

Seventeenth-century Flemish paintings in South African collections: a colonial heritage

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My interest in seventeenth-century Flemish paintings led me to research¹ such works in South African public, private and corporate collections.² As a starting point, I used Jillian Carman's 1994 publication on *Seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish paintings in South Africa*, compiled in collaboration with the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (RKD), which offers an overview, in terms of empirical data, of what is available in public collections. Her checklist includes

all known paintings in South African public collections produced by artists who were born and/or died in the 1600s and who worked in the Netherlands . . . Paintings were drawn from state and municipal museums, as well as from private and corporate collections with restricted public access. Paintings on long-term loan to public collections have also been included (Carman 1994:19).

The majority of the items listed is accompanied by a tiny black-and-white illustration and, in

line with the requirements of a checklist, none of them is discussed in any detail.³ The main aim of Carman's publication was to expose 'a body of interesting and often important paintings, many of which have been overlooked in international scholarship through lack of exposure' (1994:17).

Encouraged by requests from academics in Flanders, I took up Carman's challenge and went to study the artworks *in situ*. Although it was initially my intention to add seventeenth-century Flemish artworks in other private collections, the results of this search were disappointing. This article presents a report on what I did find, and a brief consideration of the effects of the disappearance of private collections. The focus, however, lies on the public collections of seventeenth-century Flemish paintings, the history of which is traced in an attempt to find an explanation for the choice of artworks. The quality of the paintings is investigated on the basis of authenticity, implying that works, the authorship of which

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can undisputedly be established, are ranked higher than their imitations and copies as well as artworks of contested/unknown authorship. A statistical analysis of the attributions of the works reveals the paucity of authentic works which can be explained in terms of seventeenth-century Flemish art production practices. Finally, the present state of the paintings in terms of visibility and preservation is evaluated, highlighting the difficulties experienced by museums and galleries in the face of limited funding combined with shifts in policy.

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

The search for seventeenth-century Flemish paintings in private collections proved extremely difficult and almost futile.⁴ I consulted with museum curators, art collectors, restorers, artists and art dealers, the majority of whom had no information to share. Local art dealers in old masters paintings made efforts to assist me by contacting their clients and other private collectors, but with very few exceptions the latter were not willing to co-operate on this project. Their reasons varied from a total lack of interest in sharing their artworks with the general public, to a fear of theft and enquiries from the receiver of revenue. Other collectors had already died or taken their prized possessions overseas. For example, in the greater Durban area, it is estimated that about 80 per cent of the private collectors have left the country in the course of the past decade.⁵ Although this tendency is related to economic factors and frightening crime statistics, it is quite ironic that almost a century ago the Randlords did not consider South Africa the best place to safeguard their treasures.⁶

The private collections that I did gain access to are restricted to the Cape region. The

artworks vary greatly in quality. One privately housed painting is an exquisitely painted, exact copy after David II Teniers's *Peasant Kermesse* of the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum,⁷ probably produced by an assistant or avid follower of Teniers. In contrast, the only Flemish painting in possession of the Rupert Art Foundation is a nineteenth-century version of the theme of the banker and his wife as devised by Quinten Metsys (listed in their records as school of Jan van Eyck),⁸ a painting of inferior quality exacerbated by the poor state of conservation. In Spier Manor House close to Stellenbosch, paintings of the private Enthoven collection are on public display. They include a *Landscape* attributed to Paul Brill,⁹ an enormous canvas considered to be by the Brussels artist Hendrik de Clerck depicting the *Raising of Lazarus*,¹⁰ and *The Temptation of St Anthony* attributed to David II Teniers.¹¹

Since I saw only a sample of what is still left in South Africa in private collections, it is difficult to establish or even guess their numbers. I am inclined to draw the conclusion that the major private collections of seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish art in South Africa were partly donated or bequeathed to local museums¹² and the rest were shipped to Europe as inheritance to descendants or for auction, leaving little of note in private possession in this country. Sadly, some significant private collections that were given on loan to South African public institutions were withdrawn in the 1950s and 1960s and also left the country. For example, the Beit Collection, on loan to the South African National Gallery in Cape Town from June 1949 to 1954, returned to Russborough House, County Wicklow, Ireland where parts of it were sold and donated to the National Gallery of Ireland. Similarly, the F. D. Lycett-Green Collection, on loan to the same

gallery from February 1948 to May 1954, was donated to the City of York Art Gallery (Carman 1994:114).

The implications of the lack of private collections are far-reaching, especially with regard to the organisation of exhibitions. In the past, museums and art galleries could rely on the co-operation of private collectors when mounting an exhibition on the art of a certain artist, period or theme. Drawing material only from public collections, it is far more difficult to put together a meaningful ensemble of works, particularly when those public institutions are neither very numerous nor blessed with packed reserves. The February 2001 exhibition of 'Pieter Coecke van Aelst (1502–1550). Retable re-united. Fragments of a Flemish Renaissance altarpiece' in the Old Town House in Cape Town demonstrates this very clearly. The aim of the exhibition was temporarily to reunite the Cape Town panel of Pieter Coecke's *Descent of the Holy Ghost* with the other panels which belonged to the same retable.¹³ The exhibition was disappointing in two respects. Of the six panels that it brought together, only three were original panels while the other three were full-scale facsimile reproductions. Although one can understand the hesitation of some European institutions to send away valuable works to the southernmost tip of Africa,¹⁴ the public expects to see the authentic whole. To frame and flesh out the exhibition, the partly reconstructed retable was accompanied by a small number of paintings by contemporary artists: *Virgin with Saviour* attributed to Joos van Cleve (1),¹⁵ *Saint Anne with the Virgin and Child* from the workshop of Joos van Cleve,¹⁶ *Self-portrait* of 1548 by Caterina van Hemesen,¹⁷ *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* (c. 1540) attributed to the Master of the Retable of

Gustrow,¹⁸ and *The Mocking of Christ* in the manner of the Master of Saint-Sang.¹⁹ One wonders why the loans remained limited to the South African National Gallery, especially in view of the fact that the Durban Art Gallery possesses a *Madonna and Child* by a follower of Pieter Coecke van Aelst.²⁰ Unless no effort was made to enrich the exhibit, the further deduction to be made is that not a single Flemish painting of the sixteenth century is privately owned in South Africa.

It would appear then, that the little that remains of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Flemish paintings in South Africa is largely housed in public institutions. How these collections came into being, what they comprise and what is being done with them are all questions that shed light on their current perception as an embarrassing remainder of a colonial past and, in more general terms, on the state of European art in an African country.

HISTORY OF COLLECTING

In order to understand the present attitude towards this cultural heritage, it is insightful to trace its history. Out of the total of 76 Flemish paintings in South African public collections,²¹ 61 works were donated, bequeathed or given on loan by private collectors and 15 were purchased by the museums themselves.²² The most important donation of seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish paintings was made by Max Michaelis in 1914 and later in 1933 by his wife Lady Michaelis. Following the conditions of Max Michaelis's gift, the collection was housed in a building of its own provided by the State, namely the Old Town House which underwent alterations for its conversion into a gallery (Stevenson 1997:34). The Max Michaelis collection of 68 works was extended after

Michaelis's death in 1932,²³ when his wife presented another 21 Dutch and Flemish paintings from his private collection. Of the 21 Flemish paintings currently in the Old Town House, seven works were donated by Max Michaelis and nine by Lady Michaelis. Another Flemish work entered the collection as a bequest of Mr Justice R. P. Davis, one is on loan from Sir Rupert Bromley and another three were purchased. In 1933, according to Stevenson, Lady Michaelis presented another '59 paintings to the South African National Gallery and 58 to Pretoria (where no art gallery existed at the time), again in her own name, on

condition that suitable accommodation be found for them' (1997:41). The Lady Michaelis gift of 12 Flemish paintings eventually found a suitable home when the Pretoria Art Museum opened in the 1960s. A further item was purchased to extend the collection. The South African National Gallery, which initially 'declined to accept their share of the gift' (Stevenson 1997:41), now possesses four Flemish paintings donated by Lady Michaelis. Apart from one painting bequeathed by Sir Abe Bailey, another three were purchased, while the provenance of one last work is unknown.

The two Flemish paintings in the Natale Labia



1 Attributed to Joos van Cleve, *Virgin with Saviour*. Oil on panel, 32,5 × 24 cm. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, no. 362.

Museum (2) were donated by Count Labia, while the three works in the South African Cultural History Museum, Groot Constantia, were a gift from Alfred A. de Pass. The

Johannesburg Art Gallery and the Durban Art Gallery depended on donations from several individuals to build up their collections of Flemish paintings. The former was given one



2 School of Anthony van Dyck, *Princess Mary, Daughter of Charles I*. Oil on canvas, 66 × 50 cm. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, Natale Labia Museum, no. 21.

painting by Eduard Houthakker and one by Dr F. V. Engelenburg. Two paintings were donated by Sir Otto Beit from his mother Laura Beit's estate in memory of Alfred Beit (Carman 1994:82) and the remaining three were museum purchases. The Durban Art Gallery's collection of Flemish works was formed by the bequest of Ernest John Cornelius of three paintings, the donation of two works by Col R. H. Whitwell and the purchase of three more works. In Kimberley, the William Humphreys Art Gallery keeps 15 Flemish paintings, three of which were donated by W. B. Humphreys. The other 12 are on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd who bought the Humphreys Collection when the Gallery failed to gather the necessary funds. Individual items in the National Cultural History Museum in Pretoria, The Castle in Cape Town and the Brenthurst Library in Johannesburg were all purchased.

Since almost half of the seventeenth-century Flemish paintings in South African collections came from Max Michaelis and his wife, it is worth investigating why this donation was made. The German-born Max Michaelis, who arrived in South Africa in 1876, soon gained a position of prominence in the mining industry and became one of the Randlords who dominated South Africa's mineral wealth and accumulated great personal fortunes. They were perceived as 'ruthless foreign plunderers' who gave very little in return. According to Stevenson (1997:29), 'their philanthropy seldom took the form of donating art works'.²⁴ They preferred to provide the money to fund a worthwhile project, such as the foundation of the Johannesburg Art Gallery which was an act of benefaction of the Randlords. The gallery's art collection which was imported almost entirely from England, was expected to be welcomed by the local population – an

attitude interpreted by Carman (1999:51) as 'an unshakable belief in the civilising benefits of British culture and museums . . . typical of the patronage of British imperialism'. Carman (1999:55) argues that the idea of establishing an art museum came from Lady Phillips, but that 'her plans were appropriated by the mining élite in order to promote the superiority of British culture and to foster a settled society which, in turn, would lead to the increased prosperity of the mines.'

Lady Phillips also had a hand in realising the Michaelis gift. According to Stevenson (1997:31–2), the idea of a collection of Dutch and Flemish paintings for South Africa was conceived by Lady Phillips and her friend General Smuts. Hugh Lane, encouraged by them during his 1910 visit to South Africa, set out to establish such a collection 'that, once a buyer could be found, could be donated to the South African nation'. Lane's collection was then bought by Max Michaelis on the advice of Lady Phillips with the express purpose of presenting it as a gift to the newly established Union of South Africa.²⁵

Michaelis explained his generous gift as a purely philanthropic act:

My object in making the gift was twofold. It was to show to the inhabitants of South Africa my gratitude for many happy and prosperous years I have spent in this beautiful country in my youth and it was, further, for the purpose of giving students of art the opportunity of studying old masters in their own country instead of having to go to Europe for that end . . . In selecting old Dutch pictures, I thought of the settlers who left Holland at about the period when many of these pictures were painted . . . (quoted in Werth 1992:np).

The choice of 'old Dutch pictures', namely seventeenth-century Netherlandish paintings, was again not Michaelis's, but was apparently first suggested to Hugh Lane by General Smuts (Stevenson 1997:31). Smuts believed that such a collection of artworks would

recall to the Dutch population of the Dominion the glories of their past civilisation in the days when they first colonised South Africa,²⁶ and, by the representation of the art in which the Dutch and English first met in spirit,²⁷ (be) symbolic of a new Union (Stevenson 1997:31–2).

While Smuts's motives were political in trying to foster feelings of nationalism, Michaelis's intentions were essentially self-serving. According to Stevenson (1997:31), Michaelis's ulterior motive was to further his cause for a baronetcy, in view of the fact that a title was considered an essential public symbol of social advancement.

Max Michaelis, who in the past had led an exceedingly private life and did not have a high public profile, realised that if he wished to be knighted he would need to make a noteworthy public benefaction. He is said to have confided in Lady Phillips, a close friend since the 1890s, who suggested that if Michaelis donated art works to the nation, her friend General Smuts would ensure that he was appropriately rewarded (Stevenson 1997:31).

This knowledge, combined with the fact that Michaelis simply bought the ready-made collection from Hugh Lane, has several ramifications. In the first place, it testifies to Michaelis's lack of sincere dedication to art. Moreover, because he did not personally select the paintings, the collection cannot be

assessed as a reflection of Michaelis's preoccupations or engagement with those elements of a culture that reflect his own concerns. It was Hugh Lane who put the collection together, and since it was not commissioned, he was not bound by strict stipulations dictating the type of paintings to be purchased. One may assume that his principal guideline would have been to make the collection representative of painting of the Netherlands of that period, but, as Fransen (1997b:3) readily admits, he did not quite succeed. Lane had relatively little time to compile the collection, and he could only buy what was available on the art market – 'or use what he had languishing in his picture stock'.²⁸ This could explain the lack or under-representation of paintings in some areas such as biblical and mythological subjects. Equally, the abundance of portraits questioned by Fransen (1997:45) was probably the result of a large market supply.

All of these arrangements make it clear that culture is very much part of the battlefield of politics, and that art is a pawn in the hands of the wealthy who use it to fulfil their personal ambitions. Yet without the generosity of the wealthy the public collections would not be what they are today. Their public appreciation depends predominantly on the political climate. In the years immediately following the unification of South Africa in 1910, the Michaelis collection was regarded by the ruling élite as a symbol of unity between English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, promoting a sense of nationalism. Almost a century later, in the spirit of post-colonialism, the heritage of old European masters is preferably packed away in store-rooms due to its association with the colonisers' belief in white supremacy.

QUALITY OF THE COLLECTED WORKS

The quality of the old European paintings has been a point of debate ever since they entered the South African collections. While the Michaelis Collection, for example, was described by some as 'one of the choicest collections of its size and kind in the world', 'rivalling in quality European and American collections', it was criticised by Sir Claude Phillips, a respected British art critic, as being 'of very unequal merit, and as a whole, by no means qualified to gladden the hearts of serious students of Netherlandish masters' (Stevenson 1997:36). Stevenson further observes that the Michaelis Collection was 'incomparably superior to the existing collections of European art in South Africa', but that 'in a European (and possibly American centre) (it) would have paled beside existing public galleries and museums'. Apparently, even Michaelis himself was aware of the mixed quality of the collection and Lady Phillips admitted that 'the original collection was never considered by Sir Hugh Lane to be in the front rank' (Stevenson 1997:40). The events surrounding the Lady Michaelis donation to the South African National Gallery are indicative of similar sentiments. According to Stevenson (1997:41), the gallery declined the gift

because the paintings were not considered to be of museum quality. Because the state had already accepted the pictures, the gallery relented and reluctantly absorbed them into its embryonic collection.²⁹

It makes sense to start the investigation of quality with a consideration of the attributions of the paintings. Since Carman's 1994 checklist was compiled in collaboration with distinguished connoisseurs affiliated with the RKD in The Hague (including R. E. O. Ekkart, M. C.

de Kinkelder, G. Kotting, F. G. Meijer and C. J. A. Wansink), one can be confident that the attributions are fairly accurate.³⁰ Of the 299 illustrated entries, 68 works are recorded as seventeenth-century Flemish. Carman listed another 77 works, not illustrated, by artists who died before 1600 (six Flemish) or were born after 1700 (one Flemish), by other schools (one Flemish in Italy) and by later imitators (10 Flemish). Excluding the later imitations, the total of Flemish works comes to 76. Of these, 18 paintings are without doubt considered to be by the hand of a named artist, while 18 are attributed to a particular painter, indicating that they are probably authentic. The remaining 40 works are listed as follows: four works as studio of; eight works as school of/circle of; 11 works as follower of/style of; four works as copy after; and 13 works as unknown artist.³¹

Several deductions can be made from these figures. The first striking fact is the paucity of authentic or so-called original works by recognised/recognisable artists. Whereas originality is no acceptable criterion, the very fact that the painting was produced in the seventeenth century also provides no sufficient reason to consider the work of high quality. The quality of artworks can be judged against a variety of standards, but authenticity does seem to be one of the more persistent criteria applied in the discipline of art history. At the time of the Michaelis gift, the controversy surrounding the attribution of works to Rembrandt and van Dyck – they were authenticated by the well-known expert Wilhelm von Bode (Stevenson 1997:37–40) – provides ample proof of this. The tremendous impact made by the activities of the Rembrandt Research Project (Grasman 1999:156) shows that authenticity continues to play a decisive role, despite the post-moder-

nist disclaiming of the superiority of the 'genius'.

When searching South African collections for authentic paintings by well-known artists,³² one finds that they form the exception. They are Frans Snyders's *Concert of Birds* of c. 1620–1630 **(3)**,³³ the *Portrait of Antoni van der Gouwe*³⁴ by the portraitist and history painter

Cornelis de Vos **(4)**, and David II Teniers's *Interior of a Peasant Dwelling*.³⁵ The names of Flanders' greatest artists are represented only by paintings that are close in style, place and time to the masters' work. To the school of Peter Paul Rubens, for instance, belong the *Portrait of Count de Werve*³⁶ and *The Apostle James with Flaming Sword* **(5)**³⁷, the latter



3 Frans Snyders, *Concert of Birds*, c. 1620–1630. Oil on canvas, 134,6 × 175,3 cm. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 14/54.



4 Cornelis de Vos, *Portrait of Antoni van der Gouwe*. Oil on canvas, 116 × 88 cm. Signed and inscribed on note in right hand: Antoni vander Go . . . tot Ant(werpen?). Pretoria, Collection of the Pretoria Art Museum, no. D1501.

typified by Bax (1952:118) as one of those numerous mediocre pieces in which followers introduced motifs *à la* Rubens. Of the five paintings related to Anthony van Dyck, two

are attributed to his studio, namely the *Portrait of Johan Oxenstierna*³⁸ and the *Portrait of Ferdinand de Boisschot, Lord of Saventhem* of 1630³⁹ which is a studio replica of van Dyck's



5 School of Peter Paul Rubens, *The Apostle James with Flaming Sword (Battle against the Moors)*. Oil on copper, 41 × 55 cm. Pretoria, Collection of the Pretoria Art Museum, no. R1001.

original portrait. Although the elegance and charm of the figure betray van Dyck's influence, the portrait of *Princess Mary, Daughter of Charles I* (2) was produced by an unidentifiable pupil.⁴⁰ The portrait of *Henrietta Maria, Queen of England*,⁴¹ as well as the picture representing *Christ and the Penitent Sinners*,⁴² are both copies after originals by van Dyck.

The third great name is Jacob Jordaens who is represented by a sketch of the *Birth of Christ (Adoration of the Shepherds)* (6) executed by a follower,⁴³ and a copy after his painting of *Bacchus*⁴⁴ which is in desperate need of restoration.

Authentic paintings by lesser-known artists are more numerous. Since the interest in the



6 Follower of Jacob Jordaens, *Birth of Christ (Adoration of the Shepherds)*. Oil on panel, 35 × 26 cm. Pretoria, Collection of the Pretoria Art Museum, no. J0601.

oeuvre of such masters has increased considerably in art circles during the past decades, the South African collections have accordingly gained in interest. The Johannesburg Art Gallery is the proud owner of a flower

painting by Johannes Antonius van der Baren,⁴⁵ known for his meticulous rendering of leaves and petals. Another important possession is *The Assumption of the Virgin* by Thomas Willeboirts (called Bosschaert),⁴⁶ pos-

sibly a pupil of Anthony van Dyck (de Maere & Wabbes 1994:429). As a preliminary sketch for the altarpiece that is currently in the Museu Nacional de Escultura, Valladolid (Carman 1994:75), this work has been the subject of quite extensive research. The Brenthurst Library in Johannesburg has quite recently acquired a seascape of Adam Willaerts,⁴⁷ the local importance of which resides in its representation of Table Bay with Table Mountain. According to Carman (1994:74), the subject is probably the landing of the return fleet from the East Indies under the command of Hendrik Brouwer at the Cape on 9 March 1636.

The Durban Art Gallery has a late seventeenth-

century painting of *Villagers Conversing on a Village Square* (7) executed by the Brussels painters Adriaen Frans Boudewijns and Peeter Bout.⁴⁸ The same gallery owns another painting attributed to these artists⁴⁹ but, as with two similar works in the William Humphreys Art Gallery,⁵⁰ the attribution remains uncertain. Another authentic work in the Durban Art Gallery is a small panel by Peeter Bout representing *Angels Visiting the Shepherds*.⁵¹ The artist Peeter I Neeffs is represented by two works in South African collections: both versions of the *Interior of a Church* of the National Cultural History Museum in Pretoria⁵² and of



7 Adriaen Frans Boudewijns and Peeter Bout, *Villagers Conversing on a Village Square*, late seventeenth century. Oil on canvas, 41,4 × 66,8 cm. Durban, Permanent collection of the Durban Art Gallery, no. 1653.

the William Humphreys Art Gallery in Kimberley⁵³ are considered authentic.

In Cape Town, the Michaelis Collection owns two pictures authenticated as works of lesser-known seventeenth-century artists. They are the finely executed representation of a bacchante as *Tambourine Player*⁵⁴ of Jan I van Dalen and the *Still Life with Plums and Carnations* of Jacob Fopsen van Es (8),⁵⁵ distinguished by its sobriety of composition and exactitude in the rendering of still life elements. The other two authentic works are the already mentioned sixteenth-century paintings by Caterina van Hemessen and Pieter Coecke van Aelst, although the attribution of the latter has recently been changed to 'studio of Pieter Coecke van Aelst?' (Fransen 1997:94). Simi-

larly, the *Portrait of Tomassa Gavelli* recorded by Carman (1994:88) as an authentic work of Justus Sustermans,⁵⁶ is no longer listed as such in Fransen's catalogue because the 'attribution has never been substantiated' (1997:145). The remaining authentic paintings are to be found in the South African National Gallery. They are the *Musical Party* of c. 1720 by Hendrik Govaerts which is identifiable as a brothel scene,⁵⁷ and Adriaen Gryef's depiction of *Dogs and Dead Game* (9).⁵⁸ The *Man on Horse* of Jean-Pierre Verdussen in Groot Constantia can also be mentioned,⁵⁹ although it is fully eighteenth century.

The paintings designated as 'attributed to' are connected to artists ranging considerably in reputation. They include the talented Frans II



8 Jacob Fopsen van Es, *Still Life with Plums and Carnations*. Oil on panel, 30,8 × 41,9 cm. Signed bottom left on edge of table: IACOB. VAN.ES. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 14/19.



9 Adriaen Gryef, *Dogs and Dead Game*. Oil on panel, 24,5 × 33 cm. Signed bottom left: A Gryef f. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, no. 1750.

Francken,⁶⁰ painter of history and small-scale cabinet paintings; Gaspar de Crayer,⁶¹ friend of Rubens and van Dyck; Paul de Vos,⁶² Joos de Momper,⁶³ Gillis I Peeters (10),⁶⁴ Lodewijck de Vadder,⁶⁵ Jacob Ferdinand Saeys,⁶⁶ Gaspar Peeter II Verbruggen (11),⁶⁷ Louis de Caulery,⁶⁸ and little-known artists such as I. van Venne,⁶⁹ Christiaen Luycks⁷⁰ and the Antwerp still life painter W. Mertens.⁷¹ A thorough reinvestigation of these works is required with a view to achieving more accurate knowledge about them and to determine their authorship with a greater degree of certainty.

A great amount of research has been con-

ducted in the field of seventeenth-century Netherlandish painting, enabling specialists to recognise the hand of minor artists in paintings. If, despite this progress, the authorship of the great majority – only 18 attributions out of a total of 76 works are certain – of Flemish works in South African collections remains uncertain or unknown, this could indeed be construed as an indication of the generally poor quality of the works. It appears that many were produced by less-talented artists who worked as assistants in a master painter's studio or tried to make a living as *dozijnschilders*. These people applied themselves to the imitation of works by popular artists, a practice common in Flanders



10 Attributed to Gillis I Peeters, *Sea Scene with Ruins*. Oil on panel, 32,5 × 41 cm. Pretoria, Collection of the Pretoria Art Museum, no. P1601.

as a result of market conditions. Paintings in the manner of reputed artists were sought after not only by the Antwerp citizens, but also by art collectors from outside the borders of Flanders. Even though the popular artists themselves tried to satisfy this great demand by turning out pictures from their workshops executed by assistants, there was still plenty of opportunity for less-gifted artists to earn a living from the imitations and copies after works of their more fortunate colleagues. A result of the popularity of imitations was the creation of job opportunities, giving rise to a large body of artists working in Antwerp (Van Haute 1999:17),

many of whom remained unnamed in the literature. While painters were legally not allowed to add the name of the artist whose work was being copied, they could not sign their copies with their own names. A further implication of the great demand for paintings in seventeenth-century Flanders is that the quality of the artworks could easily be compromised. The so-called *dozijnschilders*, who produced works *en masse* for the local and international market, would display little or no creativity in their compositions and limited deftness in execution. If and when they managed to develop a manner of their own



11 Attributed to Gaspar Peeter II Verbruggen, *Still Life with Flowers*. Oil on canvas, 146,2 × 113,2 cm. The Humphreys Collection on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, no. 261.

and more skill in handling the brush, they would surface from the sea of nameless artists and carve out a niche for themselves in the art market.

These conditions obviously cripple the art historian's attempts at identifying the makers of the paintings in question. Hence it is not surprising to find more works by unidentifiable seventeenth-century Flemish painters than by

known artists. The six Teniers paintings in the South African collections provide a good example. Only one painting, namely the *Interior of a Peasant Dwelling*,⁷² is recognised as an authentic work by David II Teniers compared with another five listed as either 'style of' or 'copy after', implying that Teniers himself was not involved in their production. The painting of *The Herdsman*⁷³ proves to be a variation on the theme depicted in David II Teniers's *Le berger rêveur*.⁷⁴ It is possible that Teniers executed this painting himself, especially in view of the fact that it is signed. It is also known that the artist showed such a growing interest in nature and rural life from the 1640s onwards that many representations of shepherds in his *oeuvre* are found (Klinge 1991:244). However, grey tonalities dominate the work to such a large extent that even the copper basin looks dull. This lack of colour appears to support an attribution to the studio of David II Teniers. *The Prodigal Son*⁷⁵ and *Two Hermits: Anthony and Paul*⁷⁶ are both copies after works by David II Teniers. *The Prodigal Son* differs only in very minor details from the Louvre painting of *The Banquet of the Prodigal Son*.⁷⁷ *Two Hermits: Anthony and Paul* is only a partial copy after Teniers's *Saints Paulus and Anthony*.⁷⁸ The landscape on the right has been halved in the present copy, omitting the shepherd and the castle – elements which in the London version enriched the work's meaning. The two remaining works painted in the style of David II Teniers are housed in the William Humphreys Art Gallery in Kimberley. *The Barrack Room Scene*⁷⁹ (12) is based on David II Teniers's *The Release of Peter from Prison*,⁸⁰ although the omission of the small figures of Peter and an angel in the far background on the left changes the subject matter of the present work. The figure composition of the *Interior with Figures*⁸¹ is similar to

the one in *Le bonnet vert*,⁸² except in mirror image. One may assume that these copies and less exact imitations were produced in the second half of the seventeenth century, because the demand for Teniers's work, both inside and outside the Flemish borders, was highest during the 1660s and 1670s (Van Haute 1999:60). To establish the identity of their makers, however, is virtually impossible, especially in view of the fact that art dealers commissioned many artists to execute copies of popular images (Van Haute 1999:239, note 219). The only thing that one can be sure of is that David II Teniers can be excluded as possible creator because, as Margret Klinge (1994:105) reports, the present state of research indicates that the artist himself did not repeat a single work.⁸³

In view of these facts, it can be concluded that the ensemble of seventeenth-century Flemish paintings in South African collections is not unusual in its composition. When comparing this with the inventories of seventeenth-century Flemish art collections,⁸⁴ there is very little difference in both description and composition from the private collection of the average Antwerp burgher. One does, however, expect museums to collect works of 'museum quality'. South Africa's holdings of old European masters are in all fairness not comparable with their European and American counterparts. As Fransen (1997b:3) puts it, they 'can do no more than . . . provide a tantalizing foretaste of what awaits the prospective visitor to the many splendid museums in (Belgium)'.

PRESENT STATE

The visibility of, and public access to, the seventeenth-century Flemish paintings is



12 Style of David II Teniers, *Barrack Room Scene*. Oil on panel, 44,8 × 57,2 cm. The Humphreys Collection on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, no. 277.

limited in the major museums. In the Pretoria Art Museum, the South African National Gallery in Cape Town and the Durban Art Gallery, the artworks are kept in storage rooms. They are showcased only on rare occasions, for example, to celebrate the centenary of a bequest or donation, or when they fit thematically in a display. The Johannesburg Art Gallery forms an exception in having a separate room dedicated to Dutch art of the seventeenth century. Exhibited in a controlled environment in order to avoid high degrees of fluctuation in relative humidity, the best of the

museum's works are displayed at eye level under excellent lighting conditions, allowing easy viewing. In the William Humphreys Art Gallery in Kimberley, the situation is different since the Flemish works form part of the original personal collection of William Humphreys. To honour the Humphreys bequest and the loan from De Beers, all of these artworks are on permanent public display, safely screwed into the walls. Other public venues housing old Flemish paintings are historical buildings where the artworks are permanently on display as part of the decor. These include the Castle in

Cape Town, the Natale Labia Museum in Muizenberg and the South African Cultural History Museum in Groot Constantia. Although the rules of conservation with regard to temperature, light and humidity are not always strictly adhered to in these places, the paintings can at least be seen and enjoyed by the public.

This is also the case with the artworks in the Michaelis Collection in Cape Town which is of particular interest here as the largest collection of Dutch and Flemish artworks in South Africa. Housed in the rather small Old Town House, the entire holdings are on permanent display. Whereas the rooms on the upper floor are air-conditioned and their doors kept closed to create a controlled environment,⁸⁵ the paintings on the ground floor are subject to extreme changes in temperature and to the polluted air wafting in from Greenmarket Square with its countless stalls. The doors are kept wide open to give any passerby access to the coffee shop run by an independent entrepreneur. Although this measure may add a little to the museum's limited funds, it creates a situation which, in the end, is detrimental to both viewer and artwork. While the noise level prohibits the viewer from contemplating the artworks undisturbed, the paintings are sure to suffer material damage from changes in the environment which induce internal tensions in the artworks. Fluctuations in relative humidity present a hazard for paintings on wood panels, especially if the panel is restrained in any way. Some of the smaller rooms in the Old Town House are not spacious enough, leading to a jammed display with works hung too high on the walls. The ineffective lighting, in addition to the lack of ultraviolet filters on the windows, further hampers easy viewing. The building itself needs urgent attention, as the walls on

the ground floor show signs of severe humidity with mould bursting through the paint.

These conditions mentioned here raise questions about the future of the seventeenth-century Flemish artworks in South African collections. In general, the state of these paintings is a matter of serious concern. One accepts that one of the main functions of a museum is to preserve artworks in good condition for posterity. This involves not only conservation treatment to help prevent future deterioration of a painting, but also restoration to repair damage that has already occurred. My visits revealed the fact that many paintings are in desperate need of cleaning and/or repair.⁸⁶ Yet the only care they receive is that their location is noted and their presence is ascertained, except in cases where the paintings are on loan.⁸⁷ This brings me to the alarming discovery that security measures are ineffective in most places where the Flemish paintings are on public display. Unless a vigilant guard is on duty, no precautions are taken to prevent the visitor from touching the artwork and, if small enough, lifting it from the wall and carrying it off. Several paintings have indeed been stolen, in particular from the Michaelis Collection,⁸⁸ the Johannesburg Art Gallery⁸⁹ and the Sammy Marks House.⁹⁰

The severe shortage of funds for museums could be blamed for this sorry state of affairs. In a developing country where matters of health, housing and education are of more pressing concern, arts and culture are prone to suffer financial deprivation. But even if money were available, it would not be spent on the old master paintings of Europe. The main reason is, obviously and justifiably, the prioritisation of local art. The South African museums are to serve, in the first place, the interests of the South African public. For far too long they had

restricted this service to a white élite as a result of a Eurocentric approach. Once some isolated attempts were made to redress this imbalance, the tendency to prioritise black South African art soon gained ground and intensified in the course of the last decade.⁹¹ The African heritage needed to be spotlighted, affirming the values, beliefs and practices of the previously disenfranchised communities. As bearers of meaning and cultural symbols, artworks have an important role to play in the establishment of a national identity (Klopper 1995:43). In an attempt to contribute to this formation of a national identity, most directors of museums and galleries made it their policy to keep the permanent display largely Afrocentric. Similarly, the frequency of exhibitions with an African emphasis proliferated, driven by the wish to acknowledge the importance of a shared cultural history and to make a clear statement of policy shift.

One wonders, however, whether these attempts at redress have not resulted in another kind of exclusivity. For example, according to Nettleton (1995:67), the collections of the University of the Witwatersrand Art Galleries 'are becoming racially exclusive as no funding is available for the purchase of art by other (than black) South Africans'. Although the acquisition policies of the major museums make provision for both African and European art,⁹² limited funds render South African institutions financially incapable of competing on the international market for high-quality purchases. The answer lies in sponsorship, but local businesses prefer to support art that is made locally. Exhibitions centring on non-African art generally cannot materialise without the sponsorship of non-African countries. Carman's research on seventeenth-century

Dutch and Flemish paintings in South Africa was to have culminated in a large exhibition of the best works from the various museums, but 'due to financial and logistical problems – mainly the absence of funds for the restoration and the preparation of some of the selected works – the proposed exhibition unfortunately could not take place' (Fransen 1994:4). Eventually, in 1996 on the occasion of the official visit of Queen Beatrix to South Africa, the Dutch paintings could be put on display in a travelling exhibition entitled 'Pictures From a Golden Age: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Paintings in South Africa', but only thanks to the financial support of the Netherlands Government (Fransen 1997b:3).⁹³ In the wake of this exhibition Fransen organised a special show on 'The Flemish Contribution', held in the Michaelis Collection, Cape Town, from 8 September to 20 November 1997. It featured Flemish paintings and works on paper from the Michaelis Collection and the South African National Gallery. The catalogue (Fransen 1997b) was sponsored by De Vlaamse Gemeenschap.

The goal of building national identity goes a long way to explain, but not to condone, this situation. Rankin's evaluation of the new national Museum of New Zealand offers interesting insights into this particular problem. She comments on the museum's 'single-minded focus on New Zealand' and observes that 'without engagement with other geographies and geologies, for example, exhibits lack resonance' (1999:119). Rankin also criticises the museum's 'avoidance of themes that would be negative' such as the New Zealand wars, resulting in an 'incomplete national story' (1999:120). The analogies should be acknowledged and it would be wise for both local curators and government officials allocating

funds to heed the warnings. The past has shown how impoverishing and patronising it is to favour one cultural tradition at the expense of others. Museum and gallery exhibits should, where the holdings allow it, be representative of as large a variety of cultural traditions as possible, if the ideals of multiculturalism are to be taken seriously.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Seventeenth-century Flemish paintings are hard to find in private possession in South Africa. It may be assumed that a portion of these collections found its way into local museums, another part is kept from the public by tight-lipped owners and that the rest has disappeared from the continent, depriving organisers of exhibitions of possible loans. The great majority of Flemish artworks in public collections was donated, bequeathed or given on loan by private collectors which may partially explain the generally inferior quality of the works. More than half of the paintings are works by unidentifiable artists – a condition which, though not uncommon in the light of seventeenth-century Flemish art production practices, accentuates the need for further research. Perhaps the lack of ‘museum quality’ pieces could have contributed to today’s general state of neglect of the Flemish heritage, but the major causes are a shift in museum policy and a restricted budget. The present concern with the formation of a national identity – not unlike General Smuts’s 90 years ago – intensified the prioritisation of (South) African art, concomitantly reducing, or even eliminating, funding for the preservation and exhibition of non-African art. As Rankin warns, such course of action is bound to cripple the construction of a complete national story. The multifaceted history of the

country needs to be exposed, even when it is a shameful past.

NOTES

- 1 The financial assistance of the Research and Bursaries Committee of the University of South Africa (Unisa) is hereby acknowledged. The opinions expressed, and conclusions arrived at are those of the author and are not to be attributed to Unisa. I also wish to thank Jillian Carman for reading the manuscript and providing useful information and suggestions.
- 2 I have also included the sixteenth-century and early eighteenth-century Flemish paintings in South African collections because there are too few of them to be studied on their own. Late eighteenth-, nineteenth- and twentieth-century imitations of or copies after seventeenth-century artists have been excluded due to their lack of art historical interest.
- 3 The more detailed background research notes, compiled with the help of the RKD, are lodged with each of the institutions. They are most useful in substantiating the attribution proposed by a specific person.
- 4 In my discussions with dealers in old master paintings, it transpired that many people persist in the naïve thinking that South Africa is an untapped source of colonial treasures waiting to be discovered. The dealers operate on this very principle: while buying their stock in Europe, they leave the European tourists with the belief that they have found – and purchased at a ridiculously low price – a long-lost treasure in this remote European outpost. In this way, the European paintings, almost without exception, find their way back to Europe again. Rare treasures that do turn up in South Africa today, are almost without exception sent for auction to Europe or America where they are likely to fetch higher prices.
- 5 Personal communication Nick Howarth, 6 April 2001.

- 6 See note 24.
- 7 David II Teniers, *Peasant Kermesse*. Oil on canvas, 78 × 106,5 cm. Signed bottom right on foot warmer: D.TENIERS.FEC. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. C298 (Klinge 1991:260–1, no. 89).
- 8 It is interesting to note that the Durban Art Gallery possesses a similar painting of *The Money Changers* after Quinten Metsys (oil on canvas laid on board, 92,2 × 78,5 cm. Durban, Durban Art Gallery, inv. no. 1902). The iconography of both works is identical, emphasising their modern facture.
- 9 Attributed to Paul Brill, *Landscape*. Oil on copper, 49,5 × 69,5 cm. Stellenbosch, Spier Manor House.
- 10 Attributed to Hendrik de Clerck, *Raising of Lazarus*. Oil on canvas, 210 × 182,5 cm. Stellenbosch, Spier Manor House.
- 11 Attributed to David II Teniers, *The Temptation of St Anthony*. Oil on panel, 36,2 × 54,7 cm. Stellenbosch, Spier Manor House.
- 12 See Carman (1994:17): 'Items from . . . well-known (private) collections are located today in South African museums.'
- 13 Studio of Pieter Coecke van Aelst, *Descent of the Holy Ghost*. Oil on panel, 83,8 × 62,2 cm. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 62/2. Formerly collection Dr Americo Gigli, Rome; purchased in 1962 (Carman 1994:84, 116 (as P Coecke); Fransen 1997:94–5, cat. no. 11, pl. X).
- 14 As pointed out to me by Carman, there are, of course, exceptions, but generally there are many more loans from South African institutions to Europe. She is of the opinion that there is a huge amount of conservative prejudice in many European and North American museums, and that the unwillingness to lend is only understandable in terms of an unwillingness to share with an African country which (in a conservative view) is synonymous with poor museum practice (personal communication Jillian Carman, 23 June 2001).
- 15 Attributed to Joos van Cleve, *Virgin with Saviour*. Oil on panel, 32,5 × 24 cm. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, no. 362. Donated by Lady Michaelis in 1932/3 (Carman 1994:84).
- 16 Workshop of Joos van Cleve, *Saint Anne with the Virgin and Child*. Oil on panel, 56,7 × 40,4 cm. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, no. 66/14. Purchased from E. van Schach in 1966 (Carman 1994:84).
- 17 Caterina van Hemessen, *Self-portrait* (1548). Oil on panel, 31,1 × 24,4 cm. Signed, inscribed and dated top left: EGO CATERINA DE HEMESSEN ME PINXI 1548 ETATIS SVAE 20. Inscription bottom left: 193. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 62/1. Formerly collection Ms Orlando Gunning; Gallery Leonard Koetser, London, 1946–8; collection Dr C. Dunscombe, Durban; purchased in 1962 (Carman 1994:84; Fransen 1997:108–9, cat. no. 26).
- 18 Attributed to the Master of the Retable of Gustrow, *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* (c. 1540). Oil on panel, 33,4 × 27 cm. Inscription bottom centre: .s.kAthrinA. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, no. 66/13. Purchased from Mr E. von Schach (Fransen 1997b:24).
- 19 Manner of the Master of Saint-Sang, *The Mocking of Christ*. Oil on panel, 26,7 × 21 cm. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, no. 192 (Fransen 1997b:23).
- 20 Follower of Pieter Coecke van Aelst, *Madonna and Child*. Oil on panel, 87 × 54,8 cm. Durban, Durban Art Gallery, no. 1598. Purchased from Frère Jean Marie, Oosterhout, Netherlands, in 1967 (Carman 1994:84, 117). For all intents and purposes, the Durban Art Gallery's other sixteenth-century painting attributed to the Flemish school could also have been put on display: *Eliezar and Rebecca at the Well* (1550–1575). Oil

- on panel, 74,1 × 138,9 cm. Durban, Durban Art Gallery, no. 1261. Purchased from D. R. Boyce, Durban, in 1956. Previously attributed to Jacques d'Arthois as *The Thirsty Traveller* (Carman 1994:85, 117).
- 21 The numbers of paintings arrived at in the following survey are based on Carman's 1994 checklist.
- 22 Although the standard museum policy is to acquire works to build on and expand existing holdings, it is strange that both the Durban Art Gallery and the Michaelis Collection each purchased two sixteenth-century paintings (Durban Art Gallery: see note 20; Michaelis Collection: see notes 13 and 17), even though there were no comparable works in their collections to begin with.
- 23 The original collection of 47 works sold by Lane changed in numbers due to the withdrawal of a contested Rembrandt, which was exchanged for 22 other seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish paintings (Carman 1994:12; Stevenson 1997:39).
- 24 Carman (1999:55) also makes the observation that the Randlord patrons were not interested in giving artworks from their personal collections. According to Stevenson (1997:30-31), 'the Randlords' reluctance to include art in their benefactions to South Africa derives from their origins and aspirations. (Even amongst) those Randlords (who were) South African born . . . considered Britain as their "home" . . . the prevailing attitude was that art and stately homes were reserved for England.'
- 25 Max Michaelis bought the Lane Collection in November 1912 and donated it to the Union Government in 1914 (the formal deed of donation is dated 16 May 1914). The Old Town House was chosen to accommodate the Michaelis gift and on 2 October 1916, the art gallery was opened to the public, although it was only formally inaugurated on 8 May 1917 (Fransen 1997:20, 23).
- 26 Although mention is only made of the 'Dutch' population, it must be borne in mind that the Dutch settlers comprised many people from Flanders.
- 27 The collection was described as displaying the Dutchmen's and Englishmen's affinity for temperament and character – the Dutch as the makers and the English as the collectors or patrons of these artworks (Stevenson 1997:34–5).
- 28 Personal communication Jillian Carman, 23 June 2001.
- 29 Opposition to the Lady Michaelis gift resurfaced and intensified in the 1940s under the directorship of Edward Roworth, culminating in the sale of 19 paintings of the gift between 1944 and 1947. For more details, see Carman 1994:98–100.
- 30 Current attributions of paintings in public collections are generally based on Carman's checklist of 1994, except where they have been convincingly refuted in later publications.
- 31 Carman (1994:19) uses these standard qualifications to indicate the following: studio of: painted under the artist's supervision; school of/circle of: close in style, place and time to the artist's work; follower of/style of: close to the artist's style, though probably made outside the artist's sphere; copy after: copy made in the seventeenth century, not necessarily under the artist's supervision.
- 32 In the following references to artworks, the list of literature has been limited to Carman (1994) and, if applicable, Fransen (1997) in which full details of sources are available.
- 33 Frans Snyders, *Concert of Birds*, c. 1620–1630. Oil on canvas, 134,6 × 175,3 cm. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 14/54. Formerly collection Sir Hugh Lane, London; donated by Max Michaelis in 1914 (Carman 1994:61, 116; Fransen 1997:141–2, cat. no. 61, pl. XLI).

- 34 Cornelis de Vos, *Portrait of Antoni van der Gouwe*. Oil on canvas, 116 × 88 cm. Signed and inscribed on note in right hand: Antoni vander Go . . . tot Ant(werpen?). Pretoria, Pretoria Art Museum, no. D1501. Donated by Lady Michaelis in 1932/3 (Carman 1994:71, 118).
- 35 David II Teniers, *Interior of a Peasant Dwelling*, early 1640s. Oil on canvas, 55,9 × 85,1 cm. Signed bottom left: D. TENIERS. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 33/17. Given on loan by Max Michaelis in 1923; donated by Lady Michaelis in 1933 (Carman 1994:64, 116; Fransen 1997:148, cat. no. 68, pl. XLIII).
- 36 School of Peter Paul Rubens, *Portrait of Count de Werve*. Oil on canvas, 114 × 91,4 cm. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, Natale Labia Museum, no. 18. Formerly collection of Sir Joseph Robinson; donated by Count Labia in 1988 (on loan since 1975) (Carman 1994:59, 117).
- 37 School of Peter Paul Rubens, *The Apostle James with Flaming Sword (Battle Against the Moors)*. Oil on copper, 41 × 55 cm. Pretoria, Pretoria Art Museum, no. R1001. Donated by Lady Michaelis in 1932/3 (Carman 1994:59, 118).
- 38 Studio of Anthony van Dyck, *Portrait of Johan Oxenstierna*, c. 1633. Oil on canvas, 209,6 × 128,3 cm. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 14/18. Formerly collection of Sir Hugh Lane, London; donated by Max Michaelis in 1914 (Carman 1994:34, 116; Fransen 1997:100–01, cat. no. 18, pl. XV).
- 39 Studio of Anthony van Dyck, *Portrait of Ferdinand de Boisschot, Lord of Saventhem*, 1630. Oil on canvas, 113 × 90 cm. Inscription top left: ÆTATIS . SVE . 59 . ANNO.1630. Pretoria, Pretoria Art Museum, no. V1203. Formerly collection of Max Rothschild, Sackville Gallery, London; collection of Dr J. S. Maynard, London; donated by Lady Michaelis in 1932/3 (Carman 1994:34, 118).
- 40 School of Anthony van Dyck, *Princess Mary, Daughter of Charles I*. Oil on canvas, 66 × 50 cm. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, Natale Labia Museum, no. 21. Formerly collection Sir Joseph Robinson; donated by Count Labia in 1988 (on loan since 1975) (Carman 1994:34, 117).
- 41 Copy after Anthony van Dyck, *Henrietta Maria, Queen of England*. Oil on canvas, 216 × 140 cm. Inscription middle right: Charles the 2nd s Queen. By Vandyke. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection. On loan from Sir Rupert Bromley since 1982. A copy, with slight variations, of the painting in the Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten, Potsdam (Carman 1994:35, 116).
- 42 Copy after Anthony van Dyck, *Christ and the Penitent Sinners*. Oil on canvas, 112 × 158 cm. Pretoria, Pretoria Art Museum, no. V1204. Donated by Lady Michaelis in 1932/3. Copy after van Dyck's painting in the Bayerische Staatsgemälde Sammlungen, Alte Pinakothek, Munich (Carman 1994:35, 118).
- 43 Follower of Jacob Jordaens, *Birth of Christ (Adoration of the Shepherds)*. Oil on panel, 35 × 26 cm. Pretoria, Pretoria Art Museum, no. J0601. Donated by Lady Michaelis in 1932/3 (Carman 1994:44, 118). I suggest that the title of this work is *Adoration of the Shepherds*, especially in view of the fact that the visitors are depicted as rural types in reverential attitudes bringing simple gifts (Hall 1974:6).
- 44 Copy after Jacob Jordaens, *Bacchus*. Oil on panel, 122 × 93 cm. Pretoria, Pretoria Art Museum, no. J0501. Donated by Lady Michaelis in 1932/3. A copy after the painting in the E. Lanfranconi collection (Auction Cologne, 21 Oct 1895, no. 84) (Carman 1994:44, 118).
- 45 Johannes Antonius van der Baren, *Flowers in a Vase*. Oil on panel, 51 × 39,2 cm. Johannesburg, Johannesburg Art Gallery, no. 541. Purchased from Hoogendijk, Amsterdam in 1959 (Carman 1994:20, 117).
- 46 Thomas Willeboirts (called Bosschaert), *The Assumption of the Virgin*, c. 1652. Oil on panel,

- 64,2 × 42,8 cm. Johannesburg, Johannesburg Art Gallery, no. 530. Formerly with the Arcade Gallery, London; purchased from Duits, London, in 1959 (Carman 1994:75, 117).
- 47 Adam Willaerts, *The Man-o'-war 'Amsterdam' and Other Dutch Ships in Table Bay*, c. 1636. Oil on canvas, 93 × 132 cm. Signed bottom left corner: A. Willarts. Johannesburg, the Brenthurst Library, no. ART.184. Purchased from Sotheby's Johannesburg in 1984 (Carman 1994:74, 117).
- 48 Adriaen Frans Boudewijns and Peeter Bout, *Villagers Conversing on a Village Square*, late seventeenth century. Oil on canvas, 41,4 × 66,8 cm. Durban, Durban Art Gallery, no. 1653. Purchased from Frère Jean Marie, Oosterhout, Netherlands, in 1968 (Carman 1994:25, 117). Note that the title given by Carman, *Peasants Dancing on a Village Square*, is less accurate than the present title taken from the 1977 Durban Art Gallery catalogue.
- 49 Attributed to Adriaen Frans Boudewijns and Peeter Bout, *Harbour Scene with Figures*, late seventeenth century. Oil on canvas, 32,5 × 43,8 cm. Durban, Durban Art Gallery, no. 1845. Formerly Max Singewald collection, Leipzig; donated by Mrs E. J. Cornelius as part of the Ernest John Cornelius bequest in 1973 (Carman 1994:25, 117).
- 50 Attributed to Adriaen Frans Boudewijns and Peeter Bout, *Landscape with Cattle*. Oil on panel, 21 × 28,5 cm. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, the Humphreys Collection, no. 258. Attributed to Adriaen Frans Boudewijns and Peeter Bout, *Castle with Figures*. Oil on canvas, 29 × 43,8 cm. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, the Humphreys Collection, no. 265. Received on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd in 1977 (previously on loan since 1950s) (Carman 1994:25, 118).
- 51 Peeter Bout, *Angels Visiting the Shepherds*. Oil on panel, 49 × 37 cm. Durban, Durban Art Gallery, no. 1664. Presented as part of the Ernest John Cornelius bequest in 1969 (Carman 1994:26, 117).
- 52 Peeter I Neeffs, *Interior of a Church*, 16(3-)??. Oil on oak panel, 29 × 39,8 cm. Signed and dated on second pillar from right: P. NEEFS 16(3. . . ?). Pretoria, National Cultural History Museum, no. AC 387. Acquired before 1947 by the Oude Transvaalmuseum; transferred to the National Cultural History Museum in 1974 (Carman 1994:51, 118).
- 53 Peeter I Neeffs, *Interior of a Church*. Oil on canvas, 49 × 63,5 cm. Signed top right: DENAVDEN.NEEffS. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, no. 2. Donated by W B Humphreys in 1944/8 (Carman 1994:51, 118).
- 54 Jan I van Dalen, *Tambourine Player*, 1653. Oil on canvas, 72,4 × 57,8 cm. Signed and dated to right of tambourine: J.v.d.f.1653. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 33/3. Given on loan in 1923 by Max Michaelis; donated by Lady Michaelis in 1933 (Carman 1994:31, 116; Fransen 1997:96-7, cat. no. 13).
- 55 Jacob Fopsen van Es, *Still Life with Plums and Carnations*. Oil on panel, 30,8 × 41,9 cm. Signed bottom left on edge of table: IACOB. VAN.ES. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 14/19. Formerly collection Arthur Kay, Glasgow; collection Sir Hugh Lane, London; donated by Max Michaelis in 1914 (Carman 1994:35, 116; De Maere & Wabbes 1994:146, 497; Fransen 1997:101-02, cat. no. 19, pl. XVI).
- 56 Attributed to Justus Sustermans, *Portrait of Tomassa Gavelli*. Oil on canvas, 99,7 × 71,4 cm. Inscription top right: Tomassa Gavelli Istitutrice del multiplico de Casa Olivieri. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 33/14. Given on loan by Max Michaelis in 1923; donated by Lady Michaelis in 1933 (Carman 1994:88, 116 (as Italian school, J Sustermans); Fransen 1997:145, cat. no. 65).
- 57 Hendrik Govaerts, *Musical Party*, c. 1720. Oil on canvas, 59 × 50,5 cm. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, no. 354. Donated by Lady

- Michaelis in 1932/3 (Carman 1994:37, 116). Note that Fransen (1997b:22) still accepts the earlier attribution of this work to Jan Joseph II Horemans (Antwerp, 1714 – after 1790).
- 58 Adriaen Gryef, *Dogs and Dead Game*. Oil on panel, 24,5 × 33 cm. Signed bottom left: A Gryef f. Cape Town, South African National Gallery, no. 1750. Bequeathed by Sir Abe Bailey in 1940/7 (Carman 1994:39, 117).
- 59 Jean-Pierre Verdussen, *Man on Horse*. Oil on canvas, 48 × 64 cm. Signed bottom right: JP (intertwined). Verdussen F Roma. Cape Town, South African Cultural History Museum, Groot Constantia, no. C48/1. Donated by Alfred A. de Pass in 1948 (Carman 1994:85, 116).
- 60 Attributed to Frans II Francken, *Salome with the Head of John the Baptist*. Oil on panel, 43,7 × 74 cm. Durban, Durban Art Gallery, no. 1665. Presented as part of the Ernest John Cornelius bequest in 1969 (Carman 1994:36, 117).
- 61 Attributed to Gaspard de Crayer, *Portrait of a Lady*. Oil on canvas, 62,7 × 53 cm. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, the Humphreys Collection, no. 256. Received on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd in 1977 (previously on loan since 1950s) (Carman 1994:29, 118).
- 62 Attributed to Paul de Vos, *Fighting Cats*. Oil on canvas, 111,5 × 163 cm. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, no. 3. Donated by W. B. Humphreys in 1944/8 (Carman 1994:72, 118).
- 63 Attributed to Joos de Momper, *Mountain Landscape*. Oil on panel, 44,4 × 64,1 cm. Durban, Durban Art Gallery, no. 429. Donated by Col. R. H. Whitwell in 1920 (Carman 1994:49, 117). It must be noted, however, that this painting has been identified by Klaus Ertz (1986:282) as a work of Frans de Momper.
- 64 Attributed to Gillis I Peeters, *Sea Scene with Ruins*. Oil on panel, 32,5 × 41 cm. Pretoria, Pretoria Art Museum, no. P1601. Donated by Lady Michaelis in 1932/3 (Carman 1994:54, 118).
- 65 Attributed to Lodewijck de Vadder with figures after or by David II Teniers, *Hilly Landscape*. Oil on panel, 38 × 52 cm. Cape Town, South African Cultural History Museum, Groot Constantia, no. C38/3. Donated by Alfred A. de Pass in 1938 (Carman 1994:66, 116).
- 66 Attributed to Jacob Ferdinand Saeys, *Scene at a Palladian Villa*. Oil on canvas, 84 × 120 cm. Pretoria, Pretoria Art Museum, no. 83/01. Purchased from Mrs I. Borello in 1983 (on loan prior to this) (Carman 1994:60, 118).
- 67 Attributed to Gaspar Peeter II Verbruggen, *Still Life with Flowers*. Oil on canvas, 146,2 × 113,2 cm. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, the Humphreys Collection, no. 261. Received on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd in 1977 (previously on loan since 1950s) (Carman 1994:69, 118).
- 68 Attributed to Louis de Caullery, *Conversation Piece*. Oil on panel, 56,2 × 87 cm. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, the Humphreys Collection, no. 254. Received on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd in 1977 (previously on loan since 1950s) (Carman 1994:28, 118).
- 69 Attributed to I. van Venne, *The Flight into Egypt*. Oil on canvas, 79,6 × 111 cm. Johannesburg, Johannesburg Art Gallery, no. 531. Purchased from Dr W. Katz, London, in 1959 (Carman 1994:68, 117).
- 70 Attributed to Christiaan Luycks, *Still Life with Fish*. Oil on canvas, 71 × 89 cm. Johannesburg, Johannesburg Art Gallery, no. 5. Bequeathed by Dr F. V. Engelenburg in 1939 (Carman 1994:46, 117).
- 71 Attributed to W. Mertens, *Still Life with Fruit*. Oil on canvas, 78 × 108,5 cm. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, the Humphreys Collection, no. 260. Received on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd in 1977 (previously on loan since 1950s) (Carman 1994:47, 118).
- 72 See note 35.
- 73 Studio of David II Teniers, *The Herdsman* ('Le

- berger rêveur*'), 1640s. Oil on canvas, 41,3 × 55,9 cm. Signed on the rock next to the herdsman's right leg: DTENIERS. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 14/57. Formerly collection Sir Hugh Lane, London; donated by Max Michaelis in 1914 (Carman 1994:65 (as style of D. II Teniers), 116; Fransen 1997:149, cat. no. 69).
- 74 David II Teniers, *Le berger rêveur*. Oil on panel, 37 × 27 cm. Signed bottom left: D.TENIERS.FEC. Wanas (Sweden), Count Carl-Alexander Wachtmeister (Klinge 1991:244–6, no. 84A).
- 75 Copy after David II Teniers, *The Prodigal Son*. Oil on panel, 66 × 91,4 cm. Cape Town, Michaelis Collection, no. 14/58. Formerly collection Sir Hugh Lane, London; donated by Max Michaelis in 1914 (Carman 1994:65 (as studio of D. II Teniers), 116; Fransen 1997:149–150, cat. no. 70).
- 76 Copy after David II Teniers, *Two Hermits: Anthony and Paul*. Oil on copper, 16 × 21 cm. Pretoria, Pretoria Art Museum, no. T0701. Donated by Lady Michaelis in 1932/3 (Carman 1994:65 (as style of David II Teniers), 118).
- 77 David II Teniers, *The Banquet of the Prodigal Son*. Oil on copper, 70 × 89 cm. Signed and dated on the rock bottom right: DAVID.TENIERS.FEC AN 1644. Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. 1878 (Klinge 1991:124–125, no. 37).
- 78 David II Teniers, *Saints Paulus and Anthony*. Oil on canvas, 63,5 × 97,5 cm. Signed on a rock at the middle bottom: D. TENIERS.F. London, private collection (Klinge 1991:218–19, no. 75).
- 79 Style of David II Teniers, *Barrack Room Scene*. Oil on panel, 44,8 × 57,2 cm. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, the Humphreys Collection, no. 277. Received on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd in 1977 (previously on loan since 1950s) (Carman 1994:65, 118).
- 80 David II Teniers, *The Release of Peter from Prison*. Oil on copper, 58 × 8 cm. Signed bottom right: D TENIERS F. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 1077 (Klinge 1991:78–9, no. 21).
- 81 Style of David II Teniers, *Interior with Figures*. Oil on canvas, 45 × 34,6 cm. Kimberley, William Humphreys Art Gallery, the Humphreys Collection, no. 294. Received on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd in 1977 (previously on loan since 1950s) (Carman 1994:65, 118).
- 82 David II Teniers, *Le bonnet vert*. Oil on panel, 39,4 × 37,3 cm. Signed bottom right: D TENIERS F. Lugano, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection (Klinge 1991:56–57, no. 13).
- 83 '... der Künstler hat nach dem heutigen Stand der Forschung ... nie ein Werk eigenhändig wiederholt' (Klinge 1994:105).
- 84 See Duverger, for example 1993, vol. 7.
- 85 Funds to equip this room to these standards were supplied by the Dutch Government in 1996 in order for the Michaelis Collection to receive the 1996–7 travelling Dutch exhibition (personal communication Jillian Carman, 23 June 2001). See later for a discussion of the exhibition.
- 86 An exception are the Dutch paintings which were part of the 1996–7 travelling exhibition. Workshops with a Dutch and local painting restorers were conducted at the Johannesburg Art Gallery and the Michaelis Collection to prepare the paintings for the exhibition. Some additional Michaelis pictures were also restored. In addition, the Dutch restorer assisted in the design of state-of-the-art travelling cases, funded by the Dutch Government (personal communication Jillian Carman, 23 June 2001).
- 87 The paintings in the Kimberley Art Gallery are in a good, stable condition which can directly be related to the fact that they are on loan from De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd. The legal agreement stipulates that the owner covers the largest part of the costs of any treatment deemed necessary (personal communication Ann Pretorius, 13 June 2001).
- 88 David II Teniers, *Interior of an Inn*. Oil on panel, 17,8 × 14 cm. Cape Town, South African Cultural History Museum, no. L65/733. Herring

- Bequest Institute, Green Point; City Hall, Cape Town (Carman 1994:97, 116). Lent to the Michaelis collection in 1972 and stolen in November 1980. Another work of the school of Rembrandt was stolen on 8 August 1973 (Carman 1994:97).
- 89 French school, eighteenth century?, *Portrait of a Youth*. Oil on panel, 23 × 18,5 cm. Johannesburg, Johannesburg Art Gallery, no. 533. Purchased from Rozendaal, London in 1959. According to the RKD, this is probably an eighteenth-century French replica of a Flemish (Rubens?) painting. Stolen on 24 April 1990 (Carman 1994:97).
- 90 Two works were stolen in 1994: Style of Theobald Michau, *A Man and a Boy in a Shopfront*, nineteenth or twentieth century. Oil on copper, 18,7 × 15,6 cm. Inscribed: Michold. Pretoria, National Cultural History Museum, Sammy Marks House, no. SM 928 (Carman 1994:90, 118); and style of David II Teniers, *Three Men Playing Backgammon. A Tavern Scene*, nineteenth or twentieth century. Oil on copper, 18,7 × 15,6 cm. Inscribed: Tenniers. Pretoria, National Cultural History Museum, Sammy Marks House, no. SM 927 (Carman 1994:93, 118).
- 91 See Nettleton (1995) for a discussion of the most important events.
- 92 For example, the 1996 policy document of the South African National Gallery states that its aims are 'to build a national collection which reflects and reveals the African and Western roots of South African art, as well as the range and diversity of contemporary visual art production' (http://www.museums.org.za/sang/collect/acq_pol.htm).
- 93 The funding of the Dutch government covered various areas: see notes 85 and 86.
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