

11. Signed: J. Geerardi. Illustrated in O. Granberg, *Trésors d'Art en Suède*, Stockholm 1911, vol. 1, no. 12, as in the F. Rappe collection, Stockholm.

12. Troyes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. no. D.53. 1 (information supplied by Miss M. Wijnands, Amsterdam, who is working there as a trainee on a catalogue of the Dutch paintings). The painting and a companion piece, not illustrated, were known earlier from a sale in Paris on 12 May 1939, where both were offered as works by De Heem. Also known from the exhibition catalogue, *Le siècle de Rubens dans les collections publiques françaises*, Paris (Grand Palais) 1977/78, p. 281, as ascribed to A. Benedetti.

13. Signed and dated 1646, Leningrad, Hermitage, inv. no. 3431. In 1983 S. Segal published a still life by Jacob Marrel of the same composition, and convincingly presumed it to derive from an unknown work by De Heem (exhibition *A Fruitful Past*, Amsterdam & Brunswick 1983, cat. no. 21).

14. Bergström suggested ca. 1646 as the date of this piece, but to my mind it must have been painted at least a few years later, probably in the early 1650s (I. Bergström, *Dutch Still-Life Painting in the Seventeenth Century*, New York 1956, p. 310, note 17). The painting already clearly displays De Heem's tendency at that time to shift the elements of his composition closer together, while the lighting becomes harsher as well.

15. Examples of paintings which have been "adjusted" in a comparable way were discussed by J. Held, "Alteration and Mutilation of Works of Art" (paper read at Duke University, 19 April 1962); published in *South Atlantic Quarterly* 62 (Winter 1963).

An attribution to Gerard Wigmana

by Jim van der Meer Mohr

In a recent article in *Oud Holland*, C. Wansink published works by Hieronymus van der Mij. [1] The discussion of these paintings shows how often Van der Mij's style has been confused with that of his teacher Willem van Mieris. It is difficult to identify the author of many works, not only by Van der Mij but also by other pupils and followers of Van Mieris, and in many cases traditional attributions have to be corrected. This also applies to a painting which was recently submitted to me for examination, and on which only the date is legible: 1740. In my opinion the work can definitely be attributed to Gerard Wigmana (fig. 1). [2]



1. Here identified as by Gerard Wigmana, *Scholar in his Study*, dated 1740. Panel, 42x32 cm. Netherlands, private collection

There is little information on this master, who is known mainly for his history paintings, five of which belong to Dutch museums. [3] Theodoor von Frimmel devoted a study to him in the early years of this century, [4] and it was not until 1969 that another article appeared. The author, B. van Haersma Buma, presented numerous new data, mostly of a biographical nature. [5] Gerard Wigmana was born in the Frisian town of Workum on 17 September 1673; he served as apprentice to Joachim Burmeister and Jelle Sybrandi, and presumably also to Willem van Mieris, although no conclusive evidence of the latter has yet been found. [6] Around 1700 he was living in Rome, where he was nicknamed the "Frisian Raphael," "because he always busied himself speaking of Raphael, Titian, Giulio Romano and other Italian heroes of art, and imagined himself to be already far advanced in their great manner of drawing; for whenever he showed any of his pictures he would say: this is how Raphael drew, or how Raphael painted." [7] After his sojourn in Italy he lived in Amsterdam, where he married Petronella Maria van der Lely on 9 July 1707. His paintings did not sell well in his own lifetime, partly because the prices he charged were far too high. The lack of buyers actually induced him to travel to London in the hope of selling his work there. In 1738 he is listed as a member of the Utrecht painters' guild. He died on 27 May 1741 in Amsterdam. His work clearly reveals the influence of Willem van Mieris. In addition to his history paintings, a small number of genre pieces and portraits are known.



Gerard Wigmana, A Scholar in a Niche, signed and dated 1730. Panel, 39 x30 cm. Leeuwarden. Art dealer Beeling



Gerard Wigmana, A Scholar in a Niche Holding Spectacles, signed. Panel, 37.5x28 cm. Previously The Hague, Van Panhuys-Hubert Collection (1942)

The painting that concerns us here, which was auctioned in Amsterdam in 1948 as a Willem van Mieris,[8] displays all the characteristics of Wigmana: the meticulous rendering of the figures and their surroundings, the satiny glow of the painting as a whole, and what has recently been aptly described as "vermicelli-like" folds of the costumes and draperies. [9] The date 1740 indicates that the picture was painted just before the artist's death. It shows a scholar engrossed in thought, sitting before the fireplace in his study, his head and right arm leaning on the arm of the chair. In his left hand he holds a book, a pile of books lies on the table next to him; a maidservant behind him draws the curtain aside as if to tell him something.

This type of depiction of scholars is found elsewhere in Wigmana's oeuvre. Another painting by his hand of a scholar in a niche, at present with a Frisian art dealer (fig. 2)[10] is signed and dated "Wigmana fecit 1730". The execution is identical to that of fig. 1. Note the rather artificially crumpled cap and the gossamer beard. The date, too, is written in the same, highly precise manner. A slightly different version of fig. 2 was in the Van Panhuys-Hubert Collection in The Hague in 1942 (fig. 3). [11] The same scholar is now shown holding a pair of spectacles in his hand, and the crack in the windowsill is also different. The cap and beard are both equally characteristic of this painter.



4. Gerard Wigmans, *A Dentist and a Woman in a Niche*, dated (17)39. Panel, 32 x 25.5 cm. Netherlands, private collection

The caryatids under the mantelpiece in the highly detailed rendering of the interior in fig. 1 are quite remarkable. The stone does not appear to be any harder than the face of the maidservant. This manner of rendering stone can also be noticed in the stone relief in a painting dated 1739 showing a dentist and a woman in a niche (fig. 4). The latter work was in a Hague collection in 1969, and was attributed to Wigmans by W. L. van de Watering. [12]

The maidservant in fig. 1 bears some resemblance to the woman portrayed in another painting dated 1739, who is shown seated in an interior while a man walks away from her (fig. 5).[13] The folds in the costumes and drapery again reveal the same hand as that of fig.1.

Stylistic parallels between the painting fig. 1 and signed works by Wigmans led to the attribution. It is confirmed by the notes of the late C. Hofstede de Groot at the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD) in The Hague. The painting appeared as a Wigmans at an auction in Amsterdam on 27 April 1780. The detailed description in the sale catalogue and the sies correspond exactly:

"Dit cabinetstukje verbeeld een studeerkamer, waar in een oud Filosooph zittend in een armstoel bij het vuur, gekleed in een blauwe zijden japon, het hoofd gedekt met een fluweel mutsje, houdende in de hand een opengeslagen boek. Voor hem staat een tafel waarop eenige boeken en papieren leggen, verder een jongeling die een groen gordijn wegschuiift, en dezelve met verwondering beschouwt. Ales uitvoerig geschilderd als door Wigmans".

"This cabinet painting shows a study with an old philosopher seated in an armchair by the fire, wearing a blue silk robe and a velvet cap on his head, and holding an open book. Before him stands a table upon which are some books and papers, also a young man drawing a green curtain aside, and looking upon the scene with surprise. All painted in detail as by Wigmans."

Curiously, however, the figure that we referred to as a "maidservant" was apparently taken for or looked like a "young man" in 1780.[14]

The panel may possibly also be identified with a painting that was sold at auctions in Amsterdam in 1774 and 1856. [15] A comparable scene with a scholar in his study was mentioned at another Amsterdam sale in 1809. [16]

Hopefully the aforementioned paintings will help to clarify the very personal character of this minor Frisian master's work. Perhaps it will be possible in the future to identify additional paintings as Wigmans.



5. Gerard Wigmana, *Interior with a Seated Woman and a Man Walking Away*. Panel, 44.4 x 34.2 cm. Whereabouts unknown

Notes

Translated from the Dutch by Ina Rike

1. C. Wansink, "Hieronymus van der Mij als historic- en genreschilder," *Oud-Holland* 99 (1985) No. 3, pp. 201-215.
2. The painting came from a private collection in the Netherlands to the autumn auction of the Venduhuis der Notarissen in The Hague on 5 November 1985 (as no. 15, with color reproduction on the cover).
3. Notably: a) *Allegory of Painting*, *Amsterdams Historisch Museum*, Cat. 1979, p. 361, no. 500; b) *Virgin and Child*, Leeuwarden, Fries Museum, inv. no. 596 D; c) Same subject in same museum, inv. no. 8552; d) *Ecce Homo*, Leeuwarden, Fries Museum, inv. no. 8582; e) *Allegory of Painting*, *Utrecht Centraal Museum*, Cat. 1952, p. 155 no. 341. The above information is drawn from C. Wright, *Paintings in Dutch Museums*, Amsterdam 1980, p. 497.
4. Th. von Frimmel, "Ein signiertes werk von Gerard Wigmana," *Blätter für Gemäldekunde*, January 1907, III, pp. 109-113. See for further references also H. Vollmer (ed.), *Gerard Wigmana*, Thieme-Becker, vol. 35, p. 551.
5. B. van Haersma Buma, "Gerardus Wigmana, de Friese Raphael," *De Vrije Vries*, 49 (1969), pp. 43-65.
6. Van Haersma Buma, op. cit. (note 5), p. 58.
7. "Omdat hij het altijd geweldig druk had van Raphael, Titiaan, Julio Romano en andere Italiaansche kunsthelden, en zich inbeelde in hunne grootsche manier van tekenen al ver gevordert te zijn; want als hij eenige zijner kunstafereelen vertoonde was hij gewoon te zeggen: zo tekende, of zo schilderde Raphael," J. van Gool, *De Nieuwe Schouburgh der Nederlandsche Kunstschilders en Schilderessen*, The Hague 1750 (reprint 1970), vol. 1, pp. 386, 387.
8. Sale Amsterdam (Mak van Waay), 29 June-2 July 1948, no. 39: "een geleerde bij een haardvuur gezeten in zijn boekerij, wordt uit zijn overpeinzingen gewekt door een gediensstige. Sporen van een signatuur en 1740. Paneel 43 x 32 cm." (A scholar seated by a fire in his library, is roused from his reflections by a servant. Traces of a signature and 1740. Panel 43 x 32 cm.) In view of the identical measurements, date and description, this was certainly the picture in our fig. 1. The traces of a signature, apparently still visible in 1948, have now disappeared completely.
9. Blankert, *Schilderijen daterend van voor 1800*, Amsterdam (Historisch Museum) 1979, p. 361, no. 500.
10. This painting earlier appeared at an auction in Copenhagen (Rasmussen), 27 April 1941, no. 48, and is currently with Beeling of Leeuwarden, who showed it in 1983 and 1985 at the Delft Art and Antiques Fair.
11. Photo in the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD) in the Hague.
12. Ca. 1950 the painting was at an auction in London, and on 21 December 1954 at an auction in The Hague (Van Marie & Bignell), as no. 35, "G. Dou". According to a note at the RKD, W. L. van de Watering attributed it to Wigmana.
13. The painting was recently at the auction of Lord Brownlow, Belton House (Christie), 30 April-2 May 1984, no. 573 with ill. Photo supplied by Christie's.
14. Sale Amsterdam, 27 April 1780, no. 15: panel 17 x 12 inches.
15. Respectively, sale J. Vliet, Amsterdam, 12 October 1774, no. 244; panel 16.5 x 12.5 inches: "This shows a study in which a man is seated in a chair by a table. Painted in detail" (Dit vertoont een studeerkamer in welk een man in een stoel bij een tafel zit. Uitvoerig geschilderd) for Dfl. 50; and sale Amsterdam (Roos), 20 August 1856 no. 208, panel 44 x 33 cm: "a scholar in an inner chamber, painted in great detail" (een geleerde in een binnenvertrek, zeer uitvoerig geschilderd) for Dfl. 13 to Wolf K (?) (the K, noted in the copy at the RKD, is not completely clear).
16. Sale Amsterdam (v.d. Schley, .. Spaar), 13 June 1809, no. 221, canvas, 16 x 13 inches: "seated in a study is an elderly philosopher, reading a letter with concentration, resting the right hand on a globe; painted in detail on canvas, by Wigmana." (In een studeervertrek zit een bejaarde filosoof met aandacht een brief lezende, rustende met de rechterhand op een globe; het is uitvoerig gepenceelt op doek, door Wigmana)