

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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FOR RELEASE:

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17TH-CENTURY DUTCH LANDSCAPE

RECENTLY ACQUIRED BY NATIONAL GALLERY

WASHINGTON, D. C. March 31, 1978. View of Dordrecht from the Dordtse Kil, a major picture by Jan van Goyen (1596-1656), one of the most important landscape artists of the seventeenth-century Dutch school, has been acquired by the National Gallery of Art. The painting was purchased through the Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund and is on view among the Gallery's other Northern European paintings.

The first painting by van Goyen to enter the Gallery's collection, View of Dordrecht from the Dordtse Kil is signed and dated 1644. Van Goyen's paintings of the 1640s evidence a new interest in portraying the subtle, tonal effects of land, sea and sky in landscape, a movement dominated by van Goyen and one which was hitherto unrepresented in the Gallery's collection.

The painting represents one of van Goyen's favorite scenes, the view of the seaport of Dordrecht as seen from the channel of the Dordtse Kil. It is one of the first of his many depictions of Dordrecht from the 1640s and 1650s, paintings in which he experimented with calm and rough seas, and expansive skies with billowing clouds.

Van Goyen was fascinated with atmospheric effects, and in View of Dordrecht from the Dordtse Kil, the land, sea and sky are bathed in a soft light. An

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extremely calm and peaceful painting, the subtle nuances of browns and ochres used in the landscape and boats are combined with delicately applied blues and pinks in the water and the clouds. The soft reflections in the water further contribute to the tranquility. His characteristic loose, quick brushwork with a thin application of paint is also particularly well represented in this example.

Van Goyen's response to nature and his rendering of its tonal effects was perhaps his most significant contribution to the evolution of Dutch landscape painting. This picture represents a transitional phase in van Goyen's work, and combines his light touch of the 1630s with the boldly contrasting accents characteristic of works from the 1640s and 1650s. The View of Dordrecht from the Dordtse Kil thus provides an important link in the Gallery's collection of Dutch landscape art, between Avercamp's early seventeenth-century A Scene on the Ice, and the later seventeenth-century landscapes so well represented in the Gallery's collection by Cuyp, Hobbema, and Jacob van Ruisdael.

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