kind of theory will once be written:



Fig. 7 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *The Muse Calliope*, from *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst*, Rotterdam 1678, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam

I, for my part, would like it if at some time it were possible to compose with the same diligence a like treatise on the paintings of the Italians. They provide examples, or prototypes, which to this day are before the public. One can point to them with one's fingers and say 'here they are.' For those things which touch our senses are more sharply imprinted on the mind; they remain with us and demand a more minute examination than what we represent ourselves only by imagination, and as in dream.⁶⁵

Like Rubens, Van Hoogstraten denounces the inanity of theoretical discourses that are inspired only by other discourses. Whereas Junius's project aims at writing a 'history of the arts' and at thinking about the 'nature of the imitative arts', Van Hoogstraten wants to describe the picto-

rial practices of his time. And he analyzes quite reluctantly aesthetic or ontological problems concerning the principles and origins of the arts or purely speculative analyses of them. For him, painting is a liberal art, not because it is no mechanical art, but because it is an extremely sophisticated craft.

This new form of art theory, which we may compare, for the seventeenth century, to that developed by Roger de Piles (1635-1709) and, for the eighteenth century, to the discourses of sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-92), has not often been taken seriously by art historians, maybe because it is too different from the kind of theoretical discourse on art that we are accustomed to study in our discipline. Van Hoogstraten knew quite well that books – and not insubstantial ones – had been written on painting, and by painters. He quoted some of them: Leon Battista Alberti (1404-72), Leonardo da Vinci, Giorgio Vasari, and Karel van Mander (1548-1606).⁶⁶ That being the case, the long introductory sentence of the *Inleyding* meant not only that he wanted to write a painter's book on painting, but also that he desired to get away from a certain tradition of painter's books on painting.⁶⁷ Using this tradition *and* departing from it, Van Hoogstraten expresses a paradoxical theory, a sort of anti-theoretical theory that certainly needs – in order to be understood fully – a new theory of the theory of art.

Notes

- 1 K. Beekman and A. von Graevenitz, *Marcel Duchamp*, Amsterdam 1989, 107.
- 2 V. Harlan, R. Rappman and P. Schata, *Soziale Plastik: Materialien zu Joseph Beuys*, Achberg 1976, 58.
- 3 H. Bastian, *Andy Warhol: Retrospektive*, cat.exh. Berlin (Neue Nationalgalerie), Berlin 2002, 221.
- 4 'Maer om deze vrage, of de konst grooter baet van de natuur, of van de leeringe heeft, te beantwoorden, zoo is te weten : dat de natuur zonder de leeringe veel vermach : en dat in tegendeel, de leeringe zonder eenige hulpe van de natuur, ydel en te vergeefs is. Maer wanneer middelmatige gaven der natuur door leeringe geholpen worden, zoo schijnt de natuur zich te beteren, en geeft meer uit, als't verstand begrijpt : ... Dit zelve verschil wort ook gedongen onder de naemen van Theory en practijk. Wanneer men vragt, of de konst meest door de leeringe, dan of door de oeffeninge geholpen wort ? Waer op wy antwoorden, dat de leeringe zonder de oeffeninge nietich is. En schoon de oeffeninge zonder de leeringe somtijts wel iets belooft, dat de konst tot geenderley volmaektheyt kan rijzen, ten zy men die gestaedich oeffene, en nae de onfeylbaere regels der leere bestiere', S. van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst*, Rotterdam 1678, 16. See also J. Blanc, *Samuel van Hoogstraten: Introduction à la haute école de l'art de peinture (1678)*, Geneva 2006, 94-95. All translations from the Dutch are my own.
- 5 See E. van de Wetering, 'Towards a Reconstruction of Rembrandt's Art Theory,' in: *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings, Vol. V: The Small-Scale History Paintings*, Dordrecht 2011, 3-140, and especially 11: 'Van Hoogstraten deals with the basic aspects of the art of painting in all cases in a strikingly different way from Van Mander. In the analysis of these differences, it will become apparent that a considerable number of the pictorial ideas and narrative procedures that Rembrandt developed, and which he must have taught to his pupils, are adopted in Van Hoogstraten's book'.
- 6 T. Weststeijn, 'Rembrandt and Rhetoric. The concepts of *affectus*, *enargeia* and *ornatus* in Samuel van Hoogstraten's Judgement of His Master,' in: M. van den Doel, N. van Eck, G. Korevaar, A. Tummers and T. Weststeijn (eds.), *The Learned Eye. Regarding Art, Theory, and the Artist's Reputation*, Amsterdam 2005,

- 111-32; *The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age*, Amsterdam 2008.
- 7 T. Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance*, Oxford 1979; A. Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought*, Oxford 1996.
- 8 See Blanc 2006, 24-43; J. Blanc, *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVII^e siècle: La théorie de l'art de Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Berne 2008, 126-129.
- 9 Quintilian, *Institutiones oratoriae*, II, xix, 1-3, quoted in F. Junius, *De schilderkonst der oude*, Middelburg 1641, book 1, chapter 4, part 1, 36.
- 10 E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, 2 vols., Tübingen 1968, vol. II, part 1, 366-369.
- 11 E.H. Gombrich, 'The Renaissance Conception of Artistic Progress and its Consequences', in: *Norm and Form: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, London 1966, 1-10, 137-141.
- 12 J. A. Emmens, *Rembrandt en de regels van de kunst*, Amsterdam 1968.
- 13 See J. Bouveresse, *La Force de la règle: Wittgenstein et l'invention de la nécessité*, Paris 1987; Pettit, *Rules, Reasons and Norms*, Oxford 2002.
- 14 This notion has been evoked only marginally in Van de Wetering's recent article, Van de Wetering 2011, 53.
- 15 *Inleyding* 93; Blanc 2006, 193. This passage is actually a very interesting paraphrase of a paragraph on fiction in the *Poetics*: 'The poet being an imitator, like a painter or any other artist, must of necessity imitate one of three objects – things as they were or are, things as they are said or thought to be, or things as they ought to be. The vehicle of expression is language – either current terms or, it may be, rare words or metaphors. There are also many modifications of language, which we concede to the poets. Add to this, that the standard of correctness is not the same in poetry and politics, any more than in poetry and any other art. Within the art of poetry itself there are two kinds of faults- those which touch its essence, and those which are accidental. If a poet has chosen to imitate something, [but has imitated it incorrectly] through want of capacity, the error is inherent in the poetry. But if the failure is due to a wrong choice – if he has represented a horse as throwing out both his off legs at once, or introduced technical inaccuracies in medicine, for example, or in any other art – the error is not essential to the poetry. These are the points of view from which we should consider and answer the objections raised by the critics', Aristotle, *Poetics* xxv, 1460b7-23.
- 16 *Inleyding* 93-94; Blanc 2006, 193-194.
- 17 Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, book 11, chapter 6. See also Esther 6:14-17; Ezechieel 13:41; Luke 7:36-50; John 13:21-25.
- 18 W. Stucki, *Antiquitatum convivialium libri III*, Zürich 1582; J. Rosinus, *Antiquitatum Romanorum corpus absolutissimum*, Leiden 1663 (ed. princ. 1585); P. Ciaccionius, *De triclinio sive De modo convivandi apud priscos Romanos, & de conviviorum apparatu*, Heidelberg 1590; J. de Prado and J.B. de Villalpando, *In Ezechielem explanationes et apparatus urbis ac templi hierosolymitani commentariis et imaginibus illustratus*, 3 vols, Rome 1596-1604. On this subject, see H.W. von Löhneysen, 'Die ikonographischen und geistesgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen der Sieben Sakramente des Nicolas Poussin', *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 4 (1952), 133-50; A. Blunt, 'The Triclinium in Religious Art Since the Renaissance', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 2 (1938-39), 271-79; J. Vanuxem, 'Les Tableaux sacrés de Richeome et l'iconographie de l'Eucharistie de Poussin', in: *Nicolas Poussin*, 2 vol., Paris 1960, vol. I, 151-162.
- 19 Nicolas Poussin, *The Eucharist*, 1647, Edinburgh, National of Gallery of Scotland. See A. Blunt, *Art et architecture en France, 1500-1700*, Paris 1983, 243.
- 20 Rembrandt, *The Wedding of Samson*, 1638, Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister.
- 21 P. Angel, *Lof der schilderkonst*, Leiden 1642, 47.
- 22 Philippe de Champaigne, *The Feast in the House of Simon*, 1656, Nantes, Musée des Beaux-Arts. See E. Coquery (ed.), *Figures de la passion*, cat.exh. Paris (Musée de la Musique), Paris 2001, 58.

- 23 Constantijn van Renesse, *The Supper in Emmaus*, c. 1660, Boston, Collection Dr. Sheldon Peck. See Blanc 2008, fig. 64.
- 24 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Abraham and the Angels*, c. 1644, Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. 11741. See Blanc 2008, cat. D6.
- 25 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Abraham and the Angels*, c. 1644, Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, inv. PD417-1963. See Blanc 2008, cat. D8.
- 26 A. Rey, *Le Robert: Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*, 3 vols, Paris 1992, vol. III, 3816-7.
- 27 B. Cellini, *Due trattati, uno interno alli otto principali arti dell'oreficeria, l'altro in materia dell'arte della scultura*, Florence 1568, 55r.
- 28 L. da Vinci, *Traité de peinture*, Paris 1651, paragraph XXXIII.
- 29 G. Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architettori, scritte da M. Giorgio Vasari pittore et architetto Aretino*, 3 vols, Florence 1568, vol. I, 375-76.
- 30 *Inleyding* 91-98.
- 31 *Inleyding* 96.
- 32 *Inleyding* 78.
- 33 *Inleyding* 96.
- 34 *Inleyding* 499-519.
- 35 Seneca, *De beneficiis*, book 1, chapter 33, parts 2-3.
- 36 *Inleyding* 93, 155.
- 37 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *View of a Dutch Interior with Three Allegories*, c. 1660, London, National Gallery, inv. 3832. See Blanc 2008, cat. P167.
- 38 *Inleyding* xiv.
- 39 *Inleyding* 481-2.
- 40 *Inleyding* 481-2. Even if it is possible that Van Hoogstraten thinks of Louis XIV, he speaks in his text of 'Hendrik de Groot Koning van Vrankrijk', that is to say Henry IV. Cf. K. van Mander, *Het schilderboeck*, Haarlem 1604, 125r.
- 41 Blanc 2008, 97-102.
- 42 D. Solkin, *Painting for Money: The Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England*, London 1993.
- 43 Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. III, 132.
- 44 G. de Lairese, *Groot schilderboek*, 2 vol., Amsterdam 1740 (ed. princ. 1707), vol. I, 21, 195-97; vol. II, 5.
- 45 A. Bosse, 'Le Peintre converty aux précises et universelles règles de son art', in: *Œuvres* (ed. R.-A. Weigert), Paris 1964 (ed. princ. 1667), 71-72.
- 46 Emmens 1968, 63.
- 47 *Inleyding* 170-71, 394-96, 426-27.
- 48 Blanc 2008, 42-47, 83-87.
- 49 Blanc 2008, 243-65.
- 50 Blanc 2008, 445-47; Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, book 35, chapter 60.
- 51 For more details on the mythical figure of Glycera, see Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, book 21, chapter 4; book 35, chapter 125; Van Mander, *Grondt der edel-vry schilder-const*, chapter 11, part 2, page 45r, in: Van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck*, Haarlem 1604, Junius 1641, book 1, chapter 4, part 1; J. von Sandrart, *Teutsche Academie der edlen Bau-, Bild- und Mablerey-Künste*, ed. A.R. Peltzer, Munich 1925 (ed. princ. 1675-80), I, 84; Lairese 1740, I, 205-206, 358-359.
- 52 *Inleyding* 448.
- 53 *Inleyding* 356-60, 421-2.

- 54 *Inleyding* 445-6.
- 55 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *View of the North Transept of Westminster Abbey*, c. 1662, Dordrechts Museum. See Blanc 2008, cat. P152.
- 56 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Two Women Leaning on a Cradle*, c. 1670, Springfield Museum of Fine Arts (Mass.), James Philips Gray Collection, inv. 52/02. See Blanc 2008, cat. P131/1.
- 57 C. Lévi-Strauss, *La Pensée sauvage*, Paris 1960, 27.
- 58 For example, *Inleyding* 308.
- 59 P. Bourdieu, *Les Règles de l'art: Genèse et structure du champ littéraire*, Paris 1992.
- 60 On Rembrandt's literary and erudite culture, see A. Golahny, *Rembrandt's Reading: The Artist's Bookshelf of Ancient Poetry and History*, Amsterdam 2003.
- 61 Van de Wetering 2011, II.
- 62 A precise account of Van Hoogstraten's 'quite different ideas' is precisely what I tried to write in my book *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVIII^e siècle: la théorie de l'art de Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Berne 2008. Similar problems concerning theoretical distinctions and discriminations result from the systematic comparison of Karel van Mander's and Rembrandt's theoretical and practical concepts, as proposed by Van de Wetering, that appears to suppress and erase the differences between the two painters as well as the very different artistic and historical contexts in which they developed their concepts.
- 63 C. Michel, *Charles-Nicolas Cochin et l'art des Lumières*, Paris 1993, 267-278.
- 64 C.C. Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, Bologna 1678, 480.
- 65 P.P. Rubens, *Correspondance et documents épistolaires concernant sa vie et ses oeuvres*, Antwerp 1887-1909, vol. VI, 181-2 (August 1, 1637): 'Sed quoniam exempla illa veterum Pictorum fantasia tantum en pro cujusq. captu magis aut minus assequi possumus vellem equidem eadem diligentia similem quandoq. tractatum posse de Picturis Itatorum quorum exemplaria sive prototypa adhuc hodie publice prostant et digito possunt monstrari, et dicier haec sunt nam illa quae sub sensum cadunt acrius imprimuntur et haerent, et exactius examen requirunt atq. materiam uberiori proficiendi studiosis praebent quam illa quae sola imaginatione tanquam somnia se nobis offerunt' (London, British Museum, ms. 4933). Cf. the translation in K. Aldrich, F. Fehl and R. Fehl, *Franciscus Junius, The Literature of Classical Art: Vol. 1. The Painting of the Ancients: De pictura veterum, According to the English translation (1638)*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford 1991, 327-329.
- 66 *Inleyding* 77-8.
- 67 *Inleyding* xiv: 'Dewijl'er onlangs niemant geweest is, die de geheele Schilderkonst met alle haeren aenkleeven heeft gelieven te beschrijven, want de groote meesters, die dit werk best machtig waren, zijn door de groote winst, die hen d'oeffening der konst gewoonlijk geeft, zoo karig, of liever zoo gierig geworden, dat zy niets van den tijdt, die hen zoo vrugtbaer was, hebben willen missen, om de zelve aen de armzaelige penne te besteeden, zoo heeft dit gebrek noch een veel grooter nae zich gesleept, namentlijk, dat de Schilderkonst, by de meeste menschen, als een andere gemeene konst of handwerk is geacht geworden: en hier op is gevolgt, dat'er duizenden aen de konst gevallen of gevoert zijn, zonder de zwaerigheden, die'er in steeken, eens te overweegen, jae min noch meer, dan of zy een Schoenmaekers ambacht hadden by der hand genomen: zonder eens te weeten dat deeze konst de geheele *Zichtbaere Wereld* gehelsde; en dat'er naulijx eenige konst of weetschap is, daer een Schilder onkundig in behoorde te zijn.'



CHAPTER 2

Paradoxical Passages: The Work of Framing in the Art of Samuel van Hoogstraten

CELESTE BRUSATI

Samuel van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst* is the most substantial account of painting left to us by a Dutch artist in the later seventeenth century. Yet Van Hoogstraten has only recently received due credit for his text's distinctive contributions to the historiography of art. This belated valuation owes in no small measure to shifts in the frameworks through which scholars have come to view the *Inleyding*. In his 1924 magnum opus on European art literature, Julius von Schlosser described the treatise dismissively as an unoriginal pastiche of earlier writings, a judgment that remained more or less unquestioned for decades. Nearly a half century later Jan Emmens characterized the text more generously as an amalgam of what he called 'pre-classicist' and 'classicist' ideas about art, a transitional step in his narrative of the assimilation of classicist art theory by Dutch writers.¹ In the past three decades both of these influential views of the *Inleyding* have been revisited and updated in several sustained analyses of this book and its author.² To a large extent, this scholarship has sought to reframe our understanding of Van Hoogstraten by viewing his writing on art through many overlapping frames of reference, and portraying him variously as an enterprising painter-writer, a learned artist in the humanist mold, a defender of painting in the rhetorical tradition, a mouthpiece for his master Rembrandt's ideas about art, a purveyor of academic art theory imported from abroad, and a proponent of the new experimental philosophy. This work has situated the *Inleyding* within a wide range of contexts, among them the vernacular art literature of the Netherlands, European art theory, classical rhetoric, theology, moral philosophy, history of pedagogy, image theory, experimental philosophy, the history of the book and, not least, in relation to Van Hoogstraten's art.

While all of these recent studies differ substantially in their interpretive approaches and conclusions, in the aggregate they reveal the *Inleyding* to be a far more original commentary on Dutch art than had been presumed. We can now acknowledge, in a way that Von Schlosser certainly could not, that Van Hoogstraten's treatise amounts to more than a derivative exercise.

In my own work on the *Inleyding* I have argued that Van Hoogstraten's re-framing of *topoi* and received opinions about art, as well as the dialogue he created between authoritative texts and the experiential knowledge gained from his own artistic practice constitute a singular contribution to the literature of art. Seen through this dialogic lens, the *Inleyding* can offer telling and in some cases, novel insights into the ways that painting was produced, valued, and discussed in the seventeenth century.

Such a view of the treatise revises Arnold Houbraken's oft cited criticism of his teacher as an expert who understood the rules of art impeccably but nonetheless failed to follow them in his art, a critique that has had a long afterlife.³ In fact, the disjunction between his theory and practice remained the operative assumption in much of the literature on Van Hoogstraten until the 1990s, when newer scholarship offered a much-needed reassessment of the relationship between Van Hoogstraten's art and writing.⁴ My 1995 monograph drew particular attention to the self-justifying and self-representational aspects of the *Inleyding* while at the same time suggesting ways that Van Hoogstraten's pictorial experiments complement his treatise's textual commentary on art. This essay returns to this latter issue by asking what we might learn about the interrelation of Van Hoogstraten's writing about art and his pictorial practice through a consideration of his ongoing preoccupation with the pictorial work of framing. Framing, as I will argue, offers useful insights into the means by which he thought with, through, and about his art.

Although often treated as if it were literally a marginal issue, framing is a fundamental component of pictorial thinking. We know that frames, both actual and depicted, play a constitutive role in the interrelated rhetorical and visual systems that structure pictorial images. Frames shape both the design of what is represented in pictures, as well as the real-time viewing experiences they generate, and the ocular fictions they proffer. Frames function variously to mark limits, to articulate and distinguish spaces, and to situate viewers in relation to the pictorial world. Depicted frames link, disrupt, and create spatial sequences within paintings; they pace the act of viewing, set up visual equivalences, and play a crucial role in the visual rhetoric of pictorial citation and other forms of metapictorial commentary.⁵ Because the pictorial work of framing is fundamental to the visual thinking entailed both in the making of pictorial images and in the process of making sense of them, it offers a useful point of entry into aspects of Van Hoogstraten's understanding of art that he articulated through the medium of painting. The analyses that follow consider Van Hoogstraten's deployment of frames in several kinds of pictures with a focus on two interrelated issues: first, how he used the resources particular to the medium of painting in his own idiosyncratic work to reflect on the art of painting in general, and secondly, how these pictorial commentaries might inflect our understanding both of the *Inleyding* and of the artistic ambitions of Dutch artists in the seventeenth century.

Setting the pictorial stage

Throughout his career Van Hoogstraten approached framing deliberately and with creativity. While his perspective boxes, threshold perspectives, and *trompe-l'oeil* pieces stand out for their

ingenious deployment of framing devices, Van Hoogstraten was equally purposeful in the framing of his more conventional portraits, self-portraits, and domestic interiors. As a young painter in Rembrandt's studio, he not surprisingly explored the theatrical possibilities of the frame in portraiture, following his teacher's lead by using depicted frames to stage figures in poses evocative of mental activity or suspended animation. One of his most accomplished self-portraits from the 1640s, for example, makes skillful use of the feigned window frame to present the artist attentively poised between the interlinked processes of looking and drawing [Fig. 8]. He leans forward, his weight balanced on the sill of an open window and his pen suspended over a drawing that shows traces of what appears to be the Westerkerk, a familiar Amsterdam landmark. Here the open window frame serves both to connect and separate him from the world of which his attentive eye takes the measure. The partially visible frame of a painting on the wall in the darkened interior economically suggests a larger space, perhaps a studio, in which the artist stands. This L-shaped fragment of the depicted picture's frame formally echoes in reverse the visible portion of the window, subtly begging a visual comparison between the rectangular painting on the wall, the window opening, and the pictorial image in the making. The window frame with its open shutter, in turn, establishes a shallow virtual space forward of the picture plane into which the sheets of drawing paper appear to project, deftly establishing the fictive presence of both the drawing and the draughtsman. At the same time, the window frame distances the implied viewer from the young artist whose gaze is directed elsewhere. The young artist's posture is noteworthy, as it embodies the habit of attentive observation that he would later write about as the bedrock of the painter's discipline⁶.

It is not difficult to see the attention to framing in this picture as early evidence of Van Hoogstraten's lifelong fascination with perspective and illusionist devices. Yet his use of framing to stage the concentrated mental activity of the attentive draughtsman is equally significant as a demonstration of high pictorial ambition entirely consistent with the criteria he later outlined in his treatise. His picture provides an unexpected gloss on his oft-cited discussion of the three categories of painting in which Van Hoogstraten explains:

Thus, the Paintings which belong to the third and highest rank, are those which show the noblest emotions and desires of rational human creatures. And just as these are subjects, which contain more than mere animal passions, so too are the artists, who have a true talent for them, few and far between. But, you may claim, there are plenty of History Painters, who have adorned Churches throughout Christendom magnificently, who fill the walls and courts of ducal palaces, and who busy themselves making portraits of the loveliest young women in every town. Certainly, I reply, but not all of these belong to the third rank of art, unless one perceives in these works the above-mentioned rational or human soul. For putting together some heads and bodies, attaching a few arms and legs, and creating some sort of two-legged creature, barely reaches the second level. Indeed, those portrait painters who make reasonable likenesses, and nicely imitate eyes, noses, and mouths, I would not wish to place outside, or above, the first level, unless they bestow on these faces the said quality of the rational soul.⁷



Fig. 8 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Self-Portrait Drawing at an Open Window*, c. 1650, canvas, 102 x 79 cm, St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum (inv.nr GE 788, photo: Vladimir Terebenin)

Significantly, Van Hoogstraten's hierarchy of subjects and pictorial talents is based on the order of nature rather than a hierarchy of pictorial genres. What distinguishes pictures in the third or highest category is the artist's ability to convey rationality and emotion, the distinctive qualities of the human soul. According to this reasoning, history paintings do not belong necessarily to this category unless they make these qualities evident to the eye. By the same token, portraits which *do* convey these qualities may well rise to the uppermost rung of his tripartite scale. Van Hoogstraten underscores this point by noting its corollary, namely that portraitists who render reasonable likenesses but fail to imbue them with evident rationality, were essentially painting the equivalent of still life pictures. Leaving aside the question of his success in the endeavor, we can see that Van Hoogstraten took pains to rise to the top level in his self-portrait. His careful elaboration of the portrait's framing motifs further suggests that he learned early on that descriptive skills normally associated with still life painting could be used effectively to enhance a figure's pensive attitude and thus align the work of portraiture with highest of pictorial ambitions.

Feigned frames: looking at the subject of painting

Coming into his own as an independent artist in the 1650s, Van Hoogstraten turned his attention increasingly to the metapictorial possibilities of framing in a variety of pictures that reveal ambition by reflecting explicitly on their own artistry. He made frequent use of feigned frames to visualize the dual status of paintings as both representations and fabricated material objects. One of the earliest of these efforts presents a view of the Imperial Palace complex in Vienna within a meticulously crafted feigned ebony frame. A fluttering cartellino depicted on the frame in *trompe-l'oeil* bears his signature [Fig. 9]. These illusionist devices signal to the viewer that Van Hoogstraten's picture is simultaneously a view of the imperial court precincts *and* a pictorial representation of a specific kind. As I have argued elsewhere, the overarching conceit of the painting is an ingenious one, doubtless contrived to impress the courtly audience to which it was directed.⁸ The selectively illuminated picture shows the hustle and bustle of the court, its denizens moving in and out of the shadows of the old fortress at the left and those of the Habsburg court, the implied site outside the picture from which the depicted view toward the Amalienhof with its prominent clock tower can be seen. The picture's most brightly illuminated zones are overlaid upon a dark ground that renders shadowed areas conspicuously opaque, a feature often lost in reproductions that compensate by overexposing the image. This distinctive treatment of light and shadow, along with the subtle iridescence of this painting call to mind contemporary accounts of the glowing brownish images made by light in the *camera obscura*, an optical apparatus of special interest to Van Hoogstraten's imperial client, the Emperor Ferdinand III.

In his treatise Van Hoogstraten would later recount having seen a similar image produced by such a device at the Jesuit College in Vienna, where he viewed 'countless people strolling and turning about on the piece of paper in a small room'. More importantly, he went on to praise the camera obscura's optically produced image as an epitome of 'truly natural painting' and thus an exemplary model worthy of study by aspiring painters.⁹ Viewing the Vienna picture in tandem



Fig. 9 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *View of the Hofburg in Vienna*, 1652, canvas, 78 x 84 cm, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum (inv.nr 1281)

with this passage underscores the aim of the pictorial conceit signaled by its feigned frame; namely, that we are viewing the comings and goings of the court via a picture that is both ‘natural’ and at the same time a product of Van Hoogstraten’s making. In this way the painter wittily alludes to his own artistry by simulating the natural artifice of the optical device that so fascinated his imperial audience.

Van Hoogstraten’s insistence on keeping the artifice of painting visible rather than simply creating transparent illusions is an important and characteristic feature of his most ambitious pictorial experiments. This is particularly evident in his *trompe-l’oeil* pieces, where feigned frames play a critical role [Fig. 10]. Discussions of *trompe-l’oeil* painting routinely assume that the aim of

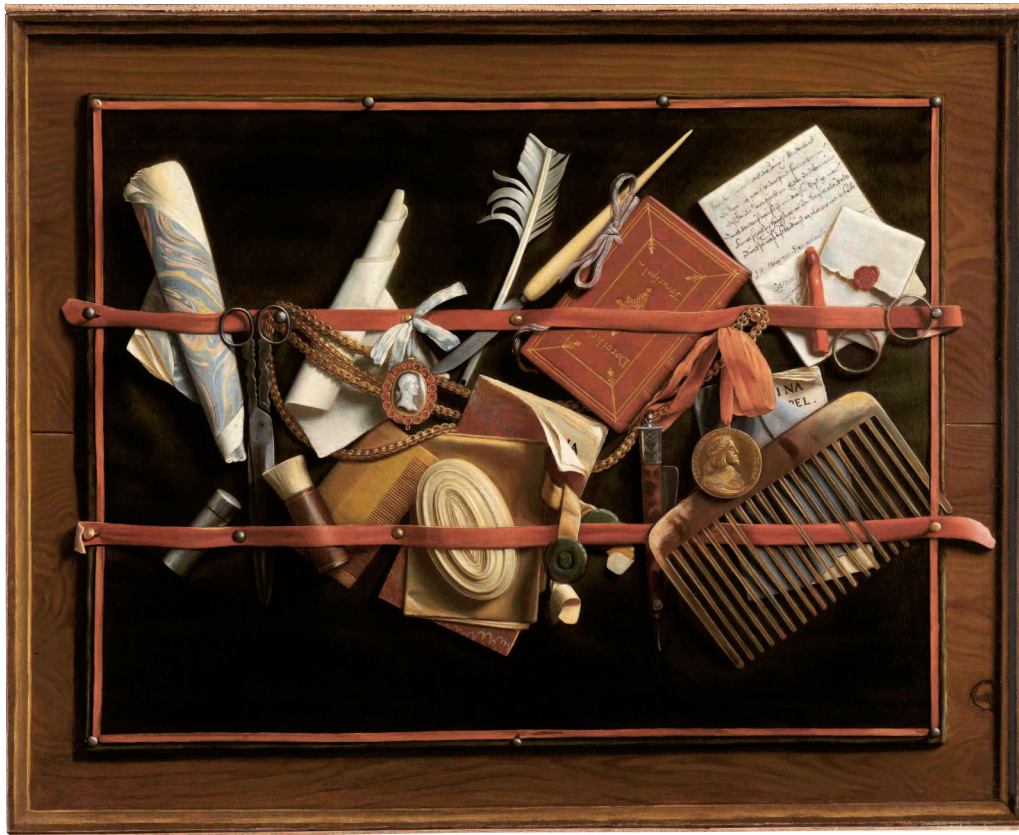


Fig. 10 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Feigned Letter Rack Painting*, after 1669, canvas, 63 x 79 cm, Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle (inv.nr. 2620)

all such works is to render the medium of painting invisible, thereby forcing viewers to mistake pictures for the objects depicted within them. Yet, with few exceptions, Van Hoogstraten's works do not operate in this way. Indeed, most of his surviving *trompe-l'oeil* pictures present themselves not as counterfeits of something else – his early *Feigned Cabinet Door* of 1655 being a notable exception – but as simulated framed paintings. These works bring the medium of painting to the fore for visual consideration by confronting viewers with their paradoxical artifice. A striking example is his *trompe-l'oeil* of an elaborately laden treasury cabinet now in Kromeriz [Fig. 11]. The picture includes a feigned frame, made more conspicuous by the inclusion of the depicted rosary that appears to dangle in front of it. These pictorial devices transform the depicted cabinet into a feigned painting of a cabinet door. Like his feigned paintings of letter racks, this simulated painting whose elements pretend to exceed its self-defining frame playfully challenges viewers to confirm that the picture they are viewing is indeed a painting. The viewer cannot escape the oscillating awareness of the fictive presence and actual absence of the things that painting simulates.¹⁰



Fig. II Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Feigned Cabinet Door Painting*, canvas, 90 x 70.8 cm, Kroměříž, Archdiocesan Castle (inv.nr. 035)

Van Hoogstraten's concern to demonstrate the double aspect of painting, namely its power to simulate and dissimulate at the same time, threads through many of his works, adumbrating and providing an experimental complement to the definition of painting he ultimately offered in the *Inleyding*. Writing of the purpose and possibilities of his art, he characterized painting as a universal science for representing all the mental images that the visible world can offer, and for deceiving the eye with line and color.¹¹ While these concepts are not novel, the close pairing of painting's powers of simulation and dissimulation is noteworthy. The paradoxical capacity to describe and deceive simultaneously was for Van Hoogstraten not only a defining feature of painting, but also a powerful spur to pictorial inventions that confront viewers with this representational conundrum.

Looking in and looking through

Some of Van Hoogstraten's most compelling inventions involve what has since come to be called the *doorkijk*, the framed through-view that is both a hallmark of Dutch paintings of domestic interiors as well as a device replete with metapictorial possibilities. Painters routinely used the through-view to comment or elaborate upon a foreground scene by opening up secondary and at times tertiary spaces for comparative viewing and consideration. In his *Doctor's Visit* we can see how Van Hoogstraten exploits this internal framing device to enhance both the visual interest and legibility of the painted domestic interior, inventively orchestrating the joint activities of reading and looking catalyzed by his incorporation of emblematically charged elements into picture [Fig. 12]. The painting exemplifies what Van Hoogstraten would recommend in the *Inleyding* as the use of sundry accessories that covertly explain or reveal something (*bywerk dat beteklijk iets verklaert*).¹² He discusses this practice of accessorizing most fully in a discussion of the embellishment of minimally figured histories with pictorial glosses that explicate the emotions of the figures. In a catchy verse he advocates composing emblems out of figures or animals that reveal the passions and movements of the soul like a familiar and legible script (*Een Zinnebeelt uit beelden dient vergaert, of Dieren, die de tochten en de driften ontdekken, als bekende en leesbre schriften*). It is clear both from Van Hoogstraten's own painting and that of his contemporaries that such accessorizing constituted a form of pictorial explanation in virtually all types of figure painting.¹³ In the case of *The Doctor's Visit* various clues – the urine flask, the cat that has trapped its mouse, the foot warmer, the nude Venus woven into the table carpet – turn on the question of pregnancy, real or feigned, as the suspected cause of the seated patient's illness. The tripartite structure of foreground, mezzanine middle-ground, and background *doorkijk* frames an optical trajectory, one that is generated by the concatenation of orbs—urine flask, banister knob, and golden andiron. These orbs link the urine analyst who often appears in Dutch pictures as a farcical character, to a similarly posed figure visible in the painting over the mantel in the farthest room. The visual analogy provokes further questions about the relationship of the two figures. Knowledgeable viewers – then as now – would recognize and wonder what to make of the framed pictorial fragment within the picture. The depicted painting shows an excerpt from Raphael's *School of Athens*



Fig. 12 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *The Doctor's Visit*, canvas, 69.5 x 5 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (inv.nr. 1256)

featuring the disciples of Pythagoras attending closely to their master's mathematical demonstration. The students' postures of rapt attention mirror those of the principal male figures in Van Hoogstraten's domestic scene, the doctor and the man of the house who attend to the lovesick lady, each with his gaze fixed on the urine flask. The viewer, like these two figures, is left to puzzle over the evidence of both pregnancy and paternity, questions posed and set into play by means of its framing and accessories but not resolved within the painting. Thus, while Van Hoogstraten recommends using accessories that covertly explain in the *Inleyding*, his painting reveals that providing pictures with a 'readable script' through such embellishments is not the same as imbuing them with specific hidden meanings. Instead such accessories offer visual prompts that make pictorial puzzles legible, framing questions and inviting speculation rather than providing answers.

Framing the threshold

Nowhere do framing issues come more clearly to the fore than in Van Hoogstraten's curious perspective known by its nineteenth-century moniker as 'The Slippers' [Fig. 13].¹⁴ Painted sometime between 1655 and 1660, this haunting picture was Van Hoogstraten's ambitious first foray into genre painting. Several of its most distinctive features – the unusual lack of figures, its novel threshold format, and its fictional covert view into the private spaces of the household – have generated much interesting interpretation and analysis.¹⁵ In a recent essay I offered an extended analysis of the question of emulation posed by the picture's explicit reference to the work of Gerard ter Borch II (1617–81) via a depicted painting. The embedded picture reprises the slender figure adorned in the shimmering satin dress that had recently made its debut in Ter Borch's famous image of two women and a man in conversation around 1654 [Fig. 14].¹⁶ This iconic figure quickly became a trademark of Ter Borch's art, appearing repeatedly in his own work and soon thereafter in dozens of replicas, variants, and adaptations, of which Van Hoogstraten's perspective is the most ambitious example. It takes on the challenge of Ter Borch's art in a novel invention that both rivals and comments on his achievement.

At first glance the picture's hushed view of the home absent its denizens seems an unlikely stage for pictorial contest; yet this quiet perspective assertively frames dialogic comparisons at every turn. With its many suggestions of secrets and spaces revealed and concealed, the painting insistently provokes inquisitive looking and interpretive speculation. Conspicuously devoid of figures but furnished with strategically placed accessories that conjure up a cast of unseen characters, the picture piques curiosity about what lies within and beyond the beholder's ken, both in painting and in the domestic sphere. Its ingenious *mise-en-scène* places us at the threshold of a room we cannot see save for a patch of its vermillion and black tiled floor and bits of a cool gray-white wall trimmed with Delft tiles, and pierced by a second doorway framed with festooned moldings. At the left jamb rests a broom alongside a cleaning towel suspended from a peg above. This second threshold gives onto a narrow passageway flooded by sunlight from an unseen source. The passage is empty but for the eponymous slippers suggestively poised near the edge of a straw mat that lies at the threshold of a third doorway. This final threshold opens onto a further



Fig. 13 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Threshold View of a Passageway*, canvas, 100 x 71 cm, Paris, Louvre (inv.nr R.F. 3722)



Fig. 14 Gerard ter Borch, *Interior with Three Figures*, 1653, canvas, 71 x 73 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (inv.nr SK-A-404)

room that, like its counterparts, is also only partly visible. But unlike the other fragmented spaces, this innermost chamber is replete with furnishings: an empty chair, a cloth-covered table upon which rests an indeterminate grey mass flanked by a book and an unlit candle askew in a silver holder and, most notably, two framed images hanging on the far wall.

Like other repeated elements in the painting – e.g., doors, floors, frames, shadows, and reflections – these framed images define one another dialogically through a visual play of similarities and differences. The mirror at the left has a thick ebony frame, and all but a thin steel-gray strip of its dimmed surface is hidden behind the adjacent doorframe. The painting to its right, by contrast, is brightly illuminated, bounded by a thinner frame, and only slightly cropped by the

open door that overlaps its right edge. While the mirror reflects nothing, its painted counterpart reveals yet another domestic interior that begs comparison with the larger interior in which it hangs. The depicted painting is fully described, furnished with a red canopy bed, cloth-covered dressing table and an upholstered bench that separates the room's two occupants, a messenger boy with hat in hand and a female figure turned away from the viewer and adorned in a white satin dress. The picture's setting, furnishings, and occupants are immediately recognizable as signature inventions of Gerard ter Borch. Through its telescoping sequence of embrasures Van Hoogstraten's perspective frames Ter Borch as both the terminus of the beholder's gaze, and as part of a visual dialogue staged between two ways of painting: one figured in the depicted painting and the other demonstrated in the larger perspective that contains it. How these two paintings relate becomes a pressing question that the viewer cannot ignore.

Van Hoogstraten poses this question within an innovative meta-pictorial commentary on the painted interior, using the threshold to frame the painted interior, and the device of the picture-within-the-picture to bracket Ter Borch's art itself as a subject for consideration.¹⁷ Embedded within the larger perspective the depicted painting invites the viewer to consider Ter Borch's artistry not only in relation to, but also through the lens of Van Hoogstraten's art. Through this double-edged framing tactic Van Hoogstraten at once honors and trumps his rival's art by showing it as an accessory to, and an accessory within, his own new invention.¹⁸

This dialogic framework cleverly presents Van Hoogstraten's orchestration of the virtual interior as the inversion of Ter Borch's tactic of enveloping self-contained figures in luminous fabrics set off against sparsely described settings. His perspective opens up the interior spaces that Ter Borch's pictures leave concealed, and activates them with ingenious emblematic accessories that trigger narrative and imaginative associations. What is more, Van Hoogstraten's picture does this without recourse to figures at all. Instead, he renders the viewing of the domestic space and its labile boundaries as an enigmatic and affectively charged experience in itself. The threshold as a framing conceit thus structures a dynamic nexus of intersecting relationships, between the viewer and picture, between the domestic world inside and outside the picture, and between Van Hoogstraten's artistry and that of Ter Borch. In the process it makes perceptible to the viewer the reflexive status of the domestic interior as both a genre of picture and a social space where art and life come into conversation.¹⁹ His perspective not only represents the threshold where life and art meet, it actually situates viewers in that very same space to experience the reciprocal dynamic that modern painting created between the domestic interior and its depiction. At their common threshold the viewer sees each through the lens of the other, and projects into both of these spaces, the desires, associations, and fantasies evoked by domestic interiors, whether real or painted.



Fig. 15 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective Box with Views of a Dutch Interior*, c. 1660, wood, 58 x 88 x 63,5 cm, front view, London, National Gallery of Art

Perspectives in a box

Van Hoogstraten's treatment of painted interior scenes as aggregates of framed spaces has a further function; it is a pictorial tactic that generates a particular kind of seeing. The most elaborate example of this use of frames is, of course, his London perspective box, which creates an experience of seeing as a temporal and pictorial process of sequential framing [Fig. 15-17]. By embedding frames within frames in the form of doors, windows, and pictures nested within the interior Van Hoogstraten opens up views and through-views, to mobilize and pace the peerings and probings of the curious eyes stationed at the box's viewing apertures. The device thus provides the viewer with a fantasy of ocular ubiquity, and of painting's ability to extend the eye's reach like a lens or other optical device. Through the inclusion of depicted paintings within the interior the artist suggests the reach of painting itself, including its implied power to comprehend not only everything visible, but everything imaginable. Framing obviously does not account for every aspect of the perspective box and its many agendas. Nonetheless, its viewing apertures, framed spaces and framed images generate a lively experience of seeing in time that serves as the primary medium through which the box and its imagery are apprehended.

Van Hoogstraten took the possibilities of framing to new heights – literally – in a series of threshold perspectives that are nearly life sized, ranging from one to more than two meters in height.²⁰ Arnold Houbraken characterized these works as being among the most ambitious of Van Hoogstraten's endeavors, remarking that despite the success and profit that his *trompe-l'oeil*



Fig. 16 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective Box*, oblique view, London, National Gallery of Art



Fig. 17 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective Box*, oblique view, London, National Gallery of Art



Fig. 18 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Transept of Westminster Abbey*, c. 1665, canvas, 157 x 110 cm, Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum



Fig. 19 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *View of a Courtyard with a Woman Reading a Letter*, c. 1670, canvas, 241.5 x 179 cm, The Hague, Mauritshuis

pieces brought him, Van Hoogstraten's ambition drove him to loftier pursuits in the painting of 'portraits, histories, and perspectives in rooms (whose walls were equipped with apertures through which to view them).' Houbraken went on to say that he had seen various examples that represented within a small room an entire palace with vaulted arches and galleries supported on marble columns.²¹ The illusion of scale that Van Hoogstraten achieved in these works is impressive to be sure. But his inventive use of the threshold format to show mastery of a range of pictorial skills and genres – figures, portraiture, landscape, still life, architecture, and perspective itself – speaks to the scale of his ambition in these works. In his view of the north transept of Westminster Abbey, for example, the threshold offers an ingenious stage for the simultaneous display of the artist's mastery of perspective and the accumulated attributes of the sitters portrayed within it [Fig. 18]. It shows a fashionably dressed couple strategically situated under a plaque bearing the inscription, 'Blessed is he that giveth to the poor'.²² But it is the imposing structure and ornamentation of the church itself that commands the attention of both the artist and the viewers on both sides of the pictured threshold. As a consequence, the embedded portraits appear somewhat curiously as by-products of the artist's pictorial performance rather than as the impetus for it.

Van Hoogstraten used a similarly elaborate framework as the setting for his grand and distinctive version of the epistolary theme so popular among Dutch genre painters of the mid-seventeenth century [Fig. 19]. In this instance the feigned stone threshold opens onto an elegant courtyard whose architecture, replete with pictorial and sculptural ornamentation, bifurcates the viewer's attention by opening up a garden vista on the left and a deep, multi-layered perspective on the right. The picture's multifocal construction accommodates a number of viewing positions, a fact underscored by the spaniel at the threshold whose watchful eyes return the gazes of beholders whether they stand facing the picture, move before it, or take it in obliquely from either side. A view into the garden at left reveals strategically posed classical statues that coyly meet the beholder's probing gaze. To the right an oblique view into the courtyard takes the viewer through a process of discovery along the optical trajectory that leads from the dog that returns the viewer's gaze at the threshold to the fashionably garbed lady reading her letter. The sequence of internal gazes links the downcast eyes of the reading woman to those of the cat peering out from the balustrade on the stairway leading to the threshold of a room occupied by the diminutive figure of the man seated with head in hand melancholically writing at a table within the palatial interior. Its many windows open onto an Eyckian vista that reveals the even tinier figure of a man seen from behind through a crenellated gateway, paradoxically making visible the vanishing point of the perspective construction. The picture caters to fantasies of unlimited visibility. Feigned frames in these large-scale perspectives thus serve a dual function. On the one hand, they limit the marginal distortions that result from the use of eccentric vanishing points to structure the multifocal experience of seeing as a temporal process. At the same time the depicted frames situate beholders at the threshold of two zones of visibility, the physical space in which the embodied gaze is mobilized and the optical spaces traversed by the eye alone.

Framing and temporality

Having considered how Van Hoogstraten's threshold perspectives stage the act of looking as a mobile and contingent process, I would like to conclude by looking at the role of framing in one of his *trompe-l'oeil* letter rack pictures that engages the temporality of viewing in several different ways [Fig. 20]. Like many of the pictures discussed so far, its feigned frame marks this picture as an image of a painting. Although at some later date part of the lower portion of the feigned frame was cropped off, it is evident that the painted frame was integral to Van Hoogstraten's metapictorial fiction. He underscored the feigned frame's liminal position as the threshold of his pictorial image by inscribing it with several simulated chalk marks, ostensibly rendered by means of the small white clump poised suggestively on the sill of the frame's lower horizontal beam. The feigned sequence of strokes appears to be a running tally, an ongoing process of reckoning brought temporarily to a pause within the picture's momentary fiction. Other depicted objects likewise allude to various forms of measuring and marking time, most notably: the fashionable pocket watch, an English almanac, and a letter imprinted with a wax seal bearing Van Hoogstraten's family escutcheon and a dated postmark.²³ The letter's postmark places its writer among

an elite few who had the privilege of using the newly established postal service. Taken together this array of objects that identify their owner as a prosperous man of affairs for whom time is calibrated through a variety of modern technologies.

A particularly explicit marker of identity, the oval miniature depicted within the painting, also bears a conspicuous frame. The framed portrait caught the attention of the English engraver and antiquary, George Vertue, who described having seen what was most likely this picture at Covent Garden in 1730.²⁴ The oval portrait clearly stood out for Vertue who drew its octagonal frame with precision in his notes. He identified its maker by linking the portrait miniature with its prominent frame to Van Hoogstraten's monogram in the red wax seal. He further interpreted the inclusion of an English almanac dated 1663, as evidence that the picture was made that year. Upon closer examination the depicted almanac's documentary function proves more complex than it might at first appear, for Van Hoogstraten situated the almanac ambivalently between fact and fiction within his witty pictorial performance. The almanac's title page displays the artist's signature in place of the publisher's address, a device that calls attention to the picture's deceptive artifice, and to the fact that the painted almanac, along with the other personal effects displayed in the picture, are products of the artist's own making. Van Hoogstraten further begs the truth of the pictorial illusion by depicting identifiable objects that function, not unlike the entries in an almanac diary, as markers of real occasions in his life and actual achievements.

Perhaps his most cherished of these personal trophies is the gold medallion and chain awarded him decades earlier by the Habsburg Emperor Ferdinand III, purportedly in return for the pleasure of being deceived by the artist's *trompe-l'oeil* paintings. By reframing it in a new context the picture effects a curious displacement, removing the medallion from the honor economy of the court whence it came, and pictorially placing it in circulation, as it were, among the artist's personal insignia – the portrait, his seals, watch, magnifier, and the golden rings that visually echo the medallion's circular form. Van Hoogstraten's pictorial framework thus translates the imperial honorarium into a personal effect of which he is the sole proprietor. This transformation is not simply a matter of the artist incorporating the medallion into his personal iconography; his illusionist rendering of the object is itself the repeat pictorial performance that reiterates for each viewer to see firsthand, the same kind of aesthetic deception for which the medallion was the original reward. Depicted in this way the medallion becomes more than a status symbol; as a representation it operates as a form of cultural capital whose value is secured by the artistry demonstrated in the work itself. Van Hoogstraten's pictorial performance thus is framed as evidence of the artistic merit to which the medallion testifies. The importance of this tactic cannot be overstated, for it claims the artist's skill, admired but possessed neither by the viewer nor the imperial client, as the ultimate source of the value of his work. It is a pictorial claim echoed in his assertion in the *Inleyding* that painting well consists in the doing rather than talking about it.²⁵

Each of the examples discussed above suggests how an understanding of Van Hoogstraten's ideas about art requires taking account of what he *made* no less than what he wrote on the subject. Whereas he defined painting in the *Inleyding* as a universal science for representing all the mental images that the visible world can produce, in his pictorial practice he actually



Fig. 20 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Feigned letter Rack with Self-Portrait and an English Almanac*, c. 1663, canvas, 44.7 x 60.7 cm, Private Collection, Paris

demonstrates this proposition. He deployed painting as a medium for thinking seriously and, at times, playfully about art, and for giving his viewers reason to do the same. His best pictorial experiments continue to afford visual pleasure while framing important questions about painting and perception. But beyond that, they offer alternatives to the binary thinking that continues to color the study of Dutch art. That mind-set has created a dichotomy between questions of meaning and those of representation, and a split between art theory and pictorial practice that Van Hoogstraten would have found strange. By contrast, his pictures show in a way that his writing alone cannot, how inseparable these issues are. They show how pictures generate processes

of visual thinking that exceed the semantic limits of iconography, inviting viewers to make sense of both perceptual experience and the play of significations that paintings open up. They reveal how the making and viewing of paintings mobilizes the mind through the hand and eye, piquing the senses, the intellect, and the imagination in unison. The fictions of seeing and the aesthetic illusions that Van Hoogstraten devised allow us to grasp experientially painting's unique powers of representation, especially its singular capacity to simulate and dissimulate at once. Through his pictorial frames he offers us first-hand experiences of painting's distinctive hold upon the visible world, a world that Van Hoogstraten shows us as replete with perceptual puzzles and endless speculative riches.

Notes

- 1 J. von Schlosser, *Die Kunstliteratur: ein Handbuch zur Quellenkunde der neueren Kunstgeschichte*, Vienna 1924 and J.A. Emmens, *Rembrandt en de regels van de kunst*, Amsterdam 1968.
- 2 See P. Thissen, *Werk, netwerk en letterwerk van de familie van Hoogstraten in de zeventiende eeuw: sociaal-economische en sociaal-culturele achtergronden van geletterden in de republiek*, Amsterdam & Maarssen 1994; C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Chicago 1995; J. Blanc, 'Théories et pratiques de la couleur chez Samuel van Hoogstraten', in: M.-C. Heck (ed.), *Théorie des arts et création artistique dans l'Europe du Nord du XVIe au début du XVIIIe siècle*, Lille 2002, 255-271 ; id. (ed. and transl.), *Samuel van Hoogstraten: Introduction à la haute école de l'art de peinture (1678)*, Geneva 2006 ; id., *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVIIe siècle: la théorie de l'art de Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Berne 2008; H.-J. Czech, *Im Geleit der Musen: Studien zu Samuel van Hoogstratens Malereitratat Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst (1678)*, Munich & Berlin 2002; and T. Weststeijn, *The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age*, Amsterdam 2008.
- 3 A. Houbraeken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols, Amsterdam 1718-1721, vol. III, 137-138.
- 4 See especially Brusati 1995 and Blanc 2008. My 1995 monograph emphasized the complementarity of Van Hoogstraten's theoretical and pictorial reflections on art, and more recently Jan Blanc made a related case for the importance of his experience as a practicing artist to the development of his art theory. Although my work on Van Hoogstraten is characterized in this volume and elsewhere as primarily concerned with his own social ambitions, it in fact made a case for understanding his art, writing, and career as expressions of his high ambitions for the art of painting. My argument that these ambitions were not wholly separable from his own aspirations does not claim that Van Hoogstraten's achievements and efforts on behalf of his art can or should be explained simply in terms of self-interest.
- 5 For a thoughtful treatment of 16th and 17th century pictures that reflect on their status as art and as representations, see V. Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image. An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting*, Cambridge & New York 1997.
- 6 See especially *Inleyding* book 1, chapter 8, 35-6: 'Van de nutticheit van veel met opmerken te teykenen' (The utility of doing much attentive drawing). In this chapter Van Hoogstraten underscores the importance of developing the habit of attentive drawing as a discipline that increases the artist's powers of observation and capacity to sustain visual attention.
- 7 'De Schilderyen dan, die tot den derden en hoogsten graed behooren, zijn die de edelste bewegingen en willen der Reedewikkende schepselen den menschen vertoonen. En dewijl dit onderwerpen zijn, die meer dan een dierlijke beweging in hebben, zoo zijn de konstenaers, die hier toe een rechte bequaemheyt hebben, alderdunst gezaeyt. Maer, zegt gy, men vind History Schilders genoeg, die de Kerken, de gansche Christenheyt door, wonderlijk opsieren, die de wanden en hooven der vorstelijke paleyzen vervullen, en het druk hebben met de schoonste jonkvrouwen in alle steeden te konterfeyten. Zeeker, zeg ik, deeze behooren noch niet alle tot den derden graed van de konst: ten zy datmen in haere werken de boovengemelde

- Reedewikkingen of menschelijke zielen gewaer word; want een deel hoofden en lichaemen te vergaderen, een deel armen en beenen aen een te voegen, en zoo een stach van tweevoetige gediertens samen te brengen, bereykt naulijx den tweeden graed. Jae de konterfeyters, die al reedelijke gelijkenissen maeken, en oogen, neuzen, en monden al fraeit jes naevolgen, wil ik zelfs niet buiten, of booven den eersten graet stellen, ten zyze haere tronyen met de gemelde hoedanigheyt van de verstandelijke ziele overstorten', *Inleyding* 87.
- 8 Brusati 1995, 70-74.
- 9 'Eer wy van de weerglans afscheiden, zoo moet ik van den schilderachtigen vond spreken, waer mede men al de dingen, die buiten zijn, in een beslote en duistere kamer door weerglans kan afmalen. Gelijk ik tot Weenen by de Jezuiten, tot London aen de Rivier, en op meer plaetsen wonder aerdich gezien hebbe. Tot Weenen zach ik ontallijke menschen in een kleyn kamertie op een papier wandelen en keeren: en tot Londen honderden schuitjes met volk, en de geheele Rivier, lantschap en licht, op een muer, en al wat roerlijk was, beweegen', *Inleyding* 263.
- 10 For a fuller discussion of the ways that such *trompe-l'oeil* images operated across social and economic spheres as well as pictorial spaces, see C. Brusati, 'Honorable Deceptions and Dubious Distinctions', in: Olaf Koester a.o. (eds.), *Blændværker. Gijbsbrechts - kongernes illusionsmester/ Illusions: Gijbsbrechts - Royal Master of Deception*, cat.exh. Copenhagen (Statens Museum for Kunst), Copenhagen 1999, 49-73.
- 11 'De Schilderkonst is een wetenschap, om alle ideen, ofte denkbeelden, die de gansche zichtbaere natuer kan geven, te verbeelden: en met omtrek en verwe het oog te bedriegen', *Inleyding* 24.
- 12 *Inleyding* 90. Eddy de Jongh first discussed this passage in relation to this picture in *Tot lering en vermaak: betekenissen van Hollandse genrevoorstellingen uit de zeventiende eeuw*, cat.exh. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum), Amsterdam 1976, 135-37.
- 13 While modern scholarship has adduced this passage in the *Inleyding* as evidence that Dutch painting is imbued with hidden emblematic meanings, such readings miss its emphasis on picturing as a form of writing that makes meanings visible. The passage does not propose seeding a picture with hidden symbolic meanings but rather supplying cues and clues to render visible and legible the unseen motives and feelings of depicted figures and to create pictures that invite interpretation.
- 14 The painting is now in Paris in the Musée du Louvre [inv. 3722]. John Smith in his *Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish and French Painters*, supplement vol. 9, London 1842, first catalogued the picture as a work by Pieter de Hooch, and dubbed it 'The Slippers'. Théophile Thoré-Bürger (1807-69) exhibited it as such in 1866. By that time the picture had acquired De Hooch's monogram and a date of 1658. Shortly thereafter the Belgian painter and restorer, Florent Willems (1823-1905), further fit the picture to the attribution by supplying it with the figure of a girl with a lapdog seated at the second threshold. Those additions were removed around 1883, but the picture was known in reproduction only through an engraving based on Florent's restoration up until the early 1930s. The print is included in W. Valentiner, *Pieter de Hooch* (Klassiker der Kunst), Berlin 1932, 308. For the history of this picture's fascinating provenance and shifting attributions, see the extensive entry by Jacques Foucart in: *Le Siècle de Rembrandt: tableaux hollandais des collections publiques françaises*, cat.exh. Paris (Musée du Petit Palais) 1970, 110-111.
- 15 For the early literature see Foucart 1970 and D. Hammer-Tügendhat, 'Kunst der Imagination, Imagination der Kunst. Die *Pantoffeln* Samuel van Van Hoogstratens', in: K. Krüger and A. Nova (eds.), *Imagination und Wirklichkeit, Zum Verhältnis von Mentalen und realen Bildern in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit*, Mainz am Rhein 2000, 139-153. For the subsequent literature and interpretations see Brusati 1995, 83-86; 204-208; W. Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, New Haven/London 2004, 146-147; and the recent important studies by F. Yalçın, *Anwesende Abwesenheit. Untersuchungen zur Entwicklungsgeschichte von Bildern mit menschenleeren Räumen, Rückenfiguren und Lauschern im holländischen 17. Jahrhundert* (Kunstwissenschaftliche Studien, 116), Munich/Berlin 2004; and D. Hammer-Tügendhat, *Das Sichtbare und das Unsichtbare. Zur holländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Cologne/Weimar/Vienna 2009. C. Brusati, 'Painting at the Threshold: Competition and Conversation in Perspective', in: A. Boschloo a.o. (eds.), *Aemulatio: Imitation, Emulation and Invention in Netherlandish Art from 1500 to 1800: Essays in Honor of Eric Jan Sluijter*, Zwolle 2011, 326-341.
- 16 The picture exists in two closely related versions dating from c. 1654, one in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (oil on canvas 71 x 73 cm) and the other in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (oil on canvas 70 x 60 cm). See S.J.

- Gudlaugsson, *Gerard Ter Borch, 1617–1681*, 2 vols., The Hague, 1959/60, I: 79 and II: 116–117; and the entry by Alison Kettering in: A. Wheelock Jr. et al., *Gerard ter Borch*, cat.exh. Washington (National Gallery of Art)/Detroit (Detroit Institute of Arts), New Haven/London 2004, cat. 27: 114–116. On the multivalent meanings and pictorial functions of the woman in satin, see A. McNeil Kettering, ‘Ter Borch’s Ladies in Satin’, *Art History* 16 (1993), 95–124; Yalçın 2004, 114–153 and *passim*; Hammer-Tugendhat 2009, 284–299. Cf. C. Brusati 2011, 331–335.
- 17 Victor Stoichita has argued for the importance of Van Hoogstraten’s picture in the history of self-aware images, that is, paintings that describe their own pictorial and semiotic operations. He has argued that Van Hoogstraten’s conflation of doorframe and picture frame in ‘The Slippers’ marked a decisive step in the pictorial self-definition of the interior as a genre of painting. See Stoichita 1997, 148–153.
- 18 On the ambivalence entailed in emulation, see the useful article by G. W. Pigman III, ‘Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance’, *Renaissance Quarterly* 33:1 (Spring, 1980), 1–32. Pigman notes that *aemulatio*, as distinct from other forms of imitation, calls attention to itself and deliberately challenges comparison with its model. Van Hoogstraten used the resources of meta-painting to visualize such a comparison with Ter Borch. Pigman further distinguishes emulation as an attitude and motivation from specific techniques of imitation. The focus on Van Hoogstraten’s competitive mindset and motivation in Houbraken’s biography (see Appendix) refers to emulation in this sense.
- 19 For a thoughtful account of the displacement of gender onto the space of the interior, and the social and pictorial complexities of the domestic boundary, see E. Honig, ‘The Space of Gender in seventeenth-century Dutch Art,’ in: W. Franits, ed., *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art: Realism Reconsidered*, Cambridge/New York 1997, 186–199.
- 20 Cf. Samuel van Hoogstraten, *View Down a Corridor*, 1662, oil on canvas, 264 x 136.5 cm, Durham Park, Gloucester, The Blathwayt Collection; *Perspective with a Woman Reading a Letter*, oil on canvas, 241.5 x 179 cm, The Hague, Mauritshuis; *The Tuscan Gallery*, oil on canvas, 133.3 x 113.8 cm, Innes House, Elgin, Morayshire, Sir Iain Tennant. For a discussion of the variety of viewing experiences generated in Van Hoogstraten’s perspectives, see C. Brusati, ‘Perspectives in Flux: Viewing Dutch Art in Real Time’, *Art History* 35/5 (2012), 908–933.
- 21 ‘En schoon ’t schilderen van diergelyke dingen, in dien tyd goed voordeel aanbragt, zoo had hy te grooten geest, om zig daar mee op te houden, maar maakte voornamentlyk zyn werk van Pourtretien, Historien en Perspectiven in Kamers (waar toe dan een gat in den muur buiten het vertrek om door te zien gemaakt werd) te schilderen. Ik heb ’er verscheiden gezien, die in een klein vertrek geschildert, een geheel paleis, met overwelfde bogen, en Galeryen, onderschraagt van marmere kolommen vertoonden’, A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandsche konstschilders en schildersessen*, The Hague 1753, Vol. II, 156. See the Appendix in the present book for the passage in its original context.
- 22 The inscription seems to be a paraphrase of Proverbs 22:9, ‘He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor. [Die goed van oog is, die zal gezegend worden; want hij heeft van zijn brood den armen gegeven]’. If this is the case, the omission of the ‘bountiful eye’ as the figure of generosity in the inscription may be a witticism that invites like-minded viewers to seek that eye either within the picture or in themselves.
- 23 Dror Wahrman recognized that Van Hoogstraten was among the first to include this recently invented postmark in this painting which served as a model for Edward Collier. He discusses both pictures in *Mr. Collier’s Letter Racks: A Tale of Art and Illusion at the Threshold of the Modern Information Age*, Oxford 2012, 106–109. See also the study by Allan Oliver, *Bishop Marks*, URL: http://www.philatelicsannex.org/reference/bishop_marks_updated.pdf. Accessed 1 April 2012.
- 24 Vertue’s annotation reads, ‘April 1730, at a Sale of Pictures in Covent Garden. by S.V. Hoogstraten p. 1663. a still life painting. Against a walnut tree board. papers (stuck between) pens penknife. An Almanack 1663 gold medal hanging and the picture of the Author a black ebony fram [sic], his hair long & reddish. by the date of the Almanack & the Title. English. its apparent it was done by him in England. that year.’ Alongside the note Vertue made a drawing of the oval portrait with careful description of the octagonal frame. See A.J. Finberg (ed.), *The Twentieth Volume of the Walpole Society, 1931–1932: Vertue Note Books II*, Oxford 1932, 74.
- 25 *Inleyding*, 18, 46. Cf. Brusati 1995, 223–227 and Blanc 2008, 285 ff., 309–318.



CHAPTER 3

The Young Samuel van Hoogstraten, Corrected by Rembrandt

BEN BROOS

A long-haired young man wearing a large bowler hat sits facing us at an open window. Poised to draw or write on a blank page of a sketch- or notebook, he uses a goose quill cut to a fine point and holds an ink-well in his left hand [Fig. 21].¹ Due to perspectival distortion, his hands may seem a little too large. Light washes lend relief to his clothing and face. It is, I believe, a self-portrait, corresponding along general lines with what the young artist must have seen in a mirror, but with an added setting and the customary reversal to a lifelike right-handedness.² The drawing was acquired as a self-portrait by the Fondation Custodia in Paris in 2012.³

Versteegh, De Claussin and His de la Salle

It is remarkable that despite an old attribution to Samuel van Hoogstraten and a provenance that includes a few reputable Dutch and French collections, this appealing portrait has thus far escaped mention in the extensive literature about Rembrandt's students. The lower left of the drawing features a pseudo-signature in virtually the same eighteenth-century hand as that of an inscription on the back: 'Samuel van Hoogstraten fecit' [Fig. 21].⁴ Numerous examples of the distinctive signature of young Samuel have come down to us, so that we can tell that these inscriptions are not in his hand.⁵ Nevertheless, the attribution is altogether convincing. In a letter to the Paris auction house that sold the drawing in 2010, Werner Sumowski reacted enthusiastically: 'The drawing is by S. van Hoogstraten, an exceptionally beautiful sheet'.⁶

The collector's mark 'HL', stamped within a circle at the lower right, belonged to Horace His de la Salle.⁷ According to a note on the back of the old frame, moreover, the sheet was once in the 'Thureau-Dangin' collection.⁸ The same combination of former owners also applies to Rembrandt's drawing *The Men of Sodom at the House of Lot* (Genesis 19, 1-11), which the Thureau-Dangin family lent out for an exhibition of 1908 in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.⁹ Anne-



Fig. 21 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Self-Portrait*, not dated (c. 1643 and 1650),
pen and brush in brown with red and black chalk, 170 x 135 mm,
signed in the lower left (18th-century handwriting): 'Samuel van Hoogstraten',
Paris, Fondation Custodia (inv. nr. 2012-T.4)



Fig. 22 Reverse of fig. 21

Louise Henriquel-Dupont (1843-1928), Mrs. Thureau-Dangin, was the daughter of Louis-Pierre Henriquel Dupont (1797-1892), better known as Henriquel, the first graphic artist to become commander in the Legion of Honour.¹⁰ At some still unknown date, her father must have procured the Rembrandt drawing from the collector His de la Salle.

Aimé-Charles-Horace His de la Salle (1795-1878) assembled a splendid print collection, only to put it up for auction in 1856 to be able to concentrate completely on collecting drawings. Thanks to his friendship with Frédéric Reiset, the director of the Louvre, the museum received important donations from De la Salle's collections almost up to his death, including drawn portraits by Holbein, Rubens, Lucas van Leyden and Ferdinand Bol.¹¹ The engraver Henriquel belonged to their circle of friends, and the self-portrait by Samuel van Hoogstraten may well (also) have been a gift, or else it was traded for one of his prints, which His de la Salle admired.¹² In 1892 Henriquel's daughter Anne-Louise, who had been married to the historian Paul Thureau-Dangin (1837-1913) since 1865, inherited the two mentioned drawings by Rembrandt and his student.

The small portrait drawing was first sighted in France at the De Claussin auction of 1844 as: 'Samuel van Hoogstraten. L'écolier [the student]'. Despite the penetrating gaze that the young man directs at the spectator (originally himself), the drawing was apparently not recognized as a self-portrait. The remaining description reads: 'The head covered by a hat, a young man writes in a notebook placed on a board before a window. The pretty drawing is in pen and wash in brown

ink. H.17 cm., W. 13 cm., 6 m.¹³ Ignace Joseph Chevalier de Claussin (1766–1844) established his reputation mainly by compiling an 1824 catalogue of Rembrandt etchings, in which he paid special attention to their diverse impressions.¹⁴ He was described as a recluse living with twelve dogs in a tiny house in Batignolles, a Parisian suburb.¹⁵ Most of his drawings came from famous Dutch collections, such as those of Feitama, Tonneman, Gildemeester, Ploos van Amstel and Goll van Frankenstein.¹⁶ Between 1823 and 1833 he attended some Amsterdam auction or another on an almost annual basis.¹⁷ In 1827, for instance, he purchased the famous *Portrait of the Mother of the Artist* by Gerard Dou (which had previously been with Tonneman, Feitama and others).¹⁸ At the 1833 De Vos auction he bought the then equally renowned *Pissing Horse* by Philips Wouwerman at an unheard-of price.¹⁹ Thanks to the ‘fiches van Hofstede de Groot’ [index cards of HdG] at the Netherlands Institute for Art History in The Hague (now accessible online) we know when De Claussin bought the drawing from Samuel van Hoogstraten and are also able to trace the sheet up to the mid-eighteenth century.²⁰

In 1823 the gigantic Versteegh collection, with its choice Dutch, French and Italian drawings, came up for auction in Amsterdam. Dirk Versteegh (1751–1822) was a competent amateur draughtsman who at his death left a collection of about seven thousand old master drawings. Mainly foreign buyers elbowed each other on the preview days, with an auction catalogue in French catering to their needs.²¹ In November 1823 De Claussin had travelled to Amsterdam, where he and an accomplice named Borin (or Borais), took turns bidding on groups of drawings. In this way Borin bought two sheets from folder 3 E. He was apparently after a Biblical scene by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout and had to take ‘A young man writing in brown, by S. van Hoogstraten’ in the bargain, acquiring both sheets for nineteen guilders and fifteen five-cent pieces.²² Versteegh had bought the latter drawing in person for a few guilders in Amsterdam at the De Lange auction of 1803 as: ‘A writing youth, artfully washed in pen and soot, by S. van Hoogstraten’.²³ The title page of the catalogue identified Aarnoud de Lange (1740–1803) as an ‘Art lover’, but he was first and foremost an art broker. He was a cousin by marriage and confidant of the great collector Cornelis Ploos van Amstel and, with Ploos’ death, laid claim to his large collection of Rembrandt etchings. The matter was still before the courts when De Lange died on 15 February 1803.²⁴ He left a small collection of top works by Dutch masters, including *The Geographer* by Johannes Vermeer.²⁵ But some items on offer at the De Lange auction turn out not to have been part of his collection. That is in any case true for the drawing by Samuel van Hoogstraten.²⁶ The names of earlier owners remain to be identified, but it was probably the same item as a sheet that had changed hands at an anonymous Amsterdam sale of 1761 as ‘A Writing boy, by Hoogstraten ... left by a distinguished artist’.²⁷

Chevalier de Claussin traded and sold his acquisitions, but he kept the best for himself. He died old and lonely in Batignolles, and in September 1844 most of his collection of prints and drawings fell into the hands of junk dealers and ‘brocanteurs’. The authorities intervened after a razor-sharp article of protest in the *Bulletin de l’Alliance des Arts*. A folder that had been particularly cherished by the collector therefore did not fall ‘in manibus infidelium’. This folder contained eighty-four drawings, of which a fourth were attributed to Rembrandt. They were



Fig. 23 Nicolaes Maes, *Self-Portrait*, pen and brush in brown, 102 x 84 mm, neither signed nor dated (c. 1645-1650), Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen (inv.nr MB 237)

meticulously described in a catalogue, to be auctioned one at a time in the house of death on 2 December 1844. Dutch art buyers such as Buffa, Lamme and Gruyter showed up for the event. In this way quite a few sheets came to be repatriated, an example being *The Pissing Horse*, which, after a short stay with De Claussin, moved on to the Verstolk van Soelen collection, ending up in the Fodor collection.²⁸ The Paris dealer Jean Durand-Ruel acquired 'l'écologiste' by Samuel van Hoogstraten for sixty French francs.²⁹ As mentioned, the drawing (like the Rembrandt sheet) came into the possession of His de la Salle and then of Henriquel and his descendents. The last known owner from the first half of the twentieth century was the French engraver's grandson, François Thureau-Dangin (1872-1944), Assyriologist and curator of Persian art at the Louvre.³⁰ Finally, it was auctioned in Paris in 2010 as a portrait of a boy, with the caveat (in my opinion unnecessary) that it might not be a self-portrait.³¹

His master's hand

Though the small portrait was described centuries ago as *konstig* (artful) and *joli dessin* (pretty drawing), and though it passed through the hands of a host of experts in matters of art, it has remained an *onbeschreven blad* (blank page) to this day.³² Even Frits Lugt, who catalogued the



Fig. 24 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Self-Portrait with Beret and Ermine Cloak*, panel, 63 x 48 cm, middle right: 'S. v. H. 16[4]4', The Hague, Museum Bredius (inv.nr. 56-1946)

drawings by Rembrandt and his students in the Louvre at the time that François Thureau-Dangin was curator there, appears not to have known it. In his description of the De Claussin collection Lugt did mention drawings by Van Hoogstraten, but he did not relate them to an existing sheet.³³ Possibly owners were reluctant to publish our drawing because they thought it had been altered by a later hand. At first sight, the addition of an open shutter hanging from a frayed cord is somewhat disfiguring. However, we have learned to recognize the frontally viewed and horizontally projecting window frame, here with foreshortening that is further accentuated by shaded passages in black chalk under light-red tinted woodwork, as one of the spatial constructions on a flat surface with which Samuel van Hoogstraten established an important reputation. This recreation of the composition is therefore presumably not 'opgemaakt' [made up] by a much later hand, as one might at first think. Samuel van Hoogstraten must have done this himself.³⁴

Especially intriguing are the three vehement strokes in black ink at the shoulder and on the arm of the sitting figure. We may assume that they are corrections carried out by the young artist's teacher, Rembrandt van Rijn. He was apparently displeased by the way in which the right arm is rendered and, truth be told, it would be difficult to draw with an arm that far extended. The improvements would appear 'to betray the testy reaction of the teacher to the somewhat



Fig. 25 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Self-Portrait with Golden Chain*, panel, 55 x 45 cm, signed at shoulder height right: 'S. v. H. / 1645', Vaduz-Vienna, Sammlungen des Fürsten von und zu Liechtenstein (inv.nr GE-107)

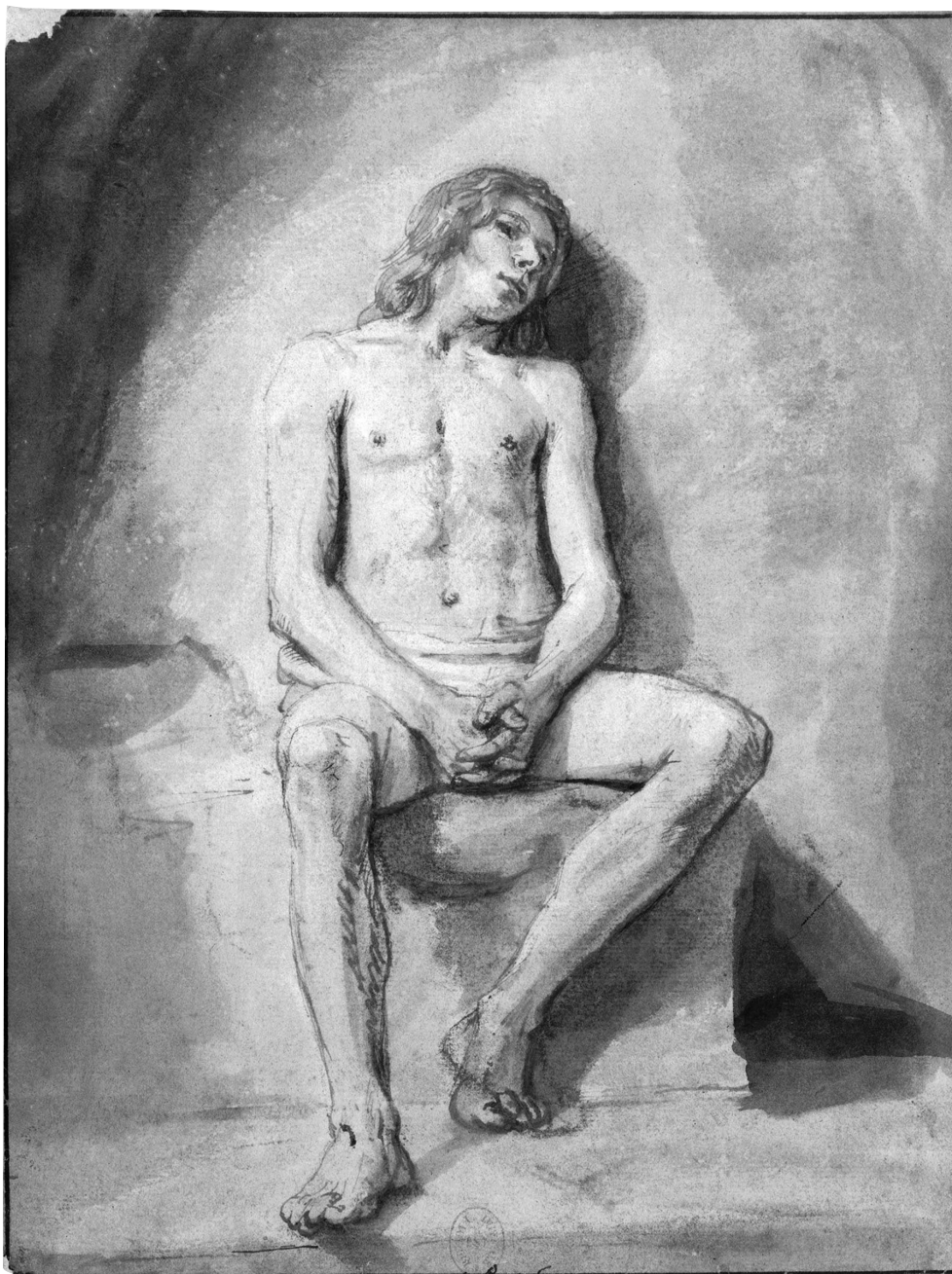


Fig. 26 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Sitting Male Nude*, 1646, pen and brush in brown, heightened in white, 230 x 175 mm, neither signed nor dated 1646, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (inv.nr B 12 rés. boîte 5)

timid composition of the student', as the (late) Josua Bruyn astutely characterized the way in which Rembrandt was wont to criticize the work of his disciples.³⁵ In addition to visual commentary, Rembrandt also offered oral advice. We have a rare example of the way in which he gave his unvarnished opinion of a drawing by one of his students, whom he accused of shortcomings such as inept anatomy.³⁶

The first works

Van Hoogstraten's self-portrait belongs to his earliest known work. It is a striking fact that Rembrandt regularly required his students to draw their own person. In 1648 he rendered an etched example of such a self-portrait, in which he sits drawing at an open window.³⁷ We also know of small self-portraits by his pupils Nicolaes Maes (ca 1645-1650) [Fig. 23],³⁸ Willem Drost (an etching of 1652),³⁹ Heyman Dullaert (ca 1650-1655).⁴⁰ and Aert de Gelder (ca 1660-1662).⁴¹ The drawing by Nicolaes Maes has also been attributed to Samuel van Hoogstraten.⁴² Thanks to this newly surfaced sheet, however, the distinctive style of the latter student has become clearly discernable. Despite his weaker grasp of modeling, Nicolaes Maes created atmosphere using pronounced washes, whereas his fellow student Samuel van Hoogstraten had his pen render immaculate contours. Then, staying precisely within his fine lines, he applied some light touches of the brush to suggest textures. However, the compositions are virtually identical, and the concentrated glance of both young draughtsmen makes for another striking similarity.⁴³

Samuel van Hoogstraten studied with his father Dirk until 1640. Around 1643 he left for Amsterdam. There he became a student of Rembrandt, along with Carel Fabritius, Abraham Furnerius and, somewhat later, Nicolaes Maes (who also hailed from Dordrecht). In 1647/1648 Van Hoogstraten returned to his native city.⁴⁴ In addition to Biblical scenes (strongly under the influence of Rembrandt initially), genre pieces and portraits, he had a special predilection for architectural paintings with perspectival elements and for *trompe-l'oeil* pictures. His earliest painted works include a few artificial self-portraits, such as *Self-Portrait with Beret and Ermine Cloak* [Fig. 24]⁴⁵ and *Self-Portrait with a Vanitas Still Life*, both dated 1644.⁴⁶ In these depictions the seventeen-year-old boy has the same broad face, with snub nose and full lips, as in the present drawing. However, the closest physical resemblance is to the somewhat more realistic *Self-Portrait with Golden Chain* of 1645 [Fig. 25].⁴⁷ The much more juvenile expression of the face suggests, however, that the drawing was made earlier than these few images, around 1643, soon after Samuel had made his entrance in Rembrandt's studio.

A few figure drawings which are also believed to date from Van Hoogstraten's student days are stylistically related to the sheet under discussion. For instance, the slanted hatching linked by tiny strokes of the pen also occurs on a sheet, *Sitting Male Nude* [Fig. 26], in Paris.⁴⁸ This drawing is easily dated because the model and his position are altogether identical to a print rendered by Rembrandt in 1646, so that the student can be seen to have worked in pen and ink even as his master plied the etching stylus.⁴⁹ A closely related drawing is Van Hoogstraten's *Sitting Female Nude* [Fig. 27].⁵⁰ It shows comparable hatching as well as the very cautious washes



Fig. 27 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Sitting Female Nude (Geertje Dircks?)*, c. 1646, pen and brush in brown, 262 x 186 mm, neither signed nor dated (c. 1646), Paris, Louvre (inv.nr. RF 4.193)

that lend more closely defined structure to the figure. Some time ago I believed I could identify the female model as Geertje Dircks, who was part of Rembrandt's household in the mid-forties.⁵¹ Samuel van Hoogstraten was later an informant for the biographer Arnold Houbraken, who was able to describe Rembrandt's 'housewife' as 'good looking, with a fetching body'.⁵²

From study to preparatory study

Van Hoogstraten continued to develop the theme of the self-portrait after his student days. We see him once again looking at the spectator from below a broad brimmed hat in a drawing of 1649, in which he holds a large banderole with a celebratory poem by his Dordrecht friend Carel van Nispen [Fig. 28].⁵³ As with Rembrandt, Samuel's painted self-portraits were theatrical presentations from the outset. He later explained that youthful painters should practice expressing emotions in front of a mirror, so as 'to be performer and spectator at the same time'.⁵⁴ A relatively recent arrival in this series of ego documents is a *Self-Portrait of the Drawing Artist*,⁵⁵ which he probably painted in Dordrecht around 1650 [Fig. 29]. Surprisingly, this canvas turns out to be a further development of the sheet under discussion. We again see the drawing artist sitting in



Fig. 28 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Self-Portrait with Banderole*, 1649, pen and brush in brown, 143 x 172 mm, signed and dated (in verse) 'Samuel' and '1649', Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung (inv.nr. 1910:6 Z)

a stone-framed window with attached shutter. The latter object is now seen hanging vertically, largely defeating the *trompe-l'oeil* effect. Just as in the drawing, a hinge of an open shutter is visible at the right. But the most striking similarity resides in the hands, which have been taken over precisely from the drawn study. Especially the hand with the ink-well is a direct copy of the model.⁵⁶ The right arm is now less extended, apparently following Rembrandt's advice. In the painted version the model wears an artist's beret and his face is somewhat more masculine, presumably as a correction on his appearance in the drawing, which shows him some years younger. But the creator of the painting and drawing must have been the same person. In this way a study graduated to a preparatory study.

With hindsight, it is understandable that the Haboldt drawing has never been connected

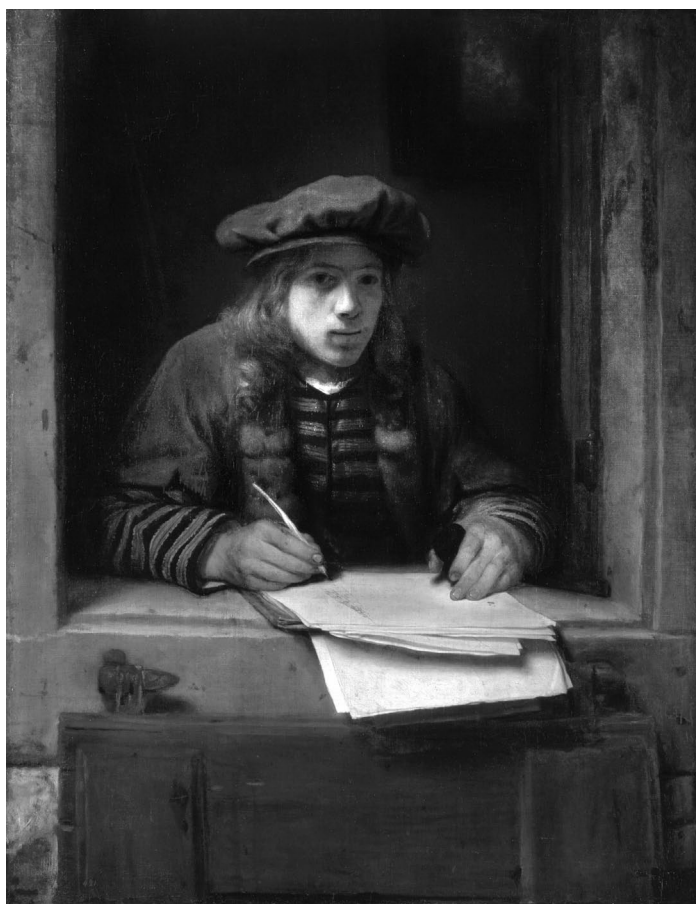


Fig. 29 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Self-Portrait of the Drawing Artist*, canvas, 102 x 79 cm, neither signed nor dated, St. Petersburg (c. 1650), The State Hermitage Museum (inv.nr GE 788, photo: Vladimir Terebenin)

to this painting. The canvas was published in *Oud Holland* in 1925 as a work by Ferdinand Bol.⁵⁷ In 1982 Albert Blankert rejected this attribution with the suggestion: 'A work by Samuel van Hoogstraten?'.⁵⁸ By the time the painting was displayed in the Boymans-van Beuningen museum in 1985, this attribution appears to have become common knowledge.⁵⁹ Since then attention has also been paid to what the artist observes from his window, namely a narrow tower.⁶⁰ Benjamin Binstock has recently proposed that he could identify the drawing on the window sill with an existing sheet that used to be attributed to Rembrandt: *The Tower of the Westerkerk* [Fig. 30]⁶¹ This is a renowned image of which a great nineteenth-century critic, Conrad Busken Huet, wrote somewhat melodramatically: 'Rembrandt's depiction of Amsterdam's Westerkerk is the Westerkerk itself.'⁶² The drawing has always enjoyed great popularity because Rembrandt was



Fig. 30 Nicolaes Maes (attr.), *The Tower of the Westerkerk*, mid-17th century, pen and brush in brown, 190 x 147 mm, neither signed nor dated (c. 1650), Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum (inv.nr. A 10288)

believed to be its author and also happens to be interred in the church in question. On account of the perceived correspondences, Binstock attributed the *Westerkerk* drawing to Van Hoogstraten. He even claimed that Samuel's painting shows him looking out on the Westerkerk tower from his student quarters on the Nieuwe Leliegracht, at the corner of the Prinsengracht, in Amsterdam.⁶³ But the artist in the painting is clearly older than he would appear to be in works like his portrait drawing of 1649 [Fig. 28]. It follows that the painting cannot have been rendered in Amsterdam, since Van Hoogstraten had returned to Dordrecht by 1647/1648.⁶⁴ Moreover, the hesitant execution of the drawing points to Nicolaes Maes.⁶⁵ A stylistically related group of landscape drawings was recently attributed to this Rembrandt student.⁶⁶

An interesting document

All in all we are here concerned with an intriguing document from around 1643 to 1646, when Van Hoogstraten studied with Rembrandt.⁶⁷ Samuel apparently treasured the sheet enhanced by his master's three incisive lines, fascinated by these interventions, but he eventually added the open shutter with chain to the composition on his own accord. Finally he simplified this feature in the painting, eliminating the somewhat labored foreshortening. As mentioned, he took Rembrandt's corrections seriously; the artist now has his right arm close to the body, as it would have been in actual practice.

In his treatise of 1678 Samuel van Hoogstraten philosophized about the right way to go about doing a portrait and began his chapter 'Van't Konterfeyten' [on portrait painting] by engaging in self-censure. There are inept portraitists, wrote Van Hoogstraten, 'who have not only been unable to attach an arm or a leg, but not even a healthy shoulder to the neck of their portraits'.⁶⁸ Apparently the punitive reaction of his master still resonated when he made this confession.

Notes

- 1 Paris, Fondation Custodia (inv. nr. 2012-T.4), pen and brush, black and red chalk, 170 x 135 mm; RKDim-ages no. 200481. I am beholden to Hein Horn (the translator) and Michiel Roscam Abbing for their insightful comments on this essay. This chapter was published in a slightly different form in 2012, see: B. Broos, 'Een onbekend "Zelfportret" van Samuel van Hoogstraten', *Oud Holland* 125 (2012), pp. 180-192.
- 2 Samuel van Hoogstra(e)ten was right handed, as is clear from his print of 1677 which served as an illustration to his *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderconst*, Rotterdam 1678, n.p.
- 3 G. Luijten, 'Recent Acquisitions (2008-12) at the Fondation Custodia, Frits Lugt Collection, Paris', *The Burlington Magazine* 154 (2012), 157 and Fig. 1 and cover (in color), acquired from Haboltd & Co (2012). Cf.: 'Samuel van Hoogstraten. Self Portrait of the Artist Drawing', in: *The European Fine Arts Fair*, Maastricht 2012, 98; W. Liedtke, 'Rembrandt at Work: Some Late Self-Portraits', *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* (2011), 25 and Fig. 4; B. Haboltd, 'Portrait of an Art Business, Age Thirty', in: *Singular Vision. Haboltd en Co.'s Old Master Paintings and Drawings Since 1983*, Amsterdam, New York & Paris 2012, 9 and 369 (actual size) and cover; B. Broos, *Saskia, de vrouw van Rembrandt*, Zwolle 2012, 129, Fig. 99.
- 4 The drawing also reads '26' on the back in black chalk. The watermark is a fragment of the foolscap from the years 1630-1650, comparable to that in a drawing of 1653 by Van Hoogstraten, see: P. Schatborn, *Rembrandt and his Circle: Drawings in the Frits Lugt Collection* (2 vols.), Bussum/Paris 2010, vol. 2, 202, no. 98 and ill..
- 5 W. Sumowski, *Drawings of the Rembrandt School* (10 vols.), New York 1979-1992, vol. 5, 2454-2487, nos. 1101-1117.
- 6 'Die Zeichnung stammt von S.van Hoogstraten, ein besonderes schönes Blatt'. Copy of this letter, dated 12-10-2010, with Haboltd & Co. Naturally, the drawing is not to be found in Sumowski 1979-1992.
- 7 F. Lugt, *Les Marques de collections de dessins & d'estampes*, Amsterdam 1921, 238, no. 1333 and fig.
- 8 The following information concerning the Thureau-Dangin family is based on research done by Hélène Sécherre for Haboltd & Co.
- 9 Heirs P.Thureau-Dangin (died 1944); see: F. Courboin e.a. (eds.), *Exposition d'oeuvres de Rembrandt: dessins et gravures*, Cat. Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale) 1908, 94, no. 294: 'Ce dessin a fait partie des collect. His de la Salle et Henriquel-Dupont. Collect. De M. Thureau-Dangin'. On the index card referring to this exhibition ('door Dr.C. H.d.G. zelf gezien') [seen by Dr.C.H.d.G. himself] Hofstede de Groot wrote: 'goed en

- amusant' [good and amusing] (The Hague, RKD, no. 1431667). O. Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt* (6 vols.), London/New York 1973, vol. 6, p. 378, no. C 101 and fig. 1719: 'Excellent copy after a powerful original of 1657-60'. Called 'Rembrandts eigen tekening' [Rembrandt's own drawing] by J.Q. van Regteren Altena, 'De schenking De Bruijn-Van der Leeuw aan het Rijksmuseum. Tekeningen', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 9 (1961), p. 87, nr. 42 (occasioned by a variant by Constantijn van Renesse in the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam, inv.no. 1961:86), about which F. Lugt remarked: 'Factuur als grove Hoogstraten' ('manufactured as a rough version of Van Hoogstraten'), see: RKD, archivalia, fiches Lugt, nr. 40b. See also: S. Slive, *Drawings of Rembrandt* (2 vols.), New York 1965, vol. 2, no. 499 and ill.: 'P. Thureau-Dangin Collection, Paris'; H.-M. Rotermond, *Rembrandts Handzeichnungen und Radierungen zur Bibel*, Stuttgart 1969, pp. 19 and 311, no. 16 and ill.: 'Paris, P. Thureau-Dangin'.
- 10 On Henriquel, see: U. Thieme and F. Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler* (37 vols.), Leipzig 1907-1950, vol. 16, p. 419.
- 11 R. Bacou, *Drawings in the Louvre: The German, Flemish and Dutch Drawings*, London 1968, nos. 3, 58, 69 and 92.
- 12 On His de la Salle, see: C. Ephrussi, *Les Dessins de la Collection His de la Salle*, Paris 1883; Lugt 1921, p. 238 and M. de Baysier Hertoghe, Horace *His de la Salle, un collectionneur du XIXe siècle* (dissertation Sorbonne), Paris 2008.
- 13 *Catalogue d'une précieuse collection de très beaux dessins originaux des grands maitres de l'école hollandaise ... provenant du cabinet de M. le chevalier de Claussin*, Batignolles (Dumesnil and Schroth), 2 December 1844 (Lugt 17521), p. 16, no. 39. 'La tête couverte d'un chapeau, un jeune homme écrit dans un cahier placé sur une planche en avant d'une fenêtre. Ce joli dessin est à la plume et lavé au bistre. H. 17c., L. 13c., 6m.'
- 14 [I.J.] de Claussin, *Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Rembrandt ... Nouvelle édition corrigée et considérablement augmentée*, Paris 1824 (Supplément 1828).
- 15 On De Claussin, see: Lugt 1921, 88-89 (his mark [Lugt 485] does not occur on the drawing); Thieme/Becker 1907-1950, vol. 7, 70.
- 16 'Vente de la collection de dessins de M. de Claussin', in: *Le Cabinet de l'amateur et de l'antiquaire...*, Paris 1844, vol. 3, 404-407: this biographic sketch formed the basis of the text by Lugt 1921.
- 17 On De Claussin as buyer at Dutch auctions, see: M.C. Plomp, *Hartstochtelijk verzameld: 18^{de} -eeuwse Hollandse verzamelaars van tekeningen en hun collecties*, Paris & Bussum 2001, 148, n. 91. To his list may be added: Auction Muller 1827 (Lugt 11399) and Auction Verbrugge 1831 (Lugt 12764) (see notes 18 and 33).
- 18 Paris, Louvre, inv.no. 22579; Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 3, 1146-1148, no. 528 and ill.: *Catalogus van eene verzameling uitmuntende fraaije gekleurde en ongekleurde tekeningen ... alles nagelaten bij wijlen ... Gerrit Muller*, Amsterdam (Jeronimo de Vries e.a.) 2-3 April 1827 (Lugt 11399), 13, nr. 1: f 800,- to De Claussin.
- 19 Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum, inv.no. A 10390; B. Broos and M. Schapelhouman, *Nederlandse tekenaars, geboren tussen 1600 en 1660 (Oude tekeningen in het bezit van het Amsterdams Historisch Museum, waaronder de collectie Fodor)*, Amsterdam 1993, 233, no. 184 and ill.
- 20 B. den Otter, 'Fiches Cornelis Hofstede de Groot: van schenking tot wereldwijde ontsluiting', *RKD Bulletin* 2 (2010) 2, 34-38.
- 21 *Catalogue du cabinet de tableaux, dessins, estampes et recueils de gravures, délaissé par feu monsieur Dirk Versteegh*, Amsterdam (J. de Vries e.a.), 3 November 1823 (Lugt 10531). On Versteegh, see: R. van Eijnden & A. van der Willigen, *Geschiedenis der Vaderlandsche Schilderkunst, sedert de helft der XVIII eeuw* (4 vols.), Haarlem 1816-1840, vol. 3, 469-470, vol. 4, 15-16: 'I repeatedly saw a large part of this collection with great pleasure during the lifetime of the owner, with whom I was amicably acquainted.'
- 22 'Un jeune homme écrivant, en brun, par S. van Hoogstraten'. Auction Versteegh 1823, 86, kunstboek 3 E, no. 23, together with no. 22 ('Moïze au buisson, par G. van den Eeckhout', not identified, cf.: Iconclass Index

- 71 E II 41 1). For De Claussin Borin also bought *The Visitation* by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (idem, p. 85, no. 19), which is now attributed to Samuel van Hoogstraten (Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum, inv. no. A 10153), see: B. Broos, *Rembrandt en tekenaars uit zijn omgeving (Oude tekeningen in het bezit van de Gemeentemusea van Amsterdam, waaronder de collectie Fodor)*, Amsterdam 1981, 135-138, no. 37 and ill.
- 23 'Een schryvend Jongeling, konstig met de pen en roet gewasschen, door S. van Hoogstraaten'. *Catalogus van een fraaye verzameling schilderyen ... Beneevens een collectie gekleurde en ongekleurde teekeningen ... naarge-laaten, door wylen den kunst-beminnaar den heer Arnoud de Lange*, Amsterdam (P. van der Schley e.a.), 12 December 1803 ff. (Lugt 6718), 37, kunstboek E, no. 5: 'f 3,5-, aan Versteegh'.
- 24 S.A.C. Dudok van Heel, 'Het prentwerk van Rembrandt', in: T. Laurentius, J.W. Niemeijer and G. Ploos van Amstel (eds.), *Cornelis Ploos van Amstel. 1726-1798: kunstverzamelaar en prentuitgever*, Assen 1980, 99-103, esp. nn. 188-189.
- 25 Frankfurt am Main, Städtisches Kunstinstitut, inv.no. 1149; B. Broos and A. Wheelock, *Johannes Vermeer*, cat.exh. The Hague (Mauritshuis) & Washington (National Gallery of Art) 1995-1996, 170-175, no. 16, esp. n. 35.
- 26 Dudok van Heel 1980, 99: only the drawings from *kunstboek H* came from the De Lange collection.
- 27 'Een Schryvend Jongetje, door Hoogstraten'. *Catalogus van een aanzienelyke party kunstige gekleurde en ongekleurde teekeningen ... nagelaten door een voornaam konstenaar*, Amsterdam (H. de Winter), 12 Januari 1761 ff. (Lugt 1131), p. 14, *kunstboek E*, no. 39: 'f 2,12'. It is not known who this artist/collector was.
- 28 Broos and Schapelhouman 1993, p. 233. The most expensive drawing of the De Claussin collection was *The Swine Heard* of 1644 by Paulus Potter (Chantilly, Musée Condé, inv.no. 363), see: Auction De Claussin (note 13), pp. 19-20, no. 50: 'Frf. 4690'.
- 29 P. Lacroix (ed.), 'Comment se font les ventes d'objets d'art après décès', *Bulletin de l'Alliance des Arts* 3 (1844), no. 7, 28 September, pp. 97-99; idem, no. 9, 25 October, pp. 129-130: 'Suite d'une vente d'après décès aux Batignolles'; idem, no. 12, 25 December, pp. 186-188: 'Seconde vente de feu M. de Claussin', esp. p. 187, no. 39: 'Hoogstraten. L'écolier. 60 [frf.] (M. Durand Ruel)'. Jean Durand-Ruel was the father of the famous art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel.
- 30 According to Hélène Sécherre, the drawing may also have been with his brother Jean Thureau-Dangin (1876-1942). François Thureau-Dangin (1872-1944) had three children.
- 31 Catalogue *Dessins et tableaux anciens ...* Paris (Drouot Richelieu), 1 December 2010, pp. 6-7, no. 7 and ill.: 'Portrait de jeune homme (autoportrait?)'; estimated at € 20.000-30.000, sold for € 145.000.
- 32 J. Blanc, *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVIIIe siècle: La Théorie de l'art de Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Berne 2008, p. 345, no. D 140*: 'Ecolier écrivant'. Blanc mentioned only the description in the catalogue of the De Claussin auction, with incorrect specification of the measurements as: '44 x 35 cm'.
- 33 Lugt 1921, 89. Lugt must have known the Rembrandt drawing in the Thureau-Dangin collection, given his remarks: 'Mme v[euve] Paul Thureau-Dangin, + 1919' and 'echt, maar niet om te hebben' ('authentic, but not desirable for my collection'), RKD, archivalia, fiches Lugt, nr. 40. These suggest that Lugt did not know the drawing from the exhibition in 1908 (see note 9). The second drawing by Samuel van Hoogstraten with De Claussin was *Tobia(?) on His Deathbed* (Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum, inv.no. A 10192); Auction De Claussin 1844, 16, no. 38: 'La mort de Jacob'. See: Broos 1981, 139-141, no. 38 and ill.: bought in 1831 in Amsterdam at the Verbrugge auction (L. 12764); see: Blanc 2008, 329, no. D 49 and [fig. 89](#) (to Gruyter for De Claussin).
- 34 On *opmaken* in the 17th and 18th centuries, see: B. Broos, 'Improving and Finishing Old Master Drawings: An Art in Itself', *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury* 8 (1989), 34-55.
- 35 'De kregelige reactie te [...] verraden van de leermeester op de enigszins timide compositie van de leerling,' J. Bruyn, 'Rembrandts werkplaats: functie & productie', in: C. Brown, J. Kelch and P. van Thiel, *Rembrandt:*

- de meester & zijn werkplaats. Schilderijen*, cat.exh. Berlin (Gemäldegalerie), Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) & London (The National Gallery) 1991-1992, 68-89: 81, with reference to a drawing by Constantijn Daniel van Renesse. A selection of drawings by Rembrandt students improved by the master was depicted in Benesch 1973, vol. 6, 365-370, nos. 1370-1384 and figs. 1683-1698.
- 36 B.P.J. Broos, 'Review of W.L. Strauss and M. van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents*, New York 1979', *Simiolus* 12 (1981-1982), 258-259 and fig. 10; M. Roscam Abbing, *Rembrandt 2006: New Rembrandt Documents*, Leiden 2006, 32-32, no. NRD 17 and ill.; Blanc 2008, 333, no. D 71 and fig. 101; C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: the Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Chicago/London 1995, 31-32 and fig. 17. The authors cited all attributed the drawing (Dresden, Kupferstichkabinett, inv.no. C 1443) to Samuel van Hoogstraten, but its author has been identified as Constantijn van Renesse, see: H. Bevers, 'Ausstellungen zu Rembrandt im Rückblick', *Kunstchronik* 58 (2005), 480; idem in: P. Schatborn a.o., *Drawings by Rembrandt and His Pupils: Telling the Difference*, cat.exh. Los Angeles (The J. Paul Getty Museum) 2009-2010, 189-191, no. 31.2 and fig. 31a.
- 37 Bartsch 22; see also P. Schatborn, *Bij Rembrandt in de leer/Rembrandt as Teacher*, cat.exh. Amsterdam (Museum het Rembrandthuis) 1984-1985, 15, no. 2 and ill.
- 38 Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, inv.no. MB 237; J. Giltay, *De tekeningen van Rembrandt en zijn school in het Museum Boymans-van Beuningen*, Rotterdam 1988, 178-179, no. 85 and ill., with attribution to Samuel van Hoogstraten.
- 39 Hollstein 1; Schatborn 1984-1985, 16, no. 3 and ill..
- 40 Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, inv.no. KdZ 5665; Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 3, pp. 1244-1245, no. 570** and ill.; Schatborn 1984-1985, 17, no. 6 and ill..
- 41 Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet, inv.no. 1975:56; Schatborn 1984-1985, 16, no. 4 and ill.; P. Schatborn, 'Tekeningen van Rembrandts leerlingen', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 33 (1985), 93-109: 106 and fig. 28.
- 42 Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 8, 3952-3954, no. 1758 and ill. (Maes); Schatborn 1984-1985, 17, no. 5 and ill. (Maes?); Giltay 1988, 178 (Samuel van Hoogstraten); P. Huys Janssen and W. Sumowski, *The Hoogsteder Exhibition of Rembrandt's Academy*, Den Haag/Zwolle 1992, 178-180 and fig. 21a (Samuel van Hoogstraten); Blanc 2008, 349, no. 162 (Samuel van Hoogstraten).
- 43 In a recent communication (e-mail message of 16 June 2011), Michiel Roscam Abbing kindly drew my attention to a related drawing, *Youth with Hat in a Dutch Door*. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (inv.no. KdZ 11974). Given the close facial resemblance to our drawing, it would appear to be another *Self-Portrait* by Samuel van Hoogstraten, though perhaps of a slightly later date. The washes are more pervasive, however. See Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 5, pp. 2790-2791, no. 1261* and ill. Like the Custodia sheet, this drawing was in the Versteegh sale (note 21), kunstboek 3E, no. 1. It is related to a painting in Saint Petersburg, Hermitage (inv.no. GE 2812); W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler. II. G. van den Eeckhout-I. de Joudreville*, Landau/Pfalz 1983, pp. 1298 and 1339, no. 856 and ill., but the precise connection is not clear.
- 44 M. Roscam Abbing, *De schilder en schrijver Samuel van Hoogstraten. 1627-1678: eigentijdse bronnen en oeuvre van zijn gesigneerde schilderijen*, Leiden 1993, pp. 33-35.
- 45 The Hague, Museum Bredius, inv.nr. 56-1946; Sumowski 1983, pp. 1295 and 1330, no. 847 and ill.; M. Roscam Abbing, *Van Hoogstraten: iconografie van een familie*, Amsterdam 1987, 78 and 93, no. 1 and fig. 43.
- 46 Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, inv.no. 1386; Sumowski 1983, 1296 and 1332, no. 849 and ill.; Roscam Abbing 1987, 93-94 and 110, no. 2 and fig. 54. On the early self-portraits by Van Hoogstraten, see: Brusati 1995, 139-145.
- 47 Vaduz-Vienna, Sammlungen des Fürsten von und zu Liechtenstein, inv.no. GE-107; Sumowski 1983, 1296 and 1334, no. 851 and ill.; Roscam Abbing 1987, 94-95 and 108, no. 3 and fig. 53; Blanc 2008, 363, no. P 41 and fig. 116. I recognize the same facial features in the drawing *Standing Male Model* (Darmstadt, Hessisches

- Landesmuseum, inv.no. AE 671), which Sumowski considered to be a *Self-Portrait* by Barent Fabritius: see Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 4, 1786-1787, no. 820 and ill.
- 48 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, inv.no. B. 12 rés. boîte 5; F. Lugt, *Bibliothèque nationale: cabinet des estampes, inventaire général des dessins des écoles du nord*, Paris 1936, 67, no. 251 and fig. LXXII; Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 5, 2780-2781, no. 1256* and ill.; Blanc 2008, 348, no. D 157.
- 49 Schatborn 1984-1985, 30-31, nos. 18-19 and ill.: 'The drawing must have originated from the same sitting during which Rembrandt made his sketch on a prepared etching plate.' For a characterization of the drawing style of Samuel van Hoogstraten between 1646 and 1648, see: Broos 1981, 135-136; Schatborn 2010, vol. 1, 237.
- 50 Paris, Louvre, inv.no. RF 4193; Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 5, 2770-2771, no. 1251* and ill.; Blanc 2008, 349, no. D 160; J. Blanc, *Dans l'atelier de Rembrandt: Le Maître et ses élèves*, Paris 2006, 72-73 and ill. The note 'no 4' is by the same hand as the half cut off inscription 'no 16' on the drawing mentioned in note 47 and 'no 12' on a drawing in Rotterdam (Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, inv.no. R 43), see Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 5, 2784-2785, no. 1258* and ill.
- 51 B. Broos, 'Rembrandts "huisvrouw" en haar vroegste biografen', *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 1/2 (2003), 35-38, 44, n. 7, and fig. 5. That Van Hoogstraten got to draw Geertje in the nude was first suggested by H.J. Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*, 2 vols., Doornspijk 2000, vol. 1, 476.
- 52 A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (3 vols.), Amsterdam 1718-1721, vol. 1, 272; Horn 2000, vol. 1, 476 and vol. 2, n. 10-61; Broos 2003, 35: 'huisvrouw' and 'welgemaakt van wezen en poezel van lichaam'.
- 53 Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, inv.no. 1910:6 Z; Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 5, pp. 2472-2473, no. 1110 and ill.; Roscam Abbing 1987, 97 and 99, no. 9 and fig. 51; Roscam Abbing 1993, 37-37, no. 17 and ill.6; T. Vignau-Wilberg, *Rembrandt auf Papier: Werk und Wirkung/Rembrandt and His Followers: Drawings from Munich*, cat.exh. Munich (Alte Pinakothek) Amsterdam (Museum het Rembrandthuis) 2001-2002, 302-305, no. 84 and ill.; Blanc 2008, 349, no. D 163.
- 54 *Inleyding*, 110: 'om te gelijk vertoon en aenschouwer te zijn'.
- 55 Saint Petersburg, Hermitage, inv.no. GE-788; W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler: V, Nachträge-Ortsregister, Ikonographisches Register, Bibliographie*, Landau/Pfalz 1983, 3102 and 3230, no. 2095 and ill.: 'aus den mittleren vierziger Jahren'; Roscam Abbing 1987, 62 and 96, no. 6 and fig. 33 (without dates); Brusati 1995, 139-142, fig. 101 and 347, no. 4 saw in the composition a variant on Rembrandt's etching of 1648; Vignau-Wilberg 2001-2002, 302-304, fig. 1: 'Etwa im gleichen Alter' (ca. 1649); Cat. *Rembrandt et son école: collections du musée de l'Ermitage de Saint-Petersbourg*, Dijon (Musée des Beaux-Arts) 2003-2004, pp. 154-155, no. 30 and ill.: 'la fin des années 1640'; Blanc 2008, p. 364, no. P 47 and fig. 3 (without dates).
- 56 According to Michiel Roscam Abbing, mention must be made of a *Self-Portrait*(?), attributed to Samuel van Hoogstraten, in the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford Connecticut (inv.no. 1961-643). This work shows a drawing young man whose hands, but especially the left one holding an inkwell, closely resemble those of a painting in St. Petersburg. The canvas was once famous as one of the 'Rembrandts of Pierpont Morgan' and, according to 'documentary evidence', was identified as a *Portrait of Jan van de Capelle*, see: *The Hudson-Fulton Celebration*, cat.exh. New York (The Metropolitan Museum of Art) 1909, 94-95, no. 93 and ill. It was later considered to be a portrait of a pupil (Constantijn van Renesse or Barent Fabritius), see: W.R. Valentiner, 'Carel en Barent Fabritius', *The Art Bulletin* 14 (1932), 203 and 235 and fig. 1; M. Weinberger, 'Rembrandt's Portrait of Constantijn a Renesse', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 90 (1948), vol. XXXIV, 23-32, passim and fig. 1. In the Rembrandt year 1956 it was exhibited as a *Self-Portrait* by Barent Fabritius, see: W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt and his Pupils: A Loan Exhibition*, cat.exh. Raleigh (The North

Carolina Museum of Art) 1956, 118, no. 32 and ill. In 1968 it was tentatively identified as a *Self Portrait* by Samuel van Hoogstraten, see: A.B. de Vries, *Verzameling Sidney J. van den Bergh*, Wassenaar 1968, no. 72. The attribution was taken over by the Hartford museum, which had acquired the painting in 1961 from Robert Lehman, see: Cat. *Wadsworth Atheneum Paintings, I: The Netherlands and the German-speaking Countries, Fifteenth-Nineteenth Centuries*, Hartford 1978, 154, no. 76 and [fig. 81](#) (with literature). Roscam Abbing did not recognize Samuel van Hoogstraten in the portrait (see: Roscam Abbing 1987, 109, no. 2) and expressed no opinion about the attribution. In Sumowski's 'Nachträge' it was attributed to Barent Fabritius as a (self)portrait, see: Sumowski 1983, 3096 and 3200, no. 2069 and ill. in color (with extensive literature). The painting was once heavily overpainted (see for instance: W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt: des Meisters Gemälde in 643 Abbildungen*, Stuttgart & Berlin 1908, 346), which makes it very difficult to assess the attribution. The connection with Van Hoogstraten's painting and its preparatory study is apparent, but has yet to be satisfactorily explained.

- 57 A. Pappé, 'Bemerkungen zu einigen Neuerwerbungen der Eremitage, III: Werke der Rembrandtschule: Ferdinand Bol und Jan Lievens', *Oud Holland* 42 (1925), 153-158.
- 58 A. Blankert, *Ferdinand Bol (1616-1680): Rembrandt's Pupil*, Doornspijk 1982, 173, no. R 103.
- 59 *Meesterwerken uit de Hermitage/Masterpieces from the Hermitage Leningrad*, cat.exh. Rotterdam (Museum Boymans-van Beuningen) 1985, 58-59, no. 16 and ill.: reference not to Blankert 1982, but to unpublished attributions by K. Bauch (1966), C. Cunningham (1967) and J.G. van Gelder (1969).
- 60 Roscam Abbing 1987, 96, no. 6, again without mention of Blankert.
- 61 Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum, inv.no. A 10288; B. Binstock, 'Samuel van Hoogstraten's Westertoren', *Master Drawings* 45 (2007), 187-200.
- 62 C. Busken Huet, *Het land van Rembrandt: Studien over de Noordnederlandsche beschaving in de zeventiende eeuw* (3 vols.), Haarlem 1882-1884, vol. 3, 536: 'Rembrandt's afbeelding der amsterdamsche Westerkerk is de Westerkerk zelf ...'. Broos 1981, 82-86, no. 19 and ill.: 'Leerling van Rembrandt (midden 17^{de} eeuw)' [Student of Rembrandt (mid 17th century)]; see also: B.P.J. Broos, 'Recensie van W. Sumowski, Drawings of the Rembrandt School, Vols. 1-4', *Oud Holland* 98 (1984), 162-186, esp. 174.
- 63 Binstock 2007, 191-192 and [figs. 2 and 3](#) (detail); in a missive of 20 June 2011, Michiel Roscam Abbing informed the present writer that he had advised Binstock that his story about Hoogstraten's student dwelling is not based on any source .
- 64 AA.vv. (Cat. Dijon) 2003-2004, 154: 'Le jeune peintre avait déjà quitté l'atelier de Rembrandt'.
- 65 The drawing is now attributed to Nicolaes Maes (by W.W. Robinson, oral communication), on the grounds of the inscriptions on a few related sheets which were named in Broos 1981, 86, nn. 21-22 (e.g., Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, inv.no. KdZ 1116; see: Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 8, 4248-4249, no. 1899a* and ill.).
- 66 W.W. Robinson in: Schatborn a.o. 2009-2010, 179-181, nos. 29.2, 29b-c and ill.; see earlier: W.W. Robinson, *Seventeenth-Century Dutch Drawings: A Selection from the Maida and George Abrams Collection*, cat.exh. Amsterdam (Rijksprentenkabinet) Vienna (Albertina) New York (The Pierpont Morgan Library) Cambridge, CT (The Fogg Art Museum) 1991-1992, 138, no. 60 and [fig. 1-2](#); Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. 8, 4250-4251, no. 1900* and ill.. See also W.W. Robinson, 'Landscape Drawings by Nicolaes Maes', *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* (2011), 42-47, esp. 45.
- 67 Roscam Abbing 1993, 35 dated the students' years to 1643-1647. See also Luijten 2012, 157: 'made by Hoogstraten after entering Rembrandt's workshop around October 1641'.
- 68 *Inleyding* 44: 'niet alleen niet een arm of been, maer zelfs niet een gezonde schouder aen den hals van haere Konterfeysels hebben kunnen vastmaken'.



CHAPTER 4

“Zwierich van sprong”: Samuel van Hoogstraten’s *Night Watch*

PAUL TAYLOR

It is probably true to say that the lines of Hoogstraten’s *Inleyding* which have been quoted most often in the literature on Dutch art are those which discuss Rembrandt’s *Night Watch* [Fig. 31 and 32]. These lines appear in an absorbing passage, which treats of pictorial composition and the balance of imitation and invention within the artwork. Hoogstraten tells us that the painter should not line up figures in rows, as has happened in too many Dutch militia portraits. True masters, he tells us, manage to make their whole work into a compositional unity.¹ He goes on:

Rembrandt achieved this very well in his piece in the Doelen at Amsterdam, but in the opinion of some too well, making more of the overall image he had designed, than of the individual portraits which he had been commissioned to paint. Nevertheless that same work, however much one may find fault with it, will in my opinion outlast those of his co-workers, being so pictorial in thought, so sinuous of step, and so forceful, that, in the opinions of some, all the other pieces there stand like playing cards next to it. Though I do wish that he had added more light.²

One could probably write a short book on this passage, but this paper will focus on a single phrase, a phrase translated into English above, inadequately, as ‘sinuous of step’. The Dutch is ‘zwierich van sprong’, and it is an unusual expression; I do not know of any other Dutch author who uses this particular triplet of words. Recent attempts to translate the phrase have been far from uniform, suggesting a certain amount of disagreement and confusion. To give just two examples of English renderings: Seymour Slive suggested ‘dashing in movement’, while Gary Schwartz has proposed ‘graceful in the placing of the figures’. It seems to me that both translations, different as they are from one another, and from the one put forward above, are perfectly good. The truth is that these words cannot be put into twenty-first-century English, or French



Fig. 31 Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Night Watch*, 1642, canvas, 363 × 437 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

or German or even Dutch, with simple one-to-one equivalents. The phrase is an allusive one, and it can only be understood once the various connotations it probably had for its author have been patiently teased out.

The discussion that follows will involve a certain amount of *ad hominem* philology, since it seems unlikely that even Hoogstraten's contemporaries would have immediately grasped the meanings these words held for their author. At the same time close attention will be paid to the painting which gave rise to Hoogstraten's phrase. The *Night Watch* as we have it today is of course rather different from the canvas Rembrandt made and Hoogstraten knew, since it was cut down on all four sides, especially at the left and at the top, in the early eighteenth century. It will be argued here that the expression 'zwierich van sprong' can only be understood fully if we restore the *Night Watch* to its original shape, at least in virtual reality. The mutilated version of the work which we make do with today is in its compositional coherence, legibility and fluency very different from the painting which Hoogstraten, despite his reservations, so admired.



Fig. 32 Rembrandt's *Night Watch*, as it appeared before it was cut down in the 18th century: c. 408 x 508 cm. Reconstruction by Paul Taylor from photos of the original in the Rijksmuseum and the copy by Gerrit Lundens (after 1642, oak, 66.8 x 85.4 cm, London, National Gallery)

Most of this paper will be devoted to the complex adjective ‘zwierich’, but ‘sprong’ is really the odder of the two terms. To Hoogstraten’s contemporaries the word was principally used to mean ‘leap’ or ‘jump’,³ with a variety of derivative meanings such as ‘assault’ and ‘dance step’;⁴ but to Hoogstraten ‘sprong’ also did service as a term associated with pictorial composition. Thus he writes in a passage on the subject of composition of ‘the agreement, measurement and fittingness of tone; the *sprong* and trooping and, further, all the beauty of the art of arrangement.’⁵ There is not enough context in this passage to make its precise meaning clear, but from other passages it emerges that Hoogstraten is using the word to refer to the arrangement of figures. He even uses the compound neologism ‘beeldesprong’ at one point, telling us that one can wonderfully

improve the parts of one's painting through an applied order, the arrangement of shadows and 'beeldesprong', which must mean the disposition of figures in pictorial space.⁶ Hoogstraten is using the concept 'sprong' here, I would suggest, because he is thinking of dancers prancing gracefully in step; one of his key terms when writing about the graceful movement of figures within the composition is '*dansleyding*', leading the dance.⁷ Like most other early modern authors, his concept of composition is focussed on the figures; by the word '*ordineering*' he does not want to denote the overall arrangement of the pictorial elements within the frame, so much as the interaction of the human beings depicted in the picture's illusory space.⁸ In referring to the *sprong* of the *Night Watch*, then, he is trying to draw our attention to some pleasing aspect of the arrangement of the figures within the painting. Exactly which one, or which ones, will only become clear once we have examined the word that modifies *sprong* in Hoogstraten's description of the *Night Watch*.

The adjective and adverb *zwierich*, the noun *zwier* and the verb *zwieren* do not appear in Middle Dutch, and their sudden emergence in mid-sixteenth-century texts are something of an etymological mystery. The *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* suggests that they are probably a relatively recent onomatopoeic formation, growing out of other Dutch words for movement beginning with *zw-*, such as *zwaaien*, *zwenken*, *zwerfen*, *zweven* and *zwiepen*.⁹ Certainly, movement seems to be at the core of the words' meaning; but by the beginning of the eighteenth century this basic sense had acquired a rather wide range of figurative connotations, in fields from art and poetic theory to fashion and what is now known as imagology.¹⁰

To begin with the senses connected with movement. Van Mander writes of the creeping of '*swierende*' snakes,¹¹ and by this word he is referring to their curvy, looped movement; elsewhere he writes that the snake '*loopt crom al swierende henen*' 'moves along in a crooked, curling manner'.¹² It is not only snakes who adopt this zig-zag motion; Van Mander notes that Aeneas, fleeing by sea from Troy, made *swierende dwalinghen*, wanderings back and forth.¹³ Later authors also use *zwieren* in the sense of serpentine movement; so for example Houbraken describes a talented skater making '*allerlei drayen en zwieren*', all kinds of turns and loops, on the ice of Lake Geneva.¹⁴

A related meaning to this basic one of snaky motion, and one that is now obsolete in Dutch, is that of '*zwier*' as a train, retinue or entourage. Houbraken tells us that Job and Gerrit Berckheyde travelled to Heidelberg, where the Elector Palatine held his court, and where each day they made a point of watching '*den ganschen hofzwier*', the whole retinue of the court of the Elector, as it rode out to hunt.¹⁵ They made from this sight two paintings with portraits of the Elector and his courtiers. Elsewhere Houbraken writes of the '*gantschen zwier*', the whole train, of the god Bacchus.¹⁶ As a simple transfer of meaning from the snaky senses of the word this is clear enough. Houbraken was not the first person to use *zwier* in this way: the *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* records such meanings from the 1650s onwards.¹⁷

Looking at the *Night Watch*, we can see that Hoogstraten's words '*zwierich van sprong*' could be translated as 'serpentine in movement', since there are two columns of militiamen in the painting, the one snaking in from the left, following Frans Banning Cocq, the other from the

right, following Willem van Ruytenburch, and they are curving and swerving as they merge to cross the bridge. This interpretation of what we see is much easier to make when looking at the restored version of the *Night Watch* [Fig. 32].

In the present, shrunken version [Fig. 31], one cannot see that the militia companies are lining up on the opposite bank in order to cross a bridge towards the viewer, and the amputation of the end of the queue at left means it is not clear that the men in the centre are going anywhere at all; they seem to be just milling around in order to have their picture taken. The mutilation of the *Night Watch* has largely destroyed the strong sense of movement which gave the painting that compositional unity Hoogstraten noted with admiration.

It seems unlikely that by using the word ‘zwierich’, Hoogstraten was trying principally to describe the way these two lines of soldiers converge like two snakes – the meanings of the term are more complex than this – but, like other users of language, he must have been in the habit of choosing words because they seemed apt, and often aptness is more than a question of surface meaning. We use words because they strike us as fitting, and this sense of fitness arises in part because they make the assertions we want them to make, and in part because they have the right feeling in context. Hoogstraten used *zwier* in a number of metaphorical and art-theoretical senses, but he must also have been aware of the basic underlying meanings of the words; and if he pulled *zwierich* out of his aesthetic lexicon here, it was surely because it suited the *Night Watch* well on more than one level of sense. In Rembrandt’s painting the two captains’ retinues curve in a serpentine way, and Hoogstraten could have expressed this in the Dutch of his day as ‘De zwieren zwieren zwierich’: it is no surprise then that ‘zwierich’ seemed like a good word to choose when describing Rembrandt’s composition.

‘Zwieren’ could mean ‘to advance windingly like a snake’, but it also extended itself to other forms of movement. Houbraken at one point refers to an inn with ‘a group of thirsty painters flitting round the door like bees around sugar’,¹⁸ and almost any movement which included curves could find itself described by *zwieren*. Another example of *zwieren* used in this broader sense occurs in Van Mander’s Italian *Lives*, in the biography of Rosso Fiorentino.

Van Mander tells us that, in the cloister of the church of Santissima Annunziata in Florence, Rosso painted an Assumption of the Virgin Mary, with a ring around her of naked children or angels, with beautiful outlines and foreshortenings, turning in a very graceful and handsome way in the glow that surrounds the Virgin [Fig. 33].¹⁹ Van Mander is of course translating Vasari, whose expression is ‘con graziosissimo modo girati per quell’aria’;²⁰ ‘swierende’ corresponds to ‘girati’, turned. However Van Mander is not only putting Italian into Flemish here, since he has used the word ‘schijnsel’, ‘aura’ or ‘glow’, to translate ‘aria’, which just means ‘air’, ‘atmosphere’ or sometimes ‘sky’. Since Van Mander’s word fits exactly with the glory in Rosso’s Assumption, we could have one of those rare instances where the Fleming adds something to his Italian original.²¹ Van Mander spent some time in Florence, exactly how long we do not know,²² and may well have visited the Annunziata; perhaps he still had an accurate memory, almost forty years on, of Rosso’s painting.

Besides referring to almost any kind of curving movement, *zwier* could also be used to

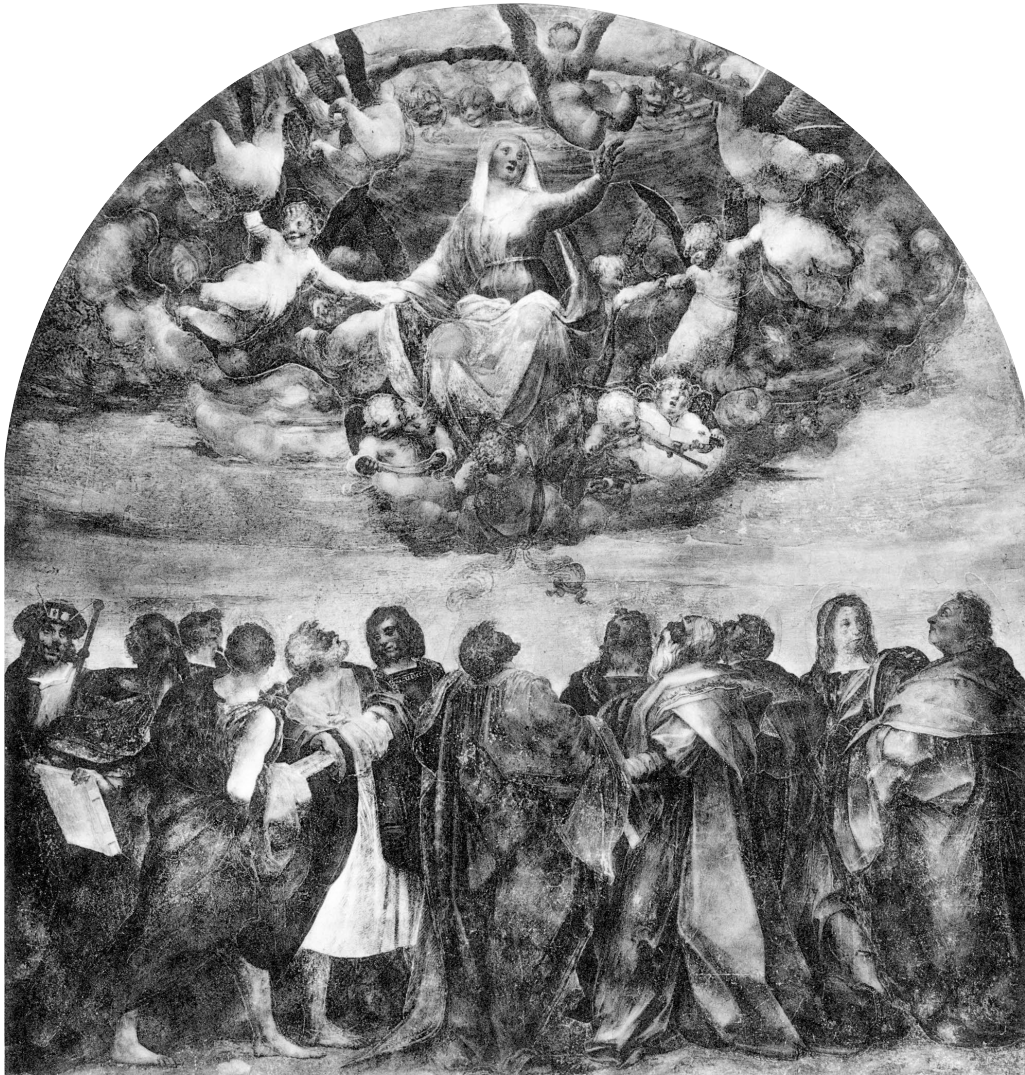


Fig. 33 Rosso Fiorentino, *The Assumption of the Virgin*, 1517, fresco, 385 x 337 cm, Florence, Chiostro dei Voti, Basilica della Santissima Annunziata

describe curves which were more or less stationary. Both Hoogstraten and Lairesse use *zwier* and *zwierig* to refer to tumbling locks of hair,³³ while the obscure poet Bartholomeus Abba, when rhapsodising a portrait of Joanna de Witt, wrote of ‘den swier van ’s lichaems ommetrek’, the curve of the body’s outline.³⁴ This meaning, of curves forming an outline, feeds into a sense of *zwier* that Hoogstraten uses quite frequently, especially in the early section of his treatise, when he is talking about drawing. Thus he encourages the young draughtsman to learn sketching, and

to contemplate the general contour of things, *de zwier der dingen*, avoiding all the fine detail which might blind him to the overall shape.²⁵ This sense of *zwier* was also deployed by Hoogstraten’s pupil Houbraken; in a passage in the life of Johanna Koerten, Parrhasius is characterised as ‘braaf van zwier’, good at contours.²⁶ Van Mander tells us, following Pliny, that Parrhasius was acclaimed by all painters as the artist who knew best how to draw a good outline.²⁷

A related use of the word can be found in another part of Hoogstraten’s *Inleyding*. He tells the budding draughtsman to give the contours of his drawing ‘haer eygene zwiertjes’, their own little curves, ‘not with an outline, which runs round like a black thread, but carefully, with a light hand, bit by bit.’²⁸ This is advice which even a virtuoso like Goltzius invariably followed [Fig. 34]; drawing contours bit by bit was not meant merely as prudent practice for beginners, so they would not go too far astray, but as a technique which experienced draughtsmen would also use. It allowed them to emphasise lights and shadows, to convey space, to accentuate turning points, and even to express the feel of sensitive and less sensitive regions of the body; faces, hands and feet are often drawn in thicker lines than flanks or biceps. Hoogstraten’s talk of *zwiertjes* here may make this manner of drawing sound timid and hesitant, but he is unlikely to have meant it that way, since in so many other contexts *zwier* has connotations of looseness, grace and facility.

We can see this for example in a passage in the *Inleyding* where Hoogstraten, embellishing Van Mander,²⁹ is talking of the depiction of draperies among the ancient Greeks. The most ancient of painters, Hoogstraten writes, made their draperies without folds or creases, until one Cimon of Achaia abandoned that stiff manner, and gave his draperies ‘een losse zwier’, a loose sway.³⁰ Words like ‘*los*’ and ‘*vry*’ often accompany ‘*zwier*’, emphasising the way that the latter generally has connotations of relaxed ease and free, unconstrained grace. When Hoogstraten translates Tasso’s description of Armida, he writes that her tresses are of gold thread, swaying loosely.³¹ A related usage comes in an interesting passage where he tells us that the close imitation of nature does not produce good results when painting hair, clouds or flowing drapery; here we need to work ‘uit den geest’, from the spirit.

He writes: ‘The right sway of lovely hair, cloud and loose clothes comes only from the spirit.’³² Here a number of the meanings and connotations of *zwier* are united: curves and grace and ease are all blended together. *Zwier* was a word which was constantly being used in extended senses: loose graceful curves could lend themselves to all kinds of metaphorical applications, and few authors applied these metaphors as eagerly as Hoogstraten.

One of the most interesting of these applications comes in a passage devoted to the subject of composition. Hoogstraten tells us that our compositions should not be too packed together, and he adds that we should leave them ‘een vrye zwier’.³³ The metaphorical connotations are packed densely in this phrase; an open composition gives the figures room in which to turn, to move at their ease, it allows for a graceful interplay of forms, for a harmonious loop of curves connecting the different sections of the painting. All of these allusive notions, and more, are expressed in the richness of Hoogstraten’s language here.

This particular sense of ‘*zwier*’ is surely one that matches the restored version of the *Night Watch* better than the cut-down version. In the restored version there is, so to speak, air in which



Fig. 34 Hendrick Goltzius, *Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus*, 1593, pen and ink on parchment, 62.9 x 49.4 cm, London, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings

to breathe; the standard bearer can wave his flag without having the top clipped off by the frame, the shade of the arch behind is visible in its entirety, a cooling breeze floats up from the canal at bottom left and the road ahead of the militia is empty and open before them. All of this, it would seem, is an example of what Hoogstraten meant by ‘een vrye zwier’, and some of this meaning presumably seeped into the phrase ‘zwierich van sprong’.

As we have seen, ‘losse zwier’ could mean ‘loose sway or grace’; a more condensed application of the term comes in a passage on degrees of finish in a painting. Hoogstraten writes: ‘To give something a fine appearance in little time with an easy touch of the hand (*een losse zwier*) is not as difficult as to execute the same thing from start to finish with intelligent industry. A good beginning rightly gives one encouragement, but the greatest art is to end well.’³⁴

In this passage, *zwier* has the connotations of ease and grace that we have already noted, but it is also being used in a more concrete way to mean something akin to manual skill. This is a fairly rare meaning of the word, but it is found too in Van Mander and Houbraken.³⁵ Indeed Houbraken uses the compound word ‘penceelzwier’, telling us that Willem van Drillenburgh’s landscapes were close in style to those of Jan Both, but that Drillenburgh’s were neither so naturally coloured nor so ‘dartel van penceelzwier’, lively in their use of the brush.³⁶ In using the word ‘zwierich’ of the *Night Watch*, then, Hoogstraten may also be alluding to the easy facility of the handling: and this, for once, is an aspect of the painting which we can still admire today, in the amputated version of the work.

The further we travel in our study of *zwier*’s many meanings, the more we find that what we have considered the simplest of its senses, curvy movement, has been lost. *Zwier* is a perfect example of what analytical philosophers of language would call a cluster concept; its meanings have been so extended by analogy that the core meaning has been left behind.³⁷

When Jan Luyken describes a dream vision of his beloved Laura, standing naked by his bed, and asks ‘what heart would not have been moved by so beautiful and godly a grace?’,³⁸ we can still see the meaning of ‘curvaceous’ in the background; but when Vondel notes the ‘Ridderlyken zwier’, the aristocratic grace, in the eyes of the Baron of Amerongen,³⁹ then we have entered different territory. *Zwier* could mean ‘grace’ in any number of contexts where curves or shape or even appearance seem to be irrelevant; for example, Dutch poets sometimes praised poems by other authors, ancient or modern, for their godly or noble *zwier*, meaning by this the harmonious grace of their diction.⁴⁰ On occasion, Hoogstraten too seems to use the word to mean little more than ‘grace’; but each time, I think, he has something more definite in the back of his mind. Take for example a revealing bit of verse where he appears to be using *zwier* to mean something very close to grace, but at the same time appears to contrast *zwier* with *bevallijkheid*, grace:

It happens even to images which are beautiful in form that they lack Grace, the true gift of Heaven, due to secret failings, which stick in the sway (*zwier*) of their movement.⁴¹

Here surely the simple meaning of *zwier*, as curvaceous movement, is colouring his use of the word, and he does not merely mean by it grace or beauty. The same can be said of another pas-



Fig. 35 Raphael and workshop, *Fire in the Borgo*, 1514, fresco, 500 x 670 cm, Vatican City, Palazzi Pontifici, Stanza dell'Incendio

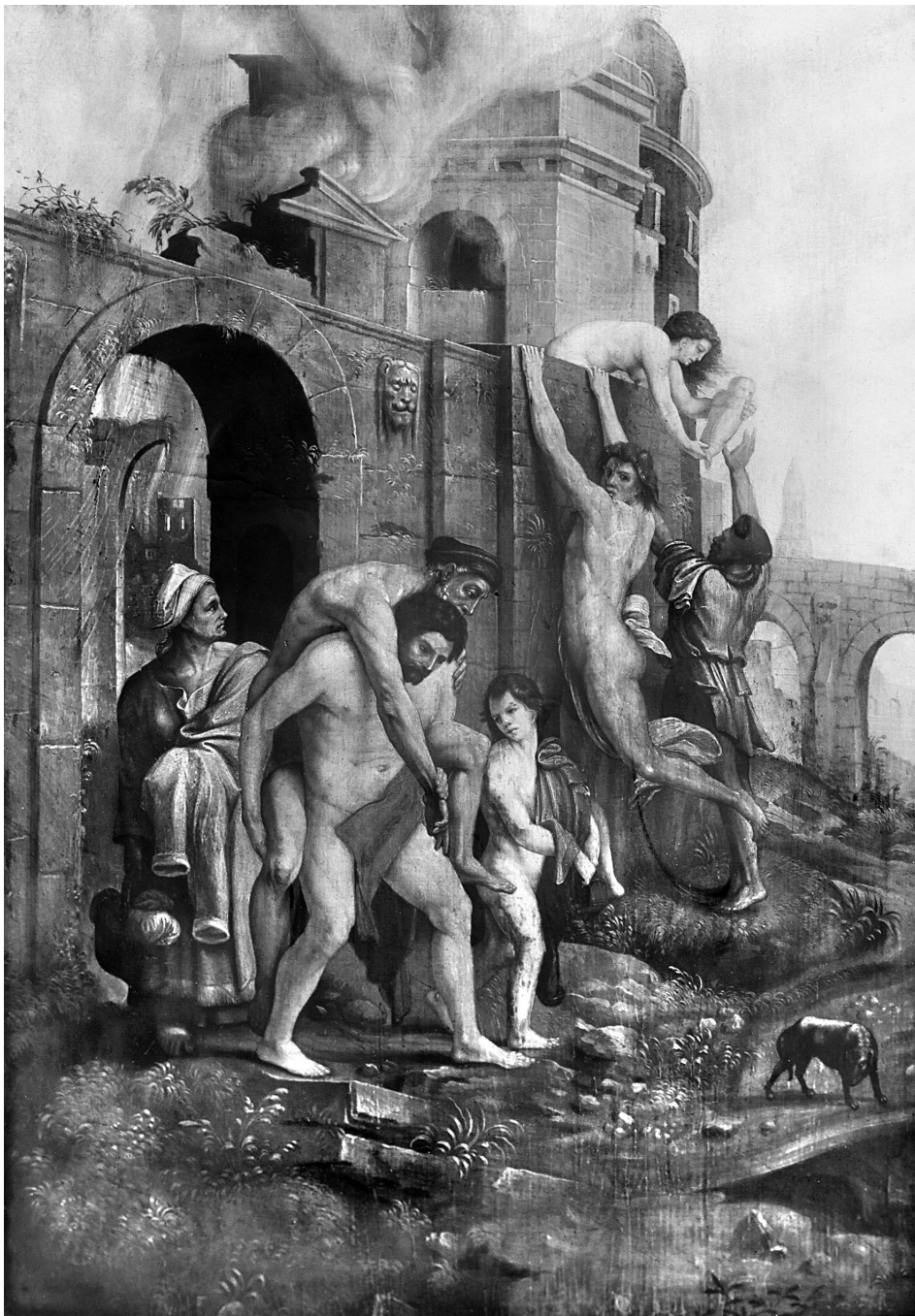


Fig. 36 Lambertus Suavius (attr.), *Aeneas and Anchises Fleeing Troy*, c. 1550, panel, 43.4 x 31.1 cm, Utrecht, Centraal Museum

sage, where he talks of the style of Roman painting as practised by Raphael and Michelangelo [Fig. 35]. This he characterises as ‘de Roomsche *zwier*’,⁴² and it appears from context that he wants to contrast this grand, stately way of painting with a style that detracts from the central theme by devoting too much attention to subsidiary elements and the play of chiaroscuro. Indeed there appears to be some implicit criticism of Rembrandt here: he writes that ‘the command of light and shadow is a feeble crutch: and that it is wrong, in order to make one thing beautiful, that one darken another.’ If the Roman *zwier* runs so contrary to the chiaroscuro style that Rembrandt had developed, then it may seem paradoxical that his *Night Watch* should have been called *zwierich van sprong*.

The apparent contradiction can however be explained. The meaning of *zwier* that Hoogstraten is using when talking about Raphael and Michelangelo has a strong connotation not only of grace but also of essence. This is a sense that Hoogstraten uses elsewhere too. Thus he writes, in a passage on imitation [Fig. 36]:

None the less you will be permitted, when someone else’s well-composed piece is put before you, to borrow from it its melody or tone, that is the grace (*zwier*) of the way it joins hands and dances. Just like some poet, who makes a new song to an old tune. There is no disgrace in composing some verses to a famous melody, which already pleases the whole world.⁴³

I have translated *zwier* as ‘grace’ here, but Hoogstraten intends I think a fuller sense to the word, ‘essence’ or ‘essential grace’ coming close perhaps. The meaning we encountered earlier, of *zwier* as the basic outline of an object, seems to be playing in the background. Accuracy and clarity of line seem to have been linked, at the metaphorical level, with clarity of composition and the clear conception of an artwork’s underlying structure.

Returning now to the *Night Watch* we can perhaps see another layer of meaning in Hoogstraten’s phrase *zwierich van sprong*. What he wanted to suggest was that the painting’s composition was a lucid one, that it was easy to understand what was happening because the overall control of the pictorial elements was so clear and so consistently applied. And this is indeed so in the restored version; twenty-four people and a dog are engaged in a very complex movement and yet we immediately understand who is standing where and the direction in which they are moving. The painting is so well-constructed that we feel a sense of something akin to calm before it; the painter has taken what could have been a commotion and made it into a minuet. This sense of harmony, of parts subsumed by the whole, was also what Hoogstraten and others admired about Roman painting: thus there is no real contradiction in the same word, *zwier*, being used in praise of Rembrandt and Raphael.

Hoogstraten made extensive use of *zwier* and *zwierich*, which he seems to have found ever more useful the more he dragged their senses in all directions. After his death the appeal of the words did not die out: by the second quarter of the eighteenth century they were being used to refer to elegant and thus fashionable appearance, and so became associated with French

manners, usually with a strong undertone of disapproval. Hoogstraten pre-deceased all this, and he probably would not have shared the hostile attitude; his generation was after all the one that first introduced French elegance into Holland. When he wrote of the *Night Watch*, he was turning back from his Francophile old age to pay tribute to one of the great Dutch cultural achievements of his youth: and it says something about his pride in this achievement that, despite all his doubts and reservations, he could still write with such condensed eloquence of Rembrandt’s superb composition.

Notes

- 1 ‘Al wat de konst stuk voor stuk vertoont, is een nabootsing van natuerlijke dingen, maer het by een schicken en ordineeren komt uit den geest des konstaers hervor, die de deelen, die voorgegeven zijn, eerst in zijne inbeelding verwardelijk bevat, tot dat hyze tot een geheel vormt, en zoo te zamen schikt, datze als een beelt maken: en dikwils een menichte beelden eender Historie zoodanich schikt, dat’er geen de minste te veel noch te weynich in schijnt te zijn. En dit noemtmen met recht een waerneming der *Simmetrie, Analogie, en Harmonie*. Ten is niet genoeg, dat een Schilder zijn beelden op ryen nevens malkander stelt, gelijk men hier in Hollant op de Schuttersdoelen al te veel zien kan. De rechte meesters brengen te weeg, dat haer geheele werk eenwezich is, gelijk *Clio* uit *Horatius* leert: *Brengt yder werkstuk, zoo’t behoort, / Slechts enkel en eenweezich voorf*, S. van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderconst*, Rotterdam 1678, 176. The reference (as noted by H.-J. Czech, *Im Geleit der Musen: Studien zu Samuel van Hoogstratens Maleretraktat Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderconst, anders de Zichtbaere Welt (Rotterdam 1679)*, Munich and Berlin 2002, *112) is to Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 23: ‘denique sit quod vis, simplex dumtaxat et unum’.
- 2 ‘*Rembrant* heeft dit in zijn stuk op den Doele tot Amsterdam zeer wel, maer na veeler gevoelen al te veel, waergenomen, maekende meer werks van het groote beelt zijner verkiezing, als van de byzondere afbeeltsels, die hem waren aenbesteet. Echter zal dat zelve werk, hoe berispelijk, na mijn gevoelen al zijn meedes-trevers verdueren, zijnde zoo schilderachtich van gedachten, zoo zwierich van sprong, en zoo krachtich, dat, nae zommiger gevoelen, al d’andere stukken daer als kaertblaren nevens staen. Schoon ik wel gewilt hadde, dat hy ‘er meer lichts in ontsteeken had’, *Inleyding* 176.
- 3 E.g. ‘*Zie hier is Rhodus, en daar is de sprong*.’ [Note:] ‘Deze spreuk is ontsproten uit een oude Griekse Fabel, die melt van een Reyziger welke swetste en snorkte over vreemde ontmoetingen, en daden die hy verricht had te Rhodus, inzonderheid over een wyden sprong dien hy gedaan had; welken Blaaskaak men bracht aan diergelyk wyd water, zeggende: *Toon ons hier een sprong als gy zegt te Rhodus gedaan te hebben*’, A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols, The Hague 1753 (ed.princ. 1718-1721), II, 212.
- 4 For these see the *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche taal*, s.v. *sprong*. As observed there (§4) the meaning of ‘sprong’ as ‘dance step’ is now obsolete in Dutch, but was current in Hoogstraten’s time.
- 5 ‘*Thaleie als Hofmeesters der Eedle konst, gewoon/ In kamerspel en klucht met vreugde te verkeeren, / Leert hier de grage jeugt de zwier van’t Ordineeren:/De min-en-maetschap, en gevoegblykheit van toon:/De sprong en troeping en voort al’t schikkunstig schoon*’, *Inleyding* 173.
- 6 ‘Zoo hebben de voornaemste Schilders ook altijt iets, dat hun best meevalt. Dezen zal’t lusten, wat stof hy ook voorheeft, de zelve deur aardige deelen wonder behaeglijk te doen schijnen, als of hy meer vermaeks had in’t vertoonen van een soorte der medewerkende dingen, als in’t gros van de zaek; ’t zy in geestige bewegingen, tronien, toetakelingen of teujeringen. Een ander zal dezelve deelen door een gedwongener orde, door schickschaduwe en beeldesprong, wonderlijk vergrooten’, *Inleyding* 175. At the conference of

which this is the proceedings Eric Jan Sluijter suggested to me that Hoogstraten was employing the word ‘sprong’ in a sense derived from architecture, where it can be used to refer to the way that certain architectural elements protrude or jut out over others: see *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche taal, Sprong*, § 11. The idea then would be that the whole meaning of ‘sprong’ was a spatial one, more or less identical with the sense just sketched for ‘beeldesprong’. However the *WNT*’s earliest example of this architectural sense of ‘sprong’ is mid-nineteenth century. The word ‘uitsprong’ (Middelnederlands ‘utespronc’) had the same range of meaning from the middle ages onward; Hoogstraten could have written ‘zwierich van uitsprong’, but did not do so.

- 7 The fourth chapter of his eighth book (‘Calliope’) is called ‘*Van de Dansleyding, dat is, de welstandige en bevallijke beweging der Beelden, of anders de Graselijckheit in allerley doeningen*’, *Inleyding* 292.
- 8 On the early history of composition see T. Puttfarcken, *The Discovery of Pictorial Composition: Theories of Visual Order in Painting 1400-1800*, New Haven and London 2000; P. Taylor and F. Quiviger (eds.), *Pictorial Composition from Medieval to Modern Art* (Warburg Institute Colloquia, 6), London and Turin 2000.
- 9 ‘Zwieren: onz. en bedr. zw. ww. *Nd. swiren; fri. swiere*. Niet aangetroffen in *Mnl. W.* Mogelijk van de wgm. basis **swī* -, zoals ook *zweep, zweven* en eveneens in oorsprong bewegingaanduidend *zweem*; wsch. echter op te vatten als jonge onomat. vorming, mede onder invloed van bewegingsww. met *zw*-anlaut.’ The examples given here (swing, swerve, wander, float, swish) are mine.
- 10 M. Beller and J. Leerssen (eds.), *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters. A critical Survey*, Amsterdam 2007.
- 11 ‘Als wy onse gronden dus vast beknopen,/ En soo van d’een in d’ander laten strijcken,/ Ghelijck ofter swierende aders copen,/ Van goet verschieten werdt niet te mishopen,/ Want crachtich moeten d’achter-uyten wijcken,/ Wy sullen mijden Berghen, Heuvels, Dijcken,/ Hardt bruyn teghen soet licht te stooten laten,/ Maer comen dat met half verwe te baten’, *Grondt der edel-vry schilder-const*, VIII, 21, in K. van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck*, Alkmaar 1604.
- 12 ‘By dees Hemel-beclimmende Reusen (welcx dgyen en beenen, nae eeniger Poeten versieren, waren cromme Slangen) zijn oock te gelijcken stoute, Godt verachtende, boose Menschen, die nemmeer yet rechts doen: maer gaen heel den crommen wegh, tegen Godt en zijn gebodt, ghelijckende de Slange, die haer niet en van van der aerden opheffen, en recht gaen: maer loopt crom al swierende henen, dese worden van *Minerva* de wijsheyt ghedoot, om datse altijd blijven in de duysterheyt der Menschlijcker onwetenheyt, en nemmeer de ooghen opheffen tot dit Godtlijck licht, het welcke d’ander gheleydet tot een eerlijck en deughdigh leven, en doet verwinnen all’ onverstandt en boosheyt’, *Uutlegginghe, en sin-ghevende verclaringhe, op den Metamorphosis Publij Ovidij Nasonis*, I, 4v-5r, in Van Mander 1604. Cf. ‘Dat onsen Poet desen *Achelous* in Stier en Slange verandert ons uytbeelt, is, om dat sulcke groote Vlieten in hen gheweldt woedende, met der vloet soo een Stiers gheluydt gheven, en dat sy al swierende in den loop den Slangen ghelijcken’, *ibid.*, IX, 74r.
- 13 ‘De swierende dwalinghen die *Aeneas* ter Zee heeft ghedaen, en alle de swaricheden die hy op den wegh hadde, aley hy tot het voorgeschickte Italien con in rust comen, wijsen aen, dat in de beroerlijcke biter Zee deser Weerelt, geen seker rust-haven en is, daer men den ancker zijner hopen oft betrouwen vestighen mach: voor wy en zijn tot der van Godt beloofde Siel-rust ghecomen’, *Uutlegginghe, en sin-ghevende verclaringhe, op den Metamorphosis Publij Ovidij Nasonis*, XIII, 107v, in Van Mander 1604.
- 14 ‘Hy begaf zig ’s middags op ’t Ys (terwyl de toekykers op den wal stonden) makende allerlei drayen en zwieren, buitenover, dan op ’t een dan op ’t ander been, ’t welk van de aanschouwers met verwondering en handgeklap geprezen werd.’ The sentence occurs in a long and amusing anecdote about Vincent van der Vinne, who, while in Geneva, boasted that he was a great ice skater, assuming that the nearby lake would never freeze over; but in the hard winter of 1653 it did. Van der Vinne feigned a sprain and found a fellow Dutchman, Joost Baille, who carried out the pirouettes here described. Houbraken 1753, II, 212-14.

- 15 Houbraken 1753, III, 192.
- 16 ‘Terwyl wy nu den optocht van Bachus, met zyn gantschen zwier breedwydig, hebben aangetogen, is ‘er eyndelyk noch iets te zeggen omtrent de verbeelding van den Wyngod...’, Houbraken 1753, III, 149. ‘t lust ons met dat zelve oogwit, des Wyngods verjaarfestviering in zyn gantschen zwier, bekleedingen, hoofdsierselen der Veld-en Tuinnimfen, hun wyze van Vreugdbedryven, en hoe de snoeplustige Satyrs daarmee omspringen, als in een Schildery met levendige koleuren, eerst door de fenixpen van Naso, nu door zyn vertaalter Arn. Hoogvliet, in Duitse vaarsen afgemaalt, voor te stellen’, *ibid.*, III, 152.
- 17 ‘Zoo heeft hem ... Prins Willem ... verwaerdicht, om ... als speelgenoot, in syn gezelschap naer Engeland toe te reysen met een langhen swier van edel-luyden, V. SLICHTENHORST, *Geld. Gesch.* 1, 114 a [1654], *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche taal, s.v. Zwier* (§7).
- 18 ‘Naderhant maakte hy ‘t noch slechter; want staande in de deur van de Herberg, en ziende een troep dorstige Schilders om de deur zwieren als Byen om de suiker, vraagde hy aan de geenen die by hem stonden, *zyn dat ook al Bentvogels?* en als hem *Fa* geantwoort wierd: antwoordde hy met opgestreken knevels: *Ik dacht dat het bedelaars waren: om dats’er zoo geplukt uitzien.*’ The passage occurs in the life of Jacob Toorenvliet, Houbraken 1753, III, 165.
- 19 ‘Hy moedt grijpende, maecte in den voorhof van Servi, Marien Hemelvaert, met eenen ringh om haer van danssende naeckte Kinderen oft Engelen, met schoon omtrecken en vercortinghen, seer gracelijck, in dat schijnsel aerlich swierende’, *Leven der moderne, oft dees-tijtsche doorluchtighe Italiaensche schilders*, 130r, in Van Mander 1604.
- 20 ‘Onde gli crebbe l’animo talmente, che avendo egli a maestro Giacopo frate de’ Seni, che attendeva alle poesie, fatto un quadro d’una Nostra Donna con la testa di S. Giovanni Evangelista, mezza figura, persuaso da lui fece nel cortile de’ detti Servi, allato alla storia della Visitazione che lavorò Giacopo da Puntormo, l’Assunzione di Nostra Donna, nella quale fece un cielo d’Angeli, tutti fanciulli ignudi che ballano intorno alla Nostra Donna acerchiati, che scortano con bellissimo andare di contorni e con graziosissimo modo girati per quell’aria...’, G. Vasari, *Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori* [1568 edn] (ed. G. Milanesi), 7 vols, Florence 1878-85, V, 156-7.
- 21 For a summary of Van Mander’s additions to Vasari, see H. Miedema, *Karel van Manders Leven der moderne oft dees-tijtsche doorluchtighe Italiaensche schilders en hun bron: een vergelijking tussen van Mander en Vasari*, Alphen aan den Rijn 1984, 19-21.
- 22 K. van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters: Preceded by The Lineage, Circumstances and Place of Birth, Life and Works of Karel van Mander, Painter and Poet and likewise his Death and Burial* (ed. H. Miedema), 6 vols, Doornspijk, 1994-99, II, 50.
- 23 *Inleyding* 146 and 229; G. de Lairese, *Groot schilderboek*, 2nd edn [1st edn Amsterdam, 1707], Haarlem 1740, I, 60 and 100.
- 24 ‘Op d’afbeeldinghe van mejoffèr Joanna de Witt. *Audetque Vires concurrere Virgo.* Hier geeft de schilderkonst, op ‘t edel tafereel./ Johanna, vrou Natuurs volkomen pronkjuweel./ Een moedige Amazoon, geviert en aangebeden./ Om schoonheit zonder gaede, en werreltwijze zeden./ Indien d’afbeelder meer kon schetsen, dan den swier/ Van ‘s lichaems ommetrek; men zag in ‘t levend vier/ Der flonkrende ooggen ‘t hart van Hollandts adel blaeken’, A.J. van der Aa, *Nieuw biographisch, anthologisch en critisch woordenboek van Nederlandsche dichters*, Amsterdam 1844, I, 2. There is of course a strong connotation of grace in this use of the word ‘zwier’.
- 25 ‘Die d’eerste les van deze Konst begeert./ Zie dat hy wel en aerdigh schetssen leert./ Dat’s, hoe de zwier der dingen valt, betrachten./ En netticheyt en stijvicheyt verachten:/ Want mistmen in den welstant van’t geheel./ Men spilt vergeefs zijn arbeyd in een deel, *Inleyding* 28.
- 26 ‘Het wezen des gemelden Keizers door haar [Johanna Koerten] schaare gesneeden is aan zyn Majesteit

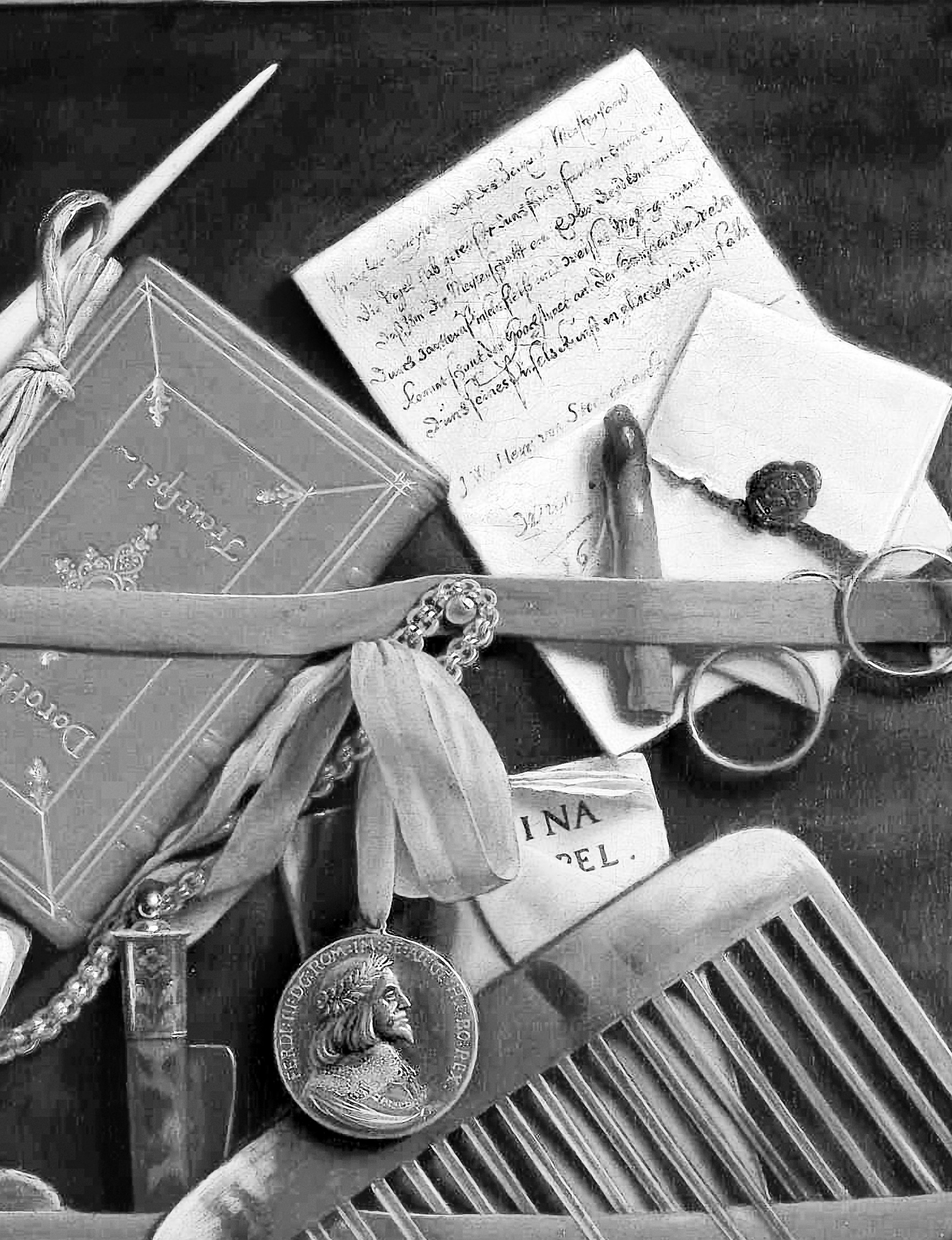
- gezonden, en hangt noch te Weenen in zyn Konstkamer, waar onder dit vaars van den Professor Francius overkonstig geknipt staat: / *Cesaris hæc facies Leopoldi. dextera ferrum, / Laeva globum terræ, quam regit, orbis habet. / Marmora Lysippi cedant, & Mentoris æra: / Cedat Apelleus, Parrhasiusque, labor. / Majus opus tenui in charta (mirabile visu) / Exhibet artificii forfice docta manus.* / Dus vertaalt door A. Monen. / *Dit 's Keizer Leopold; zyn slinker vuist bewaart / Den wereltkloot, dien hy bestiert, zyn rechte 't zwaart. / Wyk Mentors koper, wyk al't marmar der Lyzippen. / Apelles arbeit en Parrhasen braaf van zwier. / Een afgerechte hant en kunstschaar fix in 't knippen, / Werkt grooter wondren voor 't gezicht op dun papier*, Houbraken 1753, vol. III, 295.
- 27 'Hy was oock gehouden, selfs nae het oordeel van alle Schilders, den alderverstandichsten van goede omtrecken te maken...', *Leven der oude antijcke doorluchtighe schilders*, 69r., in Van Mander 1604.
- 28 'Als gy nu uwe Teykeningen opmaekt, die door de netter schetsingen alreets een gedaente hebben, zoo zie toe, dat gy niet wederom buyten spoor geraekt, geeft de buitekanten haer eygene zwiertjes, niet met een omtrek, die als een zwarten draet daer om loopt, maer wijs met een luchte hand stuk voor stuk aen', *Inleyding 28*.
- 29 'Oock was hy [Cimon, schilder van Cleonen] d'eerste, die uytbeelde in lakenen oft cleederen verscheyden vrouwen en kreucken', *Leven der oude antijcke doorluchtighe schilders*, 64r, in Van Mander 1604.
- 30 'Het bont en allerley petsery natuerlijk uit te beelden, bestaet meest in't zelve natuerlijk en zacht te koloreeren: wy zullen ten aenzien van de Teykening meer zwiers in kreukelich lywaet vinden. d'Aleroudste Schilders pleegen haere kleederen zonder vrouwen of kreuken te maeken, tot dat eenen Cimon van Achajen van die stijghyheit afweek, en zyn kleederen een losse zwier gaf', *Inleyding 147*.
- 31 'Tasso ook in't verbeelden van zyn *Armida* begint eerst van't Hair: *Haer vlechten zijn van goudtdraet, los van zwieren, / Die't aenschijn nu bedekken, dan versieren, / En tergen't oog van al't nieuwsgierich volk. / Zoo speelt de Zon door eende luchte wolk, / Of toont zich bloot; en schijnt met heeter straelen. / De Weste wint doet haere lokken praelen. / Al kronkelende, als golven door de lucht*, *Inleyding 146*. The translation is a loose one, and the phrase 'los van zwieren' has no counterpart in the original: 'Argo non mai, non vide Cipro o Delo/ d'abito o di beltà forme sí care:/ d'auro ha la chioma, ed or dal bianco velo/ traluce involta, or discoperta appare./ Così, qualor si rasserena il cielo,/ or da candida nube il sol traspare,/ or da la nube uscendo i raggi intorno/ piú chiari spiega e ne raddoppia il giorno', T. Tasso, *Gerusalemme liberata*, Casalmaggiore 1581, IV, 29.
- 32 'De rechte zwier komt uit den geest alleen. / Van aerdich hair, gewolkte, en losse kleên', *Inleyding 229*.
- 33 'Geboomt, gebouw, en beelden laet vry troepen, / En deel uw werk in sierelijcke groepen. / 't Geen hier en daer gezaeit is, schoon elk deell Wel goed is, geeft geen welstand aen't geheel. / Niet dat uwe beelden als op elkanderen gepakt schijnen, maer gy moetzte een vrye zwier laten', *Inleyding 191*.
- 34 'In korten tijd eenich ding met een losse zwier een welstant te geven, is zoo verwonderlijk niet, als met vernuftigen arbeit 't zelve tot uiterste toe uit te voeren. Een goet begin behoort moed te geven, maer de grootste kunst is, wel te voleynden', *Inleyding 234*.
- 35 Van Mander, *Grondt der edel-vry schilder-const*, in Van Mander 1604, VIII, 37.
- 36 Houbraken 1753, II, 148.
- 37 L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (transl. G.E.M. Anscombe), Oxford 1953, I, §65-7; D. Gasking, 'Clusters', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 38, May 1960, 1-36.
- 38 J. Luyken, *Duytse Lier*, Amsterdam 1671, 93-94.
- 39 'De schilder mengelde, om Heer Godart af te maalen, / Oprechte rustigheit, en Ridderlyken zwier/ In d'oogen, daar men d'eer van Utrecht uit ziet straelen...', quoted in Houbraken 1753, I, 274.
- 40 E.g. 'Voor jaaren merkte ik al een goddelyken swier, / In 't kristallyne dicht, als veel getuigen weeten, / Ik sprak, onse Anslø dinght naa d'outerste laurier', J. Six van Chandelier, 'Afscheid uit Rome van R. Anslø, aan den selven', in: *Gedichten* (ed. A.E. Jacobs), Assen 1991, 82; 'Behaegde 't hem toen aentevangen, / Straks kreeg de boersche eenvoudigheid, / Van zyn laegzwevende akkerzangen, / Een' edlen zwier en majesteit...',

D. Smits, ‘Uitvaert van Hubert Korneliszoon Poot, Fenix der Nederduitsche dichtkunste’, in: *Cipresfestonnen, gestrengelt om de lykbus van den uitmuntenden dichter Hubert Korneliszoon Poot, overleden te Delf den 31 van Wintermaendt, 3 jaers 1733*, Rotterdam 1734, 1-6 (3).

41 ‘t Gebeurt wel zelf in beelden schoon van stal,/ Dat hen ontbreekt de rechte Hemelval/ Bevallijkheyt, door heymlijke gebreeken,/ Die in de zwier van haer beweging steeken./ Dus is’t van noo’, dat Venus en haer zoon/ Het werk versier’, bevallijk maeke en schoon./ Bevallijkheyt port aen om te beminne./ Het zyze speelt in Bosnimf of Godinne’, *Inleyding* 293.

42 *Inleyding* 176.

43 ‘Niettemin zal’t u geoorlooft zijn, wanneer u eens anders wel geordent stuk te vooren komt, de vois of wijze der toonen, dat is, de zwier van koppeling en sprong daer uit t’ontleenen. Even zoo wel als eenich dichter, die een nieuw liedeken op een oude stemme maekt. T en is geen schande op een bekende vois, die reets al de werelt behaegt, eenige vaerzen te dichten’, *Inleyding* 192-3.



Handwritten text on a letter, likely in German, written in cursive script. The text is partially obscured by other objects in the still life.

Freuenpel
Dorath

INA
DEL.

FERDINAND ROMANUS PONTIFEX MAXIMUS

CHAPTER 5

Samuel van Hoogstraten's Personal Letter-Rack Paintings: Tributes with a Message

MICHIEL ROSCAM ABBING¹

Introduction

Trompe-l'oeil paintings have a special and intriguing place in the oeuvre of Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678).² These illusionistic works include a series of letter racks which he painted over much of his active life.³ They are still lifes that realistically depict relatively flat objects in life-size and inserted behind leather straps. About half of the letter racks can be characterized as personal in nature. This subcategory is identified by objects that belonged to Van Hoogstraten himself or that allude to his person. In this contribution it shall be argued that these pictures could very well have been tributes with a tailored message to specific recipients.

Limiting ourselves to these letter racks with personal references,⁴ we are left with the following five paintings.

Letter Rack with Medal and Document Dated 1664. Fig. 37

Letter Rack with Medal and Manuscript of 'Den eerlyken jongeling'. Fig. 38

Letter Rack with a Play by Cowley and a Letter Addressed to Van Hoogstraten. Fig. 39

Letter Rack with Medal and Own Plays. Fig. 40

Letter Rack with Self-Portrait and an English Almanac. Fig. 20 (in Brusati's contribution)

The gold medal [Fig. 37] has pride of place among the several personal objects. It is at times depicted with the concomitant chain that Van Hoogstraten also received from Emperor Ferdinand III, and invariably adorned by a fancy bow.⁵ In addition, these pictures include images of Van Hoogstraten's own literary works (the manuscript for *Den eerlyken jongeling* and printed copies of *De Roomsche Paulina* and *Dieryk en Dorothè*), of his name written on documents, of laudatory poems, and of addressed letters. Other objects, such as a razor inlaid with tortoiseshell, a cameo



Fig. 37 *Gnadenmedaille auf Kaiser Ferdinand III*, diameter 4 cm
(photo: Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, coin cabinet, inv.nr 967 b ss)

and a magnifying glass, probably also belonged to Van Hoogstraten's personal paraphernalia, as they recur in several of the letter racks, whereas all of the latter also feature more ordinary items as recurring elements, including a pair of scissors, a goose feather and combs. A chart best illustrates the consistency of the choice of objects in the various works (see [Table 1](#)).

Table 1. Recurring personal elements in Van Hoogstraten's letter racks

	Fig. 37	Fig. 38	Fig. 39	Fig. 40	Fig. 20 (in Brusati's contribution)
Medal	X	X		X	X
Chain	X			X	
Ribbon	X	X		X	X
Cameo	X		X	X	
Razor	X		X	X	X
Personal literary work		X		X	
Magnifying glass			X		X
Own name on letter, manuscript or document	X	X	X	X	X

Van Hoogstraten painted other letter racks, but none of the depicted objects in those works can be said with certainty to belong to his personal effects.⁶ In one instance the objects seem to allude to the quartermaster of the Viennese court, Johann Cunibert Wenzelsberg.⁷ It is possible that this painting was either made for or commissioned by this dignitary.

The personal *trompe-l'oeil* letter racks can be seen to be 'portraits of Van Hoogstraten's own letter rack'. After all, they depict the painter's real – or fictitious – message board.⁸ We may assume that letter racks as actual implements functioned as memory-aids, to keep a number of current concerns close at hand and in plain sight. These would have been things of which the letter rack's owner wished to be reminded, such as messages, appointments and items needed on a daily basis, or borrowed ones that have to be returned, as well as letters awaiting reply or ready to be dispatched.⁹ The English descriptive term 'necessary board', a board with requisites, describes the function of such implements very well – better than 'letter rack' (because they contain more than just letters) or than *quodlibet* (because the objects are not randomly selected).¹⁰

Brusati's theory of self-representation

In her 1995 monograph entitled *Artifice and Illusion; The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*, as well as in several contributions to exhibition catalogues, Celeste Brusati has put forward the following novel hypothesis regarding the *trompe-l'oeil*:¹¹

After Van Hoogstraten was granted an audience with Ferdinand III in August of 1651 in Vienna, on which occasion he showed a portrait, a history painting and a still life to the Emperor, the ruler rewarded him with a gold medal for the still-life, a *trompe-l'oeil*, which the Emperor kept.¹² The artist subsequently exploited his success at the Viennese court by painting *trompe-l'oeils* that show the medal in question. According to Brusati, the other personal items that are portrayed can be understood as manifestations of the artist's lifelong strategy to increase his reputation as a painter and author, to announce his superiority over other known masters, to climb the social ladder, and to acquire fame.¹³ She argues that this group of paintings is above all a manifestation of 'self-representation'.¹⁴ She sees self-representation as a way to increase the market value of an artist's name and work.¹⁵ The painter is seen to follow a deliberate strategy to consolidate his reputation and broaden his customer base. Brusati characterizes the *trompe-l'oeils* with objects alluding to the person of the painter, as alternative self-portraits.¹⁶

Celeste Brusati's interpretation has elicited a number of reactions -- both positive and negative.¹⁷ Basically, unless I am mistaken, her supporters believe that she has provided a compelling model for the life and work of Samuel van Hoogstraten, whereas her detractors think that hers is a twentieth-century paradigm, one that does not ring true for the seventeenth century. It is clear that Van Hoogstraten engaged in self-promotion on occasion. It is the assumption that he pursued a sustained strategy of self-realization that is perceived to be anachronistic. Whereas none of the specific objections to Brusati's theory refutes it in the eyes of some scholars, others see only a lack of solid evidence. My essay is not intended to take sides in this controversy but to introduce the more circumscribed possibility that Van Hoogstraten primarily intended his letter-rack paintings to curry personal favour with specific patrons.

One reviewer of Brusati's book, Linda Stone-Ferrier, asks the following questions with respect to the painted personal *trompe-l'oeils*: 'What self-serving appeal for a viewer or buyer could such works by Van Hoogstraten have had?' and 'How would [the various owners] have recognized the emblems, symbols and other personal allusions in Van Hoogstraten's paintings?'¹⁸ Clearly, these questions apply to both Brusati's ambitious thesis and my more modest proposal. We need to ask to what degree first owners can have recognized the personal objects as such, but also why such paintings would have appealed to them and what specific function the personal letter racks could have served.

The first owners of personal letter racks

We can tentatively identify Van Hoogstraten as the inventor of the letter-rack genre.¹⁹ Certainly he was one of the first artists to have concentrated on it.²⁰ Van Hoogstraten must also have enjoyed a measure of success with his painted letter racks, as he produced many of them over a long period of time and as other painters in his circle emulated him. For instance, a letter rack painted by one of Van Hoogstraten's pupils, Cornelis van der Meulen, can be understood to be 'personal' because Van der Meulen's name and profession are inscribed on both a letter and a second document [Fig. 38].²¹ The original owner of this work is unknown, as is the identity of the woman depicted on the medallion. It is logical to assume, however, that Van der Meulen's striking references must have served a specific function and that Van Hoogstraten was therefore not the only painter of personal letter racks.²²

Who would have been able to recognize and fully appreciate the personal elements of such letter racks? The answer to that question, raised by Stone-Ferrier, is obvious. Only the original owners of the works, who would have been intimates or acquaintances of the painter, were in a position to appreciate that the objects were personal in nature. The first owners of Van Hoogstraten's personal letter racks would have been familiar with his finest hour at the Viennese court, with his published and unpublished manuscripts and, perhaps, with certain personal items, such as the antique cameo or the tortoiseshell inlaid razor, which recur in several of the letter racks. Without knowledge of the story of Van Hoogstraten's triumph at the Viennese court, the letter racks with the medal – iconographically the most idiosyncratic object – are patently meaningless.²³ They become works with nothing more than a limited decorative appeal, with the legible reproductions of the name of the painter being no more than generic signatures.

The first owners of Van Hoogstraten's personal letter racks are not documented, and – except in the case of the Emperor – even less is known about the circumstances under which they acquired the paintings. How, exactly, Van Hoogstraten managed to be received by the Emperor only weeks after his arrival in Vienna, is not known. We may assume that the audience was arranged in advance by contacts at the court and that the painter offered his three paintings to the Emperor as samples of his talent.²⁴ Van Hoogstraten undoubtedly presented the works in an attempt to curry the favour of the court. This raises the question whether the extant personal letter racks may also have been gifts. In the seventeenth century, gifts were seen as tributes (gifts

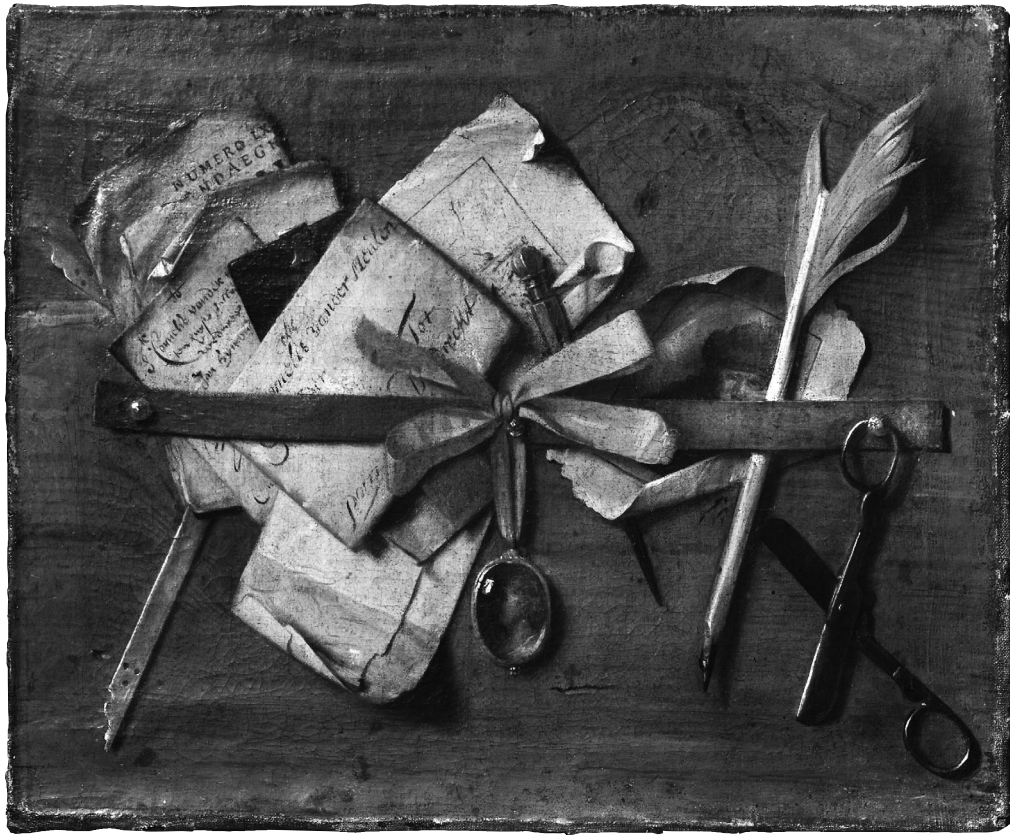


Fig. 38 Cornelis van der Meulen, *Letter Rack with Medallion*, canvas, 26 x 33 cm, Stockholm, Collection H.M. King of Sweden (O II: s st. 212)

in honour) to cultivate friendship and social relations.²⁵ The meaning of the word itself does not embrace the 'elicitation of a return service', but whoever gives something away obliges the recipient to reciprocate.²⁶

There is more to it than 'marketing strategy'

To establish whether certain paintings were in fact tributes, we must examine how Van Hoogstraten organized his marketing, whether certain paintings may have been intended as gifts, and how selling and giving were interrelated. A search for answers leads us to the detailed examination of Van Hoogstraten's possible marketing strategies undertaken by Jan Blanc in his 2008 doctoral dissertation entitled *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVIIe siècle*. Blanc analyzed Van Hoogstraten's *magnum opus*, the *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst, anders de zichtbaere werelt* of 1678 which he also translated into French,²⁷ and systematically identified the strate-

gies that its author puts forward as needed by painters to market their work and flourish. Blanc identified four such strategies, ones that the *Inleyding* raises only casually or even implicitly. He also proposes connections between these strategies and Van Hoogstraten's painted work, but he ultimately focuses only on economic motives, meaning how Van Hoogstraten would have been able to optimize his marketing to make his paintings as lucrative as possible.²⁸

The first strategy discerned by Blanc is a high rate of productivity. The more one paints within a given period of time, the more one can sell and earn. One way this aim can be facilitated is by employing recurring elements and compositions. Blanc's second strategy is what he calls the organization of scarcity. When there are few paintings of a kind for which there is great demand, the value of these pictures rises. The specialization of the painter falls under this category. Painters can focus on a particular genre. Thus the *Inleyding* argues that every painter has some personal strength with which he can pursue favour among art buyers and art lovers.²⁹ The third strategy is to heighten one's professional profile. As art collectors often rely on established status, it is important for artists to establish a good reputation with potential buyers. This can be achieved, for instance, by drawing attention to oneself by the use of a 'trade mark' instead of a signature. In Blanc's opinion the recurring personal items on Van Hoogstraten's *trompe-l'oeils* were such trade marks.³⁰ As a fourth marketing strategy Blanc advances what Van Hoogstraten referred to as 'the generating of Maecenasses', which involves the securing of business and the favour of clients and patrons. It is they, after all, who are in a position to grant lucrative and praiseworthy commissions.³¹ This final strategy helps explain why painters would have adhered to the taste of their times, or to those of the country in which they found themselves. Blanc convincingly shows that Van Hoogstraten conformed to the taste, or fashion, that prevailed during his career.

It is not easy to relate the letter racks to the afore-mentioned marketing strategies. Clearly the letter racks are varied, and it is therefore out of the question that they were mass produced. In addition, the evidence seems to confirm Houbraken's proposition that his master did not concentrate on *trompe-l'oeils*. Houbraken claims that his teacher could paint so realistically that he deceived many people with his still-lives. However, he subsequently notes that though such painting brought monetary rewards back in those days, Van Hoogstraten possessed 'too large an intellect' to concern himself with them and that he mainly applied himself to portraiture, history pieces, and perspectives in rooms.³² We may well ask, therefore, to what extent Van Hoogstraten expected letter racks to secure his fame. As Van Hoogstraten did not make consistent use of a single trade mark in lieu of his signature, it seems unlikely that he truly intended the personal elements in his letter racks to serve as trade marks, or that they were recognized as such by others.

It is conceivable, on the other hand, that the letter racks were instrumental in obtaining commissions, in keeping with Blanc's fourth strategy. Blanc, however, does not consider the possibility that personal letter racks may have been tributes, or whether such tributes were related to the pursuit of economic gain or social status. Nor does Brusati mention the possibility that these paintings were intended as a tribute. What can be said about this phenomenon, and is there any evidence to be found in Van Hoogstraten's life and writings to indicate that he created tributes, and why?

Personal work as tribute

When a painter works on commission or to build up stock and then sells his work, his relationship with his client is in principle over as soon as the transaction is completed. When an art work is offered in homage, the exact opposite is the case, as such a gesture unmistakably reinforces the bond between maker and recipient.

Tributes, gifts in honour, were in fact of great importance to the economic and social traffic of the seventeenth century, and they occurred in many forms and on all kinds of occasions. A service or tribute to a friend, or to someone of higher status, entitles the giver to a return favour. The performance of a counter-gesture remains a moral obligation, however, which cannot be enforced. The return gesture is not explicitly requested or named, and the manner of reciprocation is entirely left to the recipient.³³ Thus one can never expect a tribute to lay claim to a person's services, especially not when he or she belongs to a higher social class. In this game of give and take, it is above all crucial to cultivate social relations.

Artists may receive tributes (for work offered), but they can also use art works to pay tribute themselves, for example, with a view to obtaining employment or a commission, or to encouraging the recipient to put in a good word with a third party to whom the artist himself does not have access. In such cases the tribute could be considered to be instrumental because it is an investment that is ultimately intended to promote the sale of paintings. There are many more dimensions and motives that play a role, however. Tributes in social intercourse can serve as appropriate acknowledgement of praise or of favours or gifts received, or they can simply be gestures of friendship. Michael Zell placed the artworks donated by Rembrandt, Van Hoogstraten's teacher, in this perspective.³⁴ In another publication, one concerning landscape drawings as gifts, Zell demonstrated that works given by artists to art lovers were desirable collector's items because they were not dealt in, and therefore exceedingly rare.³⁵ There are many known examples of art works as gifts and of the rewards that artists received for them, but I do not know of a separate study dedicated to this topic.³⁶

If it was in fact customary for artists to dedicate works to friends and acquaintances, did not Van Hoogstraten write about this practice? He tells us in the *Inleyding* that Zeuxis gave away works of art, taking pleasure in the honour that the act of giving bestowed on himself.³⁷ But Van Hoogstraten only truly addresses the practice of giving in a chapter of the *Eerlyken jongeling* (1657), his translation and adaptation of a French edition of Baldassar Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*. After remarking that the courtier will have to try to oblige one and all with work and words as much as possible, he turns to the matter of gifts:

The manner of giving must be so pleasing that the gift never seems trifling, and that the rarity is of greater importance than the cost. In order to gain favour, one must carefully consider the nature of the gift so that what is given by us leaves a lasting impression on the mind of the recipient and meets our objective. For thus even the ungrateful will be forced to remember the gift, so that neither the gift nor its occasion may be forgotten. One must take special care not to honour someone with something that is of no use to him or that

does not suit him, such as a mirror for an ugly woman, but to duly take into account the status and age, standing and wealth, sex and worth of the person on whom we want to bestow our humble gifts.³⁸

The quotation establishes that the originality and rarity of the gift are of key importance to remaining in someone's thoughts and obtaining his favour, and that the gift must suit the person of the recipient and the occasion at hand. Indeed, one cannot do much more than that, as one cannot exact gestures, friendship or reciprocated favours. In several places in the *Eerlyken jongeling* it emerges that the courtier must show himself to be *buysaem*, meaning flexible, in order to aspire to effective social intercourse. Adapting one's conversational material and tone to the person to whom you are speaking is an example of courteous, pleasant and socially successful behaviour. These are, in effect, recommendations that Castiglione drew from rhetoric, aimed at the creation of an effective relationship between a speaker and his public.³⁹ The question remains whether Van Hoogstraten put into practice the social codes that he advocated and, in particular, whether he gave away works of his own.⁴⁰

Van Hoogstraten dedicated publications to eminent people and composed many occasional poems. He must have presented all this written work, which he created on his own initiative, to others. Some possible motives for such gestures are the strengthening of friendship, the repayment of services rendered, the solicitation of a reciprocal gesture, or the pursuit of an opportunity to approach a potential patron and to appeal to his taste. Occasionally the specific purpose can be surmised.

In 1658 Van Hoogstraten composed a sonnet on the wedding of Cornelis van Beveren and Adriana Wouw, which he undoubtedly presented at the wedding feast in a small printed work entitled *Bruylofts-fakkelt* [*Wedding Torch*].⁴¹ We do not know how well the artist knew the bride and groom, but it is likely that this poem secured him commissions. This can be deduced with relative certainty from the fact that, at a date unknown, he copied an old family portrait of the great-grandfather and namesake of Cornelis van Beveren (1524-1586) and that he also painted a portrait of this couple's daughter in 1676 or 1677.⁴²

Van Hoogstraten's novel *Haegaenveld* is an even clearer example of a tribute intended to obtain commissions. This booklet of 1669 is dedicated to two princesses.⁴³ Two years later the painter appears to have portrayed at least one of them, as well as several of their family members.⁴⁴ One may assume that he presented this small volume in person, and that the portrait commissions then followed. Van Hoogstraten regularly dedicated works to influential people. *Den eerlyken jongeling* (1657) is dedicated to Adriaan van Blyenburgh, the mayor of Dordrecht, and the *Inleyding* to the governing mayors of the city, including said Van Blyenburgh. That there is a relationship between Van Hoogstraten's written work and the people who owned his paintings is abundantly clear from the overview published by the historian Peter Thissen in 1994.⁴⁵

Authors were at times directly rewarded for dedications.⁴⁶ Vondel received a gold chain and medal valued at five hundred guilders from Queen Christina of Sweden for a poem in praise of her, and on other occasions he was rewarded with valuable objects as his fee or honorary remuneration.

neration. According to his biographer, Geerardt Brandt, Vondel was only meagerly rewarded for his laudatory dedications to 'great personages, Princes, Rulers, Kings and Heroes'.⁴⁷ It is known that Vondel wrote for a living, whereas it must have been a hobby or recreational pastime for Van Hoogstraten. Direct payment for a laudatory poem might even have seemed offensive in the eyes of the latter, whereas indirect payment in the form of a commission would have been acceptable, in keeping with the social code of the times.

Did Van Hoogstraten also present paintings as gifts, as he undoubtedly did with his written works? That is only certain in the case of the three paintings that he presented to the Emperor Ferdinand.⁴⁸ A passage in a letter to the Dordrecht grain merchant, poet and philosopher Willem van Blijenbergh (1632-1696) provides additional evidence. Van Hoogstraten bemoans the difficulties that he has been encountering in England, trying to 'scale the mountain of glory and to win the favour of gentlemen with his brush'.⁴⁹ The obvious question that presents itself is, did he use his brush to create tributes?

Precisely because of their personal character, the personal letter racks fit the hypothesis that they were both created and offered as tributes. It would only have made sense for Van Hoogstraten to depict the gold medal if he intended the image as a gift for an intimate or for someone with whom he hoped to strike up a relationship. In this way, he reminded the recipient in an equally witty, original and exclusive way of his reward from the emperor, thereby singing the praise of his own internationally recognized excellence as painter. The more valuable the gift, the larger the expected return would have been. This remuneration could have been a commission, but also recognition in the form of a reward or payment⁵⁰ or of access to someone's social network. It is conceivable, for instance, that the antique cameo which is depicted on three of the letter racks was a precious homage to Van Hoogstraten, as was certainly the case with the gold medal.⁵¹ It is equally certain that such symbolism must have prompted the receiver of the letter rack to amply reward the painter for his work, though obviously in a manner to be determined by the recipient himself.

Though the bestowed letter racks may have helped secure commissions, they nevertheless accord better with our picture of Van Hoogstraten as learned painter and of the prevailing social code of civility among the social elite of his time.⁵² What, in each case, could have been the specific motive for paying tribute to someone by means of a letter rack? The answer to this question must lie hidden in the depicted objects and letters. These contain messages that are difficult for the modern spectator to recover.

One example is the date of 20 January 1664 found on the letter rack that is now in the Dordrechts Museum [Fig. 39]. Such a precise date will not have been added without good reason, but we no longer know what it is.⁵³ The *Letter Rack with Medal and Manuscript of 'Den eerlyken jongeling'* [Fig. 40] could have been presented out of gratitude to the Dordrecht printer and publisher Abraham Andriesz. (1614-1662), who published *Den eerlyken jongeling* in 1657, or as encouragement soon to proceed with publication. It is conceivable that Van Hoogstraten's letter racks with his own missives were tokens of gratitude intended for intimates or people who had honoured the artist with a letter or poem praising these writings. These suppositions cannot be

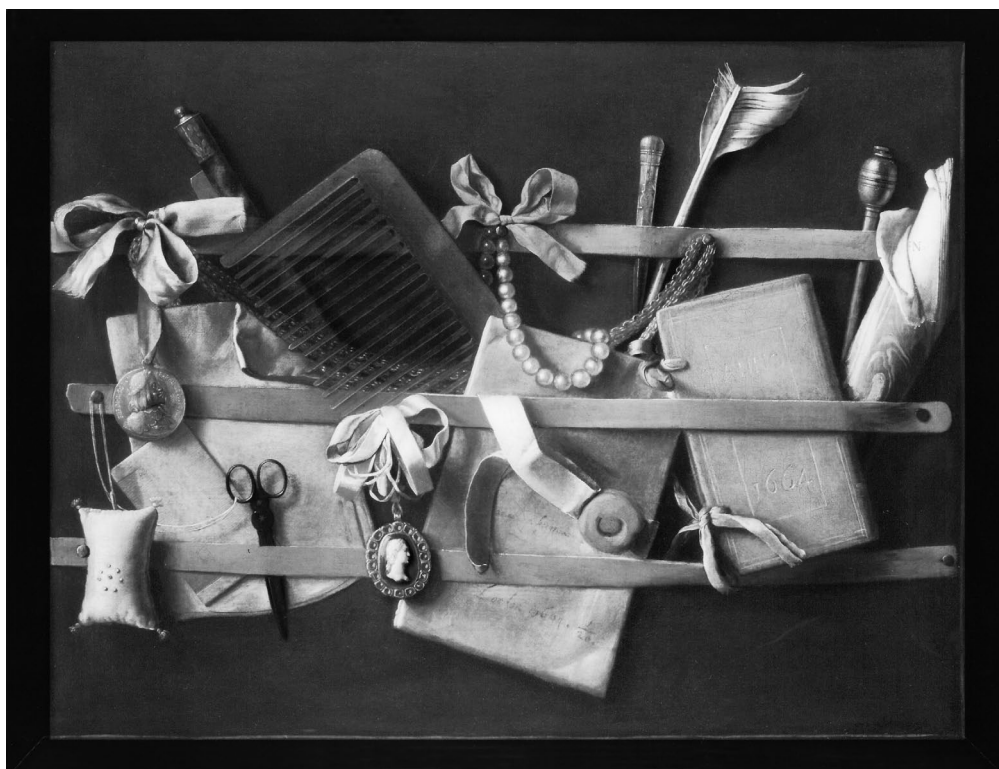


Fig. 39 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Letter Rack with Medal and Document Dated 1664*, canvas, 45.5 x 57.5 cm, Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum

proved, but they do imply that the letter racks are not to be called personal simply on account of the depicted objects belonging to Van Hoogstraten. They are equally ‘personal’ in that they were made for a specific individual. In keeping with the quoted recommendations in Van Hoogstraten’s *Eerlyken jongeling* concerning the best manner of giving, it also matters that a gift be closely suited to its recipient.

For want of facts, little can be determined about how letter racks came to be acquired by their first owners, or if we may speak of relationships, expressed by the paintings, with their recipients. Fortunately a work has come down to us from Van Hoogstraten’s English period that offers a point of departure in this respect.

‘Letter Rack with a Play’ by Cowley and a Letter Addressed to Van Hoogstraten

In his own country, Van Hoogstraten enjoyed a major advantage; he knew many people via the artistic and literary circles within which he moved; he was master of the language; and he held an official post with the Mint of Dordrecht. The question is, how did he manage when abroad?

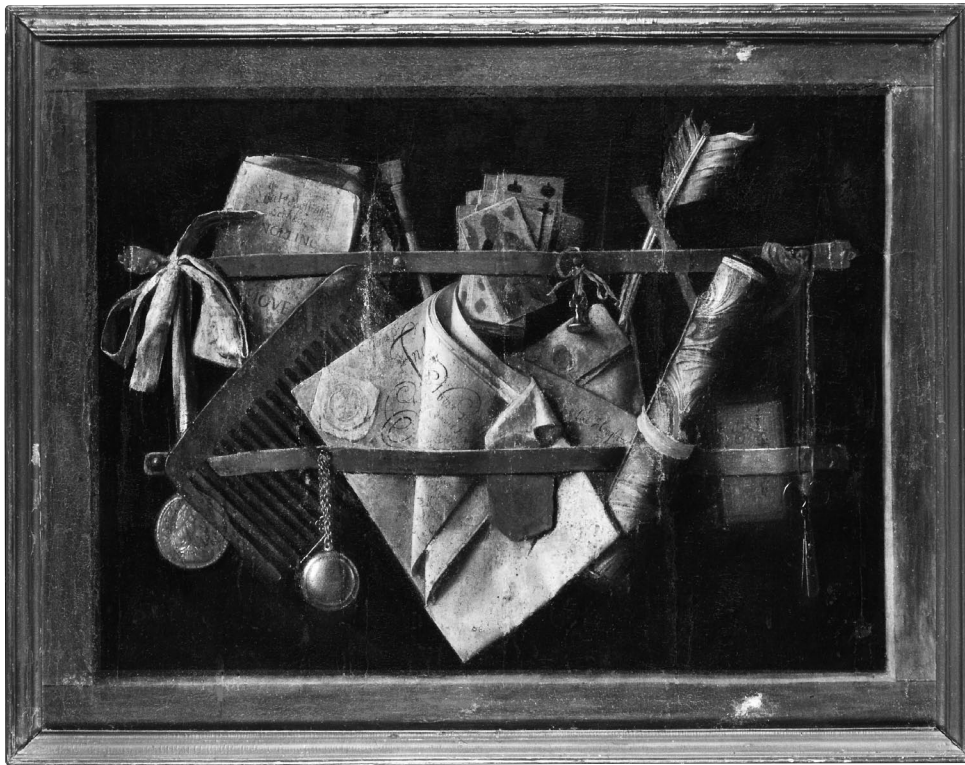


Fig. 40 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Letter Rack with Medal and Manuscript of 'Den eerlyken jongeling'*, canvas, 53.5 x 69.5 cm, France, Private Collection

Did he offer people letter racks to draw attention to himself as painter and to secure admission to select social circles? It is in any case noteworthy that he appears to have produced his letter racks primarily while he was abroad.⁵⁴ A personal letter rack that is now in Kingston Lacy illustrates for whom such gifts may have been intended [Fig. 41].

Van Hoogstraten's undated letter rack in Kingston Lacy has attracted little attention in the art-historical literature to date.⁵⁵ This painting is definitely listed in an inventory, compiled in October of 1762, of the holdings of this country estate, in which it is described as 'Still Life, a medley, very fine, Painter unknown', and it probably also shows up in a list of 1731 as 'A piece of still life'.⁵⁶ Even so, we can't identify its first owner. Though the gold medal is missing, the letter addressed to Van Hoogstraten allows us to place it among his personal works. We also recognize the cameo and the razor from two other letter racks [Figs. 39 and 42]. The letter is addressed to 'S[?] Sam[ue]le Hoogstraten / pittor d s sacra / m^{ta} Cesare' (The honourable Samuel van Hoogstraten, painter of His holy Imperial Majesty).⁵⁷

The wooden panel with painted frame depicts an English play.⁵⁸ That play provides purchase for a closer interpretation. The legible words are 'The Guardian / A / COME[DY] /



Fig. 41 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Letter Rack with Play by Cowley and Letter Addressed to Van Hoogstraten*, panel, 54 x 59 cm, Kingston Lacy, Wimborne Minster

A[cted] Prince C[harles]' and the complete title of the play reads *The Guardian. A Comedy. Acted before Prince Charles at Trinity College, Cambridge, the 12th of March, 1641*. The play's author, the then famous English poet and author Abraham Cowley (1618-1667), published it under that title in 1650. Later on Cowley reworked the play, which was then put on with the title *Cutter of Coleman Street*.⁵⁹ In December of 1661 Samuel Pepys (1633-1703), the renowned diarist, attended a performance.

In March of 1668 Pepys describes what is likely to have been a letter rack, though without mentioning the name of the painter.⁶⁰ This passage is a fine example of how art lovers experienced such works as conversation pieces. Elsewhere in his diary, Pepys writes about Van Hoogstraten's surviving perspectival piece of 1662, which Thomas Povey must have owned.⁶¹ We also know that the painter dined in style with Povey in London, together with four or five unnamed



Fig. 42 S. van Hoogstraten, *Letter Rack with Medal and Own Plays*, canvas, 63 x 79 cm, Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle

members of London's Royal Society for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge, which had been founded in 1660.⁶² Povey, Pepys and Cowley were all members of the Royal Society. The dinner with Povey can serve as an illustration of another recommendation found in the *Eerlyken jongeling*. The chapter 'How to make friends' describes how via someone to whom you have

made yourself agreeable, one's circles of friends may be expanded to 'an infinite number'.⁶³ With Povey supplying the introduction, Van Hoogstraten gained admission to the merchant-lawyer's extensive circle of friends.

Van Hoogstraten went to England after the restoration of the monarchy. That the undated letter rack in Kingston Lacy depicts an English-language play, taken in combination with the work's earliest-known provenance, indicates that Van Hoogstraten painted it during his stay in England, meaning between 1662 and 1666/67.⁶⁴ Theatre performances had been forbidden under the Puritan reign of Cromwell but they were again permitted after the investiture of Charles II in 1660. Another undated letter rack from Van Hoogstraten's English period also shows a satirical play from this time, John Tetham's *The Rump; or The Mirrour of The late Times* (which was printed in 1660 and 1661).⁶⁵ Both plays belong to the then most popular satires of Puritan rule and the powerless Rump Parliament.

How are we to interpret the work at Kingston Lacy in the light of the hypothesis that letter racks served as tributes? Let us assume that Van Hoogstraten gave Cowley the letter rack, possibly after they had met over dinner at the house of Thomas Povey. What might Cowley have made of the work?

Possibly Cowley gave Van Hoogstraten a copy of his play, and the painter then thanked him with a personal letter rack on which that play was depicted. That may also have been how things went with Tetham, but not necessarily. Van Hoogstraten could also have intended to express his awareness of Cowley's literary gifts and to communicate that he, an accomplished playwright himself, was a lover of the stage, an advocate of acting and one of Cowley's reading public. The painting further shows that Van Hoogstraten is appropriately addressed as court painter of the Emperor. He must therefore be an outstanding and appreciated master.⁶⁶ The painter has apparently received a letter and attached it to his letter rack; this letter is awaiting a reply. Perhaps the letter is a hint to the recipient of the painting that he should react quickly to be able to make use of Van Hoogstraten's services, for would not such a posh letter be likely to contain a commission of some sort? Or is the letter intended as a reminder of an earlier commitment, possibly taken on when Cowley sent the painter precisely such a letter?

The work suggests that the letter racks functioned as a kind of rebus that only the recipient could solve. Naturally the time of presentation provided a painter with an opportunity to elucidate his own work. The recipients of such paintings displayed them at home for the benefit of their guests.

From a personally accented letter rack to a general type

Whereas early letter racks may have been tributes, the type of painting eventually became so well known and popular that a separate genre, the letter-rack painting, was born.⁶⁷ The transition from letter racks made for specific people to the general, 'impersonal' type of painting can be illustrated using a series of pictures by Edward Collier (died 1709), a later painter of the genre, who took a letter rack by Van Hoogstraten as his point of departure.

The letter rack of 1663 by Van Hoogstraten that surfaced in 2005 was seen and described by the English engraver George Vertue (1684-1756) in London in 1730. It is the only letter rack to include a self portrait.⁶⁸ We may again assume that this painting is a tribute, in this instance a letter rack in which Van Hoogstraten included his own portrait among personal objects such as the obligatory medal. A letter rack by Collier that was auctioned in New York in April of 1991 now turns out to be a fairly literal copy of Van Hoogstraten's resurfaced specimen.⁶⁹ The current location of this *Letter Rack with Medal and Portrait of a Man* is not known, but thanks to the auction we do have a photograph [Fig. 43].

Looking at the auctioned *Letter Rack with Medal and Portrait of A Man* by Collier we at once recognize most of the objects of Van Hoogstraten's letter rack of 1663: the gold medal and the razor inlaid with tortoiseshell, and also the magnifying glass.⁷⁰ Not all the details of the original composition were taken over. The magnifying glass leans against an inscribed piece of parchment with an illegible text.⁷¹ In the case of Van Hoogstraten's letter rack, it is an English almanac with the date 1663 as well as the name of the painter. Another obvious difference is that the small portrait does not depict Van Hoogstraten, but an unknown man. Collier must have rendered another portrait in this location, possibly someone with whom he had specific ties. If Collier gave his version of the letter rack to someone, possibly the individual who is portrayed, a special connection with that person would have been given eloquent expression.

With his undated *Letter Rack with Medal and Portrait of a Man* [Fig. 43] Collier himself provided the direct model for a letter rack that he made in 1684.⁷² Collier still adopts the general lines of Van Hoogstraten's original composition of 1663, as may be seen from the medal hanging over the comb and from the location of the razor, the watch and the portrait at the right. In this instance, however, the medal of Ferdinand III has been replaced by a coin with the head of Charles II, hanging on a blue silk ribbon, whereas the portrait now depicts an unknown woman.⁷³ As an aside, in 1694 Collier rendered a *trompe-l'oeil* portrait of Abraham Cowley, the very same man whose play Van Hoogstraten depicted on a letter rack, although we do not know what the occasion for that portrait may have been.⁷⁴

Collier continued to paint such letter racks, always with components that go back directly to the example of Van Hoogstraten. These later letter racks are more generalized in nature than the 'personal' ones. The portrait of the English king is often depicted, as is a pamphlet entitled *Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to Both Houses of Parliament* and an address that indicates in which city Collier was painter.⁷⁵ Little remains of the personal letter rack as a tribute intended for close friends, while the general references to English politics must have been accessible to a much larger and anonymous public than the specific and obscure references of the 'personal' letter racks.

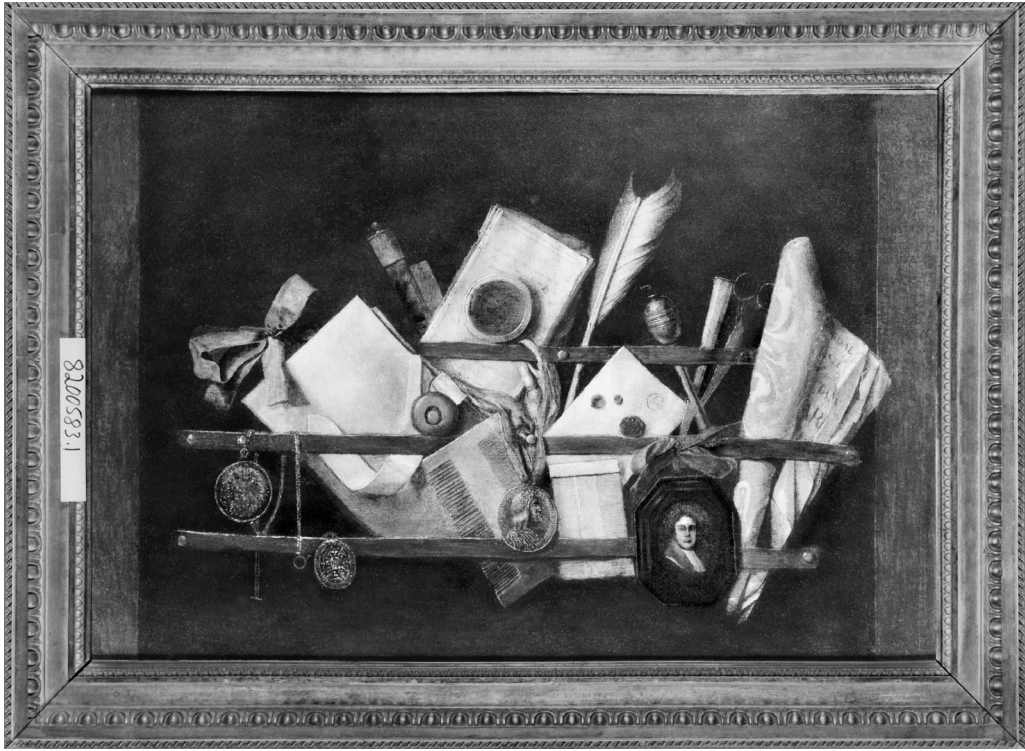


Fig. 43 Edward Collier, *Letter Rack with Medal and Portrait of a Man*, canvas, 44.5 x 66 cm, unknown collection (Sotheby's, New York, 11 April 1991, nr. 120)

Conclusion

This contribution proposes that Van Hoogstraten's personal letter racks should be interpreted as tributes with a message tailored to specific recipients. This may involve a gift to someone in a prominent social position. The painter may have intended to obtain favours or commissions, or to procure an introduction to other eminent personages who might be able to serve as Maecenas-es. The letter racks may also be seen as original acknowledgments for gifts received, a possibility that arises in connection with the letter rack with play by Cowley [Fig. 39]. Certainly not all of Van Hoogstraten's letter racks will have been instrumental in procuring commissions, but must first and foremost have been expressions of customary social intercourse between gentlemen who were in principle on equal footing and who shared cultural interests.

The recipient of an homage was appropriately rewarded for a service already rendered or became more or less morally obliged to make a (never enforceable) counter gesture. Both these interpretations of personal letter racks as tributes address the concerns raised by Stone-Ferrier in reaction to Brusati's thesis of self-representation, namely that it is difficult to imagine how the

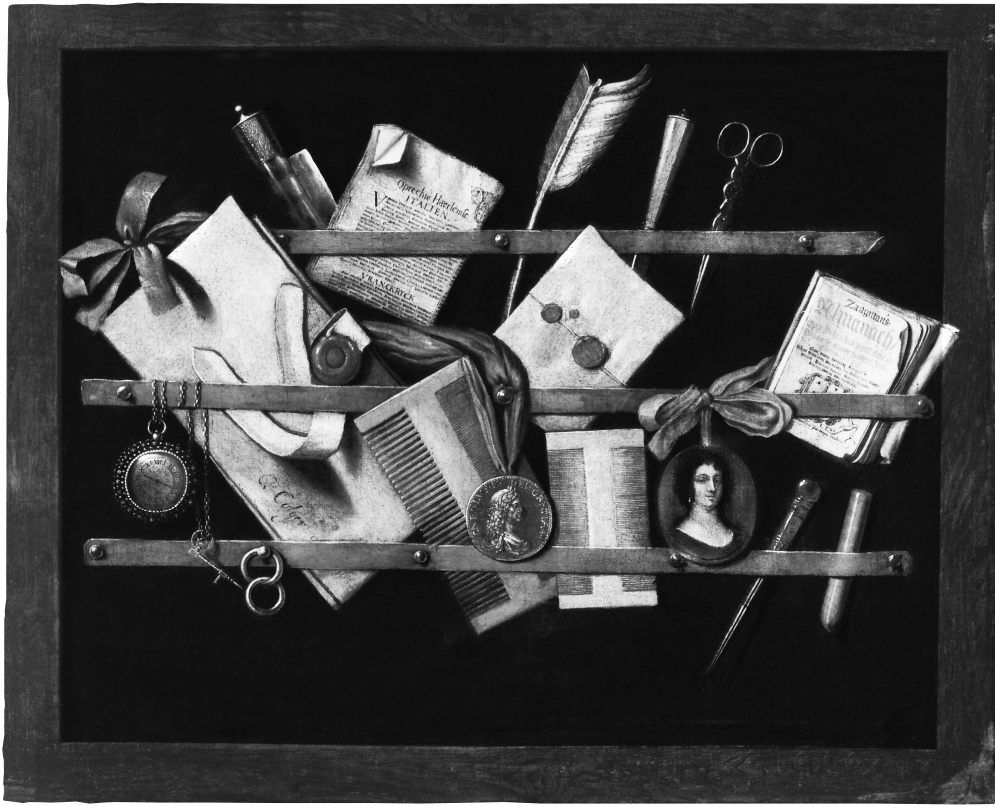


Fig. 44 Edward Collier, *Letter Rack with Zaagman's Office Almanac*, 1684, canvas 52 x 65 cm, unknown collection (Sotheby's London, 27 October 2010, nr. 89)

original owners could have recognized Van Hoogstraten's self-referential objects as his personal possessions, and why they should have supported the painter-writer in his ostensible quest for self-promotion.

Van Hoogstraten used these paintings for a social purpose that was more important than any artistic or economic one. The personal letter racks are neither self portraits nor expressions of personal identity, nor were they made with the intention to increase the social reputation of their maker, or to demonstrate his superiority with respect to other painters. They were a way of making an original, fitting and exclusive gesture to the right person, as Van Hoogstraten himself pointed out in his *Eerlyken jongeling*, and geared to perfection to the social discourse of the cultural elite to which Van Hoogstraten belonged.

Notes

- 1 The impetus behind this contribution was a lecture, 'Succes en betekenis van Van Hoogstratens brievenbord *trompe-l'oeils*' which I presented at a symposium on Samuel van Hoogstraten held in the Dordrechts Museum on 3 December 1994. I thank Dr. Herman Colenbrander for his commentary and our extensive discussions on this topic. He drew my attention to the often underestimated importance of tributes in the seventeenth century. I thank Thijs Weststeijn, Elly Groenenboom-Draai, Hendrik J. Horn, who also translated this contribution from the Dutch, and two anonymous reviewers, for their commentary on earlier versions.
- 2 Brusati's checklist (C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Chicago 1995, 346-381, especially 361-364) and Blanc's 'Catalogue des oeuvres de Van Hoogstraten' (J. Blanc, *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVIIe siècle. La théorie de l'art de Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Bern 2008, 319-412, especially 391-395) offer sound surveys of Van Hoogstraten's painted oeuvre.
- 3 The word *trompe-l'oeil* is first used in 1800 in France, see A. Chong, 'Contained under the Name Still Life: The Association of Still-Life Painting', in: A. Chong and W. Kloek (eds), *Still Life Paintings from the Netherlands, 1550-1720*, cat.exh. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) and Cleveland (The Cleveland Museum of Art), Zwolle 1999, 11-37: 36, n. 95. In old Dutch auction catalogues *trompe-l'oeils* are referred to as *bedriegers* (deceivers) or *schijnbedriegers* (seeming deceivers), as in the following auction catalogues with works by Van Hoogstraten: 'Een bedrieger Van [Hoogstraatten].' (13 May 1754, no. 185; F. Lugt, *Répertoire des catalogues de ventes publiques intéressantes l'art ou la curiosité*, 4 vols., The Hague and Paris 1938-1987, 837); 'Een scheyn bedriegertje, zeer fraai en natuurlyk, door S.V.Hoogstraten' (20 March 1764, no. 198; Lugt 1938-1987, 1362); 'Een Schijnbedrieger, met diverse voorwerpen van gezezelde en andere papieren. Op doek door S. van Hoogstraten' (13-14 July 1812, no. 153; Lugt 1938-1987, 8227). An early example is a letter rack by Edward Collier, dated 1703, in which the words 'SCHYN BEDRIEGD' appear on a print with a portrait of Erasmus (D. Wahrman, *Mr. Collier's Letter Racks: A Tale of Art and Illusion at the Threshold of the Modern Information Age*, Oxford 2012, 125, 170 and fig. 7.3) The seventeenth century does not appear to have had a distinct term for this kind of painting. Van Hoogstraten placed letter racks under still lifes.
- 4 There are other *trompe-l'oeils* that can be called 'personal', such as the *Trompe-l'oeil with Terrestrial Globe* in a Zwiss private collection, which depicts, among other things, the medal and *De Roomsche Paulina* (Brusati 1995, nr. 82; Blanc 2008, nr. P175). In this presentation I limit myself to the letter racks.
- 5 This bow is of blue or red silk. In the engraved self portrait of 1677, Van Hoogstraten wears the medal and chain around his neck, again provided with a silk bow in this instance. For the identification of the medal, see M. Roscam Abbing, *De schilder en schrijver Samuel van Hoogstraten 1627-1678. Eigentijdse bronnen en oeuvre van gesigeneerde schilderijen*, Leiden 1993, 43.
- 6 Aside from a few references in archival pieces and auction catalogues, we are concerned with, respectively: *Letter Rack with Rosary* in Prague (Brusati 1995, nr. 75; Blanc 2008, nr. P171); *Trompe-l'oeil with Leather Gloves* in Kromeriz (Brusati 77; Blanc P172); *Letter Rack with Papers and Book*, San Diego (Brusati 78; Blanc P173); and *Letter Rack with English Play and Powder Horn* in the Lenney Collection, Larchmont (Blanc P179).
- 7 In the painting in Kromeriz, Wenzelsberg's name serves as address on the letter that is depicted. Brusati has argued plausibly that the depicted objects refer to him (Brusati 1995, 68-69).
- 8 No doubt Van Hoogstraten also had a painted version of his letter rack hanging in his home. After all his home was filled with *trompe-l'oeils*, as we know from a famous passage by Houbraken, who saw: 'daar een appel, peer, of limoen in een schotelrak: ginder een muil, of schoen op een uitgehakt plankje geschildert, en geplaatst in een hoek van de kamer of onder een stoel, als mede zoute gedroogde schollen, die op een geluimurt doek geschildert, en uitgesneden, hier of daar agter een deur aan een spyker ophingen, die

zoo bedrieglyk geschildert waren, dat men zig licht daar in zou hebben vergist, en die voor eygentlyke gedroogde schollen aangezien', A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schildersessen*, Amsterdam 1718-1721, vol. I, 157). Could visitors of Van Hoogstraten's studio have been *bedrogen* and thus encouraged to purchase his work?

- 9 The upper left corner of a painting of ca 1670 in the Hallwylska museum in Stockholm, inv.no. B.75, which is signed 'A. Bloem' and depicts a company in a cloth store, shows a part of a true letter rack; see E.H. Cassel-Pihl a.o. (eds.), *Hallwylska målerisamlingen. The Hallwyl Collection of Paintings*, Stockholm 1997, 122-127, no. 52. With thanks to Herman Colenbrander, who pointed this out to me.
- 10 A *quodlibet* consists of a selection of 'many diverse objects without any apparent relationship', P. Weiland, *Kunstrwoordenboek*, Rotterdam 1858, 603.
- 11 C. Brusati, 'Samuel van Hoogstratens Hooge schoole of de Zichtbaere werelt', in: P. Marijnissen a.o. (ed.), *De zichtbaere werelt: schilderkunst uit de Gouden Eeuw in Hollands oudste stad*, Zwolle 1992, 65-71 with descriptions of cat. nos. 43 to 49 on pp. 190-209: 203-205; Brusati 1995 and C. Brusati, 'Capitalizing on the Counterfeit: Trompe-l'oeil Negotiations', in: A. Chong and W. Kloek (eds), *Still Life Paintings from the Netherlands, 1550-1720*, cat.exh. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) and Cleveland (The Cleveland Museum of Art), Zwolle 1999, 59-71.
- 12 Brusati assumes that the emperor got to see a *trompe-l'oeil* (Brusati 1992, 203) and that it was probably the *Letter Rack with Rosary* (see note 6) in Prague (Brusati 1995, 64).
- 13 The author had earlier put forward her thesis in C. Brusati, 'Stilled Lives: Self-Portraiture and Self-Reflection in Seventeenth-Century Netherlandish Still-Life Painting', in: *Simiolus* 20 (1990-1991), 168-182: 180-182 ("strategy of self-representation (...), making (...) pictorial deceptions central to the forging of his professional and social identity"; "the deceptive artifice of *trompe-l'oeil* as a means of social self-advancement"; "self-promoting pictorial performances").
- 14 Brusati 1985, e.g. 96, 138 ("various strategies of self-representation", "pictorial self-representation in the construction of his social and professional identity"), 139 ("the strategy of identifying self and art"), 163, 258 ("self-representation through praiseworthy deceptions").
- 15 Brusati 1995, 2-4; Brusati 1999. For a critical discussion of this: H.-J. Czech, 'Review of C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion*', *Simiolus* (1997), 363-368: 364.
- 16 Brusati 1992, 203; Brusati 1995, 139, in which she argues on the basis of an idiosyncratic understanding of the word *konterfeyt* that Van Hoogstraten's *trompe-l'oeils* are a form of 'self-imagery'. The word *konterfeyt* is related to *likeness* only insofar as the painter imitates something. That is why we may speak of a "portrait of Van Hoogstraten's letter rack", but not, as Brusati proposes, of a "letter rack as a portrait of Van Hoogstraten". Nor did Jochen Becker resist the temptation to think of these paintings as self portraits; see J. Becker, 'Das Buch im Stilleben – Das Stilleben in Buch', in: U. Bernsmeier et al. (ed.), *Stilleben in Europa*, exhibition catalogue Westfälisches Landesmuseum Münster, 1979, 448-478: 468. The presence in some of the personal letter racks of objects that do *not* relate to Van Hoogstraten's person (like the English play in Fig. 39) suffices to render the self-portrait hypothesis dubious at best.
- 17 Reviews of Brusati 1995 include M. Hollander in *HNA Newsletter* 13 (1996), 16-17; C. Ford in *The Burlington Magazine* 138 (1996), 201-202; L. Stone-Ferrier in *Seventeenth-Century News* (Fall-Winter 1997), 70-71; Czech 1997; H.P. Chapman in *The Art Bulletin* 79 (1997), 332-334; P. Taylor in *Art History* 21/1 (1998), 140-145; and L. Shaw-Miller in *Oxford Art Journal*, 21 (1998), 154-157.
- 18 Stone-Ferrier 1997, 70.
- 19 The oldest instance of a letter rack is a panel of around 1490 to 1500 attributed to Vittore Carpaccio, now located in the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles. The word 'Mocinego', the name of an important Venetian family, has been read on one of the letters; see Y. Szafran, 'Carpaccio's "Hunting on the Lagoon":

- A New Perspective', *The Burlington Magazine* 137 (1995), 148-158. We must allow for the possibility that Van Hoogstraten saw the painting in 1652 in Italy and that it suggested the idea of the letter rack to him. It is also possible that the type was discovered anew around 1650 in The Netherlands (kind suggestion of Fred Meijer of the Rijksinstituut voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, in a letter of 31 July 1991).
- 20 Two other early painters of letter racks are Wallerant Vaillant and Cornelis Gijsbrechts.
- 21 This letter rack is located in the Swedish royal collections in Stockholm. The following words can be read on the work: '[Co]rnelis vander Meulen / S[chil]der / Tot D[or]drecht / port' (Cornelis van der Meulen, Painter at Dordrecht, postage) en 'Sr. Cornelis van der Meulen ten huys [...] weduwe Jan [...]' (Mr. Cornelis van der Meulen at the house of the widow Jan ...).
- 22 Brusati does not discuss the letter racks by Cornelis van der Meulen. A second letter rack by Van der Meulen, a canvas of 48.5 by 62 cm, was acquired in 2003 by the Dordrechts Museum.
- 23 Leaving aside possible iconological meanings that are often difficult to substantiate; cf. O. Koester, *Bedrogen ogen: geschilderde illusies van Cornelius Gijsbrechts*, Zwolle 2005, 15-17.
- 24 It can be no accident that the three paintings represent the three most important genres: histories, portraits and genre. Van Hoogstraten presented himself as a master of all genres.
- 25 *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche taal* vol. XIX, 1725-1727 (*vereeren*); 1734, 1735 (*vereering*). The word *vereering* means a gift or present that one presents to show appreciation, friendship or respect. You give in exchange for a service rendered or an effort expended, or as a token of friendship or esteem. A gift (a compliment, an invitation for a meal, etc.) thus serves to strenghten social relations.
- 26 M. Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, London 2002 (original edition 1954). In 1925, first published under the title *Essai sur le don: Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques*.
- 27 J. Blanc (ed. and transl.), *Samuel van Hoogstraten, Introduction à la haute école de l'art de peinture*, Geneva 2006.
- 28 Blanc 2008, 103-122.
- 29 *Inleyding* 74.
- 30 Blanc 2008, 112-115. Blanc points to a passage in the *Inleyding*, p. 137, where Van Hoogstraten observes that the landscape painters Joachim Patenier and Herry de Bles placed a hallmark instead of their names in a hidden corner of their works.
- 31 *Inleyding* 212. On the same page this strategy is called 'aanfokken van liefhebbers'.
- 32 Houbraken 1718-172, vol. II, 158. Paul Taylor pointed this out as well: Taylor 1998, 142, 3, as did Hendrik J. Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*, 2 vols., Doornspijk 2000, 653-658, who casts his net more widely to consider Houbraken's mixed opinion of Van Hoogstraten in general, a topic that he again addresses in his contribution to this bundle. With "perspectiven in kamers" Houbraken meant the large perspectival works which, according to his description, were placed in large rooms and, when seen from a specific vantage point (a hole in the wall), provided an illusion of a bigger whole. See Brusati 1995, 204, 205.
- 33 L. Kooijmans, *Vriendschap en de kunst van het overleven in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw*, Amsterdam 1997, 144.
- 34 M. Zell, 'The Gift Among Friends: Rembrandt's Art in the Network of His Patronal and Social Relations', in: A. Chong and M. Zell (eds.), *Rethinking Rembrandt*, Boston and Zwolle 2002, 173-193.
- 35 M. Zell, 'A Leisurely and Virtuous Pursuit: Amateur Artists, Rembrandt, and Landscape Representation in Seventeenth-Century Holland', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 54 (2004), 335-368: 363, and M. Zell, 'Landscape's Pleasures: The Gifted Drawing in the Seventeenth Century', in: A. Golahny, M.M. Mochizuki, and L. Vergara (eds.), *In His Milieu: Essays on Netherlandish Art in Memory of John Michael Montias*, Amsterdam 2006, 483-494: 486. Zell adduces an English letter of 1619 which says of certain Dutch land-

- scape drawings: 'they being things never sold but given to friends that are *leibheffers* [*liefhebbers*, art lovers]' (cited after D. Howarth, *Lord Arundel and His Circle*, New Haven and London 1985, 231, n. 3).
- 36 The flower painter Daniël Seghers (1590-1661) went so far as to give his paintings only to rulers and the like. He was a lay brother of the Antwerp Jesuit Order and the gifts were intended to render the recipients beholden to the order (P. van der Ploeg a.o., *Vorstelijk verzameld: de kunstcollectie van Frederik Hendrik en Amalia*, Zwolle 1997, 208). Jan Lievens (1607-1674) gave Joan Huydecoper a painting for services rendered. Huydecoper, as he noted himself, disposed of the work so as not to 'have any obligation', J. van der Veen, 'Patronage for Lievens' Portraits and History Pieces, 1644-1674', in: *Jan Lievens. A Dutch Master Rediscovered*, cat.exh. Washington (National Gallery of Art), Milwaukee (Art Museum) and Amsterdam (Rembrandthuis) 2008, 28-39: 31.
- 37 *Inleyding* 354: 'Zeuxis alreets door zijn konst rijk geworden, schonk zijne konstige werken weg, aen de Koningen, aen de vrye steeden, en aen de Kerken of Tempelen der Goden: en vernoege de zich met de glory, die hy daer door verkeeg.' Elsewhere in the *Inleyding* (pp. 181 and 303) Van Hoogstraten alludes to *xenia*, the gifts of antiquity that were presented by host to guest, such as fruit, also in painted form.
- 38 S. van Hoogstraten, *Den eerlyken jongeling, of de edele kunst, van zich by groote en kleyne te doen eeren en beminnen*. In *Hollants, deur S. van Hoogstraten*, Amsterdam 1738 (ed. princ. 1657), copy used: Universiteitsbibliotheek Amsterdam, OK 73 580. Chapter 13 ('Hoe beleeft en milt men zyn zal'), 52-55: 'De wyze van geven moet zo aardig zijn; dat nimmer het geschenk kleyn schynt, daarom meer de zeldzaam en raarheid, als de kostelykheid moet betracht werden. (...) Deswegen men om gunst te verwerven, zijn geschenk wel moet overweegen, opdat het geene van ons gegeven werd, in geheuge blyve, en ons oogwit treffen. Want alzo zullen de ondankbare zelfs gedwonge werden, de giften te gedenken, wyl nevens het geschenk des zelfs omstand niet vergeten kan werden. Voor alle dingen moet men zich hoeden, dat men niemant iets vereere 't geen hem onnut is, of niet volgt te ontfangen als by voorbeeld, (...) een leelyke Juffer een Spiegel (...), maar dat men recht onderscheid de persoon, in stant en jaren, aenzien en vermogen, geslacht en waarde, aen welke wy onze milde giften willen besteden.' For *oogwit* see *Woordenboek der Nederlansche taal vol. X*, 2337-2338. The word *oogwit* means, in this connection, "the goal on which one keeps the eye fixed while performing an action". In her contribution 'Zonder vrienden geen carrière', *De zeventiende eeuw* 27/2 (2011), 300-336, Erna Kok elaborates on this topic, citing (on p. 306) the same passage from the *Eerlyken jongeling*. Unfortunately, she does so without referring to the final version of the present paper, of which the author presented her with a copy in the framework of her doctoral research.
- 39 T. Weststeijn, *The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age*, Amsterdam 2008, 67-69.
- 40 Brusati 1995, 79, observes in general that the *Eerlyken jongeling* '[is] self-referential with respect to both its subject and its author', but does not discuss the passage in question. Weststeijn 2008 writes in detail about the relationship of concepts derived from rhetoric and their application by Van Hoogstraten to the art of painting.
- 41 Note, in this connection, that Van Hoogstraten observes in the *Inleyding* that a painter stands to gain great prestige when the most important people of his city invite him to a wedding feast, *Inleyding* 353.
- 42 Roscam Abbing 1993, 53, 96.
- 43 My overview of Van Hoogstraten's literary work (Roscam Abbing 1993, 83-87) can be expanded with his opening poem to a translation by Lambert van den Bos, entitled: 'Op L.A. Senecas Agamemnon Vertaelt door L. Van Den Bos', which was published by Gillis Neering in 1661. The 36-line poem, which begins with 'Wie oit vermaeck schiep, op 't Toneel', is signed by 'S. van Hoogstraten.' It is printed in: *Senecas Agamemnon vertaelt door Lamb. van Bos*, Dordrecht 1661. The University of Leiden Library (1091 B 03) owns a copy. This volume also contains the laudatory poems by Willem van Blijenbergh and Abraham van Groeningen, members of Van Hoogstraten's Dordrecht circle.

- 44 Roscam Abbing 1993, 66, 68.
- 45 P. Thissen, *Werk, netwerk en letterwerk van de familie Van Hoogstraten in de zeventiende eeuw*, Amsterdam and Maarssen 1994, 178-181.
- 46 See B. Buissink and J. Kleijne, 'Theses en thesauriers. Dedicaties van boeken aan het Haarlems stadsbestuur', in: E.K. Grootes (ed.), *Haarlems Helicon: literatuur en toneel te Haarlem voor 1800*, Hilversum 1993, 111-122. In the case of printed works, the reward could also consist of the acquisition of several copies which would then be distributed in the circle of the recipient. It is not clear if Van Hoogstraten was rewarded for these commissions. Van Blyenburgh was also warden of the Dordrecht Mint and Van Hoogstraten painted Van Blyenburgh's portrait in the same year, as part of a group portrait of the minters. In 1678 the city of Dordrecht commissioned Van Hoogstraten to copy portraits of two stadtholders, see Roscam Abbing 1993, resp. 50 and 77.
- 47 M. Spies, 'Betaald werk? Poëzie als ambacht in de 17e eeuw', *Holland: Regionaal-historisch tijdschrift* (23) 1991, 210-224: 210-211: 'grootte personaadjen. Prinsen, Vorsten, Koninginen en Helden'.
- 48 This was the normal course of events. Joachim Sandrart writes of a *trompe-l'oeil* made by Stosskopf and presented to Ferdinand III in 1651, that it was offered as a gift. See: Brusati 1995, 284, n. 25.
- 49 Letter of January 1663, cited by Roscam Abbing 1993, 61-62: 'de berg der glorien te bekloueren en heeren gunst met pinceel te zoeken'.
- 50 Spies 1991, 211 pointed out that the patronage of rulers and governing bodies usually consisted of gifts instead of payments.
- 51 It is not certain that the same cameo is depicted in all instances. The cameo on the letter rack in Dordrecht (fig. 1) would appear to represent a Roman woman, whereas the cameo in Karlsruhe (fig. 4) and Kingston Lacy (fig. 3) show a Roman man.
- 52 H. Roodenburg, 'Visiting Vermeer: Performing Civility', in: A. Golahny, M.M. Mochizuki, L. Vergara (eds.), *In His Milieu: Essays on Netherlandish Art in Memory of John Michael Montias*, Amsterdam 2006, 385-394.
- 53 Brusati points to the possibility that this date refers to a specific event, but she does not raise the possibility of a tribute. See Brusati 1992, 205.
- 54 As pointed out by P. Taylor, 'Review of C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*', *Art History* 21/1 (1998), 140-145, 142.
- 55 Kingston Lacy, The Bankes Collection (The National Trust), inv. no. KLA/P/203; Roscam Abbing 1993, 129 (incorrectly as in the Hamilton Kerr Institute Collection, Cambridge University, and with a photograph of the work in pre-restoration condition); Brusati 1995, 85; Blanc 2008, P181.
- 56 Kind communication from Alistair Laing (email of 6 November 2006) and Lydia Hamlett (email of 31 October 2008) of the National Trust. In the 'Catalogue of the Pictures at Kingston hall and by whom painted' (October 1762) the painting occurs on p. 7 (and as no. 112 of the slightly later revised list), and probably also as no. 92 of a 1731 list of paintings which George Dowdeney had cleaned. Kingston Hall has been called Kingston Lacy since the 19th century.
- 57 This transcription by the National Trust deviates slightly from that in Brusati 1995, 363: 'Sam ... Hoogstraten-pittor d s sacra M ta Cesar...'
- 58 Virtually all the letter racks have painted frames, but this is the only instance of a decorated painted frame.
- 59 A. Cowley, *Cutter of Coleman-Street, A Comedy: The Scene London, in the Year 1658*, London 1663. The play was later included in an edition of Cowley's collected works (1710-1711); *The Works of Mr. Abraham Cowley*, 3 vols., 1710-1711. Brusati 1999, 71 in note 21, identifies the author of the play but proposes incorrectly that the publication of 1663 is depicted on the letter board.
- 60 S. Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (ed. R. Lathan en W. Matthews), 11 vols., London 1970-1983, vol. IX

- (1976), 119 (...) and mightily pleased with a picture that W. Hewer brought hither of several things painted upon a deal Board, which board is so well painted that in my whole life I never was so pleased or surprised with any picture, and so troubled that so good pictures should be painted upon a piece of bed deale; even after I knew that it was not board, but only the picture of a board, I could not remove my fancy.'
- 61 On this picture, *View Down Corridor*, from the Blathwayt collection, see Brusati 1992, 196-199.
- 62 *Inleyding* 188.
- 63 Van Hoogstraten 1738, Chapter 12, 48-51: 'Hoe men zich vrienden zal verwekken'.
- 64 Van Hoogstraten arrived in London between May and August of 1662 and remained in England until sometime between September of 1666 and November of 1667. See Roscam Abbing 1993, 58-65.
- 65 Chong and Kloek 1999, 224-226.
- 66 There is no proof, however, that Van Hoogstraten was in the service of Emperor Ferdinand III. Nor, in point of fact, is there any proof to the contrary.
- 67 Naturally, letter racks may have been painted as tributes and yet have been put up for sale and bought early on by art lovers. One such purchase, by the French diplomat Balthasar de Monconys (1611-1665), appears to be documented. Op 24 March 1664 De Monconys recorded the purchase of 'un Tableau de Corneille, de lettres, plumes et ganif attaché contre une planche'. The painter 'Corneille' is presumably Cornelis Gijsbrechts. See B. de Monconys, *Journal de voyage de Monsieur de Monconys*, 3 vols., Lyon 1665-1666, vol. 2, 373, 374 and 375.
- 68 Wahrman 2012, 107 and fig. 6.3 below. See Fig. 20 in Brusati's contribution. For Vertue's note, see vol. XX of the *Walpole Society*, Oxford 1932, 74.
- 69 Sotheby's Old Master Paintings, New York, 11 April 1991, lot no. 120, canvas of 44.5 x 66 cm, as a signed painting by Collier. Wahrman 2012, 107 points out that this painting was Collier's copy of Van Hoogstraten's earlier one of 1663, as proven by Collier's initials in the postmark "EC/2". Sumowski and Blanc thought that the work is by Van Hoogstraten himself, no doubt on account of the gold medal that is depicted: W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, Landau-Pfalz 1983-1995, vols. II and VI, nr. 2304; Blanc 2008, 180.
- 70 The same magnifying glass also occurs in the letter rack in the Lenney Collection, see Chong and Kloek 1999, cat. no. 53; Blanc 2008, no. P179.
- 71 Letter to the author from Leslie Rutherford, Sotheby's New York, 11 June 1991: 'With regard to the text, there are only three lines that are unobscured by other subject matter and they are barely discernable, perhaps not even true writing at all'.
- 72 Sotheby's London, 27 October 2010, no. 89. Canvas, 52 x 65 cm. Present location unknown. The work was earlier auctioned by Sotheby's London, 15 July 1987, no. 119; 13 December 1978, no. 207 and on 26 June 1924, no. 190 by Nassau Sale, Robinson & Fisher, London.
- 73 The gold coin represents the English king Charles II. The inscription reads CAROLUS II DEI GRATIA (Charles II by the grace of God). In addition, the work depicts a copy of the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* and Zaagman's office almanac. Wahrman 2012, 107 erroneously writes that this loose copy is 'likewise sporting Van Hoogstraten's imperial medallion'.
- 74 In 1694 Collier depicted a portrait engraving by Abraham Cowley as *trompe-l'oeil*. Cowley himself had died by then. The engraving is found in the editions of 1674, 1678 and 1680 of the collected works of Cowley, where it forms the frontispieces. Collier's canvas, 44 x 33 cm, was auctioned by Sotheby's London, 26 October 1988, no. 262, according to information supplied by the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie in The Hague. With thanks to Herman Colenbrander, who drew the portrait to my attention.
- 75 Many examples in: Wahrman 2012.



CHAPTER 6

A Pledge of Marital Domestic Bliss: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Perspective Box in the National Gallery, London

HERMAN COLENBRANDER

This essay explores Samuel van Hoogstraten's reasons for designing his intriguing perspective box in the National Gallery in London [Fig. 45].¹ Susan Koslow, one of the scholars who dealt in depth with the few extant boxes, presumed that there was a romantic love story behind the London work. More recently, Celeste Brusati did not deny that there was an erotic element to the depictions on the outside of the box, but she was inclined to regard the work as an artful self-portrait and a proud self-reflexive demonstration of the artist's accomplishments in the art of perspective.² In what follows, I shall put forward another, more 'domestic' suggestion with regard to what may have moved Samuel van Hoogstraten in creating his perspective box.

In his book *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* of 1718-1721, Arnold Houbraken gave a rare insight in the pedagogical gifts of Samuel van Hoogstraten, to whom he was once apprenticed. The following remarkable passage suggests that Van Hoogstraten's works must always have been purposeful and never devoid of meaning:

His lessons or precepts had firm roots, his instructions were always accompanied by examples, he taught with calm and seriousness, his explications were clear, and when his words were not understood at once he patiently explained himself Once upon a time I happened to make a sketch of a biblical subject and showed him the work, in which I had added in the background, just for embellishment, some fanciful things, convinced of having made some pleasant invention. ... He immediately pointed to these things in the background asking: 'What do you mean by that?' I answered: 'Well, that is my fancy. I made it just for pleasure'. His reply was: 'You should not make things just as they come to your mind. You have to give reasons for everything you make, or you should not make them at all'.³



Fig. 45 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective box with Views of a Dutch Interior*, 1656?, wood, 58 x 88 x 63,5 cm, National Gallery, London



Fig. 46 Overview image of the interior of the perspective box, National Gallery, London



Fig. 47 Overview image of the exterior of the perspective box, National Gallery, London

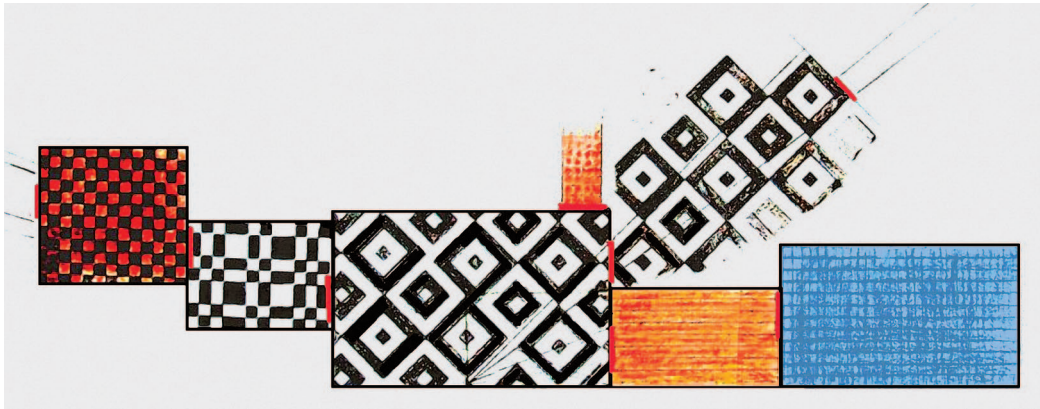


Fig. 48 Reconstruction of the floor plan of Van Hoogstraten's perspective box in the National Gallery, London (by H. Colenbrander)

If we contemplate Van Hoogstraten's perspective box in the National Gallery in London with this last sentence in mind, we may wonder what the artist intended [Figs. 46-48]. The depicted rooms are nearly empty of living beings except a lonely little dog waiting obediently, and, 'in the background', a sleeping woman in a bed, another woman reading a book beside a window that opens on the street; a little boy is peeking inside. Perfect peace reigns in these homey rooms. What the painter wished to express remains something of a mystery. It would seem that the box is an emptied doll's house; that, of course, is not the case.

According to Houbraken's statement, Van Hoogstraten seems to have been a rather sober-minded, even cerebral man. It is unlikely that he did not have something special in mind in creating the box with these curious rooms. Koslow, taking as her starting point the figures on the top of the box presumably representing Venus and Cupid, as well as various objects depicted in the interior, suggested that it tells the story of a woman who was seduced by a visitor. According to Brusati, the exterior – the three side panels and top – would show 'eroticized allegories of art making'. The presence of a certain erotic aspect cannot be denied, but it is hard to understand the entire box in this spirit.⁴

Before exploring this theme further, it is worthwhile to take account of the character of several similar perspective boxes.⁵ Of the total of six perspective boxes that have survived intact and were studied by Koslow, there are three (by anonymous painters) that I shall discuss in some detail, because they, just like the box in London, show a *voorhuis*, or front room.

The first is the box now kept in the National Museum in Copenhagen [Fig. 49].⁶ It depicts a *voorhuis* with an open, round front door and a terrace with a balustrade that offers a view onto a landscape. In this front room there is a richly dressed man with two small children.⁷ The room is decorated beautifully with chairs and cushions, a cupboard (*kussenkast*) with porcelain vases on top, paintings, and a mirror on the walls; a cage, possibly containing a monkey, hangs from the ceiling. The stained-glass windows are decorated with roundels showing coats-of-arms.



Fig. 49 Anonymous, *Perspective box*, c. 1665-70, wood, 58.5 x 45 x 49 cm, National Museum, Copenhagen



Fig. 50 Pieter Janssens Elinga (attr.), *Perspective Box*, c. 1670, wood, 84 x 82 x 42 cm, Museum Bredius, The Hague

The open door, decorated with figure reliefs on the right, reveals a cat on the threshold, and in the background a man standing in front of an object that may be a chimneypiece. On the left, there is a map depicting the two hemispheres framed by a series of portraits and what seem to be cityscapes. The map's upper right corner contains an image of a ship; in the lower right corner is a picture of a land surveyor. Moreover, one can see the banister of a staircase leading to an upper floor. Through the two stained-glass windows, framed by a series of plates and another open door, the viewer is allowed a peek into the kitchen, where one sees the back of a small child standing in front of the dresser and hearth. Above this door there is a map framed by coats-of-arms and a legend. It has the inscription 'MARE GERMANICUM', 'De Noord See' (the North Sea), and several other letters. Most of the paintings seem to be Italianizing landscapes; one of them shows a large round tower and a couple on horseback in the manner of Jan Asselijn.

The second perspective box showing a *voorbuis* is kept in Museum Bredius in The Hague [Fig. 50]. This box has a triangular floorplan and depicts, just like the box in Copenhagen, views into other rooms to the left and right of the hall. In the foreground, there are two chairs at a table with a water kettle, a tin, a teapot, and two porcelain teacups: it seems that tea has just been



Fig. 51 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective Box*, 1663, wood, 41.9 x 34.5 x 28.6 cm, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit

served. On the left, the viewer is offered a glance onto a staircase where a man stands; a woman is sweeping the floor, while another woman sits at the window on the right. Above the door is a relief (or a painted relief) representing Mercury. There are paintings and prints on the walls.⁸

The third box meriting our attention, as it shows a *voorhuis* as well, is now in the Institute of Arts in Detroit [Fig. 51]. This box has a pentagonal floorplan and still has its original door and peephole.⁹ It represents a hall with sizeable round columns; to the right and left are views through little rounded gates. Above one of the gates is an inscription with the year 1663. In the middle is a larger gate with an additional inscription reading ‘memento mori’. A shining sphere hangs from the ceiling in the center of the hall.¹⁰ In the foreground, a table is laid for a small meal, or *ontbijtje*, and a man and a woman appear in the background: they may be a betrothed couple, as the woman is represented on the man’s right side. The laid table displays a pewter plate with a small knife, a piece of white bread, a plate with oysters, a watch, a salt vessel,¹¹ some cheese on a pewter plate, an apple, a bunch of grapes and a rummer containing a half-peeled lemon. A cat, looking at the viewer, sits among these objects, and in the foreground a seemingly sniffing dog recalls the animals in a pair of still lifes by Alexandre-François Desportes of 1705 (Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Schleissheim) [Figs. 52 and 53].¹²

These three perspective boxes all represent a domestic setting, but the erotic aspect is absent. The box in Detroit, however, seems to offer several clues for the interpretation of the ‘genre’ of perspective boxes representing a *voorhuis*. To Koslow, the inscription ‘memento mori’ in the Detroit box represents not only the theme of *vanitas*, but also that of the choice between virtue and vice. The watch, the burned-out candle, and the spherical mirror could be symbols of vanity, while the fruit and oysters could represent earthly pleasures. Koslow also thought that the choice between virtue and vice was depicted in the paintings above the gates, respectively an *Adoration of the Magi* and a still life. These arguments may not be very strong, but there is no doubt that the inscription suggests that the work belongs to the genre of *vanitas* paintings. In what follows, we shall examine more arguments for this interpretation.¹³ I will suggest that the key to the interpretation lies in the objects on the table in the foreground. They may be interpreted as a variant on the so-called *ontbijtjes*, a genre of still-life paintings representing a modest breakfast. If we can suppose that these *ontbijtjes* were often marriage presents, this specimen would be an unusual variant. *Ontbijtjes* referred to the first breakfast after the wedding night.¹⁴ The Detroit box is decorated on the outside to look like a small chest of drawers, which may be an additional indication in support of this idea. According to Dutch tradition, couples were given household goods at their wedding; the box may have functioned as a playful piece of furniture in this context. Possibly, the married couple is represented in the background of the interior.

We shall now return to the perspective box in London, which is no less unusual: we will explore whether it can also be interpreted anew from the perspective of marriage. The box has, in contrast to other extant exemplars, no covering panel with a peephole up front; remarkably, it is completely open on one side, where a platform allowed for the placement of a candle or another source of light.¹⁵ This chest has two peepholes located in the side panels. Just like the ones in Copenhagen, Detroit, and The Hague, the box in London offers a view onto a *voorhuis* with addi-



Fig. 52 Alexandre-François Desportes, *Still Life with a Cat*, 1705, canvas, 70 x 91 cm, Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Schleissheim



Fig. 53 Alexandre-François Desportes, *Still Life with a Dog*, 1705, canvas, 70 x 91 cm, Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Schleissheim

tional sights in a number of adjacent rooms. In its entirety, however, this box is far more complex and sophisticated in its representation of perspectives, each of which shows two rooms en suite.¹⁶ According to Brusati, as we noted before, the exterior of the box would show ‘eroticized allegories of art making’.¹⁷ In effect, it is hard to deny a certain erotic atmosphere, but it is difficult to bring her idea into conformity with the scenes represented on the inside.¹⁸

In any account, the interpretation of the scenes on the three side panels, including a young painter seen on the back, has offered few problems of interpretation, since there are concomitant inscriptions:¹⁹ respectively ‘Amoris Causa’, ‘Lucri Causa’, and ‘Gloriae Causa’ (meaning, respectively, for the sake of love, money, and glory). These three ‘causes’, or motivations of the painter, can also be found in an epigram of the [ninth chapter](#) in Van Hoogstraten’s *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst*, and they are explained further in sub-sections four, five, and six of this chapter. The three causes are mentioned in Seneca’s *On Benefits* (*De beneficiis* II.XXXIII), but Van Hoogstraten’s immediate source was probably Karel van Mander, as Koslow has noted. The inscriptions effectively represent Van Hoogstraten’s personal credo, to quote from his treatise: ‘Three desires are the stimuli to learn the arts: for love, for profit and to be respected by everyone.’²⁰

The images accord with Van Hoogstraten’s work also in a visual sense, especially to the frontispieces to the *Inleyding*’s chapters in which the young painter, seen from the back, can be found, namely the chapters ‘Euterpe’, ‘Polymnia’, and ‘Terpsichore’ [Figs. 54–56].²¹ It is even possible that Van Hoogstraten represented himself when painting the artist on the box’s exterior.

Eroticism certainly plays a role in the interpretation of the nude woman who is depicted in an advanced state of undressing on the top panel. She is usually taken to represent Venus or Erato, the *minnesangster*, or muse, of love poetry. She wears a diadem and rests in a bed with Cupid beside her. The image is distorted in the manner of an anamorphosis, which means that it can only be perceived correctly from one vantage point – in this case from a point somewhere at the back and to the right of the box.²² Upon closer consideration, one may question whether the identification is correct. That the putto represents Cupid seems incontrovertible in light of the little bow in his hand. But it is less certain that the nude woman is Venus or even Erato. The woman and Cupid are both looking upward, full of expectation, and above them we see white fragments of what may be clouds. But why do they look upward so intensely? Are they expecting something to come down? It seems as if Cupid has just shot his arrow and they are both waiting for his action’s effect.

If this is the representation of a mythological scene, it seems that not Venus or Erato has been depicted, but Danaë waiting for Jove’s shower of gold. Identifying the female figure as Danaë would be very much in keeping with the scene on the long side of the box that represents the putto with his cornucopia full of moneybags and coins: financial gain.²³

Obviously, seventeenth-century painters worked for their bread and butter. But here, the aspect of financial gain has an additional important meaning in light of the assumption that the box may have been related to a wedding. In the seventeenth century, marriage was in fact the privilege for those who had money. Who was without earnings or capital could not offer his wife and offspring the benefits of a good livelihood. Hence the basis of marriage was money.



Fig. 54 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Euterpe*, from *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderconst*, Rotterdam 1678, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam

When we suppose that Van Hoogstraten depicted himself in the figure of the painter on the three sides of the box, it is likely that the depiction of Danaë was an allusion to his own bride and hence to his own marriage. This idea seems to be supported by the images of the coats-of-arms of Van Hoogstraten himself and his wife, Sara Balen, in the interior of the box.²⁴

This assumption seems in keeping with what is known about Van Hoogstraten's biography. After his training with Rembrandt from the early 1640s onwards, from 1648 Van Hoogstraten stayed in Dordrecht for some time before departing (in 1651) to Vienna, where he tried

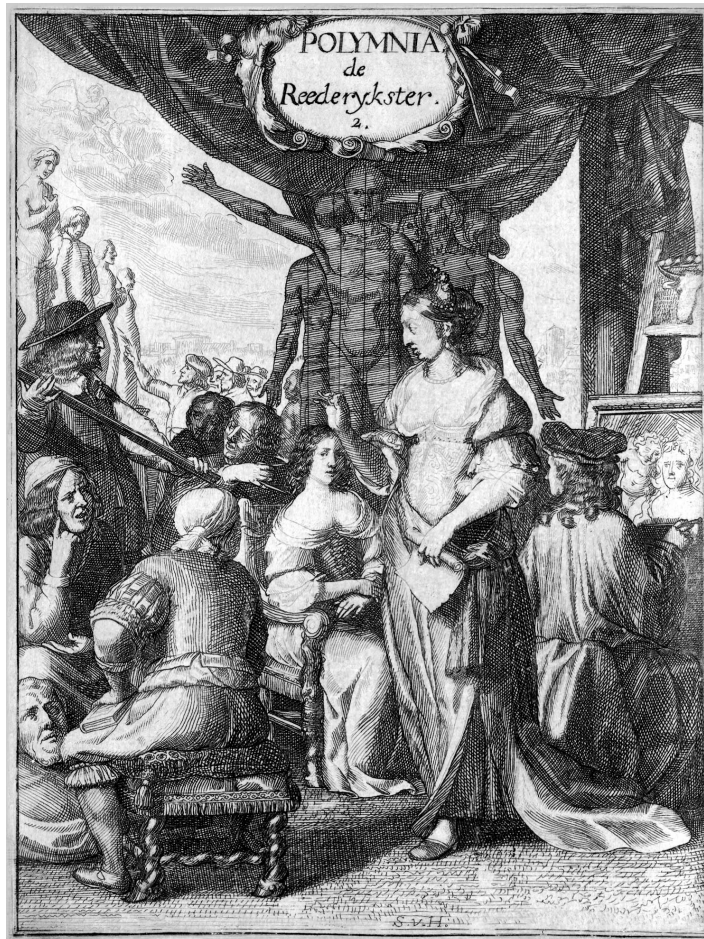


Fig. 55 Samuel van Hoogstraten, Polymnia, from *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst*, Rotterdam 1678, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam

to further his career. During that period he also visited Rome. In any event, he was back in Dordrecht in 1656 and on the 22th of May of that year he claimed the hereditary right to the chair in the college of the Masters of the Mint in Dordrecht held by his grandfather Isaac de Coninck, which had remained vacant since the latter's death in 1640. As unmarried Masters of the Mint had no right to the privileges that were connected to the office, he apparently decided to marry. Three weeks after receiving the investiture of his office he married Sara Balen, niece of Dordrecht's city historian Matthijs Balen. On the 31st of May 1656 he took out the banns, and the wedding took place on the 18th of June.²⁵ It is my contention that the perspective box was Van Hoogstraten's marriage gift to his bride.²⁶

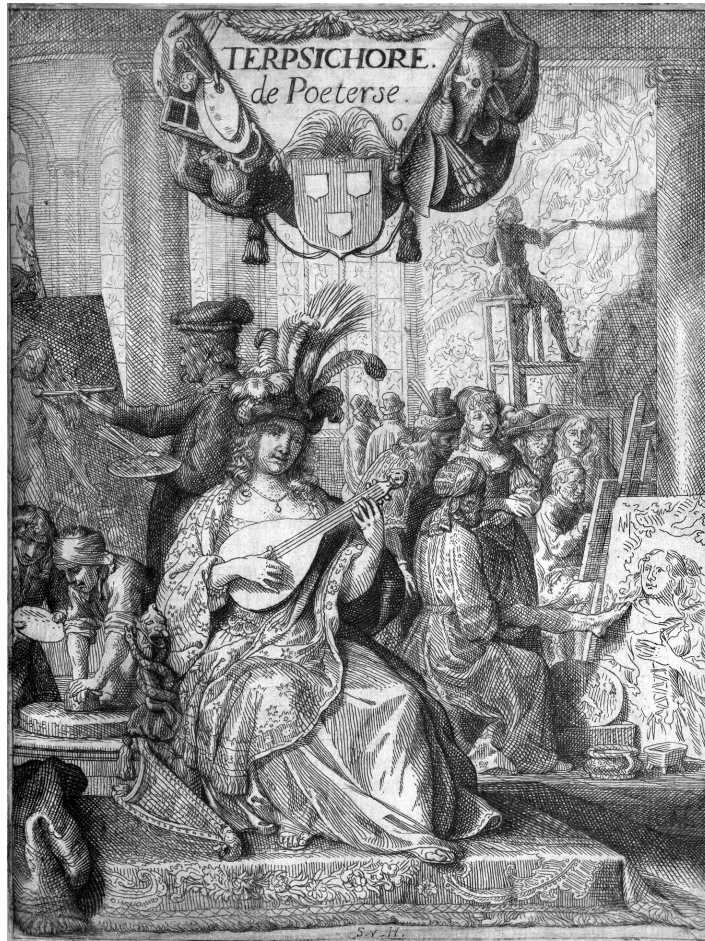


Fig. 56 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Terpsichore*, from *Inleyding tot de booge schoole der schilderkonst*, Rotterdam 1678, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam

The interior

Thus far, we have only examined the exterior panels of the box in detail; we will now test our assumptions against what is represented in the interior. Brown remarked in 1987 that ‘the notion, suggested by Koslow that [the scene in the interior] tells the story of an amorous encounter between the man at the window and the woman reading is entirely fanciful. Such meaning as the box does possess is contained in the scenes painted on its exterior’.²⁷ But even though the message on the exterior panels is rather clear, it does not automatically explain the scenes on the box’s inside.²⁸ It is, however, highly unlikely that the interior contains a scene entirely devoid of meaning (a ‘subjectless painting’, to paraphrase Fromentin’s famous idea): a purely artistic demonstration



Fig. 57 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Minerva Chasing the Vices*, detail of the left wall of the perspective box, London, National Gallery



Fig. 58 Jan de Bray, '*Sinite parvulos venire ad me*', 1663, canvas, 136 x 175.5 cm, Haarlem, Frans Halsmuseum

of Van Hoogstraten's skills in linear perspective. Koslow's suggestion may be less fanciful than Brown thought. In any account, hers was a first move to a more complete interpretation. She described the paintings represented on the walls of the various rooms; we may suppose that the choice of themes was not an arbitrary one. Taking as our starting point the assumption that the perspective box was a marriage gift, and taking account of the iconography of the exterior, it seems possible to reconstruct tentatively the story that is being told on the inside. We will assume that the box represents a number of rooms in a single imaginary house (for a reconstruction of the floorplan see Fig. 48). We will begin with the scene that is visible through the peephole on the right side of the box, which displays the exterior scene of the painter and his model (who can be identified as Abundance). It is also the side from which the anamorphosis of Danaë and Cupid can be seen in its right perspective. This peephole thus seems the logical starting point for the exploration of the domestic interior.

Looking through the peephole on the right

We see the house's entrance hall: three coats, a baldric with a sword, and a feathered hat hang on the wall. There is a view through the opened door on the left showing a back room decorated with gilt leather hangings; there is also a second room, probably the kitchen with, behind it, the scullery where a fire is lit; through an open door we see a backyard.²⁹ The wall in the *voorhuis* is decorated with three paintings: to the left, in a rich gilt frame, a mythological scene that McLaren has identified as Minerva with helmet and shield; around her are fighting figures with torches. Probably it represents the goddess chasing away the vices [Fig. 57]³⁰ The oval painting in a black octagonal frame, hanging above the door, represents the *Liberation of Saint Peter*.³¹ To the right, also in a rich gilt frame, is a painting of *Christ Blessing the Children* (Matthew 19:13–15): 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these'. The theme is represented frequently in contemporary Dutch paintings and had a special meaning. Jan de Bray's painting of 1663, now in the Frans Halsmuseum in Haarlem, is a good example because it includes inscriptions [Fig. 58]. It represents Pieter Braems and his family, and the inscriptions are 'Sinite parvulos venire ad me', Christ's quotation according to Matthew, and 'Memores estote parentum', which is the fifth of the Ten Commandments: 'Honour your father and mother'. The latter inscription is particularly relevant to our discussion, as it refers to the education of children in the Christian faith.³²

Elsewhere on this side of the perspective box's interior, we see a part of the longitudinal wall showing a window with a broken pane and an object that may be a piece of chalk on the sill. There are small figures on the panes in the window's four corners that cannot be identified. On top sits a small red phial.³³ Through the window we see a courtyard allowing a view onto a high wall of an adjacent building. Next to it there is an open portico.

In the center of the *voorhuis*, there is a chair and a dog looking faithfully at the viewer; a pillow has fallen off the chair. Furthermore, there is a large round mat on the floor. Finally, on the far right there is an open door providing a view onto a corridor with red tiles filled with



Fig. 59 Jacobus Vrel, *Old Lady Reading in a Room*, c. 1650, panel, 50 x 33 cm, formerly in Paris, Henri Schneider Collection



Fig. 60 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Chair with Signed Letter*, detail of the perspective box, London, National Gallery

a curiously bright light. On the wall directly to its right is a print, pasted on linen or printed on satin hanging on two sticks (a so-called ‘rolcaert’): a medallion portrait of a man looking at the viewer and gesticulating in the direction of the open door. The medallion is flanked by two female figures and crowned by a putto with the Van Hoogstraten coat-of-arms; below it there is an illegible inscription.³⁴

Looking through the peephole on the left

Through the hole at the left side of the box is again visible the open door with the brightly lit corridor and the print with the portrait of the pointing man. There are additional views through two open doors. Above these doors hang two pictures in black frames. The left one shows a landscape with a man standing high upon a rock, maybe Moses on Mount Sinai. The picture to the right depicts a figure in a valley with a city – possibly burning – in the background, and in the foreground sit three more figures. But if the two pictures form a pair, they may together depict the story of Lot and his daughters: Lot’s flight from Sodom, his wife transformed in a salt pillar, and his stay with his daughters in a cave in the mountains. Between the doors stands a chair above which hangs a mirror. A comb and a necklace of pearls lie on the chair, representing worldly vanity, or *vana gloria*.³⁵ To the right of the second door stands a broom and hangs another *rolcaert* with a cartouche with a figure clad in an animal skin with an undecipherable inscription underneath.

The view through the first door shows a room hung with gilt leather and a blue four-poster bed with a sleeping lady. The bed’s lower part is decorated with a medallion depicting a seated couple. Through another half-open door we have a view to a second room. Above the

door there is a landscape in a black frame. This second room shows a stained-glass window with a standing figure in a long garment and a staff in his raised hand. Above him there is a coat-of-arms, according to Brusati, of Sara Balen's family.³⁶ In the middle there is a chair and table, displaying a rummer on a plate.

The view through the second open door to the right shows two other rooms. In the first room, the left wall has a large painting in a gilt frame, representing the musical contest between Apollo and Pan and its judgment by King Midas.³⁷ The picture above the door to the second room shows a cavalry battle in a black frame. In the second tiled room is a lady sitting on a wooden platform (a *zoldertje*), reading near the windows. The upper half of the door is open and a boy with a hat is peeping in through the window. The motif of a child peeping through a window can also be found in two pictures by Jacobus Vrel, respectively in the collection of the Fondation Custodia and in the former collection of Henri Schneider, both in Paris [Fig. 59].³⁸

Close at hand on the right side of the *voorbuis*, as we look through the peephole on the left, we see two red chairs. On one of them is a letter with a clearly legible but somewhat damaged address: 'A Monsieur / Mon (s?) S: de Hoogstraten /a/ ...d ()echt'. Undoubtedly, the last word was 'Dordrecht' [Fig. 60].³⁹

Ultimately, it seems impossible to determine precisely the narrative on which the depictions in the box's interior are based, for a number of elements remain mysterious and seem to elude an unambiguous explanation. Nevertheless, I shall propose an interpretation even though it may be no more than a starting point for others to solve the riddle – for that must have been Van Hoogstraten's intention, with Samson's marriage riddle in mind (Judges 14:12).

The inside of the box consists effectively of five depicted surfaces, but there are only two peepholes. Through the peepholes, these surfaces merge more or less into a whole: it seems that there are two 'domains' that overlap in the central panel. What these two 'domains' have in common is the open door with the bright light in the panel's center. Through this door, one can arrive from one domain into the other; it represents the connection between the bridal couple's two domains.

The peephole on the right shows the man's domain: his office, decorated with gilt leather; his baldric with his sword, hat and coats that represent his public position; his virtue represented by the painting of Minerva; the Christian education of his family represented by the painting of Christ and the children; his loyalty symbolized by the dog; his burning love represented by the fire in the hearth.

The peephole on the left shows the domain of the woman: her loyalty to her husband who is portrayed next to the door (a portrait of Samuel van Hoogstraten?); the expectation of childbirth represented by the woman in the bed; the concomitant celebration symbolized by the rummer on the table. The latter object may be interpreted by reference to Matthys Naiveu's *The Nursery* (Leiden, De Lakenhal), in which the father holds a large rummer with a stick of cinammon, and a portrait by Jan Albertsz. Rotius in which he depicts himself with his wife and child, in his one hand a palette and brushes, in the other brandishing a silver rattle, and in which a so-called *ontbijtje* with a big rummer hangs on the wall.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the woman's domain

contains a warning against intemperance provided by the paintings of the story of Lot; the paintings of Apollo, Pan, and Midas and the battle scene that represent sin; a warning against vanity provided by the mirror, comb, and necklace;⁴¹ the woman's good housekeeping represented by the broom;⁴² the reading of the Bible by the woman may be interpreted as a remedy against infertility or a personification of faith. Finally, Van Hoogstraten presents the fruit of the chaste marriage, the offspring, represented by the boy looking through the window.⁴³

The letter on the chair, delivered at the right address, allowed the proud maker and donor of the perspective box to reveal his identity: Samuel van Hoogstraten in Dordrecht. Thus he promised to his bride Sara Balen their married domestic happiness in their future house.⁴⁴

Notes

- 1 N. MacLaren & C. Brown, *National Gallery Catalogues: The Dutch School 1600–1900*, II Vols., London, 1991, Vol. I., 203–206 no. 3832, Figs. 176(a–i); C. Brown, D. Bomford, J. Plesters and J. Mills, 'Samuel van Hoogstraten: Perspective and Painting', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 11 (1987), 60–85; Jan Blanc, *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVIIIe siècle: La Théorie de l'art de Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Berne 2008, 390–391 (contains additional bibliography).
- 2 S. Koslow, "'Wonderlijke Perspectyfkas': an Aspect of Seventeenth Century Dutch Painting", *Oud Holland* 82 (1967), 35–56, spec. 46; C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel Van Hoogstraten*, Chicago & London 1995, 169–217, spec. 212.
- 3 A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols, Amsterdam 1718–1721, II, 162–163; M. Roscam Abbing, *De schilder en schrijver Samuel van Hoogstraten, 1627–1678. Eigentijdse bronnen en oeuvre van gesigeneerde schilderijen*, Leiden 1993, 21–22.
- 4 Several drawings by Leonaert Bramer may have been designs for a peepshow, cf. W. Liedtke, *A View of Delft: Vermeer and his Contemporaries*, Zwolle 2000, 230–231, fig. 285 (Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam), 286 (Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf); W. Liedtke (ed.), *Vermeer and the Delft School*, cat.exh. New York (The Metropolitan Museum of Art) 2001, 458–461, nr. 108–109.
- 5 On perspective boxes in general cf. Koslow 1967 and R. Fabri, 'Perspectiefjes in het spel: optische 'Spelereiën' in Antwerpse kunstkasten uit de zeventiende eeuw', *De zeventiende eeuw* 15/1 (1999), 109–117.
- 6 Koslow 1967, 54–5 no. 5; B. Gundestrup, *Det kongelige danske Kunstkammer 1737*, II vols, Copenhagen 1991, Vol. II, 416–417, no. 895/4, no. 2 C20 'A ditto with a Dutch Antechamber,' height incl. pedestal: 182 cm, box: 83 x 53 x 66 cm.
- 7 Some elements, such as the cage and the human figures, seem to have been painted on pasted papers.
- 8 A. Blankert, *Museum Bredius: catalogus van schilderijen en tekeningen*, The Hague 1980, 56–57, no. 57, attributed to P. Janssens Elinga, ca 1670. Koslow 1967, 55–56, no. 6.
- 9 Koslow 1967, 33–56, spec. 53–54 cat. no. 4; G. S. Keyes, S. Donahue Kuretsky, A. Rüger, A.K. Wheelock Jr., *Masters of Dutch Painting*, Detroit & London 2004, 120–123, no. 48; E.P. Richardson, 'Samuel van Hoogstraten and Carel Fabritius', *Art in America*, XXV (1937), 141–152; Brusati 1995, 211–217; for the sphere, cf. the frontispiece of [Chapter 5](#) in Van Hoogstraten's treatise, according to Brusati 1995, 244, fig. 159.
- 10 The hall in Detroit is comparable to the hall in the doll's house of Petronella Dunois in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam (ca 1675), cf. J. Pijzel-Dommisse, *De 17de-eeuwse poppenhuizen in het Rijksmuseum*, Wormer 1994, 38–39; J. Pijzel-Dommisse, *Het Hollandse pronkpoppenhuis. Interieur en huishouden in de 17de en 18de eeuw*, Zwolle & Amsterdam 2000.

- 11 Koslow 1967, 53 identified the salt vessel as a burnt-up candle.
- 12 Cf. C. Grimm, *Stilleben. I. Die niederländischen und deutschen Meister. II. Die italienischen, spanischen und französischen Meister*, Stuttgart 2001, II, 196-197, figs. 119 and 120.
- 13 Koslow 1967, 46-47.
- 14 Cf. H.T. Colenbrander, "In Promises Anyone can be Rich!" Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Double Portrait: A Morgengave', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 68 (2005), 413-424.
- 15 The pedestal and platform are not original but of later date.
- 16 MacLaren 1991, I, 203-206 no. 3832, pls. 176(a-i); Koslow 1967, 49-53, cat. no. 3; Brusati 1995, 173-182. Cf. J. Loughman and J.M. Montias, *Public and Private Spaces: Works of Art in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Houses*, Zwolle 2000, 9-12. Van Hoogstraten's peepshow makes one think of the decorated painter's chest attributed to Antonie Jansz. Croos in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, nr. RBK 15234, cf. C. Veth, 'Een schilderskit uit de XVIIIe eeuw [met grisailles van Adriaen van de Venne (?); coll. Paul Arntzenius, 's-Gravenhage]', *Maandblad voor Beeldende Kunsten* XI (1934), 45-50.
- 17 Brusati 1995, 212; cf. J. Woodall, 'Love is in the Air – Amor as Motivation and Message in Seventeenth-Century Netherlandish Painting', *Art History* 19 (1996), 208-246.
- 18 For an example of an erotic perspective box see Leonard de Vries, *Venus Lusthof*, Amsterdam 1977, 141.
- 19 The three scenes on the exterior can also be compared to the frontispiece of Pieter de Jode's *Varie figure academice*, Antwerp 1629. These exterior scenes have broad flat painted borders which are hardly visible.
- 20 'Drie driften prikkels zijn, waerom men konsten leert: / uit liefde, om't loon, en om by elk te zijn geeert', S. van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderconst, anders de zichtbaere werelt*, Rotterdam 1678, 345; cf. Koslow 1967, 45 n. 22; Brusati 1995, 213 n. 56. On De Jode cf. E. de Jongh, 'De schildersleerling en het geheim van Minerva', in: *Kwesties van betekenis. Thema en motief in de Nederlandse schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, Leiden 1999, 149-165; 157, Fig. 12. We may add that the female figure on the scene labelled *Amoris Causa* can be interpreted, because of her many breasts, as the personification of Nature or Abundance, cf. Woodall 1996, 214 note 16. The figure returns in Van Hoogstraten's drawing in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, cf. Brusati 1995, 216, fig. 153, and Weststeijn 2008, 101-103.
- 21 Brusati 1995, fig. 1, 156 and 162.
- 22 Brusati 1995, 212-213 preferred the identification of the woman as Erato.
- 23 In the iconographic tradition, Danaë was sometimes represented with Amor or several putti, for instance in Correggio's painting in the Galleria Borghese in Rome and Titian's work in the Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte in Naples. Cf. E.J. Sluijter, 'Emulating Sensual Beauty: Representations of Danaë from Gossaert to Rembrandt', *Simiolus* 27 (1999), 4-45; E.J. Sluijter, *Seductress of Sight: Studies in Dutch Art of the Golden Age*, Zwolle 2000, 87-159; 150-153; E. Panofsky, 'Der gefesselte Eros (Zur Genealogie von Rembrandts Danaë)', *Oud Holland* 50 (1933), 193-217; W.S. Heckscher, 'Recorded from Dark Recollection', in: M. Meiss, *De Artibus Opuscula XL: Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, 2 vols, New York 1961, I, 192.
- 24 Brusati 1995, 177. See also below, notes 34 and 36.
- 25 According to Roscam Abbing 1993, Van Hoogstraten was born on August 2, 1627 and died on October 19, 1678. Long deliberations between families usually preceded a marriage.
- 26 The moneybag at the exterior and Jove's shower of gold for Danaë might be also understood as a reference to the solid position as Master of the Mint. The profession of painter was profitable but this seat at the Mint was of a higher social standing.
- 27 Brown a.o. 1987, 60-85, spec. 63.
- 28 The suggestion that the views have to be interpreted according to the mottos *Amoris causa* and *Gloriae causa* on the side panels disregards the fact that the three mottos constitute a whole.
- 29 The fire reminds of a *doorkijk* (view-through) in Jan Steen's *In weelde siet toe* in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches

- Museum), showing a fire with something broiled on the spit, possibly referring to the ardently burning fire of love. Cf. also Brusati 1995, Pl. XI: *Portrait of a Woman* (Dordrechts Museum).
- 30 McLaren 1991, 193.
- 31 Saint Peter Freed from Captivity, Acts of the Apostles 12:3-11; Jacques de Voragine, *La légende dorée*, 2 vols, Paris, 1967, 33-39, esp. 38: 'Le Seigneur délia miraculeusement saint Pierre de ses liens, et lui donna le pouvoir de lier et délier: or nous aussi sommes retenus dans les liens du péché et nous avons besoin d'être déliés. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous honorons le prince des Apôtres en cette solennité qui est dite aux liens, afin que comme il a mérité d'être délié de ses chaînes, et comme il a reçu du Seigneur le pouvoir de délier, de même aussi il nous délie des chaînes du péché'. Cf. L. Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien*, VI Vols, Paris, 1955-1959, III.3, 1092-1093; and A. Debold-von Kritter, *Studien zum Petruszyklus in der Brancaccikapelle*, Berlin 1975, 82, 124, 126.
- 32 J.B. Bedaux and R. Ekkart (eds.), *Kinderen op hun mooist: het kinderportret in de Nederlanden 1500-1700*, cat. exh. Haarlem (Frans Halsmuseum) and Antwerp (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten) 2000, 258-261, nr. 71. For another meaning of this text see also Bedaux in E. de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw*, cat. exh. Haarlem (Frans Halsmuseum) 1986, 325-328, nr. 82. The rest of Matthew's text is also of some importance in this context as it concerns marriage. The quote is preceded by the question posed by the Pharisees (Matthew 19: 1-12) whether a man is allowed to repudiate his wife (referring to the Commandments of Moses that mention divorce). Christ answers them, referring to Genesis 1:27; 5:2: 'Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh' (Gen. 2:24; Ephes. 5:31). 'So ought man to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself' (Ephes. 5:28). 'What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder' (Matth. 19:6). Bedaux referred to L.F. Groenendijk, *De nadere reformatie van het gezin: de visie van Petrus Wittewrongel op de christelijke huishouding*, Dordrecht 1984, 131-134.
- 33 The motif of the chalk and phial returns elsewhere in Van Hoogstraten's oeuvre, as in the *Trompe-l'oeil with a Rosary* in Prague (Castle Picture Gallery), and the *Old Man Looking Through a Window* in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum). Cf. Roscam Abbing 1993, respectively fig. 15 and 14. The meaning eludes me. The small ampoule may have contained an elixir. This kind of small bottles can usually be found displayed on tables of quacks.
- 34 A mention of a print 'oprollende mette stocken' or 'rolcaert', occasionally printed on satin, can be found in: P. Biesboer & C. Togneri, *Collections of paintings in Haarlem 1572-1745: Netherlandish Inventories I*, Los Angeles 2001, 80 inv. no. 11 (1640) no. 21: 'Isabella in print met rolletgens'. According to Brusati 1995, 177, the portrait is crowned by the Van Hoogstraten family crest, but in reality the putto supports a crowned coat of arms of the Van Hoogstraten family.
- 35 E. de Jongh, 'Vermommingen van Vrouw Wereld in de zeventiende eeuw', in: *Kwesties van betekenis*, Leiden 1999, 59-82; idem, 'De interpretatie van stillelevens: grenzen en mogelijkheden,' ibidem, 129-148; idem, 'Pearls of Virtue and Pearls of Vice', *Simiolus* 8 (1975/76), 69-97.
- 36 Brusati 1995, 177 states that it is Sara Balen's family's coat-of-arms, but this is not certain; it shows four unclear red dots, but there are no crossed bars; cf. Brusati 1995, Fig. 93.
- 37 See Gonzales Coques' *Portrait of a Couple*, 1640, Kassel, Staatliche Gemäldegalerie. The woman sits at a clavichord decorated with a painted scene of the contest between Apollo and Pan; AA.vv., *Staatliche Museen Kassel: Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Gesamtkatalog*, 2 vols, Mainz 1996, 84 G. K. 151, Taf. 84, Farbtaf. S. 94; Brusati 1995, 180.
- 38 Cf. the picture of Nicolaes Maes in the Wallace Collection in London: A child is looking through the window at a woman sitting in a room occupied with her needlework, making a gesture. A pot of flowers stands on the window sill. Behind her is a *rolcaert* with an oval portrait of a man; to her right is a book on a chair.

- Cf. L. Krempel, *Studien zu den datierten Gemälden des Nicolaes Maes (1634-1693)*, Petersberg 2000, nr. D. 25, Fig. 17, as: 'Frau beim spinnen von Wolle' [*sic!*].
- 39 See Michiel Roscam Abbing's contribution in the present volume, discussing the function and meaning of the letters in Van Hoogstraten's pictures.
- 40 Illustration in AA.vv, *Leidse Fijnschilders*, cat.exh. Leiden (Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal) 1988, 189, nr. 58 (18th century). The *Van-tijd* was the period in which the new mother received neighbours and acquaintances. The father himself was supposed to stir the caudle with the cinnamon stick, cf. G.D.J. Schotel, *Oude zeden en gebruiken*, Haarlem 1859, 29 no. 22. On Rotius cf. De Jongh 1986, 58, fig. 67. We may ponder whether Rotius made the portrait on the occasion of his child's first teeth.
- 41 On the significance of the comb, cf. De Jongh 1999, 59-82; Roemer Visscher, *Sinnepoppen*, Amsterdam 1614 (ed. L. Brummel), The Hague 1949, '1st Schock IX "Purgat et ornat" (een kam)': 'Een hooch Officier van een landt, is een kamme niet onghelijck, suyerende het landt van schadelijck geboefte, met goede justitie en scharp toesien; en versierende zijn ondersaten met goede wetten en willekeuren.' This, however, is obviously Roemer Visscher's interpretation of the figure and the text. On the necklace cf. De Jongh 1975-1976, 69-97.
- 42 E. de Jongh, 'De bezem als betekenisdrager', in: *Kwesties van betekenis*, Leiden 1999, 193-214.
- 43 As to the stages of the pregnancy and birth of the child I refer to the relative passages in [Hieronymus Sweerts, alias Hippolytus de Vrye], *De tien vermakelikheden des houwelyks*, Amsterdam 1683; see also the explanations by E.K. Grootes en Rob Winkelman in M.A. Schenkeveld-Van der Dussen's edition, Amsterdam 1988. Sweerts's text is undoubtedly ironic, but gives a good impression of a new housewife's preoccupations.
- 44 It was common for a recently married couple to live in the house of the bride's parents for a number of years, mindful of the birth of the first child. Cf. the marriage contract between Constantijn Huygens's daughter Suzanne and Philips Doublet: they would live in Huygens's house as long as they wished so, see A.D. Schinkel, *Nadere bijzonderheden betrekkelijk Constantijn Huygens en zijn familie*, 2 vols, [The Hague] 1851-1856, I, 25-34 (esp. 28). Vermeer too lived with his mother-in-law. The practice was described in J. Cats, *Zinne- en Minnebeelden* (ed. H. Luijten), The Hague 1996, I, emblem XLV, 'Iam plenis nubilis annis', II, 671-683 and commentary. The suggestion that the box's interior represents Van Hoogstraten's own house was made by Brusati 1995, 178, although I do not agree with the idea that the artist represented the 'identification of the realm of painting with his own house' (p. 179).



CHAPTER 7

Van Hoogstraten's Success in Britain

FATMA YALCIN

This chapter will retrace the footsteps of Samuel Van Hoogstraten's grand tour, considering his travels through Central Europe and Italy, which ultimately inspired his extended stay in England. Although Van Hoogstraten initially sold *trompe-l'oeil* paintings to his British patrons – harking back to his career in Vienna and Dordrecht – he soon chose to focus on an entirely new theme, namely, architectural scenes. We shall explore how these scenes were related to his travels. They are oriented towards Mediterranean examples; however, they do not depict the actual buildings that Van Hoogstraten saw.

The artist adapted his works in accordance with his patrons' tastes in two ways. The hybrid conception of his architectural scenes, which are neither Dutch nor Italian, offered a clear alternative to the predominant Palladianism in Britain, propagated by Inigo Jones. Furthermore, by including iconographical references to the Temple of Solomon, the artist may have wished to pay tribute to his patrons' political stances and the attitude of religious reconciliation favored by Charles II.

Van Hoogstraten's trompe-l'oeils

A large work made by Van Hoogstraten in England has been preserved in its original setting [Fig. 61]. This work is such a strong invitation to reflect on the possibilities of optical deceit that it still inspires the imagination of photographers today. In one such photograph, open doors invite us to look into a seemingly unending corridor. In the foreground on the right, a birdcage rests on a table; a second cage hangs from a vault, just above a dog curiously watching the beholder. A cat likewise gazes at us near the door that leads into the adjoining room; this animal apparently belongs to a more intimate sphere of the house. Meanwhile, two men and a woman sitting at a table are absorbed in conversation, drinking wine and playing cards – the five of spades lies on the floor. One other person is watching through the window. The modern photograph contains



Fig. 61 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *View Down a Corridor*, 1662, canvas, 264 x 136.5 cm, Durham Park, Gloucester (© National Trust Images / John Hammond)

a small joke – the photographer has framed a view of the actual painting with an enfilade of real architecture, and likewise has placed a real bird in front of the work: the beholder of the photograph is meant to be confused as to whether it is real or part of the painting. The place where real architecture meets the painted surface is the monumental frame of columns sustaining an arch, but this frame does not fit perfectly with the representation itself. Samuel van Hoogstraten used the device that Erwin Panofsky called a 'diaphragm arch', framing within this Renaissance element a residential interior of well-to-do citizens.¹ The image within this painted diaphragm arch starts where the cage, the broom, and the dog mark a visual barrier.

Such a representation has a strong effect of *trompe-l'oeil*. The painting's dimensions are adapted to the real building and therefore suggests an opening in the wall. The painting's patron was Thomas Povey, Treasurer and Receiver-General of Rents and Revenues of James, Duke of York, during Cromwell's reign. When Samuel Pepys, whose diaries give us a vivid picture of England in the subsequent period (under the rule of Charles II), saw Van Hoogstraten's work in Povey's house on January 26, 1663, he noted: 'above all things I do the most admire his piece of perspective especially, he opening me the closett door, and there I saw that there is nothing but only a plain picture hung upon the wall'.² Van Hoogstraten's painting strikingly confronts the viewer with another person in the picture, who is also looking through the window, thus enhancing the illusion.

The setting of the house appears Dutch because of the tiles and furniture, which we also see in Van Hoogstraten's painting *The Slippers* in the Louvre and his *Perspective Box* in the National Gallery in London. Perhaps the master's Dutch roots come to the fore here, but it is difficult to establish how similar Dutch housing was to that in England at the time. The signature on a letter deposited on the steps in the foreground at the right informs us of the painter and the date: 'SvH 1662'. This was Van Hoogstraten's first dated picture in England, and it was certainly of monumental dimensions (265 x 136.5 cm).³

Van Hoogstraten's travels

When he arrived in England, Van Hoogstraten was already a prominent master. Born and trained in Dordrecht, he joined Rembrandt in Amsterdam soon after his father's death in 1640. Eight years later, he went home for a short period. By 1651, he had travelled to Vienna and Rome. After coming back to Holland in 1656, he spent half a decade in Dordrecht before residing in London from 1662 to 1667; later he lived in The Hague before spending his last years in his hometown.

Van Hoogstraten's journey to Italy was something in between a traditional artist's sojourn in Italy, known since those of Jean Fouquet and Albrecht Dürer, and a grand tour of the type undertaken by young English noblemen from the seventeenth century onwards.⁴ A much older type of travel, the religious pilgrimage to Rome, was no longer meaningful for the Protestants of the British Isles and had already developed into a mixture of cultural and commercial travel from the sixteenth century onwards. In 1622, Henry Peacham underlined the importance of acquiring knowledge about the social, military, and political conventions of other countries, useful if a young noble was ultimately to become a 'complete gentleman'.⁵

In the sixteenth century, many travel guides and instruction books emerged, as the kind of journey, described by Peacham, became fashionable in Europe.⁶ From the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards, the intentions of such travels shifted to the cultural sphere, acquainting the traveler with the arts and inspiring him to buy and collect works from Southern Europe. A good example is the grand tour of the young Englishman Robert Montague, who left England in 1649 at the age of 15, and returned in 1651. His journey to Italy passed through France and Germany. Another traveler, the antiquarian Richard Symonds, aged 31, went on a long voyage passing through Paris and on to Rome, Mantua, and Venice. In the Veneto, he saw Palladio's villas, of which he made many drawings.⁷

On his way to Rome and Naples, Van Hoogstraten experienced what would later become typical of the travels of aristocrats: a Rhine and Danube journey, a crossing of the Alps, and a passage through Italy [Fig. 62]. Starting in the middle of May 1651, he went via Utrecht, Amerongen, Rhenen, and Arnhem to Emmerich and Wesel. Via Ürdingen and Neuss he reached Cologne, where he spent the days from May 28 to June 1, before he started along the river Rhine: passing Bonn, Andernach, and Coblenz he reached the area of the famous castles. Via Lahnstein and Wiesbaden he reached Frankfurt, where he stayed with the engraver Matthias Merian for three nights (from June 4 to 7).

The artist then went eastward, travelling via Miltenburg in the Spessart forest to Donauwörth and spending a short week (from June 12 to 17) in Augsburg. From there he headed north again, reaching the Danube River and following it from Neuburg, travelling quickly via Ingolstadt, Kehlheim, Ratisbon, Donaustauf, Deggendorf, Vilshofen, and Passau without stopping in any of these places so that in one week he reached Vienna, arriving on June 23.⁸ The timetable of his travels, so well documented in his journal and reproduced in the *Inleyding*, shows that he had no time to pay attention to anything but the landscape.⁹ If we look at his art, we encounter little of what he may have seen.

It was his art of deception that won Van Hoogstraten respect at the court of Ferdinand III in Vienna. He tells us that on August 6, 1651, the emperor saw a still-life painting that made him remark: 'That is the first painter who has cheated me!' The 'punishment' was the confiscation of the picture, and in return, Van Hoogstraten received a golden chain of honor, which became the painter's pride from that day on, depicted in quite a few of his *trompe-l'oeil* paintings.¹⁰

In 1652, Van Hoogstraten continued his travels beyond the Alps to Italy. This part of his tour is not as precisely documented as his crossing of Germany and Austria, but the artist himself wrote a poem that was published in a travel handbook by Lambert van den Bos, *Weghwyser door Italien, of beschrijvinghe der landen en steden van Italien* (1657), which includes advice for travel routes by diverse authors, in rhymed verses.¹¹ We can map out Van Hoogstraten's itinerary by connecting the towns he mentions in his *Inleyding* and the places in his poem (see my Appendix and Fig. 62).



Fig. 62 Van Hoogstraten's travel itinerary (based on H.-J. Czech, *Im Geleit der Musen: Studien zu Samuel van Hoogstraten's Malereitraktat Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst (1678)*, Munich & Berlin 2002, pp. 286-287)

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For Van Hoogstraten's travels through Italy we are no longer informed about the precise number of days he spent at certain places, but we may sketch his general route. From Venice, he went via Padua and Mantua to Milan, crossing the Ligurian Alps to Genoa, embarking there on a boat for Leghorn and then to Ostia, where he went ashore for Rome. He spent some time there before going to Naples, crossing the Apennines in order to see Loreto, an unlikely choice for a Dutch Mennonite because Loreto was the most famous pilgrimage destination for Roman Catholics in the seventeenth century.¹²

Probably for purely artistic purposes, Van Hoogstraten went to Florence, to Siena and Pisa, before crossing once more the Apennines through the valleys that nowadays accommodate the railway track to Bologna. After visiting Ferrara and Parma, he returned via the Brenner Pass and Innsbruck (not mentioned at all in his writing), this time avoiding Vienna and heading directly for Ratisbon.¹³

Pepys tells us nothing of the master's grand tour experience – perhaps he took for granted that artists of Van Hoogstraten's stature traveled to Italy – he was only fascinated by the *trompe-l'oeil* effects of the Dutchman's art, those that also attracted the emperor.¹⁴ The painter traveled to London on August 2, 1662. He interrupted his stay at least once: on August 13, 1665 he travelled to Dordrecht to be a witness in matters of good behavior of Hendrick van Heuven.¹⁵ More than a year later, he was definitively back in the Netherlands, in The Hague on November 9, 1667.¹⁶

Van Hoogstraten appears to have been interested in England from an early stage in his career: already in 1649, one of his poems was included in Jacob van Oort's collection *Stuarts ongekke heerschappye*, and in 1660 a similar poetry collection of Dutch artists, to which the painter also contributed, appeared in Dordrecht following the reinstatement of Charles II to the English throne.¹⁷ His predilection for the House of Stuart, with its Roman Catholic orientation, is striking, but Charles II was celebrated by a great number of Dutchmen when he made his journey through The Hague and departed to England from Scheveningen. The king had the reputation of being a generous patron, and Dutch artists may therefore have expected his help and patronage. Van Hoogstraten certainly would have hoped to receive the same honor from Charles II's court, as he had received earlier from the Viennese court.

Van Hoogstraten in Britain

With his painting for Povey, completed in 1662, Van Hoogstraten imported a piece of Holland to England; this may be the main reason why Pepys was not interested in the master's international experience. Later, however, Van Hoogstraten was to paint very different works for his English patrons. For Povey's house, the artist made a second canvas of monumental dimensions, *Perspective of a Man Reading in a Courtyard* [Fig. 63].¹⁸ This shows a man absorbed in his reading, with his back turned to the viewer. Large Doric columns on the right provide a view into residential rooms with sculpture and reliefs. A dog is sleeping in the foreground, and the foreshortened steps reveal a piece of paper with Van Hoogstraten's signature.

The master painted five other paintings during this period; we do not know their specific



Fig. 63 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective with a Young Man Reading a Book*, canvas, 264.2 x 276.8 cm, Dyrham Park Gloucestershire (© National Trust Images)



Fig. 64 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective View of a Courtyard with a Young Man Reading*, canvas, 238 x 175.3 cm, present location unknown.

patrons, as the pictures are undated (they are signed, however). The *Perspective Portrait of a Young Man Reading in a Courtyard* presents a view through a framing arch into a court flooded with light, where a young man on the stairs reads a book [Fig. 64].¹⁹ There are sizeable columns on the right, permitting a view into a park. In a second version of the same composition, *Perspective with a young Man Reading a Book*, presently in a private collection in England, Van Hoogstraten changed only minor elements like the dog: awake in one painting, it is sleeping in the other [Fig. 65].²⁰

Three similar perspective paintings, which in the light of their stylistic affinities probably all date from the artist's British period suggest that his innovations were a success. In one of them, now in the Mauritshuis, a woman reading a letter is depicted standing in a courtyard [Fig. 66].²¹ Behind her, in a Dutch-looking interior, a man sits at a table.²² On the right, a series of columns leads the viewer's gaze to a park bathed in Italianate light. We once again encounter the letter and the dog as motifs. In a similar work, *Perspective Portrait of a Boy Catching a Bird*, we come across a remarkable sculpture [Fig. 67].²³ In the centre of the courtyard, an equestrian sculpture, more similar to Donatello's *Gattamelata* in Padua than Andrea del Verrocchio's *Colleoni* in Venice, clearly documents what Van Hoogstraten had seen in Italy [Figs. 68 and 69].²⁴ The arched embrasures with sculptures recall Palladio's Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza [Fig. 70].

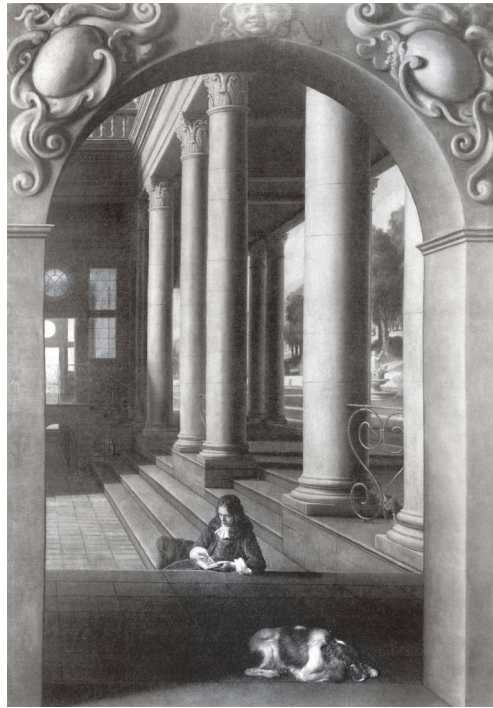


Fig. 65 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective Portrait of a young Man Reading in a Courtyard*, canvas, 231 x 165 cm, London, A.W.M. Christie-Miller Collection (© Photographic Survey, Courtauld Institute of Art, London)

The last painting of this series, known as the Tuscan Gallery, smaller than the other five but composed in a similar way, demonstrates more clearly than the others how Van Hoogstraten's paintings for English patrons do not really depict Italy, but rather a vision of what the Mediterranean may have been in English eyes [Fig. 71]²⁵ We may therefore put forward the hypothesis that the Dordrecht painter adapted his works to the expectations of his patrons in Britain. This suggestion may explain the clear difference between the 1662 canvas with its Dutch flair and the more 'Italianizing' pictures of the later years in England. It is certain that Van Hoogstraten could not have painted these palace views without the experience of his travels, as the architectural style of the Neo-Palladian buildings in England is very different from that of the Palladian buildings and palaces in Italy. The interior courtyards featured in his paintings are similar to those in the big palaces of Italy – the 'realm of beauty and joy' mentioned in his poem.

Van Hoogstraten's columns

In the five paintings with classic buildings, Van Hoogstraten shows a hybrid architecture that is neither Dutch nor Italian. The Dordrecht painter had set off for the British Isles at a time when the art of Inigo Jones, an architect who had made two journeys to Italy, was still prevalent there.



Fig. 66 Samuel van Hoogstaden, *Perspective with a Woman Reading a Letter*, c. 1670, canvas, 241.5 x 179 cm, The Hague, Mauritshuis



Fig. 67 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective Portrait of a Boy Catching a Bird*, canvas, 231 x 162.5 cm, London, A.W.M. Christie-Miller Collection

Back from his second voyage in 1615, the English architect had become acquainted with Palladio's most important successor in Northern Italy, Vincenzo Scamozzi, and owned a number of designs by Palladio. Jones's buildings are characterized by a sober style, void of decorative elements, focused on harmonious proportions with flat facades lacking columns.

At first glance, it may seem that the views Van Hoogstraten painted for English patrons simply repeat variations on elements from Jones's palace at Greenwich, with its gallery of columns connecting two simple block-like buildings [Fig. 72]. But there is a most intriguing difference: in three of the paintings discussed here, Van Hoogstraten deviates from the classical orders. His order is not Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian. At first sight, the columns may look Corinthian, but the capitals are composed of lily leaves and pomegranate seeds, uncommon in any of the classical orders [Figs. 65-67].

This unusual type of capital was described and reproduced in architectural treatises containing antiquarian discussions of the Temple of Solomon. The most influential book on this topic, published as early as 1604 by the Spaniard Juan Bautista Villalpando, depicted such columns, establishing the peculiar capitals with lilies and pomegranate seeds on the temple façade [Figs. 73]. Paradoxically, a different vision of Solomon's Temple comes from the same area: Beni-



Fig. 68 Donatello, *Equestrian Sculpture of Condottiere Erasmo da Narni or Gattamelata*, 1441-1450, 340 cm, Padua, Piazza del Santo



Fig. 69 Andrea del Verrocchio, *Equestrian Sculpture of Bartolomeo Colleoni*, 1480-1488, 396 cm, Venice, Campo Santi Giovanni e Paolo

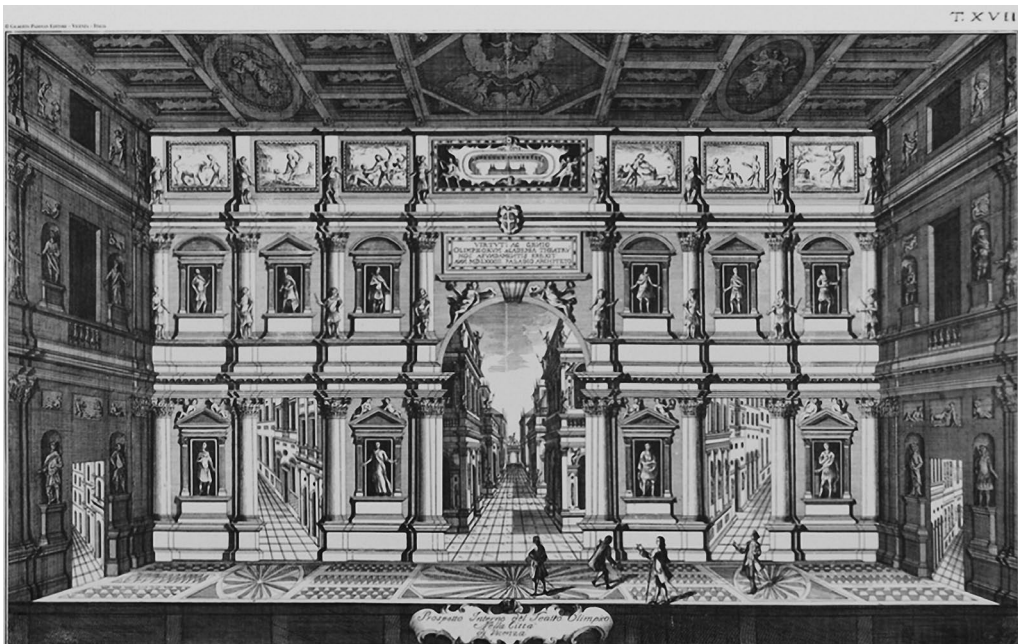


Fig. 70 Cristoforo dall'Acqua, *Andrea Palladio's Teatro Olimpico*, engraving, 360 x 615 mm, from: *Descrizione della magnifica e vaga illuminazione fatta nel teatro olimpico di Vicenza la sera del di' 17 giugno 1761 per la pubblica festa celebratasi nel medesimo*, Vicenza 1761

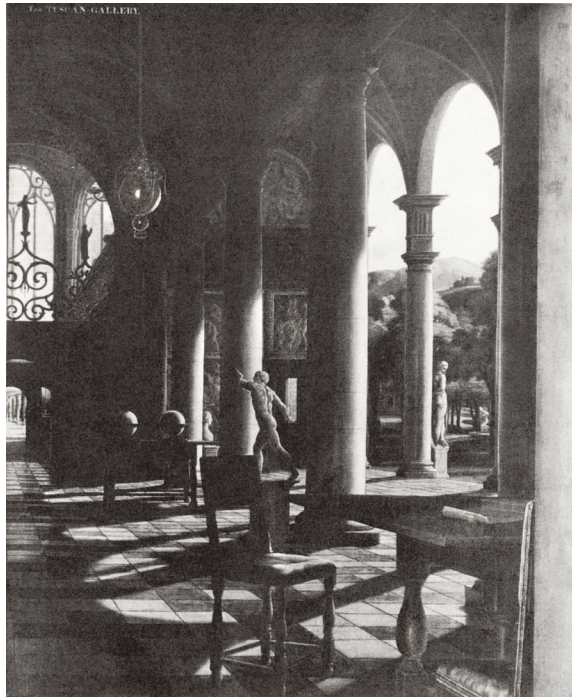


Fig. 71 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *The Tuscan Gallery*, canvas, 133.3 x 113.8 cm, Innes House, Elgin, Morayshire, Sir Iain Tennant



Fig. 72 Inigo Jones, *The Queen's House*, 1616-1635, Greenwich

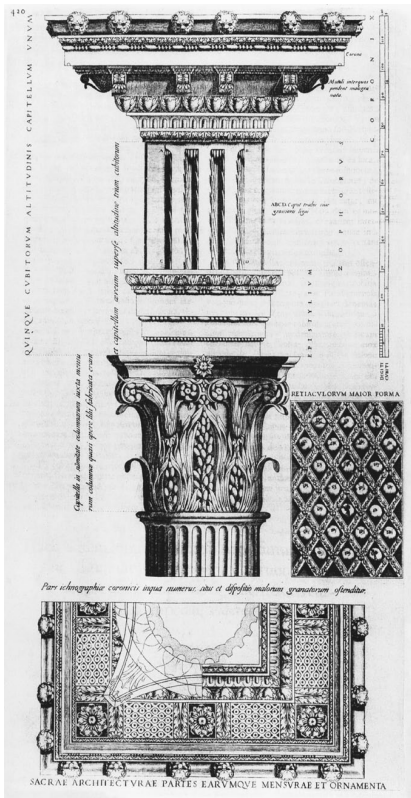


Fig. 73 Solomon's Temple according to J. de Prado and J.B. de Villalpando, *In Ezechielem explanationes et apparatus urbis ac templi hierosolymitani commentariis*, Rome 1596-1604

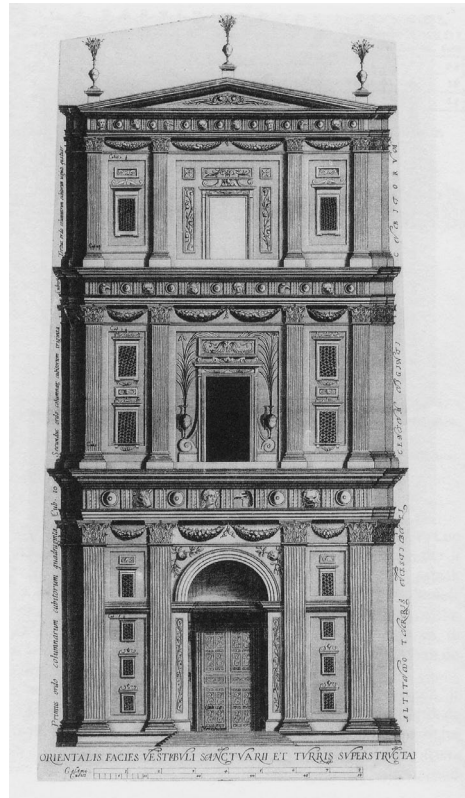


Fig. 74 Solomon's Temple according to Benito Arias Montano, *Antiquitatum Iudaicarum*, Leiden 1593

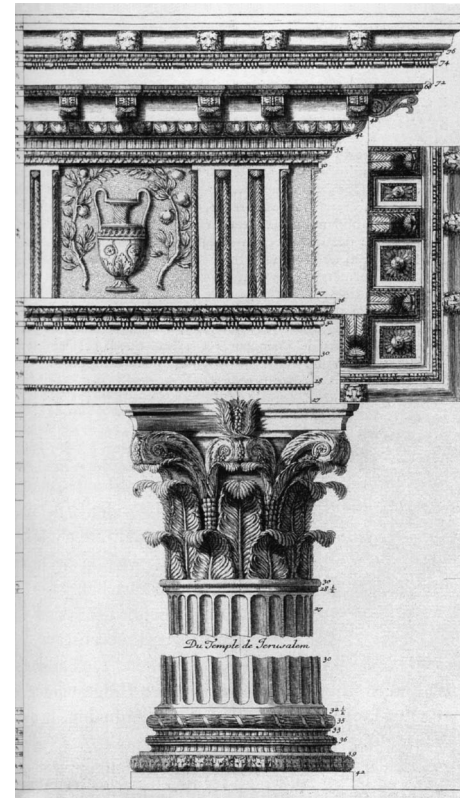


Fig. 75 Solomonic columns according to Fréart de Chambray, *Parallèle de l'architecture antique et de la moderne*, Paris

to Arias Montano, one of Philip II's librarians, had published detailed descriptions of Solomon's Temple in his *Antiquitatum Iudaicarum libri IX* (1593).²⁶ In this treatise, the design is more sober [Fig. 74]. While Villalpando's work may be deemed to conform to Catholic standards because of its lavish decorations, Montano's ascetic view may have appealed more to Protestants.²⁷ The Solomonic capitals reappear in the French architect Fréart de Chambray's publications of 1650, whose examples are even closer to Van Hoogstraten's [Fig. 75].

Unsurprisingly, Solomon's Temple was an important topic of debate for centuries; but in the years before Van Hoogstraten arrived in England, discussions about this legendary building had been especially intense there. A Protestant voice is already found in John Lightfoot's treatise *The Temple: Especially as it Stood in the Dayes of our Saviour*, published in London in 1650.²⁸ The

author explains the building's dimensions and plan in detail, in addition to liturgical objects and ritual methods, but without illustrations.²⁹ Another book, *Orbis miraculum; or the Temple of Solomon Pourtrayed by Scripture-light* (London 1659), was published by Samuel Lee, an English 'Preterist', i.e., one of those seeking common ground between Protestants and Catholics (and whose central idea was that most biblical prophesies had already been fulfilled in the first century CE). Lee's best friend, Bishop John Wilkins, was a founding member of the Royal Society: through his contacts with this same society Van Hoogstraten may have been acquainted with the theories about the Temple's architecture. Thomas Povey, a founding member, invited Van Hoogstraten to a discussion in his house that was so 'admirably arranged and artfully decorated', where the painter met 'four or five gentlemen of the Royal Society'.³⁰ From the 1640s onwards, the group discussed the New Science as promoted in Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*. This utopian novel described an ideal centre of learning based upon 'Solomon's House', envisioning a research university of sorts for both applied and pure sciences.³¹

Solomon's Temple was also a topic of debate in the Netherlands. A model of the Solomonic Temple was made by Jacob Jehuda 'Templo' Leon, who was born in Portugal and immigrated to Amsterdam at the age of three (in 1605). In Middelburg between 1639 and 1644, he built a model of the Solomonic Temple for Adam Boreel, a theologian operating in various Dutch and English groups, which was seen in his house and later exhibited in Haarlem and The Hague.³² Leon published *Afbeeldinghe van den Tempel Salomonis* (1642), which describes the temple in detail and was translated into English as *A Relation of the Most Memorable Things in the Tabernacle of Moses, and the Temple of Solomon, According to the Text of Scripture* (1675). On King Charles II's invitation, Leon took his model to London.³³ The model was based on Villalpando's idea of the Solomonic capitals. Leon's temple reconstruction eventually came to play an important role in English architectural theory; Constantijn Huygens even wrote to Christopher Wren recommending Leon's membership in the Royal Society. As a consequence, Wren's interest in the construction methods of the temple was supported by some of the members of the Royal Society.³⁴

As there is not a single building in London with columns like the ones in Van Hoogstraten's works, in all probability his architectural references did not derive from his travel experiences, but rather from books or models such as Leon's. He may also have discussed the theme during his visits to the 'Tas' association in Vauxhall (South London), which he described in the *Inleyding* and may have discussed with his friend Willem van Blijenbergh, a Dordrecht businessman:³⁵ this organisation was a place for artisans and engineers of all kinds. The group discussed technical inventions and carried out scientific experiments.

Van Hoogstraten's patrons?

Why did a man so deeply interested in art theory and antiquarian scholarship as Van Hoogstraten choose to deviate from Palladian and classical architecture for his English patrons? Solomon and his temple were certainly of great concern to many Christians. Protestants were usually known for their dependence on Old Testament stories and texts, whereas most Roman Catholics

were strongly convinced of the idea of their church and Rome as a New Jerusalem. The Jesuits in particular gave new symbolic functions to the Temple of Solomon, to which Christian interpretation had already ascribed allegorical meanings. The temple, as a perfect and divine building, was thought to reflect the harmony of all creation, including an ideal political and social order. Because of his wisdom and fear of God, Solomon was the exemplary ruler for any Christian sovereign. The temple complex therefore became a symbol of a theocratic view of worldly power, which corresponded to the ideas of Catholic kings such as Philip II of Spain, a main figure in the Counter-Reformation. The traditional motif of the temple as 'Domus sapientiae' derived from the Christian understanding of it as the seat of God's wisdom on earth.

Who, then, were the possible patrons of our artist? The question is complex, as Van Hoogstraten stayed in England during the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667), when Charles II was about to reconcile the Protestants with a reinigorated English Catholicism. Following the Clarendon Cold of 1663 the king promised more tolerance towards those of Catholic faith. In 1670 he even promised Louis XIV that he would convert to Catholicism, and was baptised on his deathbed.

The Temple of Solomon offered the potential for spiritual, moral, material, and social progress united in a single humanistic and artistic discourse. The Old Testament described the temple's beauty and regularity with units of measurement dating from the time of Noah to the period of Egypt, the Canaanites, and Abraham (*ulna*, *ephah*, *thigh*, and *gerah*). The temple and everything in it were formed after these units. At that time, the Royal Society saw the Hebrew unit *ulna* as a basis for the definition of universal longitudinal dimension, determined by a pendulum.³⁶

Van Hoogstraten adapted most of his English pictures meticulously to the rooms for which they were intended and in so doing achieved strikingly convincing illusions. He used the capitals of the temple in three of his pictures painted in Britain, so it is likely that he was aware of topical religious discussions and wanted to demonstrate his erudition in his works. Although such a conjecture is impossible to prove in the absence of written statements of the artist, the question arises whether it is possible that Van Hoogstraten wanted to reference the Old Testament units of measurement in order to provide these paintings with a sense of harmony, in addition to their spatiality. Moreover, his usage of the Solomonic columns may suggest that he paid homage to patrons who supported Charles II's ambitions of religious reconciliation. Through their idiosyncratic architecture, the paintings, made for specific houses, associated their owners with the Wisdom of Solomon and an attitude of toleration. In the words of the Bible (1 Kings 4, 29-30): 'God gave Solomon a great store of wisdom and good sense, and a mind of wide range, as wide as the sand by the seaside. And Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the people of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt.'

APPENDIX

Samuel van Hoogstraten, Op den Wegh-Wyser van D.L. v. Bos', in: L. van den Bos, *Weghwyser door Italien, of beschrijvinghe der landen en steden van Italien* (Dordrecht 1661, orig. 1657), fol. 111-12v.

My lust, met geen gezwinde Zon
 Te steig'ren over 's Hemels bocht,
 Gelijk een tweede Phaëton:
 Maer, over d' Alpes, in de locht,
 Met een gevleugelt paart, te post,
 Te scheuren, en door sneeuw en wolk,
 Dat my de ziel in 't lichaam host,
 Met eigen Viturijn en Tolk.
 Zie daar: dat vlieght den top voorby,
 Ik zie beneën een blaauwe streek,
 Een ruymt van verre, en schoon en bly,
 Het Landt, gemergelt geel en bleeck,
 Draaght roode Oranjen en Granaat.
 De Wijnstok, om een Boom vol ooft
 Zijn zwangre rank' en armen slaat.
 Godt Bacchus leunt zijn vrolijk hoofd
 Pomena op 'er hals en schoër;
 En Ceres in 'er goude schoot.
 En Flora zaait de groene vloer
 Vol Bloemen, purper, wit, en root.
 Gins springt de Satyr door 't geboomt,
 Dat lilt, geblazen van Zephyr.
 [fol. 11 v] Een koele Beek, al ruissent, stroomt,
 En kromt zich met een weitsche zwier,
 En rolt tot zy haar moeder vint,
 En ik Sint Marks gewiekte Leeuw:
 Die Mechaas over-zeeschen Hont
 Doet schrikken, voor 'er trots geschreeuw,
 En staat gelijk een ysere muur,
 En schut het scheurend Kerstendom,
 En slaat zijn klaauw, en spuwt zijn vuur
 Op't Frygisch strant. Ik keer my om,
 En ruk voorby den Mantuaan,
 En't Veronees, en zie met lust
 Philippus Stadt, het groot Milaan,
 En Padus overheerde kust.
 Beklim, door een Karstanje Wout,
 Den Appennijn, zoo Hemel hoogh,

Translation: Samuel van Hoogstraten, 'On D.L.v. Bos' Guide', in: L. van den Bos, *Guide to Italy, or Description of the Lands and Cities of Italy* (1661, orig. 1657), fol. 111-12v.³⁷

I do not want to rear up across heaven's arch
 alongside the swift sun
 like a second Phaeton:
 but to tear through the air over the Alps,
 like a messenger on a winged horse
 through snow and clouds,
 so that my soul bounces in my body,
 I bring my own Victorijn and interpreter.
 Behold: flying across the mountaintop
 I see a blue stroke below,
 and, from afar, a realm of beauty and joy:
 this land, veined yellow and white,
 bears red oranges and pomegranates.
 The grapevine bends its budding shoots like arms
 around a tree laden with fruit.
 Divine Bacchus rests his merry head
 on Pomona's neck and shoulder
 and on Ceres' golden lap,
 whilst Flora sows the green floor
 with purple, white and red flowers.
 Yonder a Satyr prances through the foliage
 rustling with Zephyr's breath.
 [fol. 11 v] A cool and swishing brook flows on
 winding in a grand serpentine
 until it finds its marine mother,
 while I find Saint Mark's winged lion
 whose proud roar terrifies
 the overseas hound of Mecca.
 Standing like an iron wall
 it protects divided Christianity:
 it bares its claws and spits its fire
 on the Phrygian shore. I turn around,
 going past Mantua and Verona,
 and see with joy
 King Philip's city, the great Milan
 and the vanquished coast of Padua.
 Through a chestnut forest, I climb
 the Apennines high as the sky

Daar Genua, zoo fier en stout,
 Verstrekt Neptuin een rechter oogh,
 En blinkt gelijk een Star in Zee,
 Haar muur staat Chinaas muur ten trots.
 Haar moelje omvat een rijke ree.
 Hier wil ik langs gebergh en rots
 In Zee: nu roey ons dat't klinckt,
 Zoo lief ik't Middellandsche Meyr,
 De Zonne daalt, den Hemel blinkt
 Met gouden Starren langs hoe meer,
 Den uchtent, vroeger als hy plagh,
 Komt zachjes koelen uit Levant,
 De golven rijzen met den dagh,
 En breken op Livornes strant,
 [fol. 12r] Een staart van zee-schuim volghet het roer,
 Tot Ostie in 's Tybers mont:
 Daar Vorst Eneas eertijds voer,
 En 't Koninklijke Alba stont.
 Dit 's Roma, daer ik 's Keisers Stadt,
 Het Duitsche Weenen om verliet,
 Den Throon daar een Augustus zat,
 En Alexander nu gebiedt.
 Hier zagh ik Innocent, voorheen
 Mijn Vader, na Gregoor, Vrbaan
 Het Hooge-Priesterdom bekleên.
 Nu zal ik weêr op Vatikaan
 En 't Kapitoel, de Roomsche praal
 Beklimmen, langs de Marb're trap:
 Nu weêr, in d'onwaardeerb're zaal
 Vol wonderen, over wetenschap
 Betoont in Beelden, en Penceel
 Des grooten Raphaëls staan ver stelt,
 Elk Tempel is een Landt-juweel.
 Hier toont zich Titus groot gewelt,
 Het Reusen Schouwburgh, eerst gebouwt
 In vijfthien jaar tot in den top,
 Maar houdt noch, vijfthien eeuwen oudt,
 Zijn grooten romp en schouders op.
 Ik renn' de Zeege-poorten deur,
 Tot daar den Tyber valt en ruyst,
 Of daar Freskade, vol van geur,
 Fonteynen na de Starren pruyst.
 Of zie, in 't zelfde oogeblick,
 Het edele Napels, vol van lust;
 [fol. 12v] Vezuvius, ô angst en schrik!
 Met vuur en vlam de wolken kust.

where Genoa, proud and brave,
 acts as Neptune's right eye
 twinkling like a star at sea.
 Her walls stand comparison with that of China:
 her piers protect a rich haven.
 Here, past mountains and rocks, I want to put to sea.
 Rowers, take us away with your clamor:
 thus I cleave the Mediterranean.
 The sun sets, the sky glitters
 with more and more golden stars.
 The morning, earlier than she used to,
 comes cooling us sweetly from the Levant.
 The waves grow as the day proceeds
 and break on Leghorn's beach.
 [fol. 12r] A tail of sea-foam follows the oar
 until Ostia in the Tiber estuary:
 where King Aeneas once sailed
 and royal Alba Longa stood.
 This is Rome, for which I left the Emperor's City
 (the Teutonic Vienna):
 the throne where once Augustus ruled
 and now Alexander VII.
 Here I saw Innocent, who was once my Pope,
 holding the High Priest's office
 after Gregory and Urban.
 Now I will climb again the Roman splendor
 of the Vatican and Capitol,
 along the marble stairs;
 once again, in the priceless hall of wonders,
 I'll be amazed by the cunning
 demonstrated in images
 and by Raphael's brush.
 Every temple is a jewel of the land.
 Here, one sees Titus's great command,
 the Giant Amphitheatre, first built
 in its entirety in a mere fifteen years
 and, fifteen centuries old, still holding high
 its great body and shoulders.
 I run through the triumphal arches
 until where the Tiber streams and rustles
 and where fragrant Frascati
 spurts its fountains to the stars.
 Then I see, at the same instance,
 noble Naples, full of lust,
 [fol. 12v] and the Vesuvius – o fear and terror! –
 kissing the clouds with fire and flames.

En nu Lorettes heyligh Huis,
 Wel eer gevoert uit Nazareth,
 En door den Hemel, met gedruis,
 En een en andermaal verzet.
 Zoo fix gelukt my ook de reis.
 Dit 's, dunkt my, d' Arno, en hoe schoon
 Schijnt gantsch Florencen een Paleis,
 't Paleis een wooning van Goôn.
 En Krezus schat de galery
 Der Medicische Vorsten propt,
 Wat stam zoo stout, als deze ry,
 Aan Famaas hoogen Tempel klopt?
 't En deê 't Lukesche vry gebiedt,
 Zy voerde een Koninklijken hoedt.
 Rust Pisa en Siena, in 't verschiet,
 Bolongna vol van overvloet,
 Ferrara, en Parma, en soo veel steên
 Als 't vruchtbaer Lombardia draeght.
 Zoo vaar ik door de Rijken heên,
 Waar van de gantsche Werelt waaght.
 En hoe? gevoert door Van den Bos.
 Hy draaght my, op een Eng'le veer,
 Veel veiliger als Perseus Ros,
 Zoo ben ik t' huis, en elders meer:
 Zijn Zanggodin mijn ziel vervoert.
 Men prijze Orpheus stem en Lier,
 Die bergen schudt, en steenen roert,
 Hy rolt ons gantsch Italien hier.

And now Loreto's Holy House
 that was once carried here from Nazareth,
 transported through the heavens with a
 rushing sound.
 My journey is just as easy.
 This, I think, is the river Arno, and how pretty
 is all of Florence, it seems a palace,
 as a stately home for the Gods,
 where Croesus's treasure fills the gallery
 of the Medici princes.
 What family knocks on the high temple of Fame's door
 as boldly as this one?
 The free realm of Lucca could not do it,
 the city wore a royal crown.
 Pisa and Siena are at the horizon
 as well as Bologna's abundance,
 Ferrara and Parma, and so many cities
 as carried by fertile Lombardy.
 Thus I travel across those lands
 about which the whole world tells stories.
 And how? Led by Van den Bos.
 He carries me, on a single quill,
 much safer than Perseus's horse,
 in a moment I'm home, and again elsewhere:
 his Muse ravishes my soul.
 Some may praise the voice and lyre of Orpheus
 who shakes mountains and moves stones:
 but Van den Bos rolls out the whole of Italy before us.

Notes

- 1 E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting: Its Origin and Character*, Princeton 1953, 57–58.
- 2 S. Pepys, *The Diary*, Monday 26 January 1662/63, URL: <http://www.pepysdiary.com/archive/1663/01/>. Accessed November 20, 2010.
- 3 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *View Down a Corridor*, 1662, oil on canvas, 264 x 136.5 cm, signed on a letter on the stair: 'S.V.Hoogstraten', Durham Park, Gloucester, The Balthwayt Collection.
- 4 Richard Lassels (c.1603–1668) was a Roman Catholic priest, a travel writer, a tutor to several of the English nobility, and traveled through Italy five times. In his work, *Voyage or a Complete Journey through Italy*, published in Paris in 1670, he introduced the term *grand tour*, suggesting that all 'young lords' make such a journey in order to understand the world's political, social, and economic realities.
- 5 H. Peacham, *The Complete Gentleman* (ed. V.B. Hetzel), Ithaca, New York, 1962.
- 6 M. Wiemers, *Der 'Gentleman' und die Kunst: Studien zum Kunsturteil des englischen Publikums in Tagebuchaufzeichnungen des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Hildesheim, Zürich & New York 1986, 6.
- 7 Manuscripts now in the British Museum: Harl. MS 943 (part of the journey through Italy until Leghorn);

- MS 942 (notes on churches in Rome), Egerton MS 1636 (*Segrete intorno la pittura veduta & sentita della praticadel Sig. Gio Anggolo Canini in Roma*), Egerton MS 1635 (on churches and palaces in Rome). One is kept in the Bodleian Library, Oxford: Rawl. MS D 121 (concerning the route from Rome to Milan).
- 8 Van Hoogstraten's brother arrived later in Vienna, see *Inleyding* 17. According to Van Hoogstraten, the brothers lived together. Samuel's relationship with the court in Vienna appears to have flourished quickly, as he had already shown some of his works to the emperor by August 6; *Inleyding* 201-203.
- 9 *Inleyding*, 201-203.
- 10 "Dit ist der eerste Maler die mir betrogen heeft." En liet hem voorts aanzeggen, dat hy tot straf voor dat bedrog "Dat stuk niet zou wederom krygen, maar hy het voor altyd wilde bewaren, en in waarde houden", A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburg der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, Amsterdam 1718-1721., Vol. II, 157-158. Brusati supposes that the painting *Trompe-l'oeil Letter Rack with Rosary and Playing Cards*, oil on canvas, Prague, Prague Castle, could be the image which Van Hoogstraten painted for Ferdinand III; C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Chicago 1995, 64. For the *trompe-l'oeil* paintings that depict the medal and chain, see Roscam Abbing's chapter in the present book.
- 11 L. van den Bos, *Weghwyser door Italien, of beschrijvinge der landen en steden van Italien*, Dordrecht 1661 (2nd ed.).
- 12 Van Hoogstraten later joined the Reformed Church after marrying Sara Balen, a member of a prominent Dordrecht family (on January 11, 1657).
- 13 See Appendix.
- 14 For Van Hoogstraten's stay in London see Pepys 1662/63 and *Inleyding* 266.
- 15 M. Roscam Abbing, *De schilder & schrijver Samuel van Hoogstraten 1627-1678: eigentijdse bronnen & oeuvre van gesigeneerde schilderijen*, Leiden 1993, 60-61, 63-64.
- 16 Van Hoogstraten's journey to England is the subject of one of Heiman Dullaert's poems, *H. Dullaerts gedichten*, ed. D. van Hoogstraten, Amsterdam 1719, p. 160, see also Roscam Abbing 1993, 58. Two letters which Van Hoogstraten wrote to Willem van Blijenbergh date from the English period, Roscam Abbing 1993, 59-63.
- 17 S. van Hoogstraten, [untitled liminary poem], in: J. van Oort, *Stuarts ongeluckige heerschappye, ofte kort verhael van alle d'ongelucken en rampsaligheden het doorluchtighigh huys van Stuart over-komen, sints Robbert d'eerste uyt desen buyse, konigh van Schotlandt, de Schotse heerschappye is op-gedragen, tot de doot van Karel, d'eerste koningh van Engelandt, Schotlandt en Yerlandt, &c.*, Dordrecht 1649; S. van Hoogstraten, 'De Merwe-nimfes zeege-zang', in: *Herstelde zeege-triomp van Karl de Tweede, koning van Groot Brittanjen, Vranckrijck en Ierlandt, beschermer des geloofs. Door verscheyde voornaemste poëten van Hollandt*, Dordrecht 1660.
- 18 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective with a Young Man Reading a Book*, oil on canvas, 264.2 x 276.8 cm, Durham Park, The Blathwayt Collection, was also painted for Thomas Povey's house. John Povey mentioned it in a letter to Thomas of December 5, 1700.
- 19 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective Portrait of a Young Man Reading in a Courtyard*, oil on canvas, 238 x 175.3 cm, present location unknown.
- 20 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective Portrait of a Young Man Reading in a Courtyard*, oil on canvas, 231 x 165 cm, London, A.W.M. Christie-Miller Collection.
- 21 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective with a Woman Reading a Letter*, oil on canvas, 241.5 x 179 cm, The Hague, Mauritshuis. Brusati thinks that the man is Van Hoogstraten himself and concludes that this picture was painted for the artist's home; Brusati 1995, 208-209.
- 22 The house looks like a design by the architect Hendrick de Keyser, who was a friend of Inigo Jones.
- 23 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Perspective Portrait of a Boy Catching a Bird*, oil on canvas, 231 x 162.5 cm, London, A.W. M. Christie-Miller Collection.

- 24 Donatello, *Equestrian sculpture of Condottiere, Erasmo da Narni or Gattamelata*, 1441-1450, 340 cm, Padua, Piazza del Santo; Andrea del Verrocchio, *Equestrian sculpture of Bartolomeo Volleonis*, 1480-1488, 396 cm, Venice, Campo Santi Giovanni e Paolo.
- 25 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *The Tuscan Gallery*, oil on canvas, 133.3 x 113.8 cm, Innes House, Elgin, Morayshire, Sir Iain Tennant.
- 26 Benito Arias Montano, *Antiquitatum Iudaicarum libri LX*, Leiden 1593.
- 27 The Spanish Inquisition accused Montano of heresy because of his translation of the Bible. Protestants appreciated his work for this reason; see J. Bennett, 'Salomons Tempel und das Haus Salomons' in der Naturphilosophie des 17. Jahrhunderts,' *Dresdener Kunstblätter: Vierteljahresschrift der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden* 4 (2009), 260-268, esp. 263, and H. Rosenau, *Visions of the Temple: The Image of the Temple of Jerusalem in Judaism and Christianity*, London 1979, 94-95.
- 28 J. Lightfoot, *The Temple: Especially as it Stood in the Dayes of Our Saviour*, London 1650.
- 29 Bennett 2009, 264.
- 30 'De Heer Povy, een overgroot liefhebber tot London, en schatmeester van den hartog van Jork, was by der een vermaert om zijn wonder wel geordineert en konstigh versiert huis, en noch meer om zijn behaglijken ommegang: maer ik bemerkte eens, hoe bequaem hy in 't ordineeren was: want my de eer aengedaen hebbende van, nevens vier of vijf heeren van de Royal Societeit, te gaste te nooden, zoo wiert'er tot vijmael toe aengerecht. Als nu een van 't gezelschap zeyde, dat hy geloofde dat dit nu't laetste was: Zoo gaf hy met een aerdich woort te kennen: dat wy eeven ter halver baen waren. Alzoo wiert'er tot tienmael afgenomen en opgezet, en alles zoo sierlijk, veranderlijk, en ordentlijk, dat het te verwonderen was; ook niet overkonstlijk, en nochtans liet hy ons van vier-en-twintigderley soorten van uitheemse wijnen proeven', *Inleyding* 188.
- 31 F. Bacon, *New Atlantis*, Latin/English, London 1624/1626.
- 32 H. Pool, 'Der verschwundene Tempel – Jacob Jehuda Leon (1602-1665) und sein Templum Salomonis,' *Dresdener Kunstblätter. Vierteljahresschrift der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden* 4 (2009), 269-280.
- 33 J. Jehuda Leon, *A relation of the Most Memorable Things in the Tabernacle of Moses, and the Temple of Salomon, According to Text of Scripture* (transl. J. Rayot), Amsterdam 1675.
- 34 C. Wren, *Parentalia; or, Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens*, London 1750, 360.
- 35 'De Tas van Faxhall gaf ons tot London een zoete zotterny, vermits we om den uitlech van Renjans Reliquen staetig aerdige geesten bijeen kreegen, daer van dingen gerept wierd, daer ons leven te kort toe zouw zijn, om aen alle te gedenken, ik zwijg uit te vinden. Maer deeze is met onzen eeuwich beweegvinder Kalthof, ik meen zoeker, in stilheit verdweenen', *Inleyding*, 207. Caspar Calthoff, a Dutch engineer, assisted Edward Somerset, Marquis of Worchester, with mechanical experiments at Raglan which included a hydraulic system to raise water for irrigation.
- 36 R. Cumberland, *An Essay Towards the Recovery of the Jewish Measures and Weights*, London 1686. Cumberland discussed many details of the temple in relation to the newest mathematics and natural philosophy, which is in itself an indication of the topical nature of the discourse. He referred to the mathematical book *Horologium oscillatorium*, The Hague 1658, by Christiaan Huygens, an honorable member of the Royal Society.
- 37 Translation by T. Weststeijn.



CHAPTER 8

Samuel van Hoogstraten, the First Dutch Novelist?

THIJS WESTSTEIJN

Samuel van Hoogstraten wrote two books that can be called novels, *Beautiful Roselijn, or the Steadfast Love of Panthus* (1650) and *The Punished Abduction, or the Victorious Reparation of the Youth Haegaenveld, Illuminated with the Curious Adventures of the Dutch Nymphs* (1669) [Figs. 76 and 77]. Written in an idiosyncratic Dutch, rich in detail, plot sideroads, and even some engravings, they feature Dordrecht youngsters whose amorous escapades eventually involve Finnish shamans, Ukrainian cossacks, African elephants, and a high priest devoted to Isis.

In a 2002 lecture, the Amsterdam historian of literature, Marijke Spies, put forward the thesis that Van Hoogstraten was the first Dutch novelist: his two books inspired various similar works among his Dordrecht friends that adumbrate the eighteenth-century writings of Betje Wolff (1738–1804) and Aagje Deken (1741–1804), who are generally regarded as the founders of the genre in the Netherlands.¹ This chapter shall explore Professor Spies' striking statement and determine the place of Van Hoogstraten's books in the early history of the Dutch novel.

In fact, contemporaries indeed esteemed Van Hoogstraten as a writer. Arnold Houbraken wondered whether his master was better at poetry than at painting.² Lambert Bidloo (1638–1724) even included Van Hoogstraten among his ekphrastic portraits of Dutch writers, the *Panpoeticum Batavum* (1720), as having reached the level of Pieter Cornelisz Hooft (1581–1647). Maybe he deemed the painter's tragedy concerning a siege of Dordrecht (*anno* 1084) comparable to the latter's monumental *History of the Netherlands*; yet Hooft also wrote drama with a pastoral setting, shared by Van Hoogstraten's novels.³ Writing in 1833, finally, the Dordrecht lawyer and amateur poet Peter Schull (1791–1835) asserted that Van Hoogstraten's literary qualities greatly surpassed his talents in the figurative arts: his poetry, even though 'not free from the old roughness of versification' was 'noble and grand, often even sublime and brave'.⁴ Schull's remark suggests that at least in Dordrecht, the master's writings remained well known more than a century after his death.⁵ None of these statements, however, explained what exactly was worthy of praise in Van Hoogstraten's writings.



Fig. 76 Title page from Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Schone Roselijn*, Dordrecht 1650, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam



Fig. 77 Title page from Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Haegaenveld*, Amsterdam 1669, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam

In some respects, the two novels confirm Peter Thissen's and Celeste Brusati's cogent thesis that much of the painter-poet's work expressed his ambitions to fashion his professional career. In effect, Van Hoogstraten dedicated his writings to people for whom he also made portraits, and he asked authors from the same group of contacts to write poems in praise of his work.⁶ Even though the novels illustrated Van Hoogstraten's self-assurance as a literary author, he also emphasized that his actual work was visual art – the main difference between the two activities being that you could earn a living by painting and not by writing poetry.⁷ Thissen thus called attention to how the books functioned in Van Hoogstraten's commercial network, without, however, discussing their content.

To answer the question whether Van Hoogstraten was the first Dutch novelist, we need to address three main points. Which novelistic works were written in Dutch and what was their intention? What, precisely, are Van Hoogstraten's books in terms of genre and content? Finally, what was their impact?

Pastoral writings and novelistic works in Dutch

The chronology of determining what was the first Dutch novel is obfuscated by a number of translations, adaptations, and fragments. Novels, in the seventeenth century, chiefly meant imitations of the kind of narrative pioneered by the Italian author Jacopo Sannazaro (1457-1530), featuring civilized shepherds – ‘pastoral courtiers’⁸ – who recount their amorous adventures in a setting reminiscent of ancient Arcadia. North of the Alps, Sannazaro’s main followers were the Frenchman Honoré d’Urfé (1568-1625) and the Englishman Philip Sidney (1554-1586). These two authors were in turn imitated in the Netherlands. Yet the first writings on the pastoral theme in Dutch were plays, namely Theodoor Rodenburgh’s *The Faithful Batavian* (1617) and Hooft’s *Granida* (1615), the latter, eventually, the basis for various paintings.⁹

As early as 1625, part of d’Urfé’s book *L’Astrée* was published in Dutch: the translator had apparently taught ‘dainty Diana to speak Dutch’.¹⁰ Various episodes were published individually before the book appeared in full, in five volumes between 1644 and 1671.¹¹ Two excerpts from Sidney’s *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia* (1590-93) also appeared.¹² The main figure among the translators was Johan van Heemskerck (1597-1656). This vernacular author envisaged to write an original work in the novelistic manner, the first in Dutch aiming at a mixture of romance and history with a didactic intent, which resulted in his *Introduction to a Project for a Batavian Arcadia* (1637).¹³

Yet, as many have observed, the *Batavian Arcadia* was not the first Dutch novel. To the literary historian Jan te Winkel, writing in 1924, ‘Van Heemskerck’s work has from the pastoral novel nothing more than the title, the designation of the characters as shepherds and the alternation between prose and songs and small poems.’¹⁴ As Alison Kettering remarked more recently, ‘By the time the book was published, it had evolved beyond the original amorous theme into a didactic and nationalistic discourse on Dutch history and politics’; this was especially true for the second edition (1647) in which pastoral aspects were drowned in antiquarian observations, local history, and digressions on the Dutch Indies.¹⁵ The title reveals its didactic intent: *The Batavian Arcadia, in which is Discussed, Under the Foliage of Caresses, the Origin of Ancient Batavia, the Batavians’ Freedom, The Freedom of the Sea, Findings from the Sea, Those who have Found Hidden Treasures, the Forfeiting of Goods, the Extraction of the Truth through Torture, the Calamities Following from the Slowness of Judicial Procedures, with the Causes of These and the Remedies Against them, and Other Similarly Serious Subjects*.¹⁶ Many of the scholarly notes in the text’s margin were written in Latin by the Amsterdam humanist Caspar Barlaeus, and other passages from writers in English, French, and Italian were added, thus hampering the novelistic intent of a lay public’s narrative to be read from cover to cover. Yet it became highly popular and had a dozen reprints up to the nineteenth century, some of them illustrated; in fact, Van Hoogstraten’s *Inleyding* refers repeatedly to it.¹⁷

Van Heemskerck’s book became the basis for an extensive series of *Arcadias* in Dutch. Most, however, had an even more explicitly antiquarian subject matter, intended at highlighting the history of the Dutch Republic.¹⁸ By contrast, Van Hoogstraten’s two books can more properly be called novels.

Intention

As Kettering has argued, pastoral writings were a marker of social class: they were imported to the Netherlands by those who had made an educational tour to Italy, France, or England and thereby demonstrated the author's enthusiasm for foreign literature.¹⁹ Many authors held political offices that partly explained their wish for raising the status of the vernacular culture. Hooft was sheriff of Muiden, Van Heemskerck a wealthy alderman in Amsterdam (he appears twice as 'Raetsheer [Councillor] Heemskerck' in Van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding*).²⁰

Van Hoogstraten may likewise have wished to express his international outlook and social ambitions through his first novel and, through the second one, to reinforce his rise to public office as master of the Dordrecht Mint (in 1656). According to Kettering, the writing of pastorals 'satisfied a social need' as these texts professed to be 'for and about [the author's] own class of people':²¹ portraying courtly manners in writing revealed one's own refined habits. In Van Hoogstraten's case, this ambition was obviously an instance of wishful thinking. As Thissen has stated, the painter's intellectual ambitions were handicapped by his lowly origins, even though in literary terms he communicated on the same level with the oligarchs of the Dordrecht magistracy.²² It seems that he turned his handicap into a token of special talent when the books highlighted his status as a painter. His writing, then, became a theme in the 'letter-rack' paintings that depict copies of his publications.²³

That civilized exchanges provided the context for Van Hoogstraten's literary texts appears in the dedication of *Hagaenveld* to the princesses Elisabeth Maria van Nassau Portugal and her sister Emilia Louisa, two scions of an impoverished branch of the Nassaus, related to the banished Portuguese royalty: the family belonged to Van Hoogstraten's painterly clientele in The Hague.²⁴ The princesses' residence serves as the starting point for Van Hoogstraten's narrative. When *Roselijn* was followed by Van Hoogstraten's second book, his abridged translation of a French treatise for courtiers, *The Honest Youth, or the Noble Art of Making Oneself Loved among the Higher and Lower Classes* (1657), it was even more explicit that the author wanted to be like his readers.²⁵

Finally, when Van Hoogstraten portrays the 'Dutch nymphs' mentioned in the title of *Haegaenveld*, speaks of 'The Hague's Goddesses', and describes local garden goddesses (*Tuyn-godinnen*), he presents contemporaries in the guise of nymphs and pagan deities: this calls to mind the popularity of *portraits historiés* in the seventeenth century that, in turn, reflected a practice of staging tableaux vivants and short plays. In *Roselijn* one of the protagonists literally dresses up 'in pagan fashion' for the diversion of her friends: this echoed events in the Dordrecht circle – Van Hoogstraten's play *Courtly Quarrel* (1669), for instance, involves marriage guests dressing up as an array of pagan figures including Bacchus and Cupid.²⁶

Yet other elements in Van Hoogstraten's books contradict the view that he merely wanted to create an imaginary realm in which his readers saw themselves favorably reflected. It is these other elements that make *Roselijn* and *Haegaenveld* idiosyncratic creations.

What are these books?

Van Hoogstraten's two books are in some aspects similar to the international 'Arcadian' texts: *Haegaenveld* refers directly to Sannazaro and Giovanni Battista Guarini (1538-1612), another pastoral dramatist whose writing was the basis for one of the most prestigious paintings in the Stadholder's collection in The Hague (by Anthony van Dyck, Fig. 78).²⁷ Furthermore, a dedication poem in *Roselijn* states that with this book Van Hoogstraten has surpassed d'Urfé: now 'Roselijn can teach Astrée, however French she may be, the art of love in a most civilized manner'.²⁸

The innovative character of d'Urfé's and Sidney's works was to some extent a matter of genre: a combination of prose, poetry, and song lyrics. Van Hoogstraten demonstrates that he appreciated this new hybridity, not only introducing lines of poetry, but even incorporating fictional letters in their entirety as part of the narrative.²⁹ In the two novels, moreover, there are frequent changes of narrator's perspective. Most of the story is told from the viewpoints of the different Holland youngsters recounting their adventures in love (often rendered literally in reported speech). This leads to many stories-within-stories, the interwoven 'layers of fiction' known from Italian prose from Sannazaro onward.³⁰ Yet, more idiosyncratic and maybe more properly novelistic is that the author directs himself to the reader in little asides. As the narrator reveals himself as a Dordrecht native and a painter, this suggests Van Hoogstraten himself speaking. When he calls on the Muses to enliven his description of a battle, there is little originality; however, uniquely for the early Dutch novel, he even refers to his painterly experience to explain features of the narrative. He writes that his pen falls short in describing an especially vivid scene involving the beauties of various 'nymphs', which he would rather have painted.³¹ He also relies on his occupation as a painter to excuse himself for any imperfections: 'If even that great Poet who polished his hymns all day long was not flawless, how then should I, who, having served another goddess [i.e., Pictura] all day long, cannot turn to *Roselijn* until bedtime, be free from error?'³² Finally, he expresses the hope that his painting might yield enough income to leave more time for his literary pursuits, being 'bound to a different Muse, who rewards her servants better than Poetry'.³³ This means that in *Haegaenveld*, as Brusati has claimed, 'it is less the narrative than its self-conscious devising that commands the reader's attention'.³⁴ Sometimes, however, there is just great clumsiness – Van Hoogstraten ends an account of storm and shipwreck abruptly by stating that his 'throat becomes sore from such a heavy tone', and turns back to his Dordrecht nymphs.³⁵

We should note, finally, that the author was an unabashed self-plagiarist. The second novel copies verbatim many passages from the first one: the same stories are now told by different protagonists at different moments in the narrative.³⁶ This may remind the modern reader of the 'vanity publishing' of our present age; speaking against such a simple motive for Van Hoogstraten is that he did not ask his brother Frans to publish the books, as he did with the *Inleyding*, but approached others, Jasper Goris (1638-1669) from Dordrecht and Baltes Boekholt (1656-1689) from Amsterdam, thus, it seems, tapping into different expanses of his network.³⁷

By contrast, the sets of illustrations of the two books differ in their content and execution; Jan Blanc has therefore concluded that although the seven images in *Roselijn* were made by Van Hoogstraten, those in *Haegaenveld* were not.³⁸



Fig. 78 Anthony van Dyck, *Amarillis and Myrtillo*, 1631, 1631-1632, canvas, 122 x 145.5 cm, Turin, Galleria Sabauda

Literature and scholarship in the vernacular

Van Hoogstraten's two books differ from the internationally successful novels in their explicitly Dutch vantage point. Instead of in an idealized, Mediterranean-style Arcadia he situates his protagonists in Holland: the narrative starts in settings recognizable by his circle of readers, identifying Dordrecht, The Hague, and Amsterdam and soon continuing to Naarden, Muiderberg, the river Lek, the Betuwe area, Rosendaal, and Arnhem [Figs. 79 and 80].³⁹ Beginning the book with genteel youngsters on a leisure journey, he took his inspiration from Van Heemskerck's works. These focused on local historical details, especially the ancient Batavians, presumed forefathers of the Dutch, who provided the classical basis for the province of Holland's cultural and political predominance. Yet Van Hoogstraten omits most of the historical references, only singling out the ancient Roman fort constructed at the beach at Katwijk, known as the Brittenburg, that seventeenth-century scholars related to the Batavians.⁴⁰

The first authors of pastoral poems and plays in Dutch, such as Hooft, had tried to



Fig. 79-80 Illustrations from Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Schone Roselijn*, Dordrecht 1650, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam

remedy what they perceived as the backward state of their own vernacular literature, training themselves by translating the classics.⁴¹ Van Hoogstraten's energetic use of the Dutch language reinforces the idea that he wanted his readers to identify with his protagonists, giving them fanciful names that are, however, decidedly Dutch and refer to local flowers and crops (Hageroos, Klaverpruyk, Korenare, Lelybandt, Matelieve) or have other pastoral associations such as Lamerveld (Lamb-field), Lauwervelt (Laurel-field), Lelygaert (Lily-garden), and Starrewit (Star-white). The introduction to *Roselijn* explains how these figures inhabit the 'Garden of Holland', which was a popular metaphor for the Dutch Republic. Though the Southern European countries had first imitated classical literature, now it was up to the Dutch: 'The proud Spaniard envies the Roman glory, and the French poet challenges the one from Mantua Likewise, the great Lion, Protector of Holland's flourishing Garden, pulls snowy-white Swans in her safe Pond.'⁴² Van Hoogstraten explicitly aspires to vie with no one less than Virgil and Homer, invoking those Muses 'whose exertions embrace the vernacular'.⁴³ In *Roselijn*, his political motive is

explicit, calling on the ‘proud Muse! who transposes Holland in Latium ... at once gird your loins, and let Bato’s people [i.e. the Batavians] hear poems in their own Language and true monuments to honor our State’.⁴⁴

The love story in *Roselijjn* sets out in a kind of vernacular Arcadia that would be all too familiar to Dordrecht readers: instead of under pines and olive trees, the protagonist Panthus meets Roselijjn on the ice. The story of Actaeon seeing Diana is transported to an unlikely Dutch backdrop, where the waters around the city’s walls have frozen and the icy sheets have drifted into piles. It is Panthus speaking here:

when the sun’s meridional course had run its end and the nights were at their longest (the cold froze everything there was) it happened that, through mere coincidence, I was walking along the city’s walls where the dreadful ice floes, which had drifted against the piers in the storm, lay as high as a man ... there I met the distinguished Roselijjn, clad in splendid and ornately draped garments. How my heart pounded with confusion! Like the tired, perspiring huntsman, gasping for breath when suddenly seeing the Hunting Goddess naked and to her waist in the water of a spring, stood surprised and amazed: just so, her radiant eyes pierced my mind with rays of lightning.⁴⁵

Despite these shared vernacular feelings, Van Hoogstraten differs in terms of intent and format from Van Heemskerck. For one, he keeps contemporary politics out of his novels. Only *Haegaenveld* has a short reference to a current issue, the Anglo-Dutch wars, complaining that ‘Alack! These wailings will not end, nor will the heated neighbours stop destroying each other, before the white swan of the Merwe river [i.e., Admiral Tromp] swims in the Thames and pulls out the enemy’s feathers; and a new Perseus on Pegasus will show Medusa’s head to the South and East Saxons [i.e., the English].’⁴⁶ Elsewhere, the author uses a contemporary metaphor when comparing a youngster’s courageous deeds to a merchant’s vessel, menaced by Dunkirk pirates off the English shore, which, rescued by three war galleons from Zeeland, has its revenge by firing its full load on the fleeing ships.⁴⁷ For suspense effects, however, Van Hoogstraten clearly prefers more exotic locations and battles than the United Provinces’ wars with Spain and England: the northern and eastern fringes of Europe.

As to scholarship, philology, history, and law – the ‘serious topics’ that are such a prominent feature of Van Heemskerck’s books – Van Hoogstraten strays even farther from his predecessor. There is next to nothing in his two novels that recalls the didactic and scientific intentions that determined, for instance, the bellettristic works of fellow Dordrecht author Lambert van den Bos (1610–1698). Perhaps one passage in *Haegaenveld* may even be interpreted as an implicit criticism of the scholarly asides in contemporary writing. The protagonist Vrederyk meets a hermit who treats him to a nineteen-page-oration about God and the cosmos. But the hero is rather annoyed than interested.⁴⁸

Horror, magic, and violence

The overview history of early Dutch novels, by Jan te Winkel (1924), only mentioned the 1669 *Haegaenveld*, ignoring *Schone Roselijn* and therefore denying Van Hoogstraten his pioneer position. Moreover, the author dismissed the painter's literary qualities, identifying *Haegaenveld* 'among the most curious creations that an unbridled fantasy has been able to bring forth' and adding that 'with the many adventures of its plethora of un-Dutch characters, who yet bear far-fetched Dutch names and most of whose escapades take place in The Hague and at our sea beaches, the novel offers such a gaudy mixture of events that it is difficult to render its story in a few words or even make it in any measure insightful.'⁴⁹ Te Winkel, however, may have been biased towards this painter who did not fit the traditional literary categories: he read little of Van Hoogstraten's book and suggested erroneously that it was inspired by a French novel, *The African Sophonisba* (1661).⁵⁰ In fact, *Haegaenveld* seems inspired only by *Roselijn*.

Yet, we cannot deny that Van Hoogstraten's novels certainly make a hard read. They testify to the verbal incontinence that also characterizes to some extent his treatise on painting: his convoluted plots vary in speed and many sideroads turn into dead ends. As another literary historian mistakenly notes, 'the most silly and odd events, the most wondrous and fantastic adventures are said to take place in The Hague's forest':⁵¹ in reality they move quickly from the Stadholder's court to a Ukrainian battle zone and an Ottoman harem. This, indeed, is what sets the two books apart from the incipient novelistic tradition in Europe and from Van Heemskerck's book in particular. In *Roselijn*, what begins like a romance ends in blood and gore.⁵² Besides trysts with sorceresses and visionaries, the novels include virulent drama extending from premarital sex to suicide, patricide, duelling women, shipwreck, and intercontinental war [Fig. 81]. What is more, the reader who makes it to the end is told that the author, if only his painting obligations allowed him more free time, would 'tell even stranger and more unheard-of things'.⁵³

Van Hoogstraten's books are profoundly nonclassical in this respect, and the author seems to be closer to the Amsterdam dramatist Jan Vos, who was infamous for confronting his audience with violence such as babies thrown on the stage from balconies, than to the classical poetical theory he quotes in his treatise on painting.⁵⁴ Van Hoogstraten's initial description of civilized youth may be deemed to accord in a generic sense to the polished portraits he made clients in The Hague. Also some of his genre paintings exude a similar refined atmosphere, focusing on the *tendres passions* rather than the *grandes passions* of heroic histories.⁵⁵ But there is no parallel in his painted works, or even in his drawings, for the exoticism in the novels.

To explore Van Hoogstraten's 'unbridled fantasy', we may focus on three passages illustrating respectively horror, magic, and violence. Yet it is difficult to capture in English the neologistic fervor of the original, evidently the work of someone unhampered by much schooling in the classics.

Roselijn presents the small towns of Naarden and Muiderberg on the Zuiderzee (present-day IJsselmeer) as the dwelling of Tymon – part clochard, part visionary – who rubs shoulders with elves and 'wise women'. One of the Dordrecht damsels, the temperamental Kommerijn, visits him to bring back her lover (who has been seduced by her rival, Starrewit). Tymon, at first



Fig. 8r Illustration from Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Haegaenveld*, Amsterdam 1669, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam

unsettled by his client's anger, soon reveals his powers to her and sets his magic to work, invoking the elements of nature:

Where the Zuiderzee plants Amsterdam full with masts and fills the brackish IJ with ships, running past Naarden and Muiderberg – there, Kommerijn raged to and fro, and her terrible curses made Tymon shiver in his cave.... Rising from the hole, he swung the sand from his grey hairs, just like when a wild seal, coming ashore after swimming, flaps its ears ... [Kommerijn's] enraged senses drove the smoke of her burning intestines out of her mouth. She shouted: 'Can your magic arts do anything, oh Tymon, and work against love? ... I am consumed by heated rage and burning desire, and cannot mollify my lover

with any prayers...'. Tymon, startled by her frightening mien, watched her seething eyes and black manes glow ice-cold in the moonshine. 'I see and understand', he said, 'all the magic of the Elves and spectres of the night. I study the turns of the will-o'-the wisps, and I grasp everything I need to know from the deeds of the wise women.' Tymon opened his eyes wide, turning them to the heavens, and threw three handfuls of dust towards the moon. He raged strangely and cursed so loud that the stars shuddered. Invisible chains dragged slowly over iron floors. The sky, veined like marble by the burning sea, was gruesome to behold. Thin figures roamed in a circle. And flickering lights floated around in the air.⁵⁶

This is amorous literature from a different category than d'Urfée's civilized conversations under mostly cloudless skies. In *Haegaenveld*, featuring the same protagonists, the story ends with a swordfight at the beach between the two rivals, Kommerijn and Starrewit, 'panting like post horses': the latter finally beats her opponent, already bleeding steadily, down the dunes, 'thrusting and hitting until Kommerijn lay nose down in the sand.'⁵⁷ The book even illustrates the scene in print.⁵⁸ The women, apparently, have active roles in Van Hoogstraten's fiction; elsewhere a damsel on horseback takes her gun to separate two fighting men.⁵⁹ Thinking of the books' protagonists as idealized reflections of their readers, we are reminded that Dordrecht's lively climate allowed many diletantes to flower – not only a socially ambitious painter, but also women: Van Hoogstraten engraved a portrait of one of them, Margareta van Godewijck (1627-1677).⁶⁰ *Roselijn*, apparently appealing to its female readers, calls on the Dutch Republic's 'learned maids', Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678) and Tesselschade Roemers Visscher (1594-1649);⁶¹ the book was produced by a printer who had earlier published Van Schurman's work.⁶²

Yet Van Hoogstraten's stories also move briskly to scenes of more exotic visual impact. Introducing boreal Scandinavia as a place of mystery, *Roselijn* describes one of the hero's mental efforts in terms of shamanism: 'Just like the fortune-telling Laps, and magic-doing Finns drive their soul out of their body with wondrous rituals and chase it over the sea: then when their breathless bodies have fallen to the ground, after some time they come back to themselves, as if from a far journey'.⁶³ Both novels feature a story told from the perspective of a sorceress who learns her magic from Hecate in the hour of the latter's death. It may make us reconsider our vision of Van Hoogstraten as a 'classicist':

Where the Tartar opens his empty jaws to the stars, and the magicians make the cold Lapland tremble and the snowy wildernesses of the Finns, commanding the winds and tying them down: that's where I was born. I have no mother or father ... until my seventh year I belonged nowhere; but afterwards my mind had the invisible element as its home, and the sharp rocks, or the seat of the water gods. Thus I rambled many years through earth and hell, and through the heavens on a winged ass, rising to the glowing candle-bearers or the flaming arms of Orion; sometimes I would go on a fiery dragon's wagon to the frosty North Pole, where the ice balls bombed down like wooden blocks in a swirling

jetty, piercing all the earth's hiding places; until I heard ... [Hecate's] moaning voice I saw her (but in the shape of a monster) almost moribund, sucking in the last air, and burning with desire for her art I jumped into the deep hole, dashing to the materials and a thousand manuscripts from Hecate's own hand. 'Oh mother of the arts', I said, 'now I shall fulfil my duty and acknowledge the good that you have done to me, when I, riding a broomstick, joined the dance of cats at the Iron Mountain – when I, having forgotten my magic lesson, ended up alright through your help, while a thousand night crickets chirped.' But I realized that she did not hear what I said, as her spirit flew out through the nose and mouth, which made the whole mountain rumble.⁶⁴

Although Van Hoogstraten's world view, as his painting treatise suggests, is still in some measure rooted in a pre-modern conception of science (presenting a view of artworks as 'acting at a distance' and even describing gems and other curiosities of nature in terms of their presumed supernatural powers⁶⁵), the fictional passages in his novels are of a different nature. Rather than looking backward to an age of superstition, they seem to herald a taste for adventure more commonly associated with eighteenth-century English novels.⁶⁶

Even harder to accommodate to the taste of the Develstein damsels are the descriptions of a battle at the fringes of Eastern Europe. In *Roselijn*, one of the protagonists, Vrederyk (whose name, interpreted as 'Peace-reign', connects him to Frederik Hendrik of Orange) finds no more glory in the Low Countries. He therefore travels eastward until he encounters burning villages at the Polish border. Soon he volunteers in a tremendously chaotic battle. Van Hoogstraten seems inspired by an actual event: the 1649 Battle of Zboriv, part of the 'Khmelnysky Uprising' when the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth fought Cossack rebels, involving more than 100,000 men.⁶⁷ *Roselijn* renders this into a war between Europe and Asia involving a plethora of troops.

To understand Van Hoogstraten's version of the fray, one should realize that the account alternates the viewpoint of the two groups constantly – virtually after each statement. Vrederyk's cause is led by the Polish King Jan II Casimir (supported by Germans, Lithuanians, Scandinavians, and Tartars). The enemy is led by the Cossack leader Bogdan Khmelnysky (supported by Croats, Hungarians, Romanians, and Russians). Moreover, in a strikingly novelistic technique, the author shifts from the past to the present tense halfway through the account and keeps alternating tenses afterward:

[T]he iron thousands ... gleamed like waves of water against the sun. ... The troops of Khmelnysky, head of the Cossack rebels, ... let fly at the Masovian army; a hail of Scythian arrows dripped in poison rained down on them, frightful to behold. The fast Tartars on their light horses, in the service of Casimir, sallied and penetrated the harnessed groups that stood like bulwarks, scattering Khmelnysky's battle array: Ottoman, the Prince of Romania, who had come to the Cossack's help with six hundred turbaned heads, all brave marksmen, lost his head when he ran into the fleeing Scythians; the Masovian and Sarmatian bands continue their victory and flash their scimitars like lightning around the

recoiling enemy's heads: thousands die in the jostle of those running away, and drown under the horses' hooves in streams of blood. Khmelnytsky's left wing, when it attacks, encounters a hedge of German pikes that, planted against cavalry, skewer man and horse: ... the Croat, pushed from behind, jumps half raging towards the certain death of iron pikes Radsevil, the Lithuanian Chancellor, attacks from the side with a thousand firearms: it cuts off the Muscovian reinforcements and sweeps entire ranks of Hungarian soldiers in that direction.

To a favorable critic, these sentences have the cinematic qualities of a sequence that highlights the confused clash between a great many people: it zooms in on different details (protagonists, swords, hooves) rather than providing a panorama shot for a clear overview. Van Hoogstraten calls upon the Muses for sustaining him in introducing new weapons and ethnic groups, until the last bits of orderly narrative explode in a burst of heavy artillery:

But, oh Muses! refresh my spirits, so that I may sing of this battle to the end: the heaven and earth seemed to crack, and from the chasm seemed to erupt mountains and rocks with a thundering roar, turning the earth's crust upside down with frightening noise, when the two armies of Prince Casimir and Khmelnytsky clashed with each other like two fleets of ships: the martial Walachs, and Dacian warriors, the Serbians ... the leading Cossack groups, a thousand Greek riders, and countless auxiliaries, all surrounded their warlord. The squadron of noble Poles, Casimir's only consolation, already stood in full battle array, ready to welcome the army: the cavalry, hidden behind the long pikes, breaks into gallop against the enemy and braves a hailstorm of bullets. The Cossack, unable to withstand that attack, breaks down and makes his groups fall away to the right and left. But just as if when the chasm of the hollow Tartar world opens and spews terrible fire and flames and great rocks to the sky, so the cannon began, which were deliberately hidden behind the troops, thundering dreadfully, crushing whole ranks with every blow: devouring man and horse, they seemed more dreadful than hell. Riders, choking in smoke, trample on the defeated soldier who does not know where to hide and falls in the slippery blood: so that the moaning of the wounded drowns out the battle clarions.⁶⁸

It is, of course, possible that Van Hoogstraten copied his account from a newspaper report or even from another novel – his friend Lambert van den Bos usually incorporated translated fragments in his own texts.⁶⁹ However, as the painter repeats verbatim this long account from *Roselijn* in *Haegaenveld*, it seems that he was proud of a piece of his own writing. The only artwork that comes to mind is not one of Van Hoogstraten's paintings or drawings but, perhaps, Rembrandt's *Polish Rider* of 1655 – which is, however, more than a work of fiction: an accurate representation of authentic costume.⁷⁰

Is there, then, a way to connect the themes in Van Hoogstraten's two novels with those in his art? Even the master's extant drawings, as identified by Werner Sumowski, concern mainly

Old Testament scenes and studies of everyday life and do not reflect the novels' exoticism. Only when *Haegaenveld* features a pleasure ground, filled with casts of Roman statues, there seems to be an echo of the airy courtyards in Van Hoogstraten's English paintings:⁷¹ he mentions the Villa Medici's *Latone and her Children*, the Vatican Belvedere's *Laocoön*, Michelangelo's *David* and *Night* in Florence, and Giambologna's *Rape of the Sabine Women*. The painter had seen these in Italy, but they were otherwise known through prints and travel accounts: he presents objects known to his audience. Yet even this peaceful setting soon turns out to be animated with mechanical devices and fountains, triggered when one takes a bridle from the hand of a sculpted goddess.⁷² Somewhat further the author introduces a set of paintings displaying monsters, personifications, and scenes from Aesop, which have no relation to his own art.⁷³

One indication that novels were, for Van Hoogstraten, a domain for experimentation rather than adherence to classical standards comes from his treatise on painting. In the *Inleyding*, he quotes Philip Sidney and Van Heemskerck only to illustrate his concept of beautiful ugliness (*aerdige leelykheid*). This was, in effect, a new element in the theory of painting, not addressed by predecessors such as Van Mander and all but ignored by successors such as De Lairese. The *Inleyding* compares Van Heemskerck's description of a rustic landlady to a painting by Adriaen Brouwer: 'Behold a beautiful ugliness, which would cost Brouwer quite a lot of effort to emulate her unseemly semblance':

Her eyes which, as if she had not had a full night's sleep, oscillated with a loose dullness, shone with a redness ... hemmed by a rim of curdled wax, which made all eyes look away, not different than from Medusa's head Here and there between the clefts in her coarse folded lips lay the drops of the muddy thick beer with which she, when first waking up, was wont to refresh greedily her throat-hole thirsting after the liquid: which had swelled her entire body, and especially her flabby bosom, with such a helpless fatness that the one looked like a fat-bellied beer barrel and the other an overfilled cow's udder. This pleasant landlady, a tobacco pipe in her mouth and a rummer in her hand, staggered towards the wagon and began, in a hoarse voice and a blinking eye, to invite the sweet company on the wagon to a little pipe of smoke and a sip of consolation-water; words that so provoked the shepherdesses' chastity and the shepherds' modesty, that they ordered the driver to get away from that hole of uselessness without delay.⁷⁴

Van Hoogstraten's own novels, which describe not so much ugliness, but the exotic and adventurous, may be deemed to take the concept of the 'picturesque' to another level. He did not explore in his novels the Viennese court and Italian states where he would travel in 1651 (as G.J. Hoogewerff has remarked, he was an 'Arcadian' writer already *before* going to Italy).⁷⁵ Rather, he chose exotic locations that he knew merely from hearsay: Scandinavia, the Ottoman Empire, Eastern Europe. He seems to have wanted to get away as far as possible from classical Rome in terms of geographical location as well as subject matter and style. Vying with Homer and Virgil in the vernacular Dutch context, apparently, also meant introducing 'rare and unheard-of things':

maybe we can denote these with Van Hoogstraten's term *schilderachtig* or picturesque, rather than deploying essentially anachronistic concepts such as romantic or novelistic.⁷⁶

Impact

As Marijke Spies argued, the importance of Van Hoogstraten's novels stems from the fact that after *Roselijn* appeared, some among Dordrecht's like-minded literati set about mastering the 'Arcadian' genre. Two of his friends, likewise intimate members of the Develstein circle, published three such works in rapid succession, all dealing with love and related to the pastoral theme.

The first was Adriaan van Nispen's (1633-1694) *The Greek Venus, Showing the Famous Loves of Clitophon and Leucippe, Ismenias and Ismene, Leander and Hero* (1652).⁷⁷ Van Nispen, scion of an honorable family who studied Latin and Greek and later law at the university of Leiden, was one of Van Hoogstraten's oldest contacts in the Dordrecht literary circle.⁷⁸ The *Greek Venus*, completed before the author even began his academic studies, was in effect a feat of considerable classical scholarship: a collection of love stories translated from ancient Greek authors (Achilles Tatius – 2nd century CE, Eustathius Macrembolites – 12th century CE, and Musaeus Grammaticus – born 187 CE).

The dedication praises a key text of the Dutch effort to recreate ancient prose: Joost van den Vondel's famous translation of Virgil from the Latin. Van Nispen now apparently set out to 'teach the Greek Venus to speak Dutch'. A liminary poem on *Ismenias and Ismene*, written by Johan van Someren (1622-1672), one of Van Hoogstraten's other literary contacts, compares the protagonist to a local Dordrecht girl: because of the translation, 'Ismene has been changed into a Damsel / wearing Dutch dress instead of Greek attire'.⁷⁹ Faithful to the classical works, the love stories are predicated on sensuous innuendo but lack the fantasy and violence that Van Hoogstraten was so fond of. Aside from its pride in the vernacular, Van Nispen's book is therefore very different from those of Van Hoogstraten.

Closer to the painter's novels are two works by one of his best friends, Lambert van den Bos. They are creative compilations of other texts, novelistic and otherwise, most of them translated from the Spanish, Italian, and French. Van den Bos's first book of 1662, *Dordrecht Arcadia, Containing Old and New, both Local and Foreign Stories, Shot Through with Explanations, Politics and Philosophy, the Arts of Love and Poetry, Delight and Teaching, etc.* features two Neapolitan noblemen, Ambrosio and Eustacchio – *bien étonnés* to find themselves duelling at Zwijndrecht – whose stories fill the main part of the book.⁸⁰ Yet the title, with its references to political and philosophical matters, betrays the author's interest in Van Heemskerck's example. At times Van den Bos' intent approaches the former's antiquarian and didactic outlook. Indeed, talking of 'wijskunde' (philosophy), the book discusses at length the chemistry of the British philosopher Sir Kenelm Digby (1603-1665; this author was apparently popular among the Dordrecht literati as his optical theory also features in Van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding*).⁸¹

A year later, Van den Bos wrote *The South Holland Thessalia, Containing Ancient and Mod-*

ern Histories, Cheerful Narrations, Verse and Similar Matters.⁸² Like Van Heemskerck's *Arcadia*, this features a leisurely trip by young men and their girlfriends through the province of Holland. Van den Bos's many stories nested in other stories made Te Winkel typify them as 'Arcadian frame narratives' and call them, in contrast to Van Hoogstraten's works, worthy of more study.

The synergy between Van Hoogstraten and Van den Bos certainly merits our attention. The painter and the poet were well matched in terms of versatility of style and subject matter. The latter, after 1655 deputy headmaster of the Latin school at Dordrecht, practiced all literary genres and, in addition, made a great many translations. Just one of his feats was the first Dutch *Don Quixote* (1657), which Van Hoogstraten read.⁸³ Imitating the painter, Van den Bos too made a Dutch translation of a courtiers' manual.⁸⁴ Most of his other publications testify to his wish to propagate his pride in Dutch culture and history.⁸⁵ His epic poem *The Batavian Aeneas*, for instance, deals with the adventures of Bato, presumed forefather of the Batavians, presented as a sequel to Livy's account of Aeneas's travels.⁸⁶ Such works were a very literal application of literature to cultural politics – in Van Hoogstraten's words, monuments for 'Bato's people ... to honor our State'.⁸⁷ Although Van Hoogstraten's own novels refer only rarely to local history, he echoes his friend's approach by portraying his protagonist Haegaenveld as a descendant of the Batavian hero, Claudius Civilis (he obtained his curious name after slaying a giant in The Hague, Fig. 78).⁸⁸

Not only did Van Hoogstraten and Van den Bos write various liminary poems for each other's publications, the affinities between writer and artist finally gave rise to a collaborative project, a 500-page *Guide to Italy: Description of the Lands and Cities of Italy, their Beginnings, Rise, Progress, Government and Curiosities, Including the Main Routes to Travel from one Place to the Other and Thus through All of Italy* (1657).⁸⁹ Van Hoogstraten probably provided his friend, who never crossed the Alps, with detailed information about his own travels.⁹⁰ He also wrote an extensive introductory poem (reproduced and translated on pp. 177-179 of this volume).

At least as explicitly patriotic as Johan van Heemskerck, Van den Bos' agenda throws some light on that of Van Hoogstraten, for whom, as we have seen, the vernacular is also an important factor. Yet Van den Bos lacks his friend's fervor when it comes to horror, magic, and violence. As we have noted, moreover, the painter stands out for *not* having the historical, antiquarian, and scientific digressions that were introduced by Van Heemskerck.

Thus, speaking of any impact of *Roselijn* on later authors, one should realize that Van Hoogstraten, Van Nispen, and Van den Bos had very different working methods and ambitions (a fantastic, philological, and didactic one, respectively), making it implausible to group them together as so-called 'Dordrecht novelists'.

Conclusion

Was Samuel van Hoogstraten the first Dutch novelist? The answer to this question is a qualified yes: it depends on what definition of the novel is used. Van Heemskerck's *Batavian Arcadia* was published earlier and it was definitely more influential, but it may be too much of an antiquarian-

patriotic hybrid to be called a novel. Van Hoogstraten stands out for ignoring his predecessor's didactic drift. Even his friend Lambert van den Bos professed to write in part for his audience's benefit, according to the title of the *Dordrecht Arcadia*. By contrast, *Roselijn* and *Haegaenveld* are aimed solely at their readers' delight. Van Heemskerck would not have appreciated these two works: his *Arcadia* explicitly condemned stories of witchcraft and superstition, desiring that his readers tell their children about the glorious history of the Dutch Republic instead.

If we decide on calling the painter-poet's books 'novels', then they are idiosyncratic ones indeed. The combination of pastoral scenes with horror, magic, and violence brings these adventures closer to English novels at the time than to Dutch ones – most striking among them are those by Margaret Cavendish, with whom Van Hoogstraten has once been associated. Cavendish's works are, if anything, more extravagant and even include what may be the first science-fiction novel in English: like Van Hoogstraten, this author depicted the high North as a backdrop for wonder and adventure. The British duchess had lived in The Hague for some time before the painter bought a house there; what is more (as Michiel Roscam Abbing makes clear in the present book), Van Hoogstraten must have had considerable knowledge of English literature. His position as a successful painter seems to have given him a similar licence to experiment and a desire for literary self-fashioning as the aristocrat and autodidact Cavendish in The Hague, Antwerp, and London.⁹¹ In any account, as a novelist Van Hoogstraten was definitely closer to 'Mad Madge' Cavendish than to Betje Wolff and Aagje Deken. The latter two authors are of a wholly different caliber, standing at the origin of Dutch confessional literature that, with its highly personal outpourings, has had a high profile on the European literary stage up to the present age.⁹²

Finally, the question remains: who among the three Dordrecht 'novelists' took the initiative? Adriaen van Nispen may well have undertaken his Dutch versions of three ancient Greek novels some time before the date of publication, perhaps already during his years at the Dordrecht Latin school – and thus may have inspired Van Hoogstraten and Van den Bos in their more amateurish works. It is possible that Van Nispen's unprecedented, intellectually demanding, and ambitious endeavor on a European scale sparked his friend's less lettered, but no less eye-catching efforts to 'transpose Holland in Latium'.

APPENDIX

From Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Schoone Roselijn of de getrouwe liefde van Panthus*, Dordrecht 1650.

Fragment 1 (pages 23-25):

Daar de Zuyderzee, den Amsteldam met masten, en het brakke Y, met schepen belommert, langhs Naarden, en de Muyerbergh, henen spoelt, vloogh [Kommerijn] heen en we'er, en dé met ysslijke besweringen, Tymon in sijn hol zidderen ... Tymon rees uyt'et hol, en slingerden het zant uyt sijn grijsen hayren, even, gelijk een ruyge waterhont, vant't swemmen te lant komende, klapoort ... 'er verwoede sinnen, dreven den rook, van het brandende Ingewant, ten mont uyt; sy riep: kunnen u tooverkunsten wat uytrechten? ô Tymon ! en in de min werken? ... ik ben door hitsige rasery, en vlamme min ontsteken, en kan mijn minnaar, met geen gebeden vermorwen. ... Tymon schrikten, van haar vervaarlijke mynen; en sagh haar glimmende oogen, en swarte manen, in de Maneschijn, ysslijk blinken. Ik door sie, seydh'y, al't spookten der Alfen, en nachtschimmen: en neem acht, op het drayen der stalkaarsen: en kan al wat ik wete wil, door den handel der witvrouwen af sien ... Tymon sparde sijn holle oogen ten hemel, en wierp, dry handen vol gruys, tegen de Maan, tierden wonderlijk, en swoer, dat 't gestarnte lilden; onzichtbare kettingen sleepten, langhsaam, langhs ysere vloeren. Den hemel, van Zee-brandt gemarmelt, was vreeslijk aan te sien. Linne beelden sworven in een kringh. En trippelende lichjes, dreven rontom den hemel.

Fragment 2 (pages 14-15):

[D]aar den Tarter ... sijn holle kaken, tegen de starren opent, en de tooverkonstenaars, het koude Laplant, en besneeuwde wildernissen der Finnen, doen rammelen, de winden dwingen, en vast knoopen, ben ik geboren; ik ken Moeder noch Vader ... tot mijn seven jaar hoorden ik nergens t'huys; maar naderhant, had mijn geest het sienloos element, of de scherpe rotsen, en zetels der Watergoôn, ten woningh; soo sold' ik menigh jaar, door aard', en hell'; en hemel, op een gewiekten Esel, aan de glimmende toortsdragers, of vlamme armen des Orions, dan we'er op een vyerige Draakwagen, aan de ysslijke noortspil, daar de yskogels, als balken in den gudsenden draaypoel, bomden; en de schuyelhoeken der aarden doorboorden; dan we'er, met koele wolken, plots'lingh in den hollen Hekla; ... tot ik op't lest ... een klagende stem hoorden ... Hecate, die als een Godinne ge-eert was, op 't lest de hant reyken, en de oogen luyken; of de erfgenaam van mijn grootse konsten, mijn naam ... Ik sagh haar (maar als een monster) vast zieltoegen, en de leste lucht insuygen, en vyerigh nae de kunst, sprongh ik in't diepe hol, en vlamde op den huys-raat, en duysent geschreve boeken, van Hecatees eyge handt. O kunstmoeder, riep ik, nu sal ik noch eens mijn plicht komen in't werk stellen, en erkennen de deught die gy my dé, doen ik op een besemrijdende, den kattendans, aande Yserbergh vermeerde; als ik, mijn les vergeten hebbende, door u behulp, onder 't gesnor, van duysent nachtkrekels, te recht quam. Maar ik merkte wel, dat se niet verstont wat ik sey, want'er geest vloogh ten neus, en te mont uyt, dat de gantsche berg kraakte.

Fragment 3 (pages 146-149):

[D]e ysere duysenden, die als water-golven tegen de Son glinsterden, den rook der brandende vlekken, en 't stof der Ruyteren, dat met woken tusschen aard' en hemel hingh te sien ... Nauwlijks was het grouwsaam gevecht aangegaan of de Moldavise Volken, met beslage stengen gewapent, stieten de Russen, die met bonte vachten geharnast, en voor uyt schermutsen in de vlucht. Gladifer die de Volken van de Rivier Prosua [*sic*] aanvoerde, ... sneuvelden in den eersten storm; schoon hy self het hoofd van den jongen Ragotski, aan den Thoren van Gresna hoopten te pronk te steken. De troepen van Chimelenski, het hoofd der Kasakse rebellen ... vielen de Masovisen Oorloghs-man op't lijf; daar sich een hagel van Scytise pijlen, met fenijn bestreken, onde storten, dat vreeslijk was om aan te sien. De geswinde Tartars, op lichte Paarden geseten, besold van Kasimier, vielen tussen de geharnaste benden, die als Bol-werken pal stonden, uyt; en verstrooyden de order van Chimelenski: Ottoman, Prinçe van Romanien, die met ses hondert Tulbanden, al-te-maal brave schutters, den Kasak was te hulp gekomen, schoter den bek in; soo hy tegen de vluchtige Scyten in viel: de Masovise en Sarmaatse benden vervolgen hun zege, en blixemen met kromme Sabels de deynsende vyant om d'ooren: duysenden sneuvelender door't gedrangh der vluchtelingen, en verdrinken onder de Paarde-voeten van't vlietende bloedt. De slinker vleugel van Chimelenski ... invallende, steken op een hegge van duytsche Pieken, die tegen Ruytery geplant, Man en Paart door-rijgen: hier gelt'et koppen, de Kroaat van achter aangedrongen, springht half rasende tegen de gewisse doot en ysere spitsen in ... Radsevil Littours Kacelier, valt'er met duysent Vyer-roers ter zijden op in: slaat de Moskovise hulp-troepen in route, en veeght heele ryen Hongerse soldaten daar heen ... Maar ô Sangh-heldinnen! laaf mijn geesten, op dat ik dese slagh tot den eynde magh uyt singen: den hemel en aarde scheen te barsten, en den afgront bergen en steenrotsen met donderslagen uyt te braken, en met yslijk getier den Aardtboôm om te keeren: doe de groote Legers van Prins Kasimier, en Chimelenski, als twee Scheeps-vloten op malkander stieten: de strijdtbare Walachen, en Dacise krijgers de Servy, die aan de Vloedt sou wonen, de Kasakse Hooft-benden, duysentd Griekse Ruyters, en ontallijke hulp-troepen, omringhden haar Veldt-heer. Vorst Kasimier daar-en-tegen, met de Poolse Heyr-kracht, glom in't geharnaste Velt, en bralde met uyt-gelese benden, die van yver rasende, den vyant angielen: de Daenen, Noren, Sweden, en bonte Russen, hadden de voor en achterhoede: Vrederijk onder de Ruytery blank in't Harrenas... Het Esquadran gebore Polen, den eenigen troost van Kasimier, stont alree in volle slagh-orde, gereet om den vyant te verwelkomen: het Paarde-volk achter de lange Pieke verborge, rendt met volle loop den vyant tegen, en dringht door een hagel van kogelen heen; maar den Kasak, niet machtigh dien aan-loop af te slaan, scheurt in tween, en doet sijn bende ter rechter en slinkerhant af wijken; maar even gelijk den afgrondt van den hollen Tartar sich opent, en afgrijslijk vyer en vlam, en groote steenen tegen den hemel spuw: soo begon het geschut, met voordacht achter de troepen verborge, vreeslijk te Donderen, en slagh op slagh heele gelederen te verplette, Man en Paart te verslinden en yslijker dan de hel sich op te doen, den Ruyter verstikt in den rook, en trapt op de verslagen oorloghsman, weet sich niet te bergen, en tuymelt in het gladde bloet: soo dat 't gekarm der gequestste, den klank der Trompetten verdooft.

Notes

- 1 M. Spies, 'Dordrechtse "roman"-tiek in de zeventiende eeuw', unpublished lecture Amsterdam Centre for the Study of the Golden Age, 7 March 2002. In the *Geschiedenis van Dordrecht* co-edited by Spies, the authors call *Roselijn* more cautiously 'one of the earliest original Dutch novels', W. Frijhoff, H. Nustelling and M. Spies (eds.), *Geschiedenis van Dordrecht van 1572 tot 1813*, Hilversum 1998, 348. W. Frijhoff and M. Spies, *Dutch Culture in a European Perspective: 1650, Hard-Won Unity*, Basingstoke & New York 2004, 576, points at the anonymous *Dool-hoff van Socia*, Leeuwarden 1643-1646, as a possible forerunner for Van Hoogstraten. Of his two novels, *Haegaenveld* has been discussed the most, beginning with A. de Jager and L.A. te Winkel (eds.), *De taalgids: tijdschrift tot uitbreiding van de kennis der Nederlandsche taal, eerste jaargang*, Utrecht 1859, 79-80. L.R. Pol, *Romanbeschouwing in voorredes: een onderzoek naar het denken over de roman in Nederland tussen 1600 en 1755*, Utrecht 1987, all but ignores Van Hoogstraten (mentioned once on p. 183).
- 2 A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburg der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, Amsterdam 1718-1721, II, 156.
- 3 L. Bidloo, *Panpoëticon Batavum*, Amsterdam 1720, 68; S. van Hoogstraten, *Dieryk en Dorothe, of de verlossing van Dordrecht*, The Hague 1666.
- 4 P.S. Schull (ed.), *Dierijk en Dorothe, of de verlossing van Dordrecht: dramatisch dichtstuk van Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Dordrecht 1833, 2-4. The quotation is from a review of Schull's edition: 'de poëzij, schoon niet vrij van de vroegere ruwheden in de versificatie, [is] edel en grootsch, dikwerf zelfs verheven en stout', G.S. Leeneman van der Kroe and J.W. IJntema, *Vaderlandsche letteroefeningen*, Amsterdam 1833, 542.
- 5 On Schull's status as poet in the Dordrecht literary circles cf. A.J. van der Aa, *Biographisch woordenboek der Nederlanden, Deel 17*, Haarlem 1874, 523-524.
- 6 P. Thissen, *Werk, netwerk en letterwerk van de familie van Hoogstraten in de zeventiende eeuw: sociaal-economische en sociaal-culturele achtergronden van geletterden in de republiek*, Amsterdam & Maarssen 1994, 175-192. See also the review by E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier in *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden* III/4 (1996), 546-548.
- 7 This is also argued by Van Mander on the grounds that painters 'must eschew Rhetoric, the art of poetry, with its lovely ways, desirable and charming though it may be', because it will not earn them any money, K. van Mander, *Grondt der edel-vry schilder-const*, in: *Het schilderboek*, Haarlem 1604, I, 47, f. 5.
- 8 The term is Alison Kettering's.
- 9 On the pastoral theme in Dutch paintings see A. Kettering, *The Dutch Arcadia: Pastoral Art and Its Audience in the Golden Age*, New Jersey & Woodbridge 1983. On pastoral poetry cf. Mieke B. Smits-Veldt and Hans Luijten, 'Nederlandse pastorale poëzie in de 17de eeuw: verliefde en wijze herders,' in: P. van den Brink (ed.), *Het gedroomde land: pastorale schilderkunst in de Gouden Eeuw*, Zwolle & Utrecht 1993, 58-78, en Karel Porteman and Mieke B. Smits-Veldt, *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen: geschiedenis van de Nederlandse letterkunde 1560-1700*, Amsterdam 2008.
- 10 '[D]ese deftighe Diana, ... heeft leeren Duyts spreken', [H. d'Urfé], *Minne-plicht, ten toon gestelt inde vry-agie van Diana en Filandre* (transl. J. van Heemskerck), Amsterdam 1625. An earlier publication with 'novelistic' elements, but leaning more towards adventure and travel literature, was *Wonderlicke avontuer van twee gellieven: een verhaal uit 1624, uitg. door een werkgroep van Amsterdamse neerlandici onder leiding van E.K. Grootes*, Muiderberg 1984. The book, originally printed in Leiden in 1624, had only 36 pages and cannot be called a novel; the editors speak of 'a highly idiosyncratic unicum' (p. 9) and situate it in the context of collections of anecdotes, novellas, and pamphlets.
- 11 First to appear were [H. d'Urfé], *De Historie van Damon en Madonthe, overgheset uyt Astrée*, Hoorn 1634, and *Toetsteen der liefde, verthoont in de historie van Celidea, Thamire ende Calidon*, Amsterdam 1636.
- 12 [H. d'Urfé and P. Sidney], *Den ongestadigen Hylas, de veranderlycke Stella, de lichtveerdige Pamphilus, De*

- volstandighe Eudoxe, de deftighe Diana, de deughdelycke Parthenia* (translated from the French and English), Amsterdam 1636 (2nd ed).
- 13 J. van Heemskerck, *Inleydinghe tot het ontwerp van een Batavische Arcadia*, Amsterdam 1637.
- 14 J. te Winkel, *De ontwikkelingsgang der Nederlandsche letterkunde IV: geschiedenis der Nederlandsche letterkunde van de Republiek der Vereenigde Nederlanden*, Haarlem 1924 (second ed.), 297.
- 15 Kettering 1983, 25.
- 16 J. van Heemskerck, *Batavische Arcadia, waar in, onder't loofwerck van liefkooserytjes in gehandelt van den oorspronck van't oud-Batavien, vryheid der Bataviers, vrye zee, zee-vonden, vindens van verborgen schatten, verbeurtmaecken van goederen, uytpersen der waerheydt door pijnigen, onheil van de lanckwyligheydt der rechtspelingen, met de oorsaken van dien en de behulpmiddelen daertegen, en andere diergelycke ernstige saken meer*, Amsterdam 1647.
- 17 *Inleyding* 39, 40, 66. The *Short-Title Catalogue Netherlands* (www.stcn.nl) mentions eleven editions and re-issues.
- 18 F. Grijzenhout, 'Wandelingen door Hollands Arkadia', *De achttiende eeuw* 2004 (2004), 132-142; W. Jansen, "'Laag bijdegrondse geleerden poespas": onderzoek naar de zeventiende- en achttiende-eeuwse arcadia', *Spektator* 23 (1994), 127-136.
- 19 Kettering 1983, 30. The same held true for the novels, cf. Frijhoff, Nusteling & Spies 1998, 353.
- 20 *Inleyding* 39, 66.
- 21 Kettering 1983, 31.
- 22 Thissen 1994, 181.
- 23 Discussed by Michiel Roscam Abbing in the present book.
- 24 Cf. Thissen 1994, 180.
- 25 Another parallel is that in this book, Van Hoogstraten also presents himself as a *painter* writing about civility, pointing out that princes and kings, when they want to demonstrate their knowledge in art, have to speak to 'us', i.e. painters; S. van Hoogstraten, *Den eerlyken jongeling, of de edele kunst, van zich by groote en kleyne te doen eeren en beminnen*, Dordrecht 1657, 26.
- 26 '[M]omden'er... opsen Heyens', *Roselij*n 14; S. Van Hoogstraten, *Hof-krakkeel, tusschen Pan, Kupido, en Uranius tot brulofstvermaek opgeoffert aen ... Kornelis Hoorens, en ... Hester Terwe ... den eersten september 1669*, The Hague 1669.
- 27 *Haegaenveld* 276-277. Guarini's play was highly popular in various Dutch versions, one of them written by Abraham Bloemaert in 1650. Another version: Van Dyck, *Amarillis and Myrtillo*, 1631, 104.5 x 130.8 cm, Graf Von Schonborn Collection, Weissenstein Castle, Pommersfelden.
- 28 'Een Roselij
- 29 One example is a letter from Panthus to Roselij
- 30 One example is Vrederijk' s meeting with an old woman in a foreign land, who turns out to be Roselij
- 31 'The brush would succeed better than my pen in depicting the specific beauty of each Nymph', *Haegaenveld* 183.
- 32 'De groote Poët die sijn Morge-sangen den gantschen dagh schaafden, bleef niet onberispt, hoe sou ik, die den gantschen dagh een ander Godinne gedient hebbende, in't ontkleeden, eerst om Roselij
- 33 'Want ik begin te twijffelen of my ook al dit schryven ergens toe dient, daer ik aen een andre Konstgodinne, die hare Dienaers beter als de Poezy beloont, verbonden ben'; *Haegaenveld* 270.

- 34 C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Chicago 1995, 110.
- 35 'Maer myn keel wort heesch, van zoo zwaren toon', *Haegaenveld* 227-29.
- 36 The introductions to both books are very similar, but not identical. Part of *Roselijn's* introduction, however, is repeated verbatim in *Haegaenveld* p. 28of. The Khmelnytsky Uprising occurs in both books, *Roselijn* 146ff, *Haegaenveld* p. 75 ff. The story of the Muiden visionary Tymon is repeated in *Haegaenveld*, 27-32. Stories that are embedded in other stories in *Roselijn*, become part of the main narrative in *Haegaenveld*: the wet nurse's story in *Roselijn* is given to the protagonist Vrederyk in *Haegaenveld*, 85 ff. In *Haegaenveld*, moreover, Tymon holds the monologue about Hecate's magic, that is given to one of the Dordrecht youngsters in *Roselijn*, 8.
- 37 Before opening his own shop, Frans worked in Abraham Andriesz' printing house.
- 38 On the engravings in *Roselijn* see J. Blanc, *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVIIe siècle: la théorie de l'art de Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Berne 2008, 399-400, nrs G12/1-7. Two sets of the prints are kept in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, and Fondation Custodia, Paris. As Brusati 1995, 279, has noted, some of the prints in *Roselijn* appear again as illustrations in Alonzo Castillo Solorzano, *Het leven en bedrijf van de doorslepen bedrieger*, Amsterdam 1669.
- 39 *Roselijn*, 23, 25, 27, 28, 108 respectively.
- 40 't Brittaanse wachthuys', *Roselijn* 93. The fort's remnants finally disappeared in 1954.
- 41 Kettering 1983, 21; for an overview of pastoral plays and poems, pp. 20-31.
- 42 'De trotse Spangjaart benijt de Roomse glory, en de Franse dichter tart den Mantuaan ... Soo trekt de groote Leeuw, de Scherm-heer van Hollandts weligen Tuyn, spier-witte Swanen in haar veylige Vyver', Roselyn, 'Aen den leser', unpaginated [p. *4].
- 43 '[T]rotse Zangheldinnen, die in moedertaal gelijkkerhand aanspannen', *Haegaenveld*, unpaginated.
- 44 '[T]rotse Sangh-heldinne! die Hollandt in Latium herstelt ... span gelijkker hant aan, en laat Batoos Landtvolk haar eygen Taal-gedichten hooren: en recht geheugh-merken onse Staat te eeren', *Roselijn*, unpaginated, no. *4. Bato is the presumed forefather of the Batavians – the Dutch.
- 45 "k [H]eb strafs genoegh geleden mijn Ingewant wier gereten, en in tweeën gescheurt, als de Son haar zuyder loop den eynde was en de nachten op't langst, (de kou al bevroos wat'er was) quam't, by geval, dat ik, aan de voet van de Stadt, daar de schriklijke ys-schorsen, met storm op de hoofden gedreven, mannen hoogh lagen, wandelden; en de ongestuymige vloedt haar glase schrijven hoorde klateren, daar gemoeten ik de deftige Roselijn met prachtige gewaden omhangen, en cierlijk uyt-gestreken, Hoe klopte mijn harte van onsteltenis, gelijk de moede en besweete Jager, na sijn asem hijgende, de Jacht-Godin onversiens naakt, en tot de middel in't bron-water, badende, verraste en verstelt stont, soo blixemden haar stralende oogen, door mijn sinnen', *Roselijn* 6.
- 46 'Helaes! deeze jammeren zullen geen einde nemen, noch de verhitte Gebueren aflaten elkander te verderven, voor dat de Witte Merw-Zwane in de Teems zwemme, en zijn vyand de Slachveders uitrukke; en een anderen Perseus op Pegazus 't hoofd van Meduze aen de Zuit en Oostsaxons vertoone', *Haegaenveld* 230-231.
- 47 '[E]ven, als een gelade Koopvaarder, op de Engelse Kust van Duynkerkers, of plundersieke Biskajers besprongen, den moedt opgeeft, en benauwt is; maar ondertussen, van drie Zeeuwse Kruyssers, ontset wordende, sijn heele lage den ge-enterde vyandt in de ribben slaat, en daar op dondert, ja den vyandt self in de grondt boort: soo ontfonkte mijn geest, als ik om de moedige Amarilli docht', *Roselijn* 46.
- 48 *Haegaenveld* 299-318.
- 49 Te Winkel 1924, 302.
- 50 F. de Soucy, Sieur de Gerzan, *d'Afrikaanse Sofonisba: die, door de min, geestige werkingen, vreemde vonden ... en schielijke toevallen van druk en blijdschap, vermakelijk onder een vertoont. Nieuwlijks uit'et Franç. door D.V.R. vert*, Amsterdam 1661 (orig. *Histoire Afriquaine de Cléomède et de Sophonisbe*, 1627-28).

- 51 J. Prinsen, *Handboek tot de Nederlandsche letterkundige geschiedenis*, The Hague 1928, 378.
- 52 For a sample of red-blooded *enargeia* in Van Hoogstraten's writings, we may explore his description of a battle elephant slipping in the mud: 'The animal, somewhat frightened by its fall, looked over its shoulder once, and twice; and noticing its blood-covered haunches (for in the heat of the fight when the black blood gushed over dunes and fields, the kinglike animal slipped and landed on its rear so that the gore stuck in clotted lumps to its rimplly skin) – now thinking it was itself hurt, it stamped its paws and roared so frightfully that the people, filling the narrow pass, ran with all their might', *Roselijn* 162-163.
- 53 '[V]remder en ongehoorder dingen vertellen', *Roselijn*, 336.
- 54 There seems to be a connection to the Amsterdam Theatre, which Van Hoogstraten presents as his example in presenting emotions: both novels refer to Joost van den Vondel, 'Amstels Treur-poeet', for describing the conflicting emotions of someone who has just killed his lover's father (*Roselijn* 60, repeated in *Haegaenveld* 291). In the *Inleyding*, Van Hoogstraten quotes not only Vondel but also refers to authors of 'classical' doctrine such as Scaliger and Vossius.
- 55 Cf. T. Weststeijn, *The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age*, Amsterdam 2008, 186.
- 56 See Appendix, fragment 1. The same passage is repeated in *Haegaenveld*, 28-29.
- 57 'Starrewit dreef se die vast bloed ten duin af ... en stiet en sloegh zoo langh, tot Kommeryn met de neus in't zand lagh', *Haegaenveld* 232.
- 58 *Haegaenveld*, facing page 278.
- 59 *Haegaenveld* 268.
- 60 Cf. Spies, Nusteling and Frijhoff 1993, 350, pointing out that the women's poetry was often a predominantly social activity, as it was not intended to be published. Other women in this circle were Agneta Colvia, Anna van Blockland, Catharina van Muylwijk, Cornelia Blanckenburg, Maria de Witt, Catharina and Wilhelmina Oem, Anna van Beverwijk and Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken.
- 61 *Roselijn* 17.
- 62 A.M. van Schuurman, *Paelsteen van den tyt onses levens: dat is, uitspraeck over het geschil, of de palen van't leven vast staen, ofte by ons verset konnen werden. In Latyn aen d'heere Johan van Beverwyck geschreven door de edele deught-en-konst-rijcke joffrouw, Joffr. Anna Maria van Schurman, en nu in de Nederlantsche tale overgeset*, Dordrecht 1639.
- 63 'Even gelijk de waerseggende Lappen, en tooverende Finnen, haar ziel, met wonderlijke gramatsen, uyt-drijven, en over Zee jagen en dan met het lichaam ademloos ter aarde gevallen zijnde, na eenige tijt, weder, als van een verre reys, to haar selve komen', *Roselijn* 2.
- 64 See Appendix, fragment 2. Same passage in *Haegaenveld*, 29-31.
- 65 See Weststeijn 2008, specifically on gemstones, 252.
- 66 Another description of a sorceress mixes references to ancient heroines with a local Dutch one to the 'Dulle Griet': 'Dus dravende door de diepe modder naderde hy een brandende fakkel, ghevoert in de vuist van een andere Ceres, zoo als zy Prozerpyn plagh te zoeken, of een Circe zoo alsze, haer toverzap toestellende, met haer draken langs de Kerkhoven omwoey, een handigh wyf wast, dryvende twee sterke paerden voor een prachtige jachtwagen, haer een hant zwoey de toorts en dander den toom, zy droegh een hoed vol zwarte plumadien op'er hooft, en om de schouderen een geborduurde Reismantel; haer boezem, door het ryghlijf gheperst, vertoonde zich als twee gezwolle duivekroppen, voorts, van gedaente en toerustingh scheenze een Amazone, maer van weezen doller Griet zelf', *Haegaenveld* 152.
- 67 Van Hoogstraten's 'Chimelenski' probably refers to the leader of the major Cossack rebellion which lasted from 1648-1657. Hetman Bogdan Khmelnytsky was allied with the Crimean Tatars and local peasantry against the southeastern part of the Commonwealth (the Masovia Voivodeship in modern-day Ukraine).

- 68 See Appendix, fragment 3.
- 69 I have not been able to identify this earlier work. Perhaps it was related to the detailed discussion of the Cossack uprising, foregrounding Khmelnitsky, in the anonymous report ‘Relation des Cosaques’, published in M. Thévenot, *Relations de divers voyages curieux qui n’ont point esté publiées, ou qui ont esté traduits d’Hacluyt, de Purchas, & d’autres voyageurs Anglois, Hollandois, Portugais, Alemands, Italiens, Espagnols, & de quelques Persans, Arabes, & autres auteurs orientaux*, Vol. I, Paris 1663, 1–13. The report is allegedly ‘tirée d’un manuscrit’; author, date, and original language are not mentioned. It may well have come from the Netherlands, like many of Thévenot’s other sources: Christiaan Huygens and Isaac Vossius provided Thévenot with François Caron’s description of Japan, Joan Nieuhof’s as yet unpublished account of China, and a text by a sixth-century traveler to India. Te Winkel’s suggestion that Van Hoogstraten copied from the *Afrikaensche Sofonisba* is unfounded. (On another note, irrelevant to the present argument: the battle Van Hoogstraten describes was also the object of a novel of much later date that likewise sides with the Polish, Henryk Sienkiewicz’s *With Fire and Sword*, 1884).
- 70 See Zdzisław Żygulski, Jr., ‘Further Battles for the “Lisowczyk” (Polish Rider) by Rembrandt’, *Artibus et Historiae* 21/41 (2000), 197–205. Van Hoogstraten reportedly painted ‘Hungarian or Polish figures’, a work that was sold in Dordrecht, July 11, 1663; see Roscam Abbing 1993, nr. 8, p. 90.
- 71 Analyzed in the present book by Fatma Yalcin.
- 72 *Haegaenveld* 191–193.
- 73 *Haegaenveld* 196.
- 74 ‘Haer ooggen, die, als ofze haer volle slaep niet gehad hadde, met een losse loomicheyd heen en weer draeden, flonkerden van roodicheit: En die roodicheit, bezet met een rand van gestremt was, maekte dat alle ooggen, niet anders, dan van het hoofd van Meduza, haer daer van afkeerden. ... Tusschen de kloven van hare grove omgeslagen lippen, lagen noch hier en daer de druppelen van’t drabbich dikke bier, daerze, op’t eerste ontwaken, haer natgierig keelgat gulzichlijk mede gewent was te laeven: en dat haer gansche lijf, en voor al haren vadzigen boezem, door een onvermogen vetticheit, zoo hadde doen zwellen, dat het eene een dikgebuike bierton, en het ander een overladen koe-uyer geleek. Deze aerdige Hofmeesterinne, met een Toebakpijp aen de mond, en een kan in de hand, trad al slingervoetende na den wagen, en begon met een schorre stem, en een pinkend oog het zoete geselschap, op den wagen zittende, te nooden tot een pijpje smooks, en een zoopje zoenwater, woorden die de eerbaerheit der Harderinnen, en de bescheydentheit der Harderen zoo tergden, dat zy de voerman bevalen ... zonder uitstel van dat hol der onnuttigheden afte scheyden. Zie daer een aerdige leelijkheid, daer Brouwer werks genoeg mede gehad zouw hebben, om hare ongabe begaeftheden t’overtreffen’, *Inleyding* 67.
- 75 G.J. Hoogewerff, ‘Nederlandse dichters in Italië in de zeventiende eeuw’, *Mededelingen van het Nederlands historisch instituut te Rome* III/6 (1950), 39–116, esp. 109.
- 76 When Van Hoogstraten uses the term *schilderachtig*, it may also be to denote ‘relating to painting’ in a neutral sense. For instance, he contrasts ‘true *schilderachtig* knowledge of musculature’ with the anatomy of medicine, *Inleyding* 52; cf. 153, 218, 263.
- 77 A. van Nispen, *De Grieksche Venus: vertoonende de beroemde vryagien van Klitophon en Leucippe, Ismenias en Ismene, Leander en Hero*, Dordrecht 1652. Van Nispen had already published the last two stories in 1651, *De Grieksche Ismene van Eusthatus en rampzalige Leander, van Musaeus*, Dordrecht 1651.
- 78 Thissen 1994, 126.
- 79 ‘Ismene zelf veranderd in een Maagd, / die’t Hollands kleeed voor’t Grieksche stelsel draagd’, J. van Someren, liminary poem in Van Nispen 1652, unpaginated. Another dedication was written by Samuel’s brother Frans van Hoogstraten. Van Someren, in turn, contributed a liminary poem to the *Inleyding*.
- 80 L. van den Bos, *Dordrechtsche Arcadia: bevattende oude en nieuwe, soo binnen- als buytenlantsche geschiedenis-*

- sen, verschiet van verhandelingen, staet en wijskunde, minnery en poesy, vermaeck en nut etc*, Dordrecht 1662.
- 81 Van den Bos 1662, 322-364
- 82 L. van den Bos, *Zuydt-hollandtsche Thessalia, begripende oude en hedendaegsche geschiedenissen, lustige vertellingen, rymery en diergelijcke stoffen*, Gorinchem & Dordrecht 1663.
- 83 L. van den Bos, *Den verstandigen vroomen ridder Don Quichot de la Mancha*, Dordrecht 1657; quoted in *Inleyding*, 67. *Haegaenveld* was brought out by the same printer
- 84 B. Castiglione, *De volmaecte hovelinck* (transl. L. van den Bos), Amsterdam 1662.
- 85 In his trilogy consisting of the *Triodon*, the *Thebais* and the *Belgiads*, the first two parts are translations of Statius' account of the Theban wars; he complements these by a 'sequel' relating the wars of the Dutch Republic.
- 86 L. van den Bos, *Batavias, of Batavische Aeneas*, Amsterdam 1648.
- 87 'Batoos Landt-volk haar eygen Taal-gedichten ... recht geheugh-merken onse Staat te eeren', *Roselij*, unpaginated, no. *4.
- 88 *Haegaenveld* 101.
- 89 Van Hoogstraten wrote liminary poems on Van den Bos' translations of the *Quichot* and L.A. Seneca, *Agamemnon*, Dordrecht 1661. Earlier, Van den Bos had written a liminary poem for *Roselij*, unpaginated. L. van den Bos, *Wegbwijsjer door Italien: Beschrijvinge der landen en steden van Italien: hun beginselen, opkomst, voorganck, bestieringe en seltsaemheden, mitsgaders de bequaamste wegen om van de eene plaets op den ander, en alsoo door geheel Italien te reysen*, Dordrecht 1657.
- 90 This was concluded by Hoogewerff 1950, 109.
- 91 Cf. M. Cavendish, *The Description of a New World, Called The Blazing-World*, London 1666. Van Hoogstraten's *Perspective with a Woman Reading a Letter*, now in the Mauritshuis, has previously been identified as a portrait of Cavendish. Cavendish and Van Hoogstraten shared an involvement with members of the Royal Society in London. The two authors' aims seem to have been similar too: they used literature and science to reinforce their social status and promote the image of themselves as equals to those with university educations.
- 92 Even Vincent van Gogh's and Anne Frank's writings, arguably among the most influential works of Dutch literature, have been interpreted as coming from this tradition that foregrounds confessions about personal life.



CHAPTER 9

Great Respect and Complete Bafflement: Arnold Houbraken's Mixed Opinion of Samuel van Hoogstraten¹

HENDRIK J. HORN

Every specialist in the Northern Baroque period knows that Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678) was the principal teacher of Arnold Houbraken (1660-1719) and that both artists wrote important books about art. They had a lot more in common, however. Both men were born in the city of Dordrecht, came from a Mennonite background, married outside the Community and joined the Dutch Reformed Church instead.² Both had the benefit of a great teacher, this being Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) in the case of Van Hoogstraten. Both became authors, each with a significant literary production, including both prose and poetry, beyond his chief work on art.³ Both were ambitious, energetic, versatile and successful artists who moved up in the world. Though Houbraken did not end up rich like his teacher,⁴ his history paintings, genre pieces, portraits, etchings and inventions for the book trade were well-enough received to allow him to maintain a large family in enviable style, first in Dordrecht and then in Amsterdam.⁵

Samuel van Hoogstraten and Arnold Houbraken were also very different artists and men. Van Hoogstraten's father was a silversmith and painter, whereas Houbraken's progenitor was a mere cloth cutter.⁶ Van Hoogstraten learned French, German, English and, possibly, Latin,⁷ whereas Houbraken scarcely progressed beyond Dutch.⁸ Van Hoogstraten had no children; Houbraken fathered ten of them. Van Hoogstraten travelled to Vienna and Rome; Houbraken got no farther inland than Nijmegen.⁹ Van Hoogstraten prospered in London for five years; Houbraken languished there for nine months only.¹⁰ Finally, Van Hoogstraten became a reflective but mainstream Calvinist,¹¹ whereas Houbraken grew into one of the most radical free thinkers of his time.¹² In fact, it was mainly to evade the ire of the Church Council of Amsterdam that he abandoned his family and fled to London in the summer of 1713.¹³

The literary profiles of the two men also differ substantially. Van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst: anders de zichtbaere werelt* (Introduction to the Academy of Painting: or the Visible World) concentrates on theory, whereas *De groote schouburgh*

der nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen (The Great Theater of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses) leans to biography.¹⁴ Beyond that, Van Hoogstraten wrote literary works, including plays, whereas Houbraken penned theological and emblematic ones. Despite such differences, however, each man spent his last years slaving his way into the grave, trying in vain to complete his *magnum opus*.¹⁵

Arnold Houbraken as custodian of his teacher's intellectual legacy

Arnold Houbraken felt greatly indebted to Samuel van Hoogstraten, as we learn from the biographer himself, who repeatedly credits his own understanding of the profession of painting to the wisdom and teaching methods of his mentor, 'the foundation of everything I know about art.'¹⁶ Van Hoogstraten was also Houbraken's source for some of his information about Rembrandt and his studio around 1643. Though dismissed by Jan Emmens (1924-1981) as 'mainly muddle-headed gossip,'¹⁷ Houbraken's testimony turns out to be more reliable than Emmens was prepared to believe.¹⁸ Such material has all the earmarks of oral transmission,¹⁹ however, as do some of the theoretical notions that the biographer credits to his teacher. On the other hand, the *Inleyding* is the only source for which Houbraken gives precise page references (in eleven out of twelve instances), indicating that he must have had a copy at hand.²⁰

Houbraken was one of Van Hoogstraten's last pupils.²¹ He mentions that his master asked him to help etch the illustrations to the *Inleyding*, but that an envious fellow student claimed the honor.²² Houbraken identifies one of the plates as a trial sample of his own work [Fig. 82].²³ It is the earliest known etching by the artist and easily the most attractive illustration to his teacher's treatise. A comparison with Houbraken's slightly smaller landscape etchings of about 1682, leaves no doubt about its authorship [Fig. 83]. The flanking Dioscuri (Castor and Pollux) in the middle ground of this largely imaginary view reflect the nascent antiquarian interests of the young artist.²⁴

De groote schouburgh further informs us that Samuel van Hoogstraten wrote a second treatise on art. This mysterious work was in Houbraken's possession while he was writing the Life of his teacher:

He returned to his fatherland with honor and profit, the goal of artists, to spend the rest of his days, averse to further commotion and at peace with his lot, in the practice of art and in writing. Just as he was then still busy completing his two books, the *Visible* [world], which has been printed, and *Invisible world*.²⁵

In his footnote Houbraken adds: 'Which still lies locked away in rolls until I have completed this voluntary task, when the final touches will be made, so as to bring them to light.'²⁶ Houbraken died before he was able to complete *De groote schouburgh*, however, so that the *Onzichtbaere werelt* (The Invisible World) never did appear.

This scenario sounds perfectly plausible. The punishing demands of *De groote schouburgh*

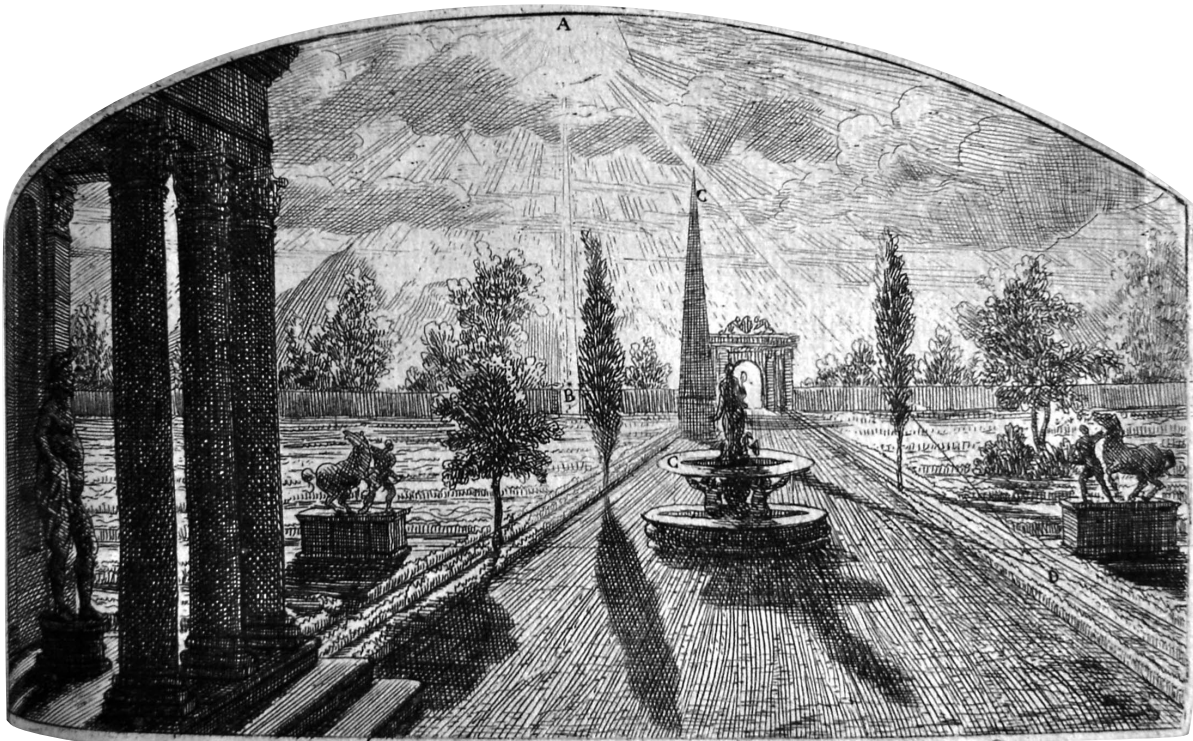


Fig. 82 Arnold Houbraken, *The Sun and Her Cast Shadows*, etching, 70 x 121 mm, signed AHB in ligature, from Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst*, Rotterdam 1678, p. 269, The Hague, Royal Library

and the untimely arrival of death would seem to absolve Arnold Houbraken of all blame for failing to publish the *Onzichtbaere Werelt*. The problem, of course, is that four decades had passed since 1678, the year of Van Hoogstraten's death and the publication of his *Inleyding*. Although it can be shown that Houbraken always had mouths to feed and projects at hand, it can also be argued that if he had truly been motivated, he could have dealt with the *Onzichtbaere werelt* long before the cares of *De groote schouburgh* overwhelmed him.

Such a challenge to Houbraken's credibility could be as irrelevant as it is tautological because we do not know when the *Onzichtbaere werelt* came into his possession or how complete it was at the time. Most obviously, Houbraken need not have come by the treatise straight from his teacher, who certainly did not bequeath it to his teenage disciple in his will of 13 June 1678.²⁷ More likely the manuscript went to Samuel's brother and heir, the distinguished translator, poet and publisher François (or Frans) van Hoogstraten (1632-1696),²⁸ who produced the *Inleyding* that same year. If so, the *Onzichtbaere werelt* must have been in need of serious work. For had the treatise been almost finished by the time Samuel van Hoogstraten died, the industrious François

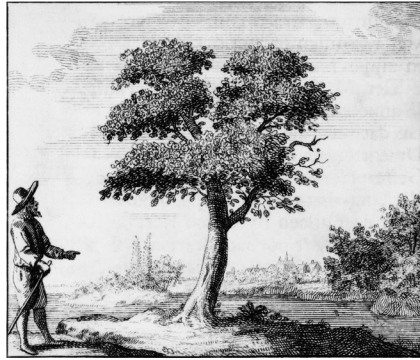


Fig. 83 Arnold Houbraken, *On Seeing an Excessively Flowering Tree*, etching, 67 x 80 mm, from Joseph Hall and François van Hoogstraten (transl.), *De schoole der wereld*, Rotterdam 1682, p. 26, The Hague, Royal Library

would surely have managed to publish it long before he in turn passed on eighteen years later. In 1682 François collaborated with Houbraken [Fig. 83] on a handsome edition of *De schoole der wereld* (The School of the World) by Joseph Hall (1674-1656).²⁹ That the two men did not also join forces to publish the *Onzichtbaere wereld*, seems to confirm that the work posed serious problems that somehow fostered procrastination.

The problematic treatise was presumably passed on to one or the other of François van Hoogstraten's gifted sons David (1658-1724) and Jan (1662-1736), who must both have known Arnold Houbraken from their shared early adulthood in Dordrecht.³⁰ That they also knew Arnold's wife, Sara Sasbout Souburg (died 1729), is established by an anonymous poem entitled *Lyris*, which contains a satirical but devastatingly well-informed Houbraken biography ranging from his birth in 1660 to its publication in 1713.³¹ Sara is shown luxuriating in her chaotic Amsterdam household while reminiscing about two brothers, one a reserved 'Doctor and very learned poet' (no doubt David van Hoogstraten) and the other a gregarious versifier (which has to be Jan), who had courted her before Arnold successfully wooed her. Sara recalls spending 'at least fifty nights' in Jan's company, 'and that in honor and virtue.'³²

David van Hoogstraten taught Arnold Houbraken poetry in the Dordrecht society *Prodesse & Delectare* around 1684,³³ the year before both men married and David left for Amsterdam. But Houbraken was probably even closer to Jan, who probably remained in Dordrecht until the winter of 1697-98, when he left for Gouda and then Breda. In 1712 Jan published *De kruisheld* (The Hero of the Cross), an epic poem about the life of Saint Paul, with incongruously anti-heroic illustrations drawn by Houbraken and engraved by Jacobus Harrewijn (1660-1727) [Fig. 84].³⁴ In his preface to this joined creation, Arnold refers to Jan as 'one of my oldest and closest friends, more than once depicted after life by our brush.'³⁵ Jan's privileged status as an intimate of the family is confirmed by two small pictures by 'the artistic young Miss Antonina Houbraken [1686-1736], daughter of the famous Mr. Arnold Houbraken,' which he still owned many years later.³⁶



Fig. 84. Jacobus Harrewijn after Arnold Houbraken, *Saint Paul on the Road to Damascus*, engraving, 181 x 130 mm, from Jan van Hoogstraten, *De kruisheld*, Amsterdam 1712, before p. 1, The Hague, Royal Library

Either of the Van Hoogstraten brothers could have passed the treatise on to Houbraken because he seemed particularly well-qualified to prepare it for publication. If it was Jan, the transfer of responsibility can hardly have taken place after 1712, when he and Arnold became embroiled in a bitter literary feud over the manner of publication of their *Kruisheld*. One year later, Jan van Hoogstraten burned all bridges by ghostwriting *Lyris*. The collapse of goodwill likely also involved Jan's son Fransois (1689-1760), who knew Arnold and Sara in their first Amsterdam years. More than two decades later Fransois recalled to his brother Samuel (1692-1759) how 'drawing there, I took down recollections from his mouth and that of his wife, who was a big gossip.'³⁷ It may well have been Sara's indiscretion coupled with Fransois' powers of observation that supplied *Lyris* with much of its damaging inside information.³⁸

Although *De kruisheld* marked the end of a valuable friendship, its history may explain how Arnold Houbraken came by the *Onzichtbaere werelt*. He had at first tried to write *De kruisheld* on his own, as an ambitious demonstration of his proficiency at serious poetry.³⁹ In 1709 he approached a former student, Jacob Zeeus (1686-1718), for help, but Zeeus gave up the work in 1711, when he left for Africa. Houbraken then asked Jan van Hoogstraten to rescue the project. It would have been in keeping with the cultivated social intercourse of his times if Arnold had reciprocated by taking on the cumbersome family heirloom. A more certain token of his appre-



Fig. 85 Arnold Houbraken, *Portrait of Jan van Hoogstraten*, 1712, mezzotint, 180 x 135 mm, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet

ciation is a closely contemporary portrait in mezzotint of a formidable-looking Jan [Fig. 85]. Its inscription reads: ‘This is the image of the poet who, driven by noble fire, had the greatest hero of the cross rise from his grave.’

After Arnold Houbraken had died on 14 October 1719, his widow Sara could have returned the still unfinished *Onzichtbaere werelt* to David van Hoogstraten, who lived in Amsterdam like the Houbrakens and who had remained a friend of the family. Only the year before, David had contributed a substantial dedicatory poem to *De groote schouburgh*.⁴⁰ He also penned four lines for the opening portrait of Arnold Houbraken, which was engraved by the latter’s son Jacob (1698–1780) [Fig. 86]:

Houbraken’s noble spirit, known from his brushes,
 Devotes itself to an expanse of beautiful scenes.
 The son, wishing to raise the father’s praise on high,
 Erects a triumphal image to him in durable copper.⁴¹



Fig. 86 Jacob Houbraken, *Portrait of Arnold Houbraken*, engraving, 158 x 105mm, with dedicatory poem by David van Hoogstraten, from Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh*, Vol. I, Amsterdam 1718, frontispiece, The Hague, Royal Library

Given his loyalty and close proximity, David van Hoogstraten would have been the appropriate destination for the *Onzichtbaere werelt* even if Houbraken had not received it from him, but from David's uncle Samuel, father François, or brother Jan.⁴²

We can imagine Sara Houbraken placing the ill-fated manuscript in the hands of her old friend when he came by – as surely he must have done – to offer his condolences. The competing assumption that she somehow let it slip away into ‘the twilight of history’,⁴³ is much less likely. Arnold's widow may have been a chatterbox, but she was no scatterbrain. Her thorough grasp of his affairs is demonstrated by the way she took charge of *De groote schouburgh* after his death.⁴⁴ Whereas she must have understood that the *Onzichtbaere werelt* had become a white elephant which could only cause trouble and cost money, its location in a locked cupboard would have reminded her of its sentimental value for her late husband as well as for the Van Hoogstraten family. Although it is always possible that Sara sold the manuscript as used paper or disposed of it in some other way, it seems unlikely that she should have done so without first consulting David van Hoogstraten.⁴⁵

Arnold Houbraken as alleged plagiarist of his teacher's biographies

Since the *Onzichtbaere werelt* is lost, we cannot be sure about the nature of its subject matter. Given the contents of Van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding*, however, his complementary exposition can hardly have dealt with pedagogical, theoretical or antiquarian issues. The only likely remaining areas are the less tangible realms of theology and philosophy.⁴⁶ That, upon reflection, is what is also implied by Houbraken's involvement in the project, as well as by its delay. His indispensable expertise presumably lay in his understanding of Van Hoogstraten's abstract subject matter, allowing him to deal with lines of enquiry that his teacher had left incomplete or poorly formulated.

There would be no need for further speculation were it not for a recent two-fold theory that the *Onzichtbaere werelt* was in fact a biographical compilation and that Houbraken stole from it for his *Groote schouburgh*.⁴⁷ Since plagiarism involves disrespect, this bothersome allegation must be addressed. Fortunately, Van Hoogstraten twice alluded to the contents of the *Onzichtbaere werelt* within the pages of his *Inleyding*:

But some may think it strange that I publish this work under the name of the nine muses That I also call it the *Zichtbare werelt* is because the art of painting shows all that is visible. But I did this all the more gladly because I have baptized a certain other work, which may divert many readers, with the title of *De onzichtbare werelt*.⁴⁸

The philosophers who discuss souls, say that these are of three natures, or that one can discern three degrees of affect; the first they call the growing The second they call the feeling and the moving The third they call the thinking, the reasoning, or the reasonable Now, this being the case in nature – for we save the serious treatment of invisible things for our *Onzichtbaere werelt* – we see that these three kinds of life more or less exalt the things that possess them.⁴⁹

These passages are more informative about the *Inleyding* itself than about the *Onzichtbaere werelt*, but they do teach us two things. First, Van Hoogstraten conceived of his two works as being fundamentally complementary.⁵⁰ Secondly, the *Onzichtbaere werelt* cannot have dealt with biography any more than its published companion does. For the deeds of painters, like those of other men, belong squarely to the realm of the visible. Not only do they involve growing, feeling and thinking, but they can certainly be depicted by other artists [Fig. 87].⁵¹

In addition, Van Hoogstraten informs us that he intended to avoid writing Lives of artists altogether:

But our Netherlands have in recent times, in the middle of savage war, nourished a surfeit of outstanding spirits ... which I pass by for the sake of brevity, as it is not my intention to deal with painters but with the art of painting. Another, who has more time, may describe her lives and continue Karel van Mander.⁵²



Fig. 87 Jean Baptiste Madou, *Rembrandt Arriving in Leiden on the Run-Away Coach*, pen and ink drawing, c. 132 x 161 mm, from J.B. Madou, *Scènes de la vie des peintres*, Brussels 1842, p. 6, The Hague, Royal Library

There can be no mistaking Van Hoogstraten's meaning here.⁵³ It turned out to be Arnold Houbraken who took up his master's challenge and the biographical format of *Het schilder-boeck* (The Book on Painting) by Karel van Mander (1548-1606).⁵⁴

Even so, the notion of the *Onzichtbaere werelt* as a collection of Lives has proved tenacious. The evidence is ostensibly found in a letter that Van Hoogstraten wrote to the Rotterdam antiquarian Joachim Oudaan (1628-1692) on 22 May 1678:

That your Pisano is not mentioned among the restorers and builders of art in Italy of around the year 1350, he may rightly complain about in our *Onzichtbaere Werelt*. As far as our introduction to the art of painting is concerned, we deal with art itself and touch on her praiseworthy practitioners only in passing.⁵⁵

This passage could seem to establish that the *Onzichtbaere werelt* dealt with the biographical material that Van Hoogstraten avoided in his *Inleyding*,⁵⁶ but only until we discern that the second sentence follows *on* the first, but not *from* it. The mention of Pisano must allude to some sort of conceptual connection between Van Hoogstraten's two treatises with respect to the history and nature of creative genius.⁵⁷ Considering all the other evidence, nothing points to biographies of seventeenth-century Flemish or Dutch masters.

Once we know that the *Onzichtbaere werelt* was not a biographical study, we have no more reason to suspect Arnold Houbraken of plagiarizing his teacher's work. Indeed, all the evidence points away from that possibility. Houbraken appears to have been an intelligent man, whereas only a fool would draw attention to possessing a work that he is in the process of pillaging.⁵⁸ In addition, the biographer was exceptionally conscientious about acknowledging his sources, as documented by the great Cornelis Hofstede de Groot (1863-1930).⁵⁹ Most importantly, a close examination of the contents and language of *De groote schouburgh* rules out the possibility of an important biographical source hiding behind the work. We therefore have every reason to believe that Houbraken continued to respect his teacher's memory and legacy to the last.

Arnold Houbraken and his teacher as related but distinct thinkers

Given that Arnold Houbraken professed to be indebted to Samuel van Hoogstraten's peerless grasp of the principles of art, it can come as no surprise that the ideas of master and student show a measure of continuity. Though a close comparison of their thought would require a whole article, it is at once clear that both men belong under the capacious umbrella of classicism, a multifaceted movement in European literature and art during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. That means they both believed in indisputable standards of beauty, especially with respect to the nude, which were to be adapted from ancient sculpture or, following the example of the Ancients, to be derived from the best features of nature.⁶⁰ Within that broad framework, however, both theoreticians preferred a painterly use of color over the *disegno* that had been prioritized in academic thinking since Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574).⁶¹ As a related common denominator, both men preferred natural colors over any kind of monochrome or murkiness (including Rembrandt's palette). Whereas Van Hoogstraten was the more explicit of the two,⁶² Houbraken went so far as virtually to exclude the entire so-called 'tonal phase' of Dutch Golden-Age painting.

Predictably, both Van Hoogstraten and Houbraken accorded history painting the preeminent status that it had consistently enjoyed in the classicistic scheme of things, in keeping with the humanistic doctrine of *ut pictura poesis*, which can be traced back to antiquity via Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472).⁶³ Similarly, both theoreticians placed still life in its traditional low place. This fact has been challenged with respect to both artists, but with little success. For though Van Hoogstraten painted still lifes, he did not privilege them in theory:

This much is sure, however, that no matter how wonderfully flowers, fruit, or other still lifes, as we call them, are painted, these paintings may not be placed higher than the first grade of art works, [not] even if they were rendered ever so deceptively by [Jan Davidsz.] De Heem, pater [Daniël] Seghers, yes Zeuxis and Parrhasius.⁶⁴

Houbraken undeniably had a soft spot for fine descriptive passages in any context, but he nevertheless placed still life at the bottom of his particular hierarchy of genres.⁶⁵

Teacher and student were quite distinct theoreticians, however. Van Hoogstraten was

more pragmatic than Houbraken, being able to accept that Dutch art practice rarely met classicistic standards.⁶⁶ Much of the remaining difference is related to Arnold Houbraken's religious engagement and unorthodox convictions. As we learn from Houbraken's *Groote schouburgh*, Samuel van Hoogstraten had a low opinion of theological speculation:

It happened (as I was also attending church discussions or gatherings at that time) that through carelessness I left the topic to be discussed the following Sunday, written on a piece of paper, on the shelf of my easel instead of putting it away elsewhere. My master picked it up and read the contents, which were as follows: 'If Adam's business [the Fall] was a contingent business or one preordained by God.' He put it back down. But before he left me he said: 'When I was young I did the same and thought it is time well-spent. But when I became wiser, I discovered it was time wasted.'⁶⁷

Such problems remained a lifelong interest of Arnold Houbraken, however. In fact, Jonathan Israel has identified Houbraken's *Philaléthes brieven* (Philaléthes' Letters) of 1712 – including its sequel of the same year – as one of the most inflammatory manifestations of the so-called Radical Enlightenment of the Dutch Republic.⁶⁸ Having evolved into a textbook deist by then, Houbraken proposes that all religion should be razed to the ground and rebuilt on a foundation of reason. Following the example of Balthasar Bekker (1636-1698), Houbraken dismisses belief in ghosts, angels, devils and Satan as superstition.⁶⁹ Neither heaven nor hell has a place in his reasoned reconstruction, nor do related articles of faith such as the last judgment and the resurrection of the body. Though he insists on belief in Christ's sacrifice, Houbraken does not interpret it in conventional terms of remission of sin or eternal damnation, but as a sign from the Creator that He has not given up on mankind. This Divine gesture is unique, however. Profoundly influenced by Baltasar Gracián (1601-1658), Houbraken advances a remote 'World's Architect' or 'Creator' who chooses to remain outside His creation and whose primeval design is hidden and beyond human comprehension. Houbraken rules out predestination, whether for us or for Christ.⁷⁰ The perilous question that his teacher had dismissed as futile was thereby settled: 'Adam's business was a contingent business.'

The contribution of Baltasar Gracián requires further clarification. This Spanish Jesuit pedagogue, moralist and Neo-Stoic was not a deist, but he did develop much the same view of God, man and the world that the deistic Houbraken was to advance six decades later. Inspired by the biblical book of Ecclesiastes,⁷¹ Gracián conceived of a remote and non-interventive 'Supreme Artificer' of the 'great building of the world'. He disseminated this dangerously dissident world-view in his *El criticón* (The Critic), a rambling allegorical novel of 1651, 1653 and 1657, and in his *Arte de prudencia* (The Art of Prudence), a compact collection of aphorisms of 1653.⁷² Like Houbraken after him, Gracián paid a price for his convictions. He published without seeking permission from his Jesuit superiors, who were so alarmed by his radical ideas that they placed him under virtual house arrest.⁷³

Houbraken read *El criticón* in the form of *De mensch buyten bedroch* (The Man Not to be

Deceived), a translation of 1701 by the Zeeland jurist and historian Mattheus Smallegange (1624-1710) of a French rendering of the first part of Gracián's seminal work,⁷⁴ Houbraken actually paraphrases Smallegange at length in connection with the vast beauties of nature, which stand in contrast with the depravities of mankind. A brief excerpt should illustrate the essential point:

Truly, he who in all such images extends his observations somewhat beyond the bare art of the painted scene, and in reflection sets himself down on a rock beside the exacting Critic of Baltasar Gracián, Spanish Jesuit ..., will see Divine PROVIDENCE shine forth and conclude: 'If this result or this caused [effect] is so wonderful, how marvelous must the cause of the same be in itself?'⁷⁵

Whereas Dutch figures as diverse as Jacob Cats (1577-1660), Adriaen van de Venne (1589-1662), Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679), Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687), Bernard Nieuwentijt (1654-1718) and Lambert ten Kate (1674-1731) all saw the hand of God actively at work in nature,⁷⁶ Houbraken took his lead from Gracián and proposed that the Creator is present in nature only in so far as His distant design is reflected in it.

Gracián's collection of aphorisms reached Houbraken via *De konst der wijsheit* (The Art of Wisdom), a translation of 1696, again by Smallegange, who worked after the original Spanish in this instance. Compulsively readable, the aphorisms posit strategies for thriving in a world in which mankind is corrupt and Fate rules unchecked. Though Houbraken is not nearly as pessimistic as his Jesuit paradigm, he quotes the Dutch translation on dozens of occasions to underscore the point of a given Life, causing Jan Emmens to surmise that the biographer must have had an open copy of *De konst der wijsheit* by his side while writing his own 'moral lessons'.⁷⁷ *De groote schouburgh* may therefore be said to be steeped in Gracián's Spanish Stoicism wedded to Houbraken's Dutch deism.⁷⁸

The biographies of *De groote schouburgh* are altogether too heterogenous to be fully explained in terms of Stoicism and/or deism,⁷⁹ but that need not concern us here.⁸⁰ It is more to the point that Houbraken's radical ideas had fundamental implications for his thinking about art, so that he came to forge a synthesis of the deism and classicism of his time. This 'deistic classicism' (a term never used by Houbraken himself) is a highly flexible amalgamation of two complex systems of thought, drawing on a great variety of sources,⁸¹ including Gracián. Most basically, Houbraken's convictions about God and nature underlie his understanding of the place of art in life. Art was in effect Houbraken's religion, offering men and women their best hope of immortality. In his view, the truly gifted artist is blessed among men in being able to perceive and communicate intimations of the Divine creative genius. Houbraken nowhere says this explicitly, almost certainly because it would have invited the same kind of grief that *Philaléthes brieven* had caused him, but if the complex book can be reduced to one thesis, this is it.⁸²

More obviously, reason is Houbraken's touchstone for good history painting, especially of the biblical kind, which he closely relates to his theological rationalism.⁸³ As the biographer himself informs us in his *Philaléthes brieven*, he based himself on advice that he received from Van Hoogstraten in his studio:

One must not do things for appearances, but have a reason for everything one makes, why one made it, or else not make it. And that one should always strive to show truths or that one would otherwise help bolster and transmit false concepts.⁸⁴

Houbraken repeated the first half this message in his *Life of Van Hoogstraten* and then all of it, in two installments, in one of the theoretical digression of *De groote schouburgh*,⁸⁵ proving that his teacher was truly his cynosure. Van Hoogstraten, however, was operating within the tradition of classicism and its concern with decorum, meaning correct costumes and accoutrements. By linking decorum to his deistic theology, Houbraken turned good practice into sacred duty. That also explains the oppressive theoretical digressions of *De groote schouburgh*. Houbraken must have known that they could prove disruptive for many of his readers,⁸⁶ but he had to be heedful of his grave responsibility to educate young history painters.

Houbraken's deistic classicism is also an essential key to his extravagant appreciation of the emotions (or 'passions') and gestures of Rembrandt's early work,⁸⁷ because a deep understanding of human physiognomy can give us a sense of the creative intellect of the prime mover.⁸⁸ Though it was Rembrandt whom Houbraken most admired in this respect, he also had relatively great appreciation for genre painters such as Jan Steen.⁸⁹ Portraiture, on the other hand, did not do as well with Houbraken as with Van Hoogstraten and others because the biographer thought it was too closely tied to mere description and the obtuse preferences of patrons, as well as too likely to swallow up truly promising artists, leaving them no time to get on with the more important business of painting histories. Had Houbraken seen animated portraits as akin to histories, like Van Hoogstraten did,⁹⁰ they might have fared better in his hierarchy of genres.⁹¹

Despite the originality of Arnold Houbraken's ideas, their outcome at an applied level may at times seem unexceptional. I have written elsewhere about Houbraken's assumption that God must have created a beautiful Eve,⁹² giving a deistic twist to a more widespread disapproval of Rembrandt's ugly nudes. Houbraken did not owe his classicistic component to his flexible teacher in this instance, but to a dogmatic lawyer and playwright named Andries Pels (1631-1682).⁹³

As another example, classicists were bound to disdain still life because it is not part of nature and cannot be idealized in any significant way. In Houbraken's personal scheme of things, the painter of still life is handicapped because one simply cannot convey the wonder of the Creator's design by means of cheese, porcelain, or books, no matter how masterfully rendered.⁹⁴ It works out to much the same thing, especially as Houbraken's logic is only implied in *De groote schouburgh*. Significantly, however, Houbraken differs from Van Hoogstraten in exempting flower painting from his reservations about still life, treating cut flowers as a choice part of nature.⁹⁵ His theological position is also expressed by his particular dislike of *vanitas* still lifes, which he says can serve no earthly purpose but to frighten the ignorant.⁹⁶ It makes perfect sense in the context of Houbraken's deism, for once we cease to believe in an afterlife, macabre warnings about death and damnation become altogether irrelevant.

Arnold Houbraken as exacting critic of his teacher as artist

Arnold Houbraken's deistic classicism underlies his surprising proposition, put forward in the last theoretical digression of the third volume of *De groote schouburgh*, that Samuel van Hoogstraten was a learned artist and great teacher, but not a good painter:

My master Samuel van Hoogstraten possessed a great mind in nearly all matters. He especially understood the fundamental rules of art so completely in all parts that I believe that no one after him has understood them better. But he was not therefore a high flyer in the application of the same. On the contrary, it has been observed that others who possessed a less than average intellect outstripped great intellectuals.⁹⁷

Houbraken's example of a practitioner who was intellectually limited but outpaced the learned Van Hoogstraten, was Herman Saftleven (c.1609–1685). The biographer illustrates the otherworldliness and gullibility of this 'esteemed painter of the Rhine river' with an unlikely story about a rural 'gift wedding', which Saftleven is to have heard from a coachman and passed on to a group of fellow artists. The tale climaxes with a homebound farm girl who, 'not wanting to get her dainty wedding slippers and white stockings dirty', tries to traverse a mucky wagon trail by using a loaf of bread as a stepping stone, getting stuck in the process. 'And', Houbraken interjects, 'this was told by the old man with such a serious expression that they were astonished by his stupidity in taking for truth what a farcical coachman had put over on him just for laughs.'⁹⁸ Houbraken then takes a characteristic swipe at organized religion, observing that Saftleven may have been required to believe even stranger things in church, before returning to his basic theme:

The reason why the most intelligent amongst the practitioners of art, and those who are cultivated in history, antiquities and other sciences, often fall short in the art of painting compared to others who are less knowledgeable, originates in this. That the former, owing to their great knowledge, are occupied with many and different ideas that both seduce them and spur them on to application, by which it happens that they do not excel at any of them, seeing that each part of art requires a human life if one wishes to excel over others. Yes, this goes so far that experience has shown us that a genius whose inclination turns indiscriminately to everything and cannot apply itself to a specific choice of any particular part of art, often cannot rise above others who only practice the least of art.⁹⁹

Clearly, Arnold Houbraken is still talking about Samuel van Hoogstraten and Herman Saftleven here, though he stops short of explicitly identifying his teacher as the indiscriminate genius, with Saftleven as his unambitious foil. The word 'often' is in any case misleading. In the entire *Groote schouburgh*, only Justus van Huysum (1659–1716) exhibits the same kind of compulsive versatility as Van Hoogstraten, and he has enough sense to persevere at the flower pieces at which he excelled.¹⁰⁰

Houbraken then offers some general advice for young painters, such as not to outreach

their still rudimentary learning, before informing us that the case of Van Hoogstraten versus Saftleven is relatively anomalous and somewhat academic:

No one should wrongly conclude from our address that we consider knowledge and mastery of all sorts of things of no use to the painter, or that intellect is good for nothing. The two mentioned examples only show that this may happen now and then, serving to satisfy the question: 'Whether painters who possess a greater intellect than others, are always the greatest masters in art?'¹⁰¹

Though he has already answered the question with a resounding 'no', Houbraken embarks on a summary of his long deliberations. Fortunately, however, he soon shifts into an important new qualification:

Experience has taught us this, and it's certain, that the greatest practitioners of painting also excelled in judgment and sciences and made use of them in their time, which they demonstrated by the works of their brush, in which, through learned inventions, philosophizing and added adornments, they gave clear evidence that their elevated spirit had understood the nature and grounds of the depicted matters, when they were able to convey these through emblems and attributes.¹⁰²

Finally, Houbraken advances a description by Joost van den Vondel of a learned biblical allegory by Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) in confirmation of this pronouncement,¹⁰³ which closes his long theoretical digression.

The message is clear, if not altogether explicit: Samuel van Hoogstraten betrayed his rare intellect by letting himself be distracted from the pursuit of learned history painting of the kind done by Rubens. We may safely add the name of Gerard de Lairesse (1640-1711) as another artist whom Houbraken credited with both learning and focus.¹⁰⁴ However, Houbraken has yet to explain what the unintelligent Herman Saftleven did to deserve his qualified approval. The key to the biographer's appreciation for this artist is his specialty, being landscape painting, including river prospects (as 'esteemed painter of the Rhine River' implies). Landscape played a relatively prominent role in Houbraken's personal hierarchy of genres, implicitly usurping the customary second place of portraiture. As with Rembrandt's profound understanding of human physiognomy, Houbraken thought of Saftleven's better landscapes as giving the viewer intimations of the genius and beauty of the Creator's remote and hidden design [Fig. 88]¹⁰⁵

The difference between physiognomy and landscape is that Houbraken explicitly enunciates the importance of the former in both his *Groote schouburgh* and his 1712 sequel to *Philalèthes brieven*, whereas we have to deduce the status of the latter from a range of clues, most notably his endorsement of Gracián's proposition (quoted above) that it is only away from mankind and surrounded by unspoiled nature that we can perceive a reflection of the Creator's great but remote intellect.¹⁰⁶ Houbraken's lyrical appreciation of the 'saffron-tinted' landscapes by Herman

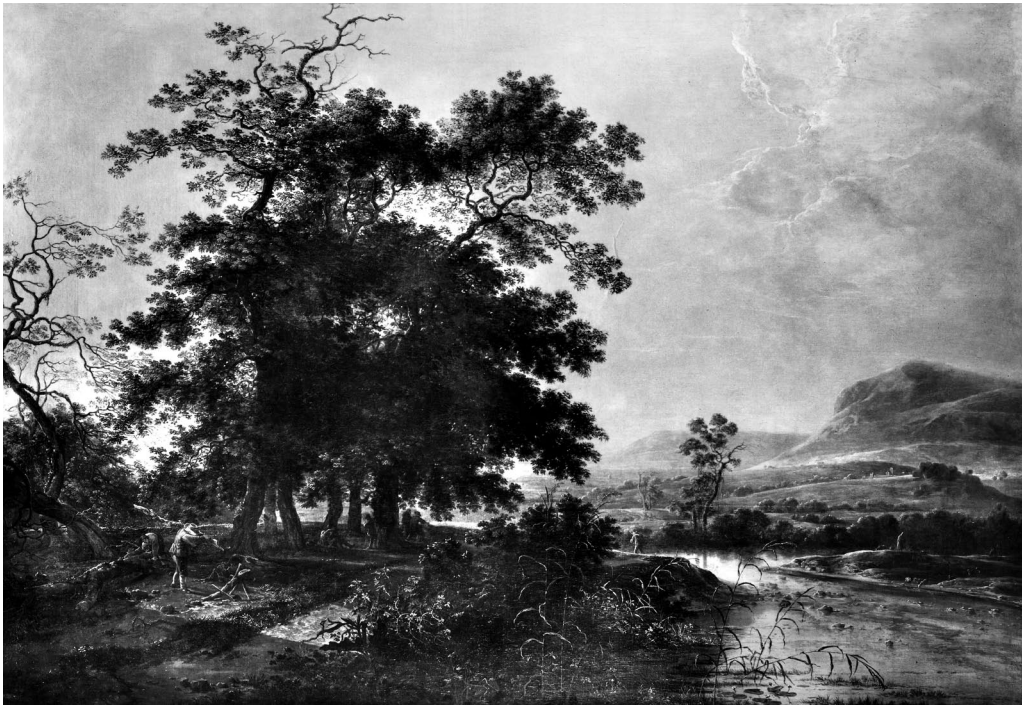


Fig. 88 Herman Saftleven, *Landscape with Sunset*, 1645, canvas, 129 x 183 cm, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

Saftleven, Lucas van Uden (1595-1672/3), Jan Both (c.1615-1652) and Aelbert Cuyyp (1610-1691)¹⁰⁷ has little to do with classicism in the sense of their being hallowed by mythological or biblical incidents. It was the astonishing ability of such artists to capture the precise quality of light at different times of day that ravished the biographer and raised his mind to his distant Creator.

Be that as it may, Herman Saftleven's intuitive gifts were only incidental to Houbraken's agenda. His principal target was Samuel van Hoogstraten, whose disturbing lack of focus he had already detailed in the second volume of *De groote schouburgh*, in his ample Life of the artist:

Driven by an unusually envious spirit, he set himself against other artists, not as it often happens (which is contemptible) as a surging outburst of hatred against their person and glittering fortune, but out of ambition and because he could not bear to have anyone pull ahead of him on the racetrack of art leading to the laurels of honor. As such there was no aspect of art in which others would appear to try to pull ahead, or he at once followed on their heels. Buildings, landscapes, stormy seas, calm waters, animals, flowers, fruit, and still life (which he painted so naturally that many were fooled), whatever it happened to be, he was able to apply himself to it and master it. I have seen remains of this still at his house, there an apple, pear or lemon in a rack for saucers; yonder a slipper or a shoe

painted on a carved board and placed in the corner of a room or under a chair, along with dried salted flounders painted on a grounded canvas, cut out and hung on a nail somewhere behind a door, which were so deceptively painted that one could easily be mistaken and take them for actual dried flounders.¹⁰⁸

Houbraken at once absolves Van Hoogstraten of ignoble cupidity and personal envy. Nor does he criticize his teacher for being *versed* in a variety of genres or pictorial skills, as advocated by Karel van Mander,¹⁰⁹ but for wanting, indiscriminately, to outstrip all other artists in all of them. That charge is highly suspect, however, since Houbraken nowhere mentions a single landscape, seascape (whether calm or stormy), animal painting, or flower piece by his master to document his allegedly obsessive versatility. Most likely, it was the illusionistic still lifes that were Houbraken's primary concern. Unable to understand or accept that the superior Van Hoogstraten could sometimes prefer to paint 'inferior' works, Houbraken exculpated his teacher by diagnosing a general condition of irrational competitiveness.¹¹⁰

Predictably, Houbraken expresses no admiration for the illusionistic experiments cluttering Van Hoogstraten's home.¹¹¹ He presents them as eyewitness evidence for his master's competitive folly. They belong in the company of what the biographer called 'beuzelingen', being trivial works that are simply unworthy of any serious artist.¹¹² The same is true for another such a work, even though it earned Van Hoogstraten acclaim at the court of Emperor Ferdinand III in Vienna:

To confirm my claim I must relate to the reader how by painting something of this kind with his brush, he gained renown with the Emperor and his entire court. When on the 6th of harvest month [August] 1651 he showed samples of his art, the Emperor, Empress, King of Hungary, and Archbishop were present. These consisted of three pieces. The first [was] a portrait of a nobleman, the second a *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, which they all praised to the skies. But especially when the third piece (being a still life) was shown, the Emperor, letting on that he was enamored of it, looked at the same for a long time but found himself deceived and said about this: 'This is the first painter to have fooled me.' And then had him notified 'that as punishment for that deceit, he would not get that piece back, since he wished to keep it forever and treasure it.'¹¹³

Though it was undeniably Arnold Houbraken who recorded Samuel van Hoogstraten's imperial triumph for posterity, he could hardly have done otherwise, given that his teacher had informed him about the events.¹¹⁴ Houbraken used all information that came his way, even if this required questioning it while passing it on,¹¹⁵ so that it would have been altogether anomalous if he had made an exception for a great story about the perplexity of an unsophisticated ruler. But Houbraken is not to be understood as endorsing his master's success with his illusionistic painting. His qualms are documented by the comments that he attached to Ferdinand's cries of appreciation:



Fig. 89 Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Masters and Wardens of the Holland Mint at Dordrecht*, 1674, canvas, 138.5 x 166 cm, Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum

And though painting in this way brought great advantage in those days, he had too elevated a spirit to occupy himself with them, but his work primarily consisted of portraits, histories and perspectives in chambers (for which a hole was made outside the room to see through). I have seen diverse ones which, though painted in a small room, showed an entire palace, with vaulted arches and galleries supported by marble columns.¹¹⁶

Note that Houbraken does not explicitly praise Van Hoogstraten's complex 'perspectives in chambers', not even for their obviously difficulty, and from then on, nothing is able to charm him. His master's histories garner neither praise nor description. Houbraken's only substantial comment concerns a group portrait that he knew particularly well:

He had a praiseworthy handling in his portraits and was fortunate in achieving a recognizable likeness, as is especially clear from his last piece of the Masters of the Mint of Dordrecht, which he painted at the time that I studied with him, whom I all knew and some of whom are still alive.¹¹⁷

Calling someone a competent portraitist is a back-handed complement in Houbraken's world. In the light of the importance that has been attached to Van Hoogstraten's Viennese triumph, it is telling that the biographer does not mention that his teacher may be seen in the foreground of this portrait, wearing the massive gold chain bestowed on him by Emperor Ferdinand III [Fig. 89].

When Houbraken at last arrives at his master's all-important histories, he damns with faint praise and atypical insinuation:

As far as his histories are concerned, they are generally praiseworthy, well arranged and with good harmony of color, and the connoisseurs of art never had anything against them but that the colors, especially in the fabrics, were used too locally and unmixed and that in the last years of his life, to court the ignorant to his advantage, he sometimes introduced things to his works that he had denounced in his book on the foundations of the art of painting.¹¹⁸

Despite his considerate reticence, Houbraken is telling us that the aging Van Hoogstraten bent his own rules for personal gain. All that the biographer can muster in defense of his teacher is a bit of generic pessimism: 'Who is without shortcomings? Yes, the most famous masters, even among the first Italians, had their failings.'¹¹⁹

Conclusion

In so far as we can judge from *De groote schouburgh* and subsidiary historical evidence, Arnold Houbraken admired Samuel van Hoogstraten and treasured his memory and intellectual legacy. At the same time, Houbraken believed that Van Hoogstraten was a mediocre painter because he lacked focus, wanting to excel at every possible genre. In particular, *De groote schouburgh* denigrates Van Hoogstraten's production of illusionistic still lifes, which is what now most interests us about his art practice. Though Houbraken explicitly condemns the opportunism of other artists,¹²⁰ he merely hints at a few late-career lapses on the part of his teacher. Certainly, self-promotion and self-realization are not themes of the Life of Van Hoogstraten.¹²¹ It would in any case

have been altogether unlike Houbraken to begrudge his master his success and wealth, believing as he did that good painters deserve to prosper and, ideally, to reach the status of gentlemen.¹²² Ultimately, however, Houbraken judged artists according to the use they had made of their talent for art, a blessing beyond compare.¹²³ He deemed the responsibility all the greater for someone such as Samuel van Hoogstraten, who was also endowed with the intellect needed to meet the exacting requirements of good history painting, including the kind of profound understanding of human physiognomy that reflects the Divine intellect of the remote Creator. It was in the context of his deistic classicism that Arnold Houbraken tried to understand what he perceived to be the irrational and counterproductive aspect of Samuel van Hoogstraten's ambition and versatility, for though the latter had been enviably successful, he had not lived up to his potential.

Notes

- 1 This article owes much to Michiel Roscam Abbing, who kindly supplied some of the archival references and commented on preliminary drafts.
- 2 What immediately announces the Mennonite origins of the two artists are their years of birth and baptism: 1627 and 1648 for Van Hoogstraten, 1660 and 1680 for Houbraken. Van Hoogstraten married Sara Balen, a niece of the city historian Matthijs Jansz. Balen (1611-1691), in a civil wedding ('voor schepenen') on 18 June 1656. On 17 September 1656 he was expelled from the Mennonite Community of Dordrecht, in part because Sara was not a member. The couple then joined the Dutch Reformed Church on 11 January 1657. Houbraken married Sara Sasbout Soubourg, the daughter of the city surgeon of Dordrecht, in the Reformed Church of Alblasserdam on 3 July 1685. See M. Roscam Abbing, *De schilder en schrijver Samuel van Hoogstraten 1627-1678: eigentijdse bronnen en oeuvre van gesigneerde schilderijen*, Leiden 1993, 36, 49, 50, 52 and H.J. Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*, 2 vols., Doornspijk 2000, I, 17, 30-31, based on documents supplied by Marten Jan Bok.
- 3 For complete bibliographies, see Roscam Abbing 1993, 83-87 and Horn 2000, II, 898.
- 4 For the considerable wealth amassed by Van Hoogstraten, see P. Thissen, *Werk, netwerk en letterwerk van de familie van Hoogstraten in de zeventiende eeuw*, Amsterdam & Maarssen 1994, 97, 100-102, who points out that by 1668 the artist 'owned several thousand pounds in liquid assets.' Although Houbraken's financial problems were probably exaggerated by his biographer, Johan van Gool (1685-1763), they certainly did not make his last years any easier. Cf. J. van Gool, *De nieuwe schouburg der Nederlantsche kunstschilders en schilderessen*, 2 vols., The Hague 1750 and 1751, 134-137 and Horn 2000, I, 70-76, with mention of additional early literature.
- 5 For an overview of Houbraken's extensive artistic production and considerable success, see Horn 2000, I, 11-17, 44-72 passim; II, figs. 2-57.
- 6 For the rich intellectual and literary fabric of the Van Hoogstraten clan, see Thissen 1994, 52-215. Samuel's prestigious apprenticeship with Rembrandt is part of this picture. For the Houbrakens, about whom there is almost nothing to report, see Horn 2000, I, 17-18.
- 7 Roscam Abbing 1993, 9 proposed that Van Hoogstraten was largely self-taught, but T. Weststeijn, *De zichtbare wereld: Samuel van Hoogstraten's kunsttheorie en de legitimering van de schilderkunst in de zeventiende eeuw*, 2 vols., Ph.D. dissertation, Amsterdam 2005, 11-15 and T. Weststeijn, *The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age*, Amsterdam 2008, 27-32 speculated about a possible education at the grammar school of Dordrecht to help explain the artist's learning and intellectual contacts.

- 8 Houbraken was apprenticed to a merchant in twine when he was only nine years old, explaining his very limited linguistic skills. See Horn 2000, I, 18-21, 112. It is therefore a mistake to quote Houbraken's bits of Latin in preference to his own Dutch (cf. Weststeijn 2008, 437, n. 5), as it credits him with the very learning to which he was laying false claim.
- 9 For Van Hoogstraten's travels, see Thissen 1994, 60-67. They were described by Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 160-162. For his own modest journey to Nijmegen, see A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols, Amsterdam 1718-1721, vol. III, 202.
- 10 For Van Hoogstraten in London from 1662 to 1667, see Roscam Abbing 1993, 58-65 and Thissen 1994, 89-92. Houbraken apparently first went to England in 1680, but we know almost nothing about that journey. See Horn 2000, I, 25. For the financial failure of Houbraken's second English journey, including key information uncovered by Marten Jan Bok, see Horn 2000, I, 63-77, 731-732, nn. 2-281 to 2-299.
- 11 H.-J. Czech, *Im Geleit der Musen: Studien zu Samuel van Hoogstratens Malereitraktat Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkunst (1678)*, Munich & Berlin 2002, 64-82, esp. 68 and 72, deduced the religious convictions of the mature Van Hoogstraten from the forty references to the Scriptures found in his *Inleyding*. Though Czech identifies a few Cartesian aspects to Van Hoogstraten's religious thought, it is inconceivable that he inspired Houbraken's radical ideas (cf. Horn 2000, I, 412).
- 12 Arnold Houbraken's radical theology, which is virtually inseparable from his art theory, is reviewed in some detail in the second half of this essay. For the general theme of religion in *De groote schouburgh*, see Horn 2000, I, 283-291.
- 13 For the Amsterdam crisis, with documents uncovered by David de Witt, see Horn 2000, I, 59-60 and II, 729-730.
- 14 See *Inleyding* and Houbraken 1718-1721. This fundamental differences no doubt explains why Houbraken's *Groote schouburgh* was a resounding international success, including a second edition of 1753 (Horn 2000, I, 73-78), whereas the *Inleyding* appears to have attracted few buyers. See T. Weststeijn, 'Review of J. Blanc: Samuel van Hoogstraten: Introduction à la haute école de l'art de peinture (1678)', *Simiolus* 32 (2006), 218-222: 218 or T. Weststeijn, 'De zichtbare wereld van een schilder-dichter. Samuel van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding tot de hoogeschoole der schilderkunst*', in: J. Bos and E. Gelijns (eds.), *Boekenwijsheid*, Amsterdam 2009, 167-176: 173.
- 15 For Van Hoogstraten's declining years, see Houbraken 1718-1722, vol. II, 161-162, 167. He was not able to complete a companion treatise on art, entitled *Onzichtbaere werelt*, as discussed below. Arnold Houbraken was still working on the third of his four planned volumes when he died, so that Sara Houbraken had to complete it. On 17 July 1720, she auctioned off the contents of Arnold's studio for 2,300 guilders, allowing her to pay for the cost of publication. See Horn 2000, I, 73-78.
- 16 Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 155, quoted in Horn 2000, I, 21: 'den grondslag van al wat ik in de Konst weet [...]'. See also Horn 2000, I, 22 and Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. I, 3 and Vol. II, 121-122, 155, 157-158, 162-163, 254, 255-256.
- 17 See J.A. Emmens, *Rembrant en de regels van de kunst*, Utrecht 1968, 98: 'overwegend warhoofdige roddelpraat.' For a less aggressive dismissal of Houbraken, see Thissen 1994, 5. M. Roscam Abbing, *Rembrant toont zijn konst: bijdragen over Rembrant-documenten uit de periode 1868-1756*, Leiden 1999, 131 argued that Emmens' view of the biographer is 'fruitless' and that it is a mistake 'to dismiss his information about Rembrant as unhistorical.'
- 18 Specifically with respect to Arnold Houbraken's insightful information about Rembrandt's lower-class but comely 'housewife' (Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. I, 272), which Emmens 1968, 110-111 dismissed out of hand, see D. Vis, *Rembrandt en Geertje Dircx*, Haarlem 1965, 59; Horn 2000, I, 476; B.P.J. Broos, 'Rembrandts "huisvrouw" en haar vroegste biografen', *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* (2003), 34-45: 35 and H.J. Horn.

- 'Deistic Classicism in Arnold Houbraken's Life of Rembrandt', in: M. Roscam Abbing (ed.), *Rembrandt 2006, I, Essays*, Leiden 2006, 251-266: 263-264. For documentary evidence supporting Houbraken's description of student cubicles in Rembrandt's studio, see Roscam Abbing 1999, 150. For still another instance, involving 't huis den Deil' in what is now Wassenaar, see Horn 2000, I, 461.
- 19 See Horn 2000, I, 411-415. C. Hofstede de Groot, *Arnold Houbraken und seine 'Grote Schouburgb' kritisch beleuchtet*, The Hague 1893, 327 made the same point with respect to Houbraken's biographical information concerning Van Hoogstraten and his circle.
- 20 It proves that the *Inleyding* 'ultimately reached' at least one of 'the readers the author was writing for: painters, apprentices and art lovers.' See Weststeijn 2006, 218.
- 21 Thissen 1994, 99, simply called Houbraken the last student. According to Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. II, 165, he was also the oldest student and a kind of prefect to the others.
- 22 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. II, 161-162.
- 23 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. II, 162 specifies that it is plate 269. It was sadly overlooked by Horn 2000 despite the example of Hofstede de Groot 1893, 327, who spotted the AHB in ligature at the lower right of the print. The etching illustrates Van Hoogstraten's discussion of sunlight and shadows, as found in the [sixth chapter](#) of his seventh book.
- 24 The key work for Houbraken was Joachim Oudaan's *Roomsche mogentheid*. See Horn 2000, I, 25 and II, 911. However, J. Oudaan, *Roomsche mogentheid, in gezag en staatsbekleeding der oude keyzeren*, Amsterdam 1664, 217, Pl. XLIV, nos. 11 and 12 mentions and illustrates 'Kastor en Pollux' with spears and on horseback, but not in the form of the renowned horse tamers that Sixtus V moved to the *Monte Cavallo* of the Quirinal in 1589. I have yet to identify Houbraken's source.
- 25 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. II, 161: 'Hy is met Eer en Voordeel, het doel der Konstenaren, weder in zyn Vaderland gekomen, om de rest zyner dagen, wars van meerder gewoel, en met zyn lot te vrede, in de Konstoeffening en schryven door te brengen. Gelyk hy dan nog bezig was met zyne twee Boeken, de *Zigtbare 't welk gedrukt is, en ' Onzichtbare Waereld* te voltoojien.'
- 26 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. II, 161, n.*: 'Die als nog in rollen leit opgesloten, tot ik deze buiten bezigheid geëindigt heb, zullende dan de laatste hand daar aan leenen, om ze in 't ligt te brengen.' Note that 'buiten bezigheid' is not a combination mentioned in the *WNT*, III^[1], 1788ff. My assumption that Houbraken intended work done in his leisure time, as opposed to on commission, follows Roscam Abbing 1999, 138, n. 34 with respect to the biographer's use of 'buiten uren'.
- 27 See Roscam Abbing 1993, 80-81. The document establishes that a more detailed inventory of goods must have been compiled within six weeks of the death of Van Hoogstraten on 19 October 1678 (Sara died three days later). This inventory has been lost, however, so that we do not know for certain whether the manuscript rolls were part of Samuel's estate.
- 28 As all of Samuel's prints, drawings and books were explicitly bequeathed to his heirs (as opposed to Sara's), being François and his sister Dina (again Roscam Abbing 1993, 80-81), it is likely that the *Onzichtbaere werelt* went to François.
- 29 Houbraken's contributed thirty-six etched illustrations to *De schoole der wereld*, being François van Hoogstraten's translation of an obscure Latin text of 1672 by the Neo-Stoic English philosopher and satirist Joseph Hall, bishop of Exeter and then Norwich. See J. Hall and F. van Hoogstraten (trans), *De schoole der wereld, geopent in CXL. vliegende bedenkingen, op veelenhande voorvallende gezichten en zaeken; in 't Latijn opgesteld door Joseph Hall, en in Nederduits digt gevolgt door Francois van Hoogstraten*, Rotterdam n.d. [1682] (Amsterdam 1687); Emmens 1968, 161; J. Becker, 'The Pleasures of Variety: Remarks on Landscape, in: M.C. Heck et al. (eds.), *Théorie des arts et création artistique dans l'Europe du Nord du XVI^e au début du XVIII^e siècle* (acts of an international colloquium, Lille 2000), Lille 2002, 274-289: 288 and [fig. 8](#); and Horn 2000, I, 26, 69-70, 294; II, 894 and [figs. 19](#) and [55](#).

- 30 I write 'presumably' because François died intestate. David van Hoogstraten was a Leiden-trained physician as well as a poet who also became a pedagogue, grammarian, literary critic and publisher. Jan started off as a bookseller and then became a poet and 'commies ter recherche' (investigative officer) in Dordrecht, Gouda, Tiel, Zaltbommel and Rotterdam
- 31 See Anonymous (Joan de Haes fronting for Jan van Hoogstraten?, alias 'Bernhardus Koulona'), *Lyris-opper rym en schilderbaaz nieuw opgestane brievenschryver, en nu volmaakt zwartekonstschraper aan 't Y: boertend heldendigt*, Breda 1713, *passim*, and Horn 2000, I, 18-19, 25, 31-33, 41-42, 45-46, 55, 58-59, with earlier secondary literature.
- 32 Anonymous 1713, 19-21 and Horn 2000, 42. This must have happened before 1683, when Jan married.
- 33 See Roscam Abbing 1999, 138-139 for the date and name of the society. This fact comes from a manuscript biography of David van Hoogstraten, which was published and annotated in its entirety in G.J. Rutten, with M. Roscam Abbing (ed.), 'De biograaf gebiografeerd: de vele levens van David van Hoogstraten (1658-1724)', in: *Voortgang, Jaarboek voor de neerlandistiek* 23 (2005), 147-178, with the biography on 162-170 and the specific information on line 259.
- 34 J. van Hoogstraten, *De kruisheld, of het leven van den grooten Apostel Paulus, leraar der heidenen: en met konstplaten en kanttekeningen; door A. Houbraken*, Amsterdam 1712. See Horn 2000, I, 45-46 and II, fig. 40. Houbraken's profound rationalism was incompatible with the kind of miraculous moments that are obligatory in a religious epic. In his highly original and reflective *Saint Paul on the Road to Damascus*, we see the dramatic conversion in the background and its mundane aftermath in the foreground.
- 35 See M. Roscam Abbing, *Van Hoogstraten: iconografie van een familie*, Amsterdam 1987, 57.
- 36 The pictures are mentioned in Jan van Hoogstraten's will, which is dated 10 March 1726 and 27 June 1727 (Archief Rotterdam, ONA 2480, f^o. 231 and ONA 2170, f^o. 394, respectively): 'de kunstryke jonge Juff.^e Antonina Houbrake[n], dochter van den beroemden Here Arnold Houbraken.' E. Groenenboom-Draai, 'De schele droes op drift: Jan van Hoogstraten aan IJssel, Waal en Maas', *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman* 18 (1995), 89-104: 94, 98 discovered and published both the will and this specific excerpt.
- 37 National Archives The Hague, Familiearchief van Hoogstraten: Hoogstratiana: Stukken betreffende de familie van Hoogstraten en aanverwante families (1696-2004), access number 2.21.333.01, inv.no. 13, item no. 150. An inventory of this large archive, edited by G.H.P. van Hoogstraten and M. Roscam Abbing, is available online. The letter in question supplies Samuel van Hoogstraten (1692-1759) with information about family portraits. Internal references establish that his brother François wrote it sometime after the death of his uncle David in 1724 and before the death of their father Jan in 1736. François concludes that most of his information must have come from 'houbraken, daer ik, daer tekenende, wel memoritjes heb opgeschreven uit de mond van hem en zijn vrouw, dat een grooten kluijfkond was.'
- 38 In addition to her Dordrecht dalliances, mentioned above, Sara is shown to lack all domestic virtue. She has become lazy and self-indulgent, shunning routine duties and relying on the older children to raise the younger ones. Her hired help is vulgar beyond belief, etc. See Anonymous 1713, 18-19 and Horn 2000, 41-42, with some material translated into English.
- 39 For a short history of the project, see Horn 2000, 45-46, with the secondary literature. Though Jan van Hoogstraten was a much better poet than Arnold Houbraken, the conception and organization of the work were defined by the latter.
- 40 The thirty-six line poem is mainly a pedestrian prospectus of the contents of *De Grootte Schouburgh*, but it shows independence of emphasis and taste in its singling out of Rubens and Van Dyck, who did not particularly interest Houbraken.
- 41 The second line contains a pun, with both 'weiden' (minus the 'n') and 'beemt' meaning 'meadow'.
- 42 And there were other considerations that favored David van Hoogstraten. Sara likely knew that he had

- supplied the dedicatory poem to the *Inleyding* and that, as oldest son of Samuel's brother, he had a large double portrait of Samuel van Hoogstraten and Sara Balen, painted by Samuel himself in 1657, hanging in his front drawing room. This portrait was passed on to David's oldest son Jakobus (1700-1756), who mentioned it in his testament of 7 July 1756 as 'een groot stuk schilderij, hangende thans in zijn Testateurs voorhuys, door wijlen den Heer Samuel van Hoogstraten geschildert in den Jare 1657.' Stadsarchief Amsterdam, ONA, inv.no. 9552, act 71 (6 July 1756, notary S. de Knuijt). This important painting, new to the oeuvre of Samuel van Hoogstraten, was probably destroyed in the Leiden Disaster of 12 January 1807. See Roscam Abbing's introduction to the Van Hoogstraten family archive mentioned in note 37 above.
- 43 See H.-J. Czech, *Im Geleit der Musen: Studien zu Samuel van Hoogstratens Malereitraktat Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst: anders de zichtbaere werelt* (Rotterdam 1678), Münster, New York, Munich & Berlin 2002, 61, who uses the phrase 'im Dunkel der Geschichte.'
- 44 See note 14 above.
- 45 David van Hoogstraten's books were auctioned in Amsterdam on 22 May 1725 (UB Amsterdam, Dutch Book Sales Catalogue, cat.no. 62, mf 51-53: 'Bibliotheca Hoogstratiana'). There is no mention of manuscripts of any kind. The *Inleyding* is mentioned under no. 348 of the 'Missellanei in quarto' and was sold to one Willem Barentsz for two guilders and six *stuivers*. No. 700 is 'Houbrakens Philaethes Brieven. Amst. 1712'. One of the buyers was one 'H[ee]r Hoogstraten' (presumably Jan), who bought many books as well as a portrait of David. I owe all this information to Michiel Roscam Abbing.
- 46 As Horn 2000, I, 22, 411-412 and Czech 2002, 57-63 concluded independently. See also Weststeijn 2008, 34-41.
- 47 See J. Blanc (ed. and transl.), *Samuel van Hoogstraten: Introduction à la haute école de l'art de peinture*, Geneva 2006, 21. Another Van Hoogstraten scholar had embraced the plagiarism hypothesis several years before (oral communication at the RKD in The Hague), which is why I already attempted to refute it in Horn 2000, I, 412. The accusation is wisely ignored by Weststeijn 2009, 171 in the best short introduction to the *Inleyding* to date.
- 48 *Inleyding* 4: 'Maer het zal mogelijk veele vreemt dunken, dat ik dit Werk onder den naem van de negen *Muzen* uitgeef [...]. Dat ik ook de *Zichtbare Werelt* noeme, is, om dat de Schilderkonst al wat zichtbaer is, verthoont. Maer dit heb ik te liever gedaen, vermits ik zeeker ander Werk, dat misschien aen veelen vermaek zal geven, met den Tijtelt van *d'Onzichtbare Werelt* gedoopt heb.' The complete passage is quoted in English translation by C. Brusati, *Artifice & Illusion. The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*, Chicago 1995, 223, in the original Dutch by Czech 2002, 59, and in French translation by Blanc 2006, 20.
- 49 *Inleyding* 85-86: 'De Philosophen, van de zielen handelende, zeggen datze of van drierley natueren zijn, of datmen 'er drierley graeden van werkingen af bespeurt: d'eerste noemen zy de groeiende [...]. De tweede noemen zy de gevoelijke en beroerende [...]. De derde noemen zy de denkende, de Reedewikkende, of de Reedelijke [...]. Nu, dit in de natuer zoo zijnde, want in ernst van onzichtbaere dingen te handelen spaeren wy voor onze *Onzichtbaere Werelt*, zoo zien wy, dat deeze drierley soorten van leevens, de dingen, die zy bezitten, of min of meerder verheerlijken.' I have replaced two of Van Hoogstraten's commas with hyphens in my translation so as better to isolate the critical subordinate clause. See Czech 2002, 58 for a partial quotation of the original Dutch, and Blanc 2006, 20 for a fragment in French translation.
- 50 That is the point of departure for the unavoidably speculative but altogether brilliant pages by Czech 2002, 57-82.
- 51 I add this obvious point to the arguments marshalled by Czech 2002, 62-63. My example features a famous event from Houbraken's *Life of Rembrandt in Houbraken 1718-1721*, vol. I, 255-256), as drawn by Jean-Baptiste Madou (1798-1877).
- 52 *Inleyding* 256-257: 'Maer ons Nederland heeft, in 't midden van den woesten oorlog, in deeze laetste tijdt

overvloet van treflijke geesten gevoed [...] die ik om kortheyt voorby gae, want mijn voornemen is niet van de Schilders, maer van de Schilderkonst, te handelen; een ander', die beter tijdt heeft, mag haere leevens beschrijven, en *Karel Vermander* vervolgen.'

- 53 As Czech 2002, 62 rightly observed, it would be absurd to assume that Van Hoogstraten was concurrently working on lives in his companion treatise. However, Blanc 2006, 21 has proposed that by 'another', Van Hoogstraten could have meant himself. Elsewhere, *Inleyding* 274 does refer to his own person as 'another', but that instance (showing modesty with respect to his own successes with architectural paintings) has no bearing on this case.
- 54 See K. van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck: waer in voor eerst de leerlustighe iueght den grondt der edel vry schilderconst in versheyden deelen wort voorghedraghen*, Haarlem 1604. The title pages of Houbraken 1718-1721 announce that *De groote schouburgh* is intended to pick up where Van Mander's *Schilderboek* (as Houbraken spells it) left off.
- 55 See Roscam Abbing 1993, 78-81, esp. p. 80, after the original in the Royal Library in The Hague (KB 424-B-3): 'Dat uwen Pisanus onder de wederopbeurders of bouwers der konst in Italie, ontrent den jaere 1350 niet gestelt en wort, mach hy zich met reeden in onze onzichtbaere werelt over beklagen. Wat onze inleyding tot de schilderconst belangt; wy handelen van de konst zelf, en roeren haere roem-waerdige oeffenaers maer in't voorbygaen aen.' Roscam Abbing identified the place of the omission, being *Inleyding* 255. Czech 2002, 59 quotes the passage in the original Dutch, whereas Blanc 2006, 21 offers French.
- 56 Roscam Abbing 1993, 80, no. 129. See also Roscam Abbing 1993, 29, n. 4: 'It shows that, other than in the *Zichtbaere werelt*, he treated lives of artists in detail in the *Onzichtbaere werelt*.' Thissen 1994, p. 5 presented this hypothesis as fact. Though Czech 2002, 62 begged to differ, he did point out that the notion had been implied by Hofstede de Groot 1893, 327-328. However, De Groot was writing in the limited context of Van Hoogstraten and his immediate circle. Roscam Abbing has kindly informed me (electronic messages of 23 and 25 July 2009) that he has accepted the argument put forward by Czech 2002, 62-63. Blanc 2006, 21 returned to Roscam Abbing's original proposition.
- 57 I believe that this assumption is compatible with Czech 2002, 76, who includes the Pisano passage in a learned interpretation of the *Onzichtbaere werelt* as the moralistic half of an ambitious bipartite work conceived in literary competition with Karel van Mander
- 58 Horn 2000, I, 412 mistakenly argues that it is only owing to Houbraken that we know about the *existence* of the *Onzichtbaere werelt*. Proper attention to Hoogstraten's *Inleyding* or Roscam Abbing 1993 could have averted this error.
- 59 See Hofstede de Groot 1893, 48-49: 'The citation of sources is carried so far that I have not managed to find even a single instance of a work that was used without it also being mentioned.' For a couple of minor exceptions to the rule, see Horn 2000, I, 116-117
- 60 This is very close to the working definition of 'classicism' that Emmens 1968, 66-76 derived from the writings of Jan de Bisschop (1628-1671), the first full-fledged Dutch classicist.
- 61 See D. Carasso, 'Houbraken's Groote schouburgh: enkele beschouwingen over de invloed van de Groote schouburgh op ons beeld van de Noordnederlandse schilderkunst in de Gouden Eeuw', *Theoretische geschiedenis* 26 (1996), 330-343: 331 (reprinted in: C. van Lakerveld, R. van Gelder and M. Carasso-Kok (eds.), *In de ban van het beeld: opstellen over geschiedenis en kunst*, Hilversum 1998, pp. 110-123: 112-113), translated in Horn 2000, II, 798, n. 32. For an historical overview of what he called 'the Tuscan-Roman configuration', see Emmens 1968, 49-66. *Disegno*, a complex term, is more than drawing with a pen or other implement. It also involves creating lines by the juxtaposition of surfaces that differ in tonal value, thereby achieving a lucid and plastic presentation. The Venetian masters, most notably Titian (c. 1488-1576), were deemed to have been strong at color but lacking in the *disegno* at which Central Italian figures such as Raphael (1493-1520) were believed to have excelled.

- 62 See *Inleyding* 227–228.
- 63 *Ut pictura poesis* means ‘as is painting so is poetry’, but the reverse was intended. For this multi-faceted tradition, which drew on the authority of Aristotle and Horace and flourished until the eighteenth century, see the wonderful booklet by Rensselaer Lee, *‘Ut Pictura Poesis’: The Humanistic Theory of Painting*, New York 1967 (which is closely based on an *Art Bulletin* article of 1940, though with updated literature). Curiously, for a man who read everything, Emmens overlooked Lee’s seminal article.
- 64 See *Inleyding* 87: ‘Echter staet dit vast, dat hoe overaerdig eenige bloemen, vruchten, of andere stillevens, gelijk wy’t noemen, geschildert zijn, deeze Schilderyen evenwel niet hooger, als in den eersten graed der konstwerken moogen gestelt worden, al waerenzelz van de Heem, pater Zegers, jae Zeuxis en Parrasius, tot bedriegen toe uitgevoert.’ Nevertheless, C. Brusati, ‘Capitalizing on the Counterfeit: Trompe-l’oeil Negotiations’, in: A. Chong and W. Kloek (eds.), *Still Life Paintings from the Netherlands, 1550–1720*, cat. exh. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) and Cleveland (The Cleveland Museum of Art) 1999, 59–71: 59, has argued that Van Hoogstraten ‘emphatically distanced himself from the traditional priority of history painting and portraiture.’
- 65 Houbraken’s ambivalence with respect to still life was spotted by O. Mandel, *The Cheerfulness of Dutch Art: A Rescue Operation*, Doornspijk 1996, 42. I return to Houbraken’s hierarchy of genres below.
- 66 See *Inleyding* 77 and Emmens 1968, 88, 108, 149. Emmens 1968, 102–103 called Houbraken’s classicism a ‘highly provincial and schoolmaster-like version of the French,’ as well as ‘accumulative, unreflective and narrow-minded.’
- 67 See Houbraken 1718–1721, Vol. II, 164: ‘T gebeurde (wyl ik in dien tyd mede op een Kerkkollegie of t’zamenkomst ging) dat ik het onderwerp, dat den naastkomenden Zondag stond verhandelt te worden, op een papiertje geschreven, door onvoorzigtigheid op het plankje van myn Ezel geleit had, in steê van het elders te bergen. Myn Meester kreeg het in de hand en las den inhoud welke aldus was: *Of Adams zaak een gebeurlyke zaak was; dan of God die voorwist*. Hy lei het weer neer; maar eer hy van my weg ging zeide hy: *Toen ik jong was deed ik ook zoo, en dagt, het is tydverdrijf; maar toen ik wyzer wierd, ondervond ik dat het tyd verkwist was.*’ The passage was cited by Thissen 1994, 5 as evidence of Van Hoogstraten’s practical orientation and sobriety, and by Horn 2000, I, 283–284 as confirmation of Houbraken’s low opinion of the doctrine of predestination. Elly Groenenboom-Draai has kindly pointed out to me that Horn 2006, 253 too hastily referred to the ‘Coccejian Calvinism’ of Salomon van Til (1643–1713), who did not reject predestination like Houbraken.
- 68 See J. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1477–1806*, Oxford 2001, 432–433, who argued for the particular importance of Frederik van Leenhof (1647–1713) for the radical notions of *Philalèthes Brieven* and their hostile 1713 reception by the Synod of Gelderland, but who thought the *Brieven* to be ‘typical of’ Willem Goeree (1635–1711). The fully documented and incontrovertible attribution to Houbraken goes back to his own writings, as spotted by Hofstede de Groot 1893, 10, 458 and 517, who also cited the near-contemporary testimony of Houbraken’s biographer Van Gool 1750, 145. The title of the *Brieven* reads: *Philalèthes’ letters, treating diverse useful scriptural, natural and antiquarian observations*. For the sequel, which is of even greater interest in connection with art, see note 87 below. The two works came out as a single volume in Amsterdam in 1713 (which is too often confused with the first editions of 1712) and in The Hague in 1729. For complete entries, including Christian names and publishers, see Horn 2000, II, 898.
- 69 For Balthasar Bekker and *De betoverde wereld* (The Enchanted World) of 1691 to 1693, see Horn 2000, I, 38 and II, 720, n. 140. For the important contribution of Johannes Duijkerius (1661/2–1702) and his Spinozistic *Het leven van Philopater* (The Life of Philopater) and *Sequel to the Life of Philopater*, see Horn 2000, I, 38–39 and II, 720, nn. 2–141 to 2–146. For additional material, complete with page references to the original texts, see Horn 2000, I, 47–58, 67, 168 and II, 725–726, with a summary in Horn 2006, 253–254.

- 70 This is the one point at which Houbraken's theology becomes problematic. Being part God and part man, Christ did what he could do, what he had to do, and what he wanted to do. See the summary in Horn 2000, I, 50.
- 71 See G. Eickhoff, 'Die "regla de gran maestro" des Oraculo manual im Kontext biblischer und ignatianischer Tradition', in: S. Neumeister and D. Briesemeister (eds.), *El mundo de Gracian: actas del coloquio internacional Berlin 1988*, Berlin 1991, 111-125, mentioned in Horn 2000, I, 167 and Horn 2006, 256.
- 72 See Horn 2000, II, 893 for the full titles of the original works as well as of all the early editions and translations. Note, however, that Horn overlooked the third, 1657, volume of *El criticón*.
- 73 For concise information on the brilliantly subversive Gracián, see the introduction by Christopher Maurer in B. Gracián, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom: A Pocket Oracle*, C. Maurer (ed. and trans.), New York 1992, i-xvii.
- 74 The French translator was the great Hispanist Guillaume de Maunory (best known for his *Grammaire et dictionnaire François et Espagnol* of 1704). He translated *El Criticón* in three parts, of which the second and third did not come out until 1708 and were never translated into Dutch. See Horn 2000, II, 705, n. 1-15.
- 75 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. III, 276: 'Waarlyk die in alzulke verbeeldingen zyn opmerkingen wat veerder doet weiden als op de bloote Konst van het geschilderde tafereel, en zig in bespiegelingen met den naukeurigen Oordeelaar van Balthazar Gratiaan, Spaans Jesuit, nederzet op een rots [...] ziet [...] de Goddelyke voorzorg daar in uitblinken, en besluit: *Is deze uitwerkinge of dit veroorzaakte zoo wonderbaar, hoe verwonderlyk moet derzelver oorzaak in zigzelve wezen?*' For a much more complete passage in English translation, see Horn 2000, I, 437. For Smallegange's closely related Dutch, see Horn 2000, II, 804, n. 9-108, with further references to 'Gracián's material on nature, from which our man borrowed liberally and loosely.' Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. III, 271-272 makes the same point in his own words, as twice quoted by Horn 2000, I, 434 and 439.
- 76 See Horn 2000, I, 176-177 and 439-441, and Horn 2006, 254-255.
- 77 All these instances are indexed under 'Gratiaan' in P.T.A. Swillens, *De Grootte Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen [...] door Arn. Houbraken*, 3 vols., Maastricht 1943, 1944 and 1953, I, 1943, 402; II, 1944, 340 and III, 1952, 392, as well as under 'Gracián' in Horn 2000, II, 960. Emmens 1969, 102, 111, used the word 'zedeleessen'. He apparently thought of Gracián as a non-descript moralist, as he overlooked his Stoicism, like that of Houbraken, as well as the deism of the latter.
- 78 With respect to the Stoic deism (or deistic Stoicism) of *De grootte schouburgh*, see Horn 2000, I, 68, 330-339. On the Stoic leanings of Houbraken's emblem book of 1714, which was published posthumously, see A. Houbraken, *Stichtelyke zinnebeelden; gepast op deugden en ondeugden, in LVII tafereelen*, Amsterdam 1723 and 1729, passim and Horn 2000, I, 68-70.
- 79 For instance, Houbraken absorbed the popular wisdom of Jacob Cats. See Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. I, 107; Vol. II, 171; Vol. III, 169 for mention of Cats himself, and the index of Horn 2000, II, 953 for many instances of his assimilated thought.
- 80 The most contentious issue is the role of topoi. Horn 2000, 157-160 argued that topoi are a relatively incidental aspect of *De Grootte Schouburgh*. For a stinging rebuttal, see H.-J. Raupp, 'Review of H.J. Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*', *Sehepunkte* 2 (2002), no. 11 (www.sehepunkte.historicum.net/2002/11/9070288664.html), who accuses me of reprehensibly ignoring the tradition of humanistic biography. Houbraken was not remotely a humanist, however. Though he may credit his immediate source for a given anecdote (as with Cornelis de Bie for Adriaen Brouwer's improbable stage performance as pirate), he shows no awareness of the kind of learned lineage adduced by Raupp. Also, if a silly tale can be shown to be a topos, it is a silly topos and no less of a biographical embarrassment.
- 81 For Houbraken's numerous sources, see Horn 2000, I, passim, esp. 61-93, with much of the material based

- on Hofstede de Groot 1893, 45-472. E. Boom, 'Review of H.J. Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*', *Oud Holland* 115 (2000/2001), 235-237 missed both the complexity and sources.
- 82 This is argued (though with insufficient clarity) in Horn 2000, I, 67, 167, 177-178, 373, 437-441 and II, 725, n. 2-124 and summarized in Horn 2006, 255-256.
- 83 Houbraken's seminal interest in *Gekruiste Christus* (Crucified Christ) of 1683 by Antoneus Bynaeas (1654-1698) was first remarked on by Hecht 2006, 273. For this and other such connections, see Horn 2000, I, 50-54, 425-428, 458-481 passim, summarized in Horn 2006, 258-260.
- 84 A. Houbraken, *Verzameling van uitgelezen keurstoffen; handelende over den godsdienst, natuur- schilder- teken-oudheid- redeneer en dichtkunde*, Amsterdam 1713 [1712], 4: 'men moet geen kwanzuizen maken; maar van alles dat men maakt Reden geven, waarom dat men het gemaakt heeft, of anders niet maken. En dat men zich anders de valsche Denkbeelden hielp styven, en voortplanten, enz.' The passage is cited in the original Dutch by Roscam Abbing 1994, 17-18 and 1999, 221, and in English translation by Horn 2000, 51.
- 85 Houbraken 1719, 164, 254, 255.
- 86 For an overview of the theoretical digressions of *De groote schouburgh* and their seemingly arbitrary placement, see Horn 2000, I, 404-407. J.C. Weyerman, *De levens-beschryvingen der Nederlandsche konst-schilders en konst-schilderessen, met een uytbreying over de schilder-konst der Ouden*, 3 vols., The Hague 1729, I, 11 already complained about being entrapped by snarls of histories (not 'stories'), having no understanding of what Houbraken was about. See Emmens 1968, 101.
- 87 Horn 2000, I, 50, 468-472 and Horn 2006, 251-268. P. Angel, *Lof der schilderkonst*, Leiden 1642, 47-48 admires the gestures and expressions in Rembrandt's '*Simsons-Bruyloft*' (*Samson Posing the Riddle to the Wedding Guests*, 1638, Dresden, Gemäldegalerie), but it is a mere ripple compared to Houbraken's later wave of enthusiasm. Nor does Houbraken mention Angel (1616-1683) in this connection.
- 88 Houbraken explicitly links human physiognomy and reasoned religion in the treatise, based on Charles le Brun (1690-1680), with which he prefaced his 1712 sequel to *Philaléthes Brieven* (cf. note 67 above). See Horn 2000, I, 56-57 and Horn 2006, 262, esp. n. 79. The endless title of this work reads: *General guidelines to religion torn down, and reconstructed on firm ground with a discourse on the passions and fixed characteristics in man's features, and how there is to be extracted from this the pure knowledge of a Supreme Being, the only one true ground for religion*.
- 89 Horn 2000, I, 443-446.
- 90 Horn 2000, I, 367-370, 446-450. When *Inleyding* 87 spells out his hierarchy of genres, Van Hoogstraten places still life at the bottom, serious histories at the top, and everything else (including mindless histories) in between. Curiously, however, he does not mention portraiture. We have to look elsewhere (*Inleyding* 176) to discover that he associated animated portraits with histories.
- 91 Whereas Emmens 1968, 101-111 was fixated on Houbraken as a dogmatic classicist, a reassessment in B. Cornelis, 'A Reassessment of Arnold Houbraken's *Groote Schouburgh*', *Simiolus* 24 (1995), 163-180: 180 proposed that, barring histories, Houbraken liked all genres about equally. P. Hecht, 'Browsing in Houbraken: Developing a Fancy for an Underestimated Author', *Simiolus*, 24/2-3 (1996), 259-274: 259-260 followed suit, with Houbraken's classicism superimposed on his otherwise catholic tastes. For a closer analysis of Houbraken's theory of genres, see Horn 2000, I, 443-454 and, implicitly, 432-433 and 498-530. For this theory as related to what the biographer does or does not discuss in *De groote schouburgh*, see Horn 2000, I, 585-589.
- 92 See Horn 2006, 257-260 for a summary of all the relevant passages in *Philaléthes brieven*, *De groote schouburgh*, and Horn 2000.
- 93 Houbraken 1718, 261-262, 267-268. See also Horn 2000, I, 463, 467 and Horn 2006, 472-473, following Emmens 1979 (1968), 88-93, 101-111 passim, who in turn owed much to S. Slive, *Rembrandt and His Critics*.

- 1630-1730, The Hague 1953. For the same sentiments, though only implicitly directed at Rembrandt, see the slightly earlier art theory of Jan de Bisschop, cited by Emmens 1968, 71-72.
- 94 See Horn 2000, I, 450-453. E.J. Walford, *Jacob van Ruysdael and the Perception of Landscape*, New Haven 1991, 30, 213, n. 5, argues that, according to Houbraken, both landscapes and still lifes are 'better able to reflect the ingenuity of the Creator' to the degree that 'they are naturalistically rendered.' That proposition is dead wrong as far as still life is concerned (unless we are dealing with flowers or write 'Creator' with a lower-case 'c').
- 95 We have seen that *Inleyding* 87 lists flower pieces with still lifes. With respect to Houbraken, see Horn 2000, I, 433, 589, 632-633.
- 96 For Houbraken's deistic dislike of *vanitas* pictures, see Horn 2000, I, 252-253, 453.
- 97 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. III, 137-138: 'Myn Meester S. v. Hoogstraten bezat een groot verstant, in by na alle zaken; inzonderheid verstont hy de grontreegels der Konst, zoo volkomen in allen deelen, dat ik niet geloof dat 'er iemant na hem dezelve beter verstaan heeft: maar, hy was daarom geen hoogvlieger in de behandeling van de zelve. In tegendeel heeftmen gezien dat anderen die min dan een gemeen verstant bezaten, groote vernuftelingen te boven streefden.'
- 98 Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. III, 138-139: 'En dit verhaalde die goede oude Man, met zulk een ernstig wezen, dat zy verzet stonden over deszelfs onnoozelheid, geloovende hy voor waarheid, 't geen een potsige wagenaar hem, om de klugt, op de mouw gespelt had.' Houbraken says he learned about the incident from Gerard Hoet I (1648-1733), who repeatedly served as his source of information about Utrecht painters.
- 99 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. III, 139: 'De reden waarom de verstandigste onder de Konstoeffenaren, en die in Historykunde, Oudheden, en andere wetenschappen ervaren zyn, dikwils by andere die min wetenschappen bezitten, in Konst van schilderen te kort schieten: komt daar van daan, dat de zelve uit hoofde van hun veel weten, met menigerhande en vershillige denkbeelden bezet zyn die hen teffens vleijen, en tot de uitvoering sporen; waar door het gebeurt dat zy in geen van alle uitsteken; aangezien elk deel der Konst een geheel menschen leven alleen veeist, zoo men daar in boven alle anderen wil uitmunten. Ja dit gaat zoo veer, dat de bevinding ons heeft doen zien, dat een vernufteling, wiens geneigtheid onbepaald to alles zwiert, en zig tot geen bepaalde verkiesing van eenig byzonder deel der Konst zetten kan, veeltyds anderen, die alleen zig oeffenen in 't geringste van de Konst, niet te boven streven kan.'
- 100 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. III, 387.
- 101 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. III, 140: 'Niemand moet uit onze redenvoering verkeert besluiten, dat wy het verstant en bedrevenheid in allerhande kundigheden ondienstig agten, voor een Konstschilder; of dat niets het verstant eenig behulp zoude kunnen toebrengen. De twee voorbeelden aangehaald, toonen alleen dat het dus by wylen gebeurt; en is zulks geschiet om aan de vrage: *of de Schilders die een grooter verstant als anderen bezitten, altyd de grootste meesters in de Konst zyn?* voldoening te geven.'
- 102 See Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. III, 141: 'De bevinding heeft ons dit geleerd, en 't gaat wis; dat de grootste Schilderkonstoeffenaars, ook in verstand en wetenschappen hebben uitgemunt, en zig daar van op hun tyd bedient; 't geen zy hebben doen sien in hunne penceelwerken, daar de vernuftige vindingen, bespiegelingen en bygevoegde cieraden klare blyken geven, dat hun verheven geest, den aart, en grond der verbeelde zaken begreep, wanneer zy die door zinnebeelden en invoegselen wisten aan te duiden.'
- 103 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. III, 141-142. Houbraken's life of Rubens (Vol. I, 62-74) is relatively weak, but the biographer did grasp his brilliance.
- 104 Gerard de Lairese received one of the longest and most positive biographies of *De groote schouburgh*, as well as the most exhaustive description of any one decorative ensemble. See Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. III, 109-132, esp. 118-127.
- 105 As pointed out by W. Schulz, *Herman Saffleven, 1609-1685: Leben und Werke: Mit einem Kritischen Katalog*

- der Gemälde und Zeichnungen*, Berlin and New York 1982, 9 and Horn 2000, I, 441-442 and 558, Houbraken did not like all of Saftleven's landscapes equally. Horn missed the perceptive paragraph in Schulz, whereas Schulz had overlooked the pregnant Van Hoogstraten connection.
- 106 Again, see Houbraken 1718-721, Vol. III, 275-276 for this key quotation. However, once it is certain that Houbraken read Smallegange's translation of *El criticón*, other connections can be inferred. See Horn 2000, I, 39, 67, 167, 436-442, esp. 437.
- 107 For Van Uden, Both and Cuyt, see Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. I, 158-159, 249 and 1719, 115, as well as Horn 2000, I, 510-511.
- 108 Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. II, 156-157: 'Hy werd door eenen byzonder nayverenden Geest gedreven tegens de Konstenaren, niet als veelyds (dat verfoeilyk is) geschiet uit een opwellende drift van haat tegens de Persoonen en hunne blinkende voordeelen, maar uit een yverzigt, en om dat hy niet dulden konde dat ymand hem voorby streefde in de loopbaan van de Konst om de Eerlaurieren. Over zulks was 'er geen deel van de Konst, zoo anderen hem daar in schenen vooruit te willen draven, of hy volgde hem straks of de hielen. Gebouwen, Landschappen, onstuimige Zee, stille Wateren, Dieren, Bloemen, Fruit, en Stilleven (dat hy zo natuurlyk schilderde dat hy 'er velen door bedroog) en wat het ook wezen mogt, daar wist hy zig na te zetten en 't zig eigen te maken. Ik heb daar van nog overblyfzelen aan zyn huis gezien: daar een Appel, Peer, of Limoen in eenen schotelrak: ginder een muil, of schoen op een uitgehakt plankje geschildert, en geplaatst in een hoek van de Kamer of onder een stoel, als mede zoute gedroogde schollen, die op een gepluimuurt doek geschildert, en uitgesneden, hier of daar agter een deur aan een spyker ophingen, die zoo bedrieglyk geschildert waren, dat men zig ligt daar in zou hebben vergist, en die voor eigentlyke gedroogde schollen aangezien.' The inept translation in Horn 2000, I, 664, which has 'blackened' for 'gepluimuurt', was the work of an inexperienced assistant and reprehensibly overlooked by the author. Elsewhere (p. 666), 'houding', meaning 'color harmony', is confused with 'pose'. For still another 'howler', see G. Schwartz[z], 'Review of H.J. Horn, The Golden Age Revisited: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses', *De zeventiende eeuw* 18 (2002), 230-232: 230.
- 109 Cf. Brusati 1995, 7-8. As she mentions, Van Mander advised budding artists to 'embrace' sundry genres. That is not the same thing as telling them that they should strive to excel in all of them.
- 110 It is a kind of obtuseness that we encounter elsewhere in *De groote schouburgh*, when Houbraken 1718-1721, Vol. III, 16-17 takes Jan Steen's *Wedding of Tobias* for a genre piece because he cannot imagine that an artist whom he admires for his superior grasp of the passions, could have been oblivious of decorum.
- 111 It is tempting to assume that if Houbraken bothered to describe the works, he must also have admired them. See, for instance, L. de Vries, *Gerard de Lairese: An Artist between Stage and Studio*, Amsterdam 1998, 83, n. 22.
- 112 Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 239.
- 113 Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 157-158: 'K moet den Lezer om myn gezegde te bevestigen verhalen hoe hy zig door dusdanig iets door zyn penceel te malen zig by den Keizer en 't gansche Hof berugt maakte. Als hy op den 6 van Oegtsmaand 1651 aan 't Hof te Weenen stalen van zyn Konst deed zien, was de Keizer, de Keizerin, de Ongense Koning, en Aardsbisschop daar tegenwoordig. Dit bestond in drie stukken. 'T eerste een Edelmans pourtret, het tweede een doornekrooning van Christus; 't geen zy alle ten hoogsten prezen; maar inzonderheid als het derde stuk (zynde een Stilleven) verthoont werd, toonde zig de Keizer daar op verliefte te wezen, die hetzelfde lang bezag, dog echter zig bedrogen vond, en daar op zeide: *Dit ist der eerste Maler die mir betrogen heeft*. En liet hem voorts aanzeggen: *Dat hy tot straf voor dat bedrog dat stuk niet zou wederom krygen, maar hy het voor altyd wilde bewaren, en in waarde houden*.'
- 114 Michiel Roscam Abbing has kindly pointed out to me that Houbraken's 'account must be in part based on a lost, but then [in 1719] still known letter that the painter had sent in 1651 from Vienna.' Curiously, Hou-

braken does not mention this letter in his account of Van Hoogstraten's Viennese triumph but, in passing, in his *Life of Willem Ossenbeeck*. See Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 170.

- 115 See, for instance, Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 75 in connection with the alleged theft by a dealer named Jan de Wet of a suitcase full of 'models, drawings and sketches' by Philips Wouwerman (1619-1668).
- 116 Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 158 and Horn 2000, I, 665-666: 'En schoon 't schilderen van diergelyke dingen, in dien tyd goed voordeel aanbragt, zoo had hy te grooten geest, om zig daar meê op te houden, maar maakte voornamentlyk zyn werk van Pourtretten, Historien and Perspectiven in Kamers (waar toe dan een gat in den muur buiten het vertrek om door te zien gemaakt werd) te schilderen. Ik heb 'er verscheiden gezien, die in een klein vertrek geschildert, een geheel paleis, met overwelfde bogen, en Galeryen, onderschraagt van marmere kolommen vertoonden.' 'Primarily' is a key word here. Van Hoogstraten did not come close to swearing off *trompe-l'oeils* after his Vienna audience.
- 117 Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 158: 'Hy had een prysseylike behandeling in zyn pourtretten, en was gelukkig in het geven van een kennelyke gelykenis, als inzonderheid blykt aan het laatste stuk van de Munters binnen Dordrecht, dat in dien tyd, als ik by hem leerde, geschildert is, die ik alle gekent heb, en waar van sommige nog leven.'
- 118 Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 159-159: 'Wat zyne Historien aanbelangt, die zyn doorgaans prysseylyk, welstandig, en van een goede houding, en de konstkenneren hebben'er nooit iets tegen gehad, als dat de kleuren, in de kleederen inzonderheid, te enkel en onvermengt gebruikt zyn, en hy in de laaste jaren van zyn leven, om onverstandigen tot zyn voordeel te vleyen, somstydys dingen in zyn stukken gebragt heeft die hy in zyn Boek van de gronden der Schilderkonst wraakt.'
- 119 Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 159: 'Wie is 'er zonder gebreken? ja de beroemste Meesters, zelfs onder de eerste Italianen, hebben hun feilen gehad.'
- 120 Examples are Joost van Geel (1631-1688: Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. III; 51), Johan Starrenberg (active c. 1681: Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. III, 310-311), Jacob Campo Weyerman (Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. III, 52) and Jan van Nickelen (1656-1721: Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. III, 265-267).
- 121 Cf. Brusati 1995, passim, esp. xxv-xxvi, 7-9, 87.
- 122 See Horn 2000, I, 373-381. The *Life of Govert Flinck* (1615-1660), as related in Houbraken 1718-1721, vol. II, 21-27, best illustrates this point.
- 123 See Horn 2000, I, 340-403, esp. 367-372, 401-403, 436-439.



APPENDIX

Arnold Houbraken's references to Samuel van Hoogstraten and his 'Introduction to the Academy of Painting'

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY HENDRIK J. HORN

Note to the reader

This Appendix list the references to Samuel van Hoogstraten in Arnold Houbraken's *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols, Amsterdam 1718-1721 and includes one related remark from Houbraken's *Philaléthes brieven, verhandelende verscheide schriftuurlyke, natuur- en outhaidkundige nutte aanmerkingen*, Amsterdam n.d. [1712]. Readers needing Houbraken's Dutch can consult the second, 1753 edition of *De groote schouburgh* online. Posted by the digitale bibliotheek voor de Nederlandse letteren (www.dbnl.nl) in 2009, the fully indexed site features both a facsimile and a modern transcription (URL: http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/houbo05groo01_01/. Accessed March 1, 2013).

I: 9-10 (EXCERPT FROM THE INTRODUCTION)

It was a strange notion of my master Samuel van Hoogstraten to dedicate his tragedy *Dieryk and Dorothe, or the Salvation of Dordrecht* to Envy with these words: 'But because, to follow common practice, I seem required to choose some patron, well then, I offer these verses to the infuriated and fierce teeth of famished Envy.' [It is] truly a daring undertaking to taunt envy and challenge it. We would sooner emulate his unsurpassed art lessons than such boldness. For envy strikes soon enough and unprovoked, as do meddlers, without their opinion being asked for.

I:15 (EXCERPT FROM THE INTRODUCTION)

At the commencement of this work we had neither thought nor intended to bring female artists onto the stage, or to insert glass painters in my book next to others, but we decided to do so for various reasons.

I. Because we saw that we were preceded in this by Van Mander, who compiled a whole list of ingenious women, and who calls glass painters and painters in egg, glue and water paints, painters as well. As does Samuel van Hoogstraten, seeing that the same [works in lesser media] are also made with the help or use of the brush.

I:90 (FOOTNOTE TO A THEORETICAL DIGRESSION ON LETTING THE WORK OF ART SPEAK FOR ITSELF)

* Samuel van Hoogstraten, on page 332 of his ninth book on the *Art of Painting*, is of one mind with Van Mander about this [the lines drawn by Apelles and Protogenes]. They do not believe that these can have been mere straightly-drawn lines or stripes, which a calligrapher can generally draw by hand better than the best painter, but some contours of arms or legs, or something of the kind. Hoogstraten bolsters his conviction with the testimony of Pliny, who says 'that those who understood the art of painting, were greatly surprised by [this] and were amazed,' from which may be concluded that the artful strokes were not straight lines and that the ancient authors did not convey the right meaning. It happens more often when the inexperienced write about matters that they do not understand, that they judge them as the blind do colors.

I:160 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF DIRK VAN HOOGSTRATEN)

The place where it [the illness of Dirk van Hoogstraten] happened escapes my recollection (because many years have passed since my master Samuel van Hoogstraten, his son, told me about it).

I:161-162 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF DIRK VAN HOOGSTRATEN)

I have seen works by him that are well drawn and also naturally painted. Also, it is clear from the incident that my master Samuel van Hoogstraten relates in his *Introduction to the Academy of Painting*, on page 107 [p. 170; cf. II:44-45 below], that he was able to imitate objects naturally with his brush.

The year of his death became apparent to me from a marginal note on a drawing that my master Samuel van Hoogstraten had sketched after his deceased father. Which drawing is still preserved with the *Heer* David van Hoogstraten, well enough known for his poetry, in remembrance of his grandfather, in his art book with the portraits of old and new men rich in intellect.

I:166-168 (OPENING EXCERPT FROM A SHORT THEORETICAL DIGRESSION ON WORKING QUICKLY OR SLOWLY)

We have made these preparations to help commemorate three well-known combatants with the brush, namely [François van] Knibbergen, [Jan] Van Goyen (about whom we will speak more

amply soon) and [Jan] Porcellis. These had undertaken a wager with one another to each paint a piece while the sun was shining, as Hoogstraten relates in his sixth book of the *Academy of the Art of Painting*. [Here follows the remainder of a two-page quotation from Van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding*, pp. 237-238.]

I: 293-294 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF ERASMUS QUELLINUS)

To take for boasting everything that the ancients have written in praise of the same [their marble statues] and to elevate the art of [Erasmus] Quellinus so high that nothing of what has made the ancient artists famous can approach it, seems to me to tend to bragging. If [Cornelis] De Bie had said that the art works of Quellinus far exceeded the art and power of a painting, believed authentic, that St. Luke painted after the Holy Mary, because it could not match his [works], it would be easier to believe; for it has happened that a connoisseur was shown a scene painted by Saint Luke (so people claimed), who studying the same attentively, finally said: 'Luke, Luke! how fortunate you are to be dead. For if you were to live today and had to make your living with painting, you would barely earn dry bread.'

When my master Samuel van Hoogstraten was at the court in Vienna, the aforementioned piece by Saint Luke was so worn by time that it had lost almost all of its power, for which reason Emperor Ferdinand had it copied. But why argue? Our writer is a poet, and the Latin saying of Horace applies here:

... *Painters and poets*
Have equal power to dare anything.

I:317 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF MARGARITA GODEWYK)

The aforementioned [Matthys] Balen has also graced his book on the history of Dordrecht with a portrait of that beautiful pearl (as she herself made it after life). Below which one sees the following inscription, rhymed by the *Heer* Samuel van Hoogstraten:

Thus Margarita painted her outer appearance,
 As if she stood before us. But to reconstruct her spirit,
 In languages, in art[,] in knowledge, and in piety,
 Even the lifetime of Nestor would prove too short.

I:354 (INTRODUCTION TO THE LIFE OF WILLEM VAN DE VELDE)

How many came to art by diverse ways and coincidences was indicated by Van Mander, and after him Samuel van Hoogstraten, with various remarkable examples, which number [includes] the artful drawer of ships, Willem van de Velde.

I:363 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF PIETER VAN LAER, KNOWN AS BAMBOCCIO)

Having arrived at his sixtieth year, he became plagued by a congested chest, which extinguished his courage. The melancholy to which he surrendered himself worsened his ailment, so that, not wanting to live any longer, he drowned himself in a well. Samuel van Hoogstraten seems to confirm this unambiguously when on page 311 of his book he says ‘that Francesco Fiamingo [or François Dequesnoy], confounded by Bernini, went despondently, by means of a noose, to the house of the spirits, where Bamboccio, it was said, later went to search for him.’

I:363-364 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF PIETER VAN LAER)

I do not know the precise time of his birth, but a few things that I do know cause me to decide that he was born early in the sixteenth [sic: seventeenth] century, for he lived to his sixtieth year, and in the year 1675, when Samuel van Hoogstraten wrote his book on painting, he was already dead, as is clear from what was just cited.

II:3 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF GERARD DOU)

What further concerns our Gerard Dou, he painted everything with the greatest resignation and patience after life through a frame stretched with a grid of threads, an aid for those who do not trust themselves to draw freehand. But this crutch is banished by everyone (because people habituated themselves to it, out of reluctance to do a lot of drawing), which is why my master Hoogstraten even condemned the use of a compass (except where necessary, as with buildings), saying: ‘One should habituate the eye to measuring.’

II:41 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF PIETER VAN DER VAES, KNOWN AS PETER LELY)

Beside them [Gonzalo Coques and David Ryckaert], the great Lely appears on Stage. First England and then The Hague wanted to claim the honor of his birth. Samuel van Hoogstraten calls him the *Gelderschen Lely*. There is no need now to start a blind quarrel over him, like that over Homer, seeing that, aided by the diligence of the painter Mattheus Terwesten, I was able to discover some of his family members, who have had the kindness ... to send me a missive with a precise indication of his dates of birth and death, from which we learned that Pieter van der Vaes, named Lely, was born in Soest, in Westphalia, on the 14th of autumn month [September] 1618.

II:45 (NOTE TO A POEM DEDICATED TO PETER LELY BY JOHANNES VOLLENHOVE)

* ... The case which Samuel van Hoogstraten relates on page 170 of his *Book on Painting*, deserves no less attention: 'It happened,' said he, 'that my father Theodoor painted a goat after life in a Bacchanal, which I, still being very young, restrained for him with the help of ropes and cords to keep her in the desired position, which I did to my utmost with great labor. But the painted goat now being almost done, and my father putting the work, which was fairly large, a little out of reach to look at it himself from a distance, it happened that the goat also became aware of the painted one, causing her to burst out as if erupting with rage. Breaking the ropes and throwing me to the ground, she flew with such violence against the horns of her painted sister that she tore the canvas and ruined the painting, to the regret of he who had so laudably demonstrated his industry in it.'

II:61 (EXCERPT FROM A THEORETICAL DIGRESSION ON ANCIENT MILITARY ENSIGNS)

The Trojans carried a swine on their ensigns.

The ancient Goths a female Bear.

The Alani, when they overran Spain, a cat.

The Scythians, dragons and other horrible monsters, and the Romans under Trajan, the same. I have no evidence for this other than that Franciscus Junius, Samuel van Hoogstraten, Willem Goeree and others have thus prompted me, without closer qualification. Nevertheless I tell myself that they took this over from writers of olden times, seeing that they would never have fabricated it.

II:68 (EXCERPT FROM THE SAME LONG DIGRESSION)

And if you wish to know the colors of the banners [discussed by Willem Goeree in his *Jewish Histories*], to be able to distinguish them from the others, Samuel van Hoogstraten did research on this on page 156 of his *Visible World*.

II:121-122 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF JOHANNES VAN DER BEECK, KNOWN AS TORRENTIUS)

Certainly there is no one in whom reason resides and fear of God lives who will not have an aversion to such [obscene subject matter]. And should it happen that it is praised by some, such praise conveys nothing but the corrupt nature of he who praises. In Rome there was a scandalous scene with Meleager and Atalanta by Parrhasius, but was it therefore praised by all? Certainly not. My master Samuel van Hoogstraten said, 'I am ashamed to describe the same.' In one word,

such displays, whether shown on stage or in a painting, are claws, as they dig up the root of the weed of sin. This is why the mentioned Hoogstraten, on page 176 of his fifth book of *The Introduction to the Academy of Painting*, has Thalia say: ‘Restrain yourselves, oh noble spirits, from showing the scandalous lasciviousness of Tiberius on the Isle of Capri in your pictures. Also, do not let the patriarch Noah lie shamelessly naked, from which Shem and Japheth avert their faces. For those who are inclined to such shameful things, deserve the curse as much as Ham did.’

I also remember that while I was living with him [Van Hoogstraten] to study art, the *Love Letters* [*Ars Amatoria*] by Naso [Ovid], translated by A[braham]. Valentyn, came out in print, and that, out of love of reading, I asked to borrow them, but got as answer: ‘That is not suitable. The poet was banished to Pontus for it, and the translator should therefore be banished to the workhouse forever, because there are things in it that were better left unspoken, or covered up, than revealed, so that those who did not know about them would never have been put to the test, to the ruin of lascivious and immoral youth.’

II:136 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF HERCULES SEGHERS)

We follow this with the unfortunate Hercules Seghers, whose time of birth we do not know, but because Samuel van Hoogstraten mentions in his Calliope [p. 312] that he flowered or, sooner, withered in his [S.v.H’s] first green years, it seemed fitting to us to bring him on stage before the mentioned Hoogstraten.

II:138 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF HERCULES SEGHERS)

Hoogstraten observed that it came to pass as he had predicted, because people later paid sixteen ducats for each print, and even then it took a stroke of luck to obtain an impression. What can I say? He who has Fortune as stepmother is in bad trouble, and it has happened more often that those who sowed with diligence, never got to reap the harvest.

II:155-168 (THE COMPLETE LIFE OF SAMUEL VAN HOOGSTRATEN)¹

If, in emulation of the example of the ancient authors, one wishes to render ineradicable the memory of men who have achieved something especially above the ordinary during their lifetime, and bind them to eternity by means of pen and printing press, the most deserving are those who worked out something in the service and for use of society by arms or the art of the pen. Among the latter may be counted Samuel van Hoogstraten, painter and writer of the book on painting, the *Visible World*. And if my pen is more expansive in his life’s description than that of others, one should blame the obligation that I have carried in my bosom since I had the honor of his instruction in art, of which I will now acquit myself, as I am not ashamed to say that he was my teacher and that I owe the foundation of everything I know about art to him.

He was born in Dordrecht in the year 1627. Whether he had other teachers in his early

years beside his father, I do not know, but I do [know] that he also studied art with Rembrandt van Rijn (because on page 257 of his book on the art of painting he calls him his 'second Master after the death of his father Theodoor') whose way of painting he adhered to for some time but dropped and in the end took up an entirely different way of painting. [He] also took to painting portraits, in which he made happy progress both in The Hague, where he lived for some years, and in Dordrecht. And just as Pictura coddled him with favor and profit, so the goddess of poetry seduced him on the other side with glory. Both seemed to be equally kindly disposed to him, just as he requited the love of the first without neglecting the latter. To the first he dedicated his best hours and to the second his recreation, as he indicates clearly in his preface to his booklet *Beautiful Roselijm*, printed in 1650. 'Here I bring Roselijm onto the stage, although it is dangerous to submit her beauty to the judgment of one and all. The great poet, who polished his morning songs all day long, did not escape censure. How should I, who, having served another goddess, could only start to think about Roselijm while removing my work clothes, be exempt?' And, a little further down: 'That is why I have so little time, which may not please the most critical among you, to devote to this. Poetry is a sister of my goddess Pictura, and I have therefore made changes in working method but not in thought, pondering and considering the diverse affects and passions of people.'

Driven by an unusually envious spirit, he set himself against other artists, not as it often happens (which is contemptible) as a surging outburst of hatred against their person and glittering fortune, but out of ambition and because he could not bear to have anyone pull ahead of him on the race track of art leading to the laurels of honor. As such there was no aspect of art in which others would appear to try to pull ahead, or he at once followed on their heels. Buildings, landscapes, tempestuous seas, calm waters, animals, flowers, fruit, and still life (which he painted so naturally that many were fooled), whatever it happened to be, he was able to apply himself to it and master it. I have seen remains of this still at his house, there an apple, pear or lemon in a rack for saucers; yonder a slipper or a shoe painted on a carved board and placed in the corner of a room or under a chair, along with dried salted flounders painted onto a grounded canvas and cut out, and hung on a nail somewhere behind a door, so that you could easily be mistaken and take it for an actual dried flounder. To confirm my claim I must relate to the reader how by painting something of this kind with his brush, he gained renown with the Emperor and his entire court. When on the 6th of harvest month [August] 1651 he showed samples of his art, the Emperor, Empress, King of Hungary, and Archbishop were present. They consisted of three pieces. The first [was] a portrait of a nobleman, the second a *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, which they all praised to the skies. But especially when the third piece (being a still life) was shown, the Emperor, letting on that he was enamored of it, looked at the same for a long time but found himself deceived and said about this: 'This is the first painter to have fooled me.' And then had him notified 'that as punishment for that deceit, he would not get that piece back, since he wished to keep it forever and treasure it.' And though painting in this way brought great advantage in those days, he had too elevated a spirit to occupy himself with them, but his work primarily consisted of portraits, histories and perspectives in chambers (for which a hole was made outside the room

to see through). I have seen diverse ones which, though painted in a small room, showed an entire palace, with vaulted arches and galleries supported by marble columns. He had a praiseworthy handling in his portraits and was fortunate in achieving a recognizable likeness, as is especially clear from his last piece of the Masters of the Mint of Dordrecht, which he painted at the time that I studied with him, whom I all knew and some of whom are still alive. In addition it was his practice to lay the paint on thickly, a way of working by which the works long retain their full power and color. As far as his histories are concerned, these are generally praiseworthy, well arranged and with good harmony of colors, and the connoisseurs of art never had anything against them but that the colors, especially in the fabrics, were used too locally and unmixed and that in the last years of his life, to court the ignorant to his advantage, he sometimes introduced things to his works that he had denounced in his book on the foundations of the art of painting. Who is without shortcomings? Yes, the most famous masters, even among the first Italians, had their failings. But our pen has already got ahead of things. First our pen has to accompany our Batavian (for such was his *Bent* name) to Rome and see him return to his fatherland from Vienna with an imperial gift adding lustre to his art, before we can join the links of his life's story. 'He who turns back half way' (the saying goes) 'does not wander.'

The world exists in constant change, and we are driven by the same impulse. Yet experience has taught us that most people live by change and derive pleasure from it. This humor also crept up on our Batavian, so he decided to undertake a journey to Rome. People say that he had been struck by love, and that he suppressed this passion by following his wanderlust. Whatever may be the case, he prepared himself and commenced the journey from Dordrecht on the 16th of bloom month [May] of 1651. His poetic pen has described the itinerary to Vienna, in Austria, in verse. But we wish to accompany him in verse only to outside the Bishopric [of Utrecht], so as not to stray too far from home base. He who would like to continue can follow the verse in his *Thalia* or fifth book of his *Visible World*, on page 201. This is how he begins:

Just as the Crane, in the flower of time,
 Follows the Sun and stirs its fleet feathers,
 So I did as well. I left my city,
 To live for a while among far-away strangers.
 I mounted a horse, armed with courage,
 No less than with sword and pistols,
 And went travelling. I was thrice detained
 And looking back, I said: why do I roam?
 Was the fatherland not dear enough to me?
 Where could one contemplate in greater comfort?
 Why is my soul thus saddened? and my spirit
 So deeply disturbed. Why do my powers fail me?
 The nightingale answered: Come, yes come,
 And take pleasure in meadows and gardens.

Freedom is a worthy kingdom.
 Seek her out now, in far away lands.
 My city, out of yearning, I gave the last greeting.
 I turned the bridle and compelled my charger with spurs.
 It snorted and foamed, and ran, fleet of foot,
 Along dyke and valley, through meadow and cornfield,
 To Utrecht, the widely renowned bishopric.
 On to the Veluwe, in shifting gusts,
 In storm after storm, accompanied by lightning,
 But soon sweetened by the beautiful days of May.
 Thus I rode etc.

The longing to see Italy, the cabinet of ancient sculpture and painting, stayed with him, however, and neither the favor of Emperor Ferdinand III, nor the medal he bestowed, nor the links of the eightfold golden chain were strong enough to keep him from his intention or to halt his journey to Rome. There (I see him before me) he admires with mouth agape the most splendid Palaces of the Farnese, Ludovici, Montaldo, Oldobrandini and many others, looking at the matchless marble statues and paintings by Raphael, Michelangelo, Parmigianino, Titian, Carracci, Guido [Reni], Paulo Veronese and Lanfranco, and in the face of all that beauty he does not know (he who has choice knows fear) which to select as the most artful.

After this he also went on a journey to England, about which voyage the notable poet Heyman Dullaert, who also painted well like him, wrote these lines:

To the Wind

Aye, transport rapidly a hero of radiant art,
 Accustomed to painting in the exalted light of a ruler's favor,
 To where requisite fortune awaits him with open arms
 So that he whose brush granted eternal life
 To so many others, [and] still has to give to many more,
 Is not violated by Death through shipwreck.

He was also remembered by his friend Abraham van Groeningen, a fine intellect, who wished him luck on his journey in a clever sonnet. He returned to his fatherland with honor and profit, the goal of artists, to spend the rest of his days in the practice of art and writing, averse to further commotion and at peace with his lot. Just as he was then busy completing his two books, the *Visible [World]*, which was printed, and *Invisible World*.⁸ When I was placed under his supervision; I was to have had the honor of joining him in etching the plates of his book on the art of painting, had not another disciple, who contested that advantage with me, prevented it from materializing, after I had made a print, which is on page 269, as a sample.

In my time he rarely went to visit anyone other than the gentlemen Cornelis Pompe van Meerdervoort, Knight and Chief Bailiff of the city of Dordrecht, and Willem van Blijenbergh, Alderman (who often visited him as well and esteemed him for his knowledge), as well as the Masters of the Mint, but that was *ex officio*, as people say, since he was Warden of the Dutch Mint.

His lessons of instruction, or rules of art, rested on solid ground. His instructions were always accompanied by examples, his teaching by restraint and seriousness, and his expressions were comprehensible. And if his intention was not understood at once, he had the patience to clarify it with gestures. It has happened that one of his disciples showed him a sketch of his composition (as everyone had to do every week) but had paid little attention to the correct workings of the figures, which he had put down any old way. At once it was being said, 'Read the text,' and asked, 'Is that supposed to be the figure that says this?' If they then answered 'yes', he usually said: 'Imagine that I am that other person, to whom you have to say this; say it to me.' If they then declaimed the words according to the letter of the text, without emotion, with the hands in the pockets, or like statues, it was his saying: 'Pockets are made so that money being carried will not slip through the fingers,' and he at once got up from his place and had the disciple sit there, saying: 'Now I will demonstrate; watch the gestures, way of standing and inclination of the body as I speak,' and demonstrated it (as the saying goes) with a fine touch. It happened that I showed him a working sketch for a scriptural subject in which I had filled in the background with several additions as embellishment, thinking that I had really gone out of my way with this. But my trousers were not as new as I imagined, for he first asked (pointing at the addition): 'What is that supposed to mean?' I answered, 'I did that for appearances' sake.' Whereupon he said to me, 'one must not do things for appearances, but have a reason for everything one makes and why one makes it, or else not make it.' It was also his habit, if we did something that displeased him, to indicate the same through circumstances, sayings, or some story. It happened (as I was also attending church discussions or gatherings at that time) that through carelessness I left the topic to be discussed the following Sunday, written on a piece of paper, on the shelf of my easel instead of putting it away elsewhere. My master picked it up and read the contents, which were as follows: 'If Adam's business [the Fall] was a contingent business or one preordained by God.' He put it back down. But before he left me he said: 'When I was young I did the same, and thought, it is time well-spent. But when I became wiser, I discovered it was time wasted.'

He was generally of a steady and quiet spirit, and if at times something occurred among his disciples that annoyed him, or if they played some prank, as the young are sometimes wont to do, he did not lash out at them but knew how to temper the sour of his reproaches with the sweetness of his calm and accommodating nature. One instance, may it not rue you, reader, I must here relate as an example. I was his oldest pupil among his disciples at the time, situated above his studio, the others in a room below, above the central court, where we often talked to each other, I from above and they from below, when he had gone out. Now and then they begged for a bunch of muscatel grapes, to which I could help them as the vines had grown to above the attic window. This I could not do carefully enough or, because of the falling of loose grapes and

leaves, it was found out by the maid and reported to her master, who subsequently came to me and said: that he could tell that were inclined to be together and that by calling to them from the window, I might displease the neighbors, as if their freedom were under surveillance (without once mentioning the grapes) which is why he thought it advisable to have me sit with them [the other pupils], which happened. What to do now? The way to get at the grapes, whose muscatel taste still tickled our tongues, had thus been cut off, and the vine had too high a trunk to be able to reach it from the ground. As a consequence it was decided by common accord to tie a penknife to the top of the handle of a dust mop to reach the bunches and cut them off. The idea was sound but the stick too short, which therefore necessitated the use of an empty beer barrel to stand on, which I was assigned [to do] by drawing lots, with two others standing in their aprons on either side to catch without damage the bunches that descended and to collect the leaves, so that nothing would fall in the courtyard that might betray our work. This play proceeded in this fashion, but I, who, because of the rustling of the leaves, could not hear as well as those who stood below and who had already scattered at the approach of Hoogstraten before I noticed, was seen by him, still standing in position, through the panes of the kitchen. This I noticed and, leaving the stick there, I fled from the yard in all haste. Now our plan was discovered and each of us already feared the currycomb, but things turned out better than we imagined. After the passing of half an hour Hoogstraten came with the same stick, first to my buddies, then also to my room and, with the stick dragging behind him, went thrice around the easel at which I was sitting, without speaking. But (after he had stood behind me for a while) he called in my accomplices, displayed the stick with the penknife tied to the front, and said: 'What was the purpose of the tool? a penknife tied at right angles to a dust mop?' But none of us answered while we stood with our eyes turned to the ground, just like criminals in the place of Justice. Finally (after he had turned and examined the stick about six times where the penknife was tied) he began to say: 'See, this is a clever invention by whoever the inventor is? It would truly serve well to reach the grapes. If they hang a little [too] high, one could easily take an empty barrel to stand on. But you know what' (he continued), 'such a venture is fraught with danger, for the bottom of the barrel could easily collapse and the one standing on it break a leg or an arm. That is why (to prevent such accidents) I have decided to have a latch put on the outside of the door to prevent this,' which happened. Thus we got off easier than the fellow in the farce of the grape thief. Stated in one word, he punished with consideration and taught with wisdom.

After having left him and proceeding to practice art independently, after life, he no longer concerned himself with the instruction of disciples, nor even bothered much with painting but only, when it pleased him, adjusted some pieces that had remained in progress. For even then he was slowly learning to accept, from the complaint (or bodily ailment) that he had, that he would before long have to take the way of all flesh to eternity. He died in Dordrecht on the 19th of wine month [October] 1678, and his housewife Sara Balen followed him in the same year on the 21st of slaughter month [November]. His brother's son David van Hoogstraten wrote this in his memory about his portrait, which he himself had painted.

Thus Hoogstraten painted himself after life,
 But better still in such a series of paintings
 Full of art, which unshackle his name from mortality.
 Now the Maid of Dordrecht sheds her tears on his grave.

His brother François van Hoogstraten honored him with an elegy in which he introduced him speaking, with the intention of having it inscribed on a plaque and hung in the Minters' chapel, where he lies buried. But Envy hindered this. We may well count him among the fortunate painters of his century, since, favored by fortune, he mostly had the wind in his sails.

II:161 (FOOTNOTE TO THE LIFE OF SAMUEL VAN HOOGSTRATEN)

* Which [the *Invisible World*] still lies locked away in rolls until I have completed this elective task, when the final touches will be made, so as to bring them to light.

II:162 (FOOTNOTE TO THE LIFE OF SAMUEL VAN HOOGSTRATEN)

* *Provost*. Of these there are two, changing from year to year, who manage most of the business of the Mint, before whom disputes between masters, and between master and apprentices (or if miss-strikes should occur) are brought as if before aldermenn, [and] who pass judgment on this under the supervision of the Master Minter and two sworn witnesses.

II:163 (FOOTNOTE TO THE LIFE OF SAMUEL VAN HOOGSTRATEN)

* *Gestures*. To give his students a firmer understanding of the gestures and actions that ought to accompany an artful address, and to get them more used to them; he picked out the most competent of his disciples (as he lived in the front house, which has since been joined to the brewery of the *Oranjeboom* of Dordrecht, where he had the opportunity to store a complete theater in the spacious attic) and gave each of them a role in his or someone else's play, to which they were then allowed to invite their parents and close acquaintances as spectators to the performance, with regard to which Samuel van Hoogstraten served as a second [Petrus] Francius.

At times he also let his disciples show or perform a shadow dance to refresh their high-strung thoughts, serving not only for amusement but especially, through such a device, to have them get to know and understand the manifold changes and lengthening and shortening of the easily changing appearances of the shadows (which result from the proximity or remoteness of the light). Just as he shows the apparatus for this, as well as an illustrative print, on page 260 of *Melpomene* or the seventh book of the art of painting.

Such diversions are much more praiseworthy than those people seek with Bacchus. And one may rightly describe them with the saying, *Prodesse & Delectare*.

II:168-170 (THE LIFE OF JAN VAN HOOGSTRATEN)

His brother Johan, or Hans van Hoogstraten (for that is what he wished to be called), younger than he, was also active in art. I find his name imprinted on the list of the Saint Luke companions in art of Dordrecht for the year 1649. Together with his brother, he was at the court in Vienna, where he also died.

Commemorative Inscription on

JAN VAN HOOGSTRATEN,

In the gallery of the Church of the Cross in Vienna.

I had carried Art to the greatest heights,
 When a harpy pulled me down:
 Death, to rob me of fame,
 Ambushed my youth before my time.

A certain artistic sculptor in marble, a friend of Samuel van Hoogstraten, honored his grave with a marble infant, depicting the transience of human existence.

It was grievous for my master that such a promising shoot on the tree of art was torn off, and to be regretted that what the youth stood to gain from his gift (when at last able to apply his life to the improvement of art) was mowed down so inopportunistly. It pleases us to relate an amusing incident which happened to him on that account. Being in Vienna, he had begun to paint the denial of Peter. The impudent maid was completed. He lacked a suitable model for a timorous Peter. For this reason he went to the market place, where he found ruffraff, and said to one whom he judged might serve his needs, that he should follow him. The good man, hoping for kind alms, followed him to his house, but Jan van Hoogstraten (no matter how deficient he still was in the German language) indicated to him that he must follow right to his studio, which is what he did. But as soon as he saw the unusual equipment, here a skull and there a headless mannequin, he began to tremble and shake, totally distressed. And no matter how cordially he was treated and what handsome promises were made to him of being well paid if he would only sit down and let himself be painted, the beggar was deaf to it all. He looked with eagle's eyes how he might best slip away from there, seized his opportunity and jumped down the stairs, to the door, to escape. By accident Samuel van Hoogstraten enters, who stops him, while his brother Jan is running after him. The former, not knowing about this incident, enquires after the reason for such commotion. The beggar, in extreme distress, prayed that they might spare his life and let him go, as he had done nothing wrong. At this racket some people approached, who, after having heard about the business, helped convince the beggar to let himself be portrayed and instructed him so well that he finally agreed, though dragging his heels, and slowly, as the condemned climb up the ladder [of the scaffold] to be made Knights of the Hemp Rope.

They then got the beggar to sit down with much protest in such a pose as required for the sketch on the canvas. But he sat in such fear and indisposition that he might have been Saint Peter himself. And no matter what promises they later made to [get him to] sit again, he did not want to come, as he fantasized he had seen the devil and death.

One can see the portraits of both in Plate G., with that of Samuel van Hoogstraten above and that of his brother below, in addition to a portrait of Johannes Lingelbach to the right.

II:170 (FRAGMENT FOLLOWING ON THE LIFE OF WILLEM OSSENBEEK)

Also, in a letter written in Vienna on the 9th of harvest month [August] 1651, Samuel van Hoogstraten makes mention of a certain Luix (but what he achieved with his brush, I do not know) as follows: 'Here comes a thunderous rumor and new tidings. They send me notice of the arrival of Germany's greatest painter, Sandrart, who (so they say) seeks honor and glory with the Emperor, and seeks to knock the crown off the head of Luix, Court Painter to his Majesty, and to put down roots at the court.'

II:239-240 (EXCERPT FROM A THEORETICAL DIGRESSION ON TRIVIAL ART)

Even so, many have pursued the painting of trivialities to their advantage. I still remember that the painter Gerard Dou received, in addition to his negotiated fee, 25 guilders for the painting of no more than 25 wormholes in an old spinning wheel. What can I say about this? When my Master Samuel van Hoogstraten was at the Imperial court, there was also someone who made it his work to paint small portraits in watercolors, which he was able to adorn so charmingly for the court ladies, using beautiful colors, that they were crazy about them. Hoogstraten, who was outspoken enough, rubbed it in with that painter (when he happened to be alone with him) 'that all that he made could not be called art.' Who received as answer, after being shown a handful of gold from his purse, 'May that not be called art which produces this?' What can I say other than that it still happens today that people gape at trivialities or stiff precision that amount to nothing and overlook artworks that excel in invention, sure drawing and lively brushwork.

II: 254 (EXCERPT FROM A THEORETICAL DIGRESSION ON THE NEED TO FOLLOW TEXTS TO THE LETTER)

The wise men of old have introduced a remarkable saying which goes: 'It is better not to do something than to do it badly.' And the following story applies to this. My Master Samuel van Hoogstraten had as habit that he had his pupils make a weekly sketch, in their free time, of some historic incident (for which he supplied us with the subject). It happened that I showed him a working sketch for a scriptural subject in which, to fill out the background, I had invented some additions as embellishment, thinking that I had really outdone myself with this. But my trousers were not as new as I imagined, for he first asked (pointing at the addition): 'What is that sup-

posed to mean?' I answered, 'I did that for appearances' sake.' Whereupon he said to me, 'one must not do things for appearances, but have a reason for everything one makes and why one makes it, or else not make it.' Thus, instead of a 'well done,' I got a masterful scuff.

II:255 (EXCERPT FROM THE SAME DIGRESSION)

To continue, Hoogstraten was an exceptionally competent man to imprint the essentials of art upon his students, but he did not tolerate the slightest liberty that deviated from the fixed rules of art. If it happened that one or another deliberately added something to the historical text, imagining to demonstrate his inventiveness by this, he was at once taught 'that one should always strive to show truths, or otherwise one helps maintain and propegate false concepts.' He looked at something in which they had followed Rembrandt and De Lairese. And do you want to know what, reader? It was a depiction of the snake of paradise, which the first mentioned had depicted in a print, contrary to the letter of the text, from his stable, like the decorated dragons of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The second [had rendered the snake] as a monster with a woman's face. Whatever reason De Lairese may have had for this is no excuse. Yes it surprises me that a great light in art should deliberately have committed such a breach of the text, more after all than with Rembrandt, of whom it is known that he bound himself by no rules of art (no matter how widely approved) but took his own pleasure for his rule.

CLOSELY RELATED EXCERPT FROM HOUBRAKEN'S *PHILALETHES BRIEVEN, VERHANDELENDE VERSCHEIDE SCHRIFTUURLYKE, NATUUR- EN OUDHEIDKUNDIGE NUTTE AANMERKINGEN*, AMSTERDAM N.D. [1729 (first ed. 1712)], p. 4.

My master Samuel van Hoogstraten could hurt me for a lesser error. It happened that I had made a working sketch of a scriptural subject, for which I had invented some circumstance as embellishment to fill out the work, believing that I had really outdone myself with this. But my trousers were not as new as I imagined, for he first asked (pointing at the addition) 'What is that supposed to mean?' I answered, 'I did that for appearances' sake: whereupon he said to me, 'One must not do things for appearances, but have a reason for everything one makes, why one made it, or else not make it. And that one should always strive to show truths or that one would otherwise help bolster and transmit false concepts.' Just as we will show in our exposition on angels, of which the world at large has no concept unless one introduces the same to them depicted with wings on the shoulders, since they take nothing for angels than those that are winged, to which ineradicable notion painters have contributed substantially.

II:347 (EXCERPT FROM HOUBRAKEN'S EXCURSION ON THE *BENTVOGELS*, THE BAND OF DUTCH AND FLEMISH ARTISTS IN ROME)

'The *Bent*' (says Samuel van Hoogstraten) 'was instituted in the days of our forefathers for the refreshment of slumbering spirits. There they receive the new arrivals with inventive outfits and honor [them] with new names of powerful meaning. There they flush away care and conceited airs with sweet wine from Alba or cradle anew those who have not yet been properly swaddled.'

II:351-352 (EXCERPT FROM HOUBRAKEN'S LONG POEM ABOUT THE *BENTVOGELS*)

Gladiator (38) produces violence
 Braces himself on the wrestling field
 Against *Count of the Rhine* (39) and *Janizary* (40),
 Though he stood firm like a Swiss [guard],
 Because the alert *Batavian* (41)
 Joined in amidst the fierce shouting
 To quench the fire of war
 And to mediate in disputes.

(38) *Jakob de Baan*, portrait painter in Antwerp. (39) *Abraham Brueghel*, flower painter of Antwerp. (40) *Pieter Hofmans*, battle painter of Antwerp [...]. (41) *Samuel van Hoogstraten*, history painter of Dordrecht.

II:360-361 (CONCLUSION TO HOUBRAKEN'S EXCURSION ON THE *BENTVOGELS*)

Many of my fellow artists whose *Bent* names are woven in here, being still alive, have taken these attendances for excesses of their youthful days and later so behaved themselves that all outstanding virtuous people hold them in esteem. 'Oh how fortunate are those' (says oft-mentioned Hoogstraten on page 207 of his book on painting) 'for whom this turns out for the better! and who, like the rejuvenated ram of Medea, jump out of the *Bent* kettle in which many a Peleus remains smothered. Yes, they are more than happy who survive their follies and put their silliness behind them.' Which is why he warns youthful painters that such company is 'full of danger, especially for lively spirits who are easily tempted.'

III:78 (FRAGMENT LEADING INTO THE LIFE OF HEYMAN DULLAERT)

Otto van Veen, Van Mander and Van der Venne, were painters and poets, as also the Haarlem artist Cornelis Ketel, who painted many handsome emblems in pictures, which he voiced in his

poems, showing his ingenuity in both. Christoffel Pierson was a better painter than poet. It was disputed whether Samuel van Hoogstraten better understood the art of painting or of poetry. But Camphuysen was a better poet than painter, and that is what we must also say about our Heyman Dullaert, though (as became clear to me) he was so far advanced in the art of painting that I have reason to include him as painter among his outstanding contemporaries.

III:104 (REPEAT OF II:347)

III:116 (EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF GERARD DE LAIRESSE)

It comes to my mind that François van Hoogstraten wrote in a verse on a portrait of his brother, my master Samuel van Hoogstraten

‘He rhymes in paints and paints in poetry.’

This also applies to our poet Pieter Verhoek, who displays with his pen, like Lairesse with his brush, beautifully paired light and dark, natural projection and recession, and pure handling observed therein. And everything praiseworthy to be observed in this work of art [an *Expulsion of Heliodorus*] is rendered with letters.

III:139-140 (EXCERPTS FROM A THEORETICAL DIGRESSION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING IN THE PRACTICE OF ART)

My master Samuel van Hoogstraten possessed a great mind in nearly all matters. He especially understood the fundamental rules of art so completely in all parts that I believe that no one after him has understood them better. But he was not a high flyer in the application of the same. On the contrary, it has been observed that others who possessed a less than average intellect outstripped great intellectuals. [Here follows an anecdote, quoted on p. 222 above, illustrating the extreme gullibility of a superior painter with an inferior mind, being Herman Saftleven.]

The reason why the most intelligent amongst the practitioners of art, and those who are cultivated in history, antiquities and other sciences, often fall short in the art of painting as opposed to others who are less knowledgeable, originates in this. That the same, owing to their great knowledge, are occupied with many and different ideas that both seduce them and spur them on to application, by which it happens that they do not excel at any of them, seeing that each part of art requires a human life if one wishes to excel above others. Yes, this goes so far that experience has shown us that a genius whose inclination turns indiscriminately to everything and cannot apply itself to a specific choice of any particular part of art, often cannot rise above others who only practice the least of art. ...

No one should wrongly conclude from our address that we consider knowledge and mastery of all sorts of things of no use to the painter, or that intellect is good for nothing. The two

adduced examples [Samuel van Hoogstraten and Herman Saftleven] only show that this can happen now and then, serving to satisfy the question: ‘Whether painters who possess a greater intellect than others, are always the greatest masters in art?’

To come to a conclusion to our deliberations, based on the examples and the arguments for and against, we say, first, that mediocre intellects have sometimes excelled in one or another part of art. Secondly, it can happen that great intellects versed in the many sciences and competences required to be a good history painter, have not always excelled in art in proportion to their intellect and competence. But this is always certain, that all high flyers in art who have earned eternal fame by their brush have been great intellects and scholars. Experience teaches us this, and it is undeniable, that the greatest practitioners of painting also excelled in intellect and sciences and made use of them in their time. Which they demonstrated by their brushworks, in which ingenious inventions, philosophizing and added embellishments clearly show that their elevated spirit understood the nature and ground of the depicted matters, which they were able to signify through emblems and attributes.

It pleases us, in confirmation of what has been said, to repeat a remarkable example of keen invention in an art work painted by the brush of Rubens and described by the pen of Vondel in his dedication to the tragedy of the *Brothers*.²

Notes

- 1 Several paragraphs of Houbraken’s Life of Van Hoogstraten are also quoted in the main body of Horn’s essay in the present book. Duplicating this material seemed preferable to disrupting the argument of the text and the flow of the following account.
- 2 J. van den Vondel, *Gebroeders, Treurspel: Fuimus Troës*, Amsterdam 1640.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jan Blanc has held the Chair of Art History in early Modern Art (16th–18th centuries) at the University of Geneva since 2010, having previously taught at the University of Paris X-Nanterre (France) and the University of Lausanne. An expert on Flemish and Dutch seventeenth-century art and eighteenth-century British art, as well as art theory during the early Modern period, Blanc has published widely in this field. His books include *Dans l'atelier de Rembrandt. Le Maître et ses élèves* (2006); *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst (Introduction à la haute école de l'art de peinture, Rotterdam, 1678) de Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627–1678)* (2006); *Peindre et penser la peinture au XVIIIe siècle. La Théorie de l'art de Samuel van Hoogstraten* (2008). He also co-edited *Les Échanges artistiques entre les anciens Pays-Bas et la France, 1482–1814* (2010).

Ben Broos (1944) graduated in 1977 on the dissertation *Rembrandt Studies* that included an 'Index to the Formal Sources of Rembrandt's Art'. He has published widely on seventeenth-century drawings, paintings, artists, and collectors. He was Head Curator of the Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis from 1986 to 2001, when he published *De Rembrandt à Vermeer, Hollandse meesters uit Amerika* and *Intimacies & Intrigues: History Painting in the Mauritshuis*. Broos co-authored catalogues on Vermeer and Rembrandt's self-portraits. From 2001 onwards, he has devoted a series of articles to Rembrandt's wife Saskia Uylenburgh and her family (in *Oud Holland* and *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis*) that culminated in the biography *Saskia, de vrouw van Rembrandt* (2012).

Celeste Brusati is Professor of the History of Art and Women's Studies and Professor in the School of Art & Design at the University of Michigan. In addition to her book, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten* she has written a book on Johannes Vermeer along with articles and essays on still life, self-imagery, perspective, illusionism, and the relations between visual and literary discourses on art in the Netherlands. She coedited with Walter

Melion and Karl Enenkel *The Authority of the Word: Reflecting on Image and Text in Northern Europe, 1400–1800* (2011). She is currently writing a book on fictions of seeing and their functions in Dutch still life and genre painting, and editing an English translation of Samuel van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst*, for the Getty Research Center's Texts and Documents series.

Herman T. Colenbrander studied art history at the University of Amsterdam and graduated in 1976. He stayed for further research in Florence, Rome and Madrid; from 1981–1997 he was affiliated to the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) in The Hague. He has published articles on Andrea del Verrocchio and Leonardo da Vinci, Jean Perréal, the Master of Saint Giles, Hieronymus Bosch, Jan van Eyck, Rembrandt and Jan Gossaert. In 2006, he defended his PhD thesis on the *Très Riches Heures and the Limbourg Brothers* at the University of Amsterdam (supervised by Prof. C. Chavannes-Mazel and Prof. P. Hoppenbrouwers).

Hendrik J. Horn A Dutch-Canadian art historian and translator, Hein (or Jack) Horn studied in Victoria, Vancouver, Utrecht, Toronto and New Haven from 1959 to 1972, and then taught at the University of Guelph (Ontario) until his 2005 retirement to Wassenaar. In 1978 Horn at last completed his Yale doctoral dissertation on the 'Conquest of Tunis' series by Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen, which was eventually absorbed into a massive study of Vermeyen's complete *oeuvre* (2 vols., Davaco Publishers, Doornspijk, 1989). Horn's controversial *The Golden Age Revisited* (2 vols., Davaco, 2000) celebrates the matchless fecundity of Arnold Houbraken as painter, etcher, book illustrator, emblemist, theologian, theoretician, art historian and biographer, while documenting his evolution from the Mennonite faith of his parents, via the Calvinism of his wife's family, to the dissident free thinking of the Dutch Radical Enlightenment and the unique synthesis of deism and classicism that underlies his *Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*. Most recently, Horn translated and edited the singular interwar memoirs of Theo van Hoorn, an Amsterdam accountant and salon Sufi (Foleor Publishers, Leiden, 2010).

Michiel Roscam Abbing published a book on the contemporary sources regarding Van Hoogstraten in 1993 (*De schilder & schrijver Samuel van Hoogstraten 1627–1678. Eigentijdse bronnen & oeuvre van gesigneerde schilderijen*). His PhD thesis on Rembrandt Documents (*Rembrandt toont syn konst*, 1999, University of Amsterdam) was followed by the volume *Rembrandt 2006: New Rembrandt Documents*. He is currently preparing a volume on the Dutch scholar Scriverius: *Petrus Scriverius Harlemensis (1576–1660). A Key to the Correspondence, Contacts and Works of an Independent Humanist*. Roscam Abbing is an independent scholar who works and lives in Amsterdam.

Paul Taylor is Curator of the Photographic Collection at the Warburg Institute, University of London. He is the author of *Dutch Flower Painting, 1600–1720* (1995), and of a series of articles on the vocabulary of art in the Low Countries, including 'The Concept of *Houding*' (1992), 'The glow in Dutch paintings' (1998), 'Flatness in Dutch Art' (2008) and 'Colouring nakedness in

Flanders and Holland' (2011). He has also published a number of articles on the iconology of Italian Renaissance art, among them 'Michelangelo's Mistakes in the Generation of Christ' (2004) and 'Julius II and the Stanza della Segnatura' (2009).

Thijs Weststeijn is associate professor of Cultural Heritage Studies at the University of Amsterdam. His book *The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age* appeared in 2008. In addition, he published a number of articles and book chapters on Van Hoogstraten, highlighting his relation to Rembrandt and, most recently, Leonardo da Vinci (in *Re-Reading Leonardo*, 2009). He is preparing the monograph *Art and Antiquity in the Netherlands and Britain: The Vernacular Arcadia of Franciscus Junius (1591-1677)*.

Fatma Yalcin studied art history at the Free University Berlin. Her dissertation *Anwesende Abwesenheit, Untersuchungen zur Entwicklungsgeschichte von Bildern mit menschenleeren Räumen, Rückenfiguren und Lauschern im Holland des 17. Jahrhunderts* (The Presence of Absence. Investigations of the Historical Development of Paintings with Empty Rooms, Figures with their Backs Turned, and Listening Figures in Seventeenth-Century Holland) was published by Deutscher Kunstverlag in 2004. She has carried out further research in New York, Paris, The Hague and Amsterdam. She now teaches in the fields of art history and adult education at the Free University Berlin and continues to publish about Netherlandish painting of the seventeenth century. Presently, she is working on a research project sponsored by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, concerning the description, explanation and criticism of art during the reign of Louis XIV.



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