

AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY

QUARTERLY

Number Eighteen 1961



PIETER BRUEGHEL

*A village fair*

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## EDITORIAL

WE MUST APOLOGISE for the late issue of this Quarterly. However, it includes information on some of the Old Master acquisitions made this year. Others will be noticed in the following issue.

The Mackelvie Trustees have added the BRUEGHEL THE YOUNGER—an example of the Trust's interest in acquiring important works for the collection.

We also have to thank Mr N. B. Spencer once more for the generous gift of the Paolini. We hope his example may be followed by other private individuals interested in augmenting the collection with paintings of quality.

Most of these new acquisitions are the result of the Director's recent visit to Europe. PIETER BRUEGHEL THE YOUNGER (1564-1638) Flemish

A VILLAGE FAIR (Cover)

(Festival in honour of St Hubert & St Anthony)

Oil on panel 44 x 65 ins

Signed P. (?) BRUEGHEL

Purchased by the Mackelvie Trust, 1961

This painting was formerly in the collection of Dr C. J. K. van Aalst which was sold at Christies in 1. 4. 60 (14). It was in that collection certainly from Feb 1931 (inventory ticket on the stretcher) while a certificated photograph by Gustav Gliick is dated 1929?

There are several versions of this painting all of which seem to vary in detail. The best known, dated 1632 is in the Fitzwilliam (1192) (rpr *Catalogue of Paintings* 1. 1960. P1.8) an-

other in the Hermitage (rpr *A Short Guide* 1955 P1.66). The Auckland version differs principally in the absence of the group fighting in the bottom left hand corner. Other versions in public collections are at Perth, Scotland and in the Gemalde Gallery, Vienna, while other variants have appeared from time to time in the European art market.

Gerson (*Art and Architecture in Belgium* 1600-1800 Pelican p.56) refers to two series of variants—one with the stage on the left (Amsterdam 425a) is often attributed to Pieter Balten. The dates of the versions range between 1624 to 1635.

Although Pieter II often made use of his father's compositions, his VILLAGE FAIR is considered to be his own invention.

Pieter Brueghel was five when his eminent father died, so that he received no training from him. He became a master in 1585 in Antwerp after being a pupil of van Coninxloo and probably P. Goetkint.

Pieter II shows little sign of development in his painting, working as he did in the transitional period before Northern Baroque seriously evolved under Rubens. Although he lacked the profundity of his father, he was capable of making similar comments on human behaviour and attitudes as an examination of his painting will show. Particularly pointed is the attention being given to the play—a Flemish comedy *Een Clayte van Playerwater* (the Trick Water Farce) and the lack of interest in the procession carrying the effigies of St Hubert and St Anthony.



HENDRIK MOMMERS (1623-1693) Dutch

**LANDSCAPE WITH A VEGETABLE MARKET**

Oil on canvas 31i x 25fins

Purchased 1961

Mommers was first a pupil of Nicholas Berchem in Haarlem and had as a fellow pupil Karel du Jardin. As Berchem only became a master in the Haarlem Guild in 1642 and is recorded to have been in Rome by the winter of 1642-3, it is probable that his pupils accompanied him, for Mommers is recorded as probably being in Rome before 1647. While in

Rome Mommers joined the Schildersbent, a local guild for Dutch painters, which had been founded in 1623. It was the practice with new members for a mock priest to baptise them with wine and give them a nickname. Mommers was given the name of Meleager.

By 1647, he was back in Haarlem when he became a master in the Guild. About 1655 he moved to Amsterdam where he died in 1693.

Although his style is fairly close to du Jardin, it has individual characteristics, particularly in the careful variations in texture which he employs.



PIETRO PAOLINI (1603-1681/2) Italian  
THE FORTUNE TELLER

Oil on canvas 43 x 68ins

Presented by Mr N. B. Spencer, 1961

Paolini painted in Lucca, but spent some years in Rome (where he had first gone as a pupil of Caroselli, who had been in turn a pupil of Caravaggio, but as a note on this painting (*Burlington Magazine* 1953. Dec Supplement Pl.XI) suggests. Northern Italian influences are as strong as the Caravaggesque.

The painting was attributed to Paolini by Dr Herman Voss in 1954, and although Paolini's work is best seen in Lucca, two portraits, one in the Vatican and the other with Messrs Agnew's London, point to the same hand.

The *Burlington* note suggests a date a little earlier than 1636, on the evidence of a signed and dated work MYSTIC MARRIAGE OF ST CATHERINE formerly in the Carroll Gallery.

Most accounts state that Paolini spent thirty years in Rome and then returned to Lucca, where he opened a school.

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#### FURTHER RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Among other recent acquisitions, the following will be noticed in our next issue

FRANCESCO BASSANO THE YOUNGER 1559-1592) Italian

LANDSCAPE WITH PEASANTS

Oil on Canvas. 30 x 43ins. Mackelvie Collection

JAN ASSELYN (1610-1652) Dutch

LANDSCAPE WITH A CASTLE

Oil on Panel 24 x 30ins

REMBRANDT VAN RIJN (1606-1669) Dutch

CHRIST AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA

Etching 122 x 105mm

JACQUES CALLOT (1592-1635) French

THE LITTLE TRELIS Etching 76 x 177mm

FRANCISCO GOYA (1746-1828) Spanish

Etchings from *Los Caprichos*; *Disasters of War*; the *Tauromachia*.

**GIAMBATTISTA PIRANESI (1720-1778)**

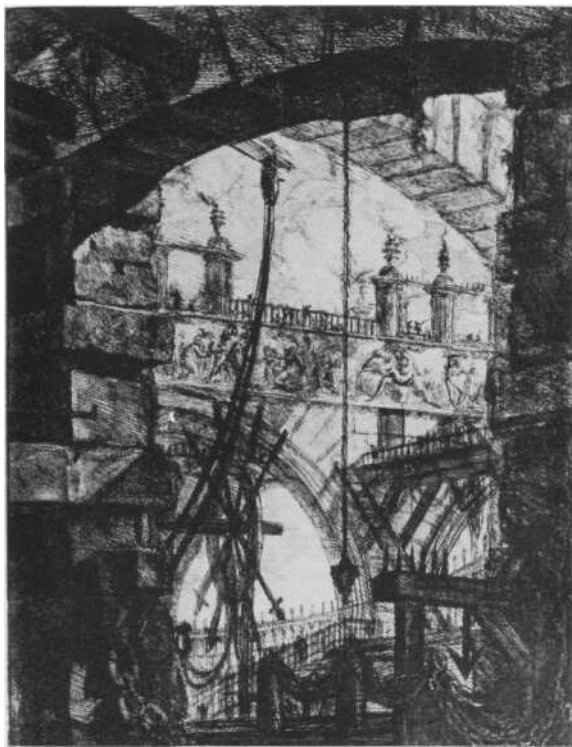
A LOFTY ARCH WITH VISTA ON TO AN ARCADE

Etching 415 x 550 mm. H 4 n

Purchased 1961

This is No.4 of the sixteen plates entitled *Careen D'Invenzione* (The Prisons) the second edition of which was issued by Piranesi about 1760 while the first edition having only 14 plates was issued between 1745 and 1750. Drawings in the same manner as the *Careen* exist in the Kunsthalle Hamburg, and these are considered to be c 1743/4/5 (Thomas *The Drawings of Piranesi* p 37).

The drama of the vault had exercised the imaginations of a number of Venetian artists, amongst them Marco Ricci, Canaletto and Guardi. Although dramatic in conception the *Carceri* were not intended as stage sets as Piranesi infers in his title to the first edition *Invenzione Capric . . .* These romantic architectural phantasies are considered to be the finest works of Piranesi.



**MARCO RICCI (1676-1729) Italian**

A ROCKY LANDSCAPE WITH FIGURES

Oil on canvas 25 x 19ins

Purchased 1960-61

This dramatic landscape is typical of Ricci's work, relevant comparisons can be found in *THE CASCADE* in the Accademia, Venice, and in the background of *THE TEMPTATION OF ST ANTHONY* in the Gallerie di Baviera, Monaco. Ricci was, next to Salvator Rosa, the most important innovator of the romantic or picturesque landscape in the 18th century.

Ricci was a nephew of Scbastiano Ricci the great decorator painter, and both visited England twice between 1708 and 1716. Ricci owed much of his painterly style to Magnasco, which one can see quite clearly in this painting, particularly the highly romantic relationship of the figures to their dramatic surroundings. In this connection it is worth noting Marco's interest in stage design in which he was active for a great part of his life.





GIULIO CLOVIO (149&-157SI Italian  
 THE PROPHET ISAIAH AND KING AHAZ (squared  
 for transfer)

THE VISITATION

Pen and bistre with bistre and grey wash  
 heightened with white. Identical size 13 x  
 9 ins

Insc. Julio Clovio (not contemporary)

These two drawings by Clovio come from a  
 small group of Old Master drawings in the  
 Mackelvie collection. Both are probably pre-  
 paratory drawings for the miniatures of the  
*Farnesz Hours* (J. Pierpoint Morgan Library  
 New York. M.69), of which the ISAIAH AND  
 AHAZ is reproduced above. The Isaiah and  
 King Ahaz may be considered particular!}- as  
 a preparatory drawing, for as Mr Plummer of  
 the Library points out, traces of the same  
 transfer grid appear in the blank lower car-  
 touche of the miniature. As will be seen the

drawing differs in detail from the finished  
 miniature — differences unlikely to come from  
 a copyist.

Clovio, the most eminent miniaturist of his  
 time, was born in Croatia with the name of  
 Glovicic. which he italianised on his arrival in  
 Venice in 1516. In 1524 he went to Buda.  
 escaping to Rome when the Turks invaded  
 Hungary. However at the sack of Rome he was  
 captured and tortured. He fled to Mantua  
 where he entered a monastery. Until his death  
 in Rome he lived and worked in many towns  
 under the patronage of Cardinal Grimani and  
 later Cardinal Farnese.

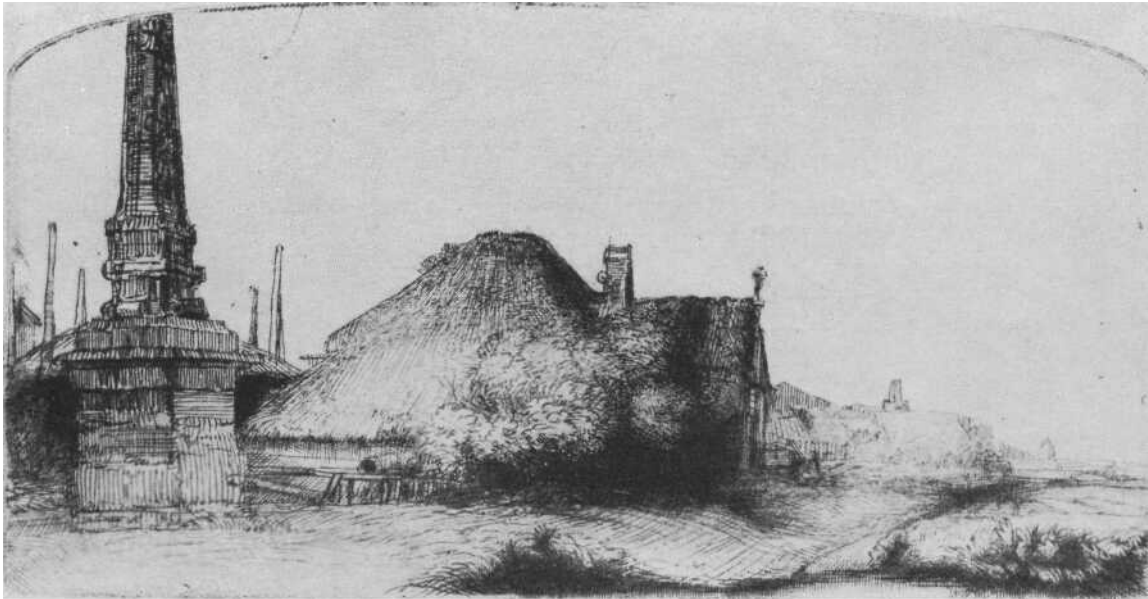
THE FARNESE HOURS, which Vasari describes  
 in detail are dated 1546 and were prepared for  
 Cardinal Alessandro Farnese. Clovio's style  
 was largely influenced by Giulio Romano  
 whom he knew in Mantua, and by Michel-  
 angelo.

REMBRANDT VAN RIJN (1606-1669) Dutch  
THREE HEADS OF WOMEN, ONE ASLEEP II. 152  
Etching H2 x 97mm only state  
Signed and dated Rembrandt 1637

LANDSCAPE WITH AN OBELISK H. 243  
Etching 83 x 160mm 2nd state  
Purchased 1960

Of these two etchings the THREE HEADS OF WOMEN is the most well known. It was made in 1637 at the same time as other similar studies of women, particularly Saskia the artist's wife. Munz suggests that likely prototypes of these studies were to be found in instruction books for artists.

The landscape with an obelisk comes later in Rembrandt's career—c 1650. An interesting feature is its arched top which it shares with a number of other landscapes of this period, LANDSCAPE WITH A HAY CART (Mz. 159) LANDSCAPE WITH A SQUARE TOWER (Mz. 158) and LANDSCAPE WITH THREE GABLED COTTAGES (Mz.163). The Obelisk is the first landscape etching by Rembrandt to enter the collection.



exhibition calendar

# International Prints

1 SEPTEMBER 1961

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