

containing identical objects, such as the blue-and-white Chinese bowl in Kalf's *Still Life with Nautilus Cup* in the Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza.

8. Grisebach 1974, 279, cat. 140a. He gives no reason for having determined this work to be a copy. The attribution has also been doubted verbally by Ingvar Bergström, Sam Segal, Claus Grimm, and Fred G. Meijer.

9. Sir Geoffrey Agnew letter, 9 January 1976, in NGA curatorial files, indicates that after they had acquired this painting at Sotheby's in 1964, they determined after restoration that it was an "old copy" (see Sotheby sale catalogue, 11 March 1964, lot 70, repro.). They subsequently sold the painting at auction on 18 August 1970. Its present location is unknown.

10. See, for example, Grisebach 1974, 286, cat. nos. B6, B7, B8.

11. Grisebach 1974, 279, however, explained the weakness of the painting he considered to be the original by dating it to the end of Kalf's career: "Qualitativ stellenweise recht schwaches Spatwerk."

12. For an illustration, see Gaskell 1989, cat. 10, 74–77.

13. For example, see his *Still Life with Nautilus Cup* (Muse-

um der bildenden Künste, Leipzig). Grisebach 1974, 160, 276–277, cat. 136, repro. 135, dates this painting to the late 1660s because of the dark tonality and the prevalence of gold tonalities in the work.

14. Timothy Anglin Burgard letter, 10 January 1989, in NGA curatorial files.

15. While the bases of the Leipzig and National Gallery paintings are similar, slight differences do occur. The turban shell, for example, sits directly on the head and hand of the putto in the Leipzig painting, whereas in the National Gallery painting it is raised above the putto by three circular forms. Such free adaptations in the shapes of objects are common in Kalf's paintings; a variant of this same base is used as a support for a glass in his *Still Life* of 1663 in the Cleveland Museum of Art (inv. no. 62.292; see Segal 1988, 195, 249, cat. 56).

References

- 1965 "Les cours de ventes": 159–167, repro. no. 12.
1974 Grisebach: 279, as copy of no. 140.
1985 NGA: 213, repro.

Philip van Kouwenbergh

1671–1729

PHILIP VAN KOUWENBERGH, the son of Frans van Kouwenbergh, a sculptor, was baptized in Amsterdam in the Nieuwe Kerk on 25 February 1671. On 11 September 1694 he was betrothed to Cornelia van der Mars, whom he married on 26 September 1694.¹ The first of their three sons, Wilhelmus [Willem], was born the following spring and baptized in the Nieuwe Kerk on 6 March. On 31 January 1721 Philip and Willem became burghers in Amsterdam. Having outlived his wife by almost ten years, Philip was buried in the Noorderkerkhof on 11 March 1729.

The few paintings known by Van Kouwenbergh are either flower paintings or woodland scenes containing ruins, flowers, and insects. While no information about his artistic training exists, Meijer has suggested that Van Kouwenbergh might have studied with the still-life painter Elias van den Broeck (c. 1650–1708). Van den Broeck, having returned from Antwerp in 1685, was active in Amsterdam at the time Van Kouwenbergh would have been learning his trade. Documents indicate that Van Kouwenbergh's paintings were on the market by 1694, so he had probably become an independent master by the time of his betrothal.

Notes

1. S.A.C. Dudok van Heel letter 3 September 1976, in NGA curatorial files. For biographical information on the artist see Meijer 1988a.

Bibliography

Meijer 1988a.

1976.26.2 (2695)

Flowers in a Vase

c. 1700

Oil on canvas, 67 x 51 (26¾ x 19¾)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William Draper Blair

Inscriptions

At lower right (damaged): [P] Kouwe[]be[]h

Technical Notes: The support, a heavy-weight, loosely and plain-woven fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins removed. Cusping is visible along all edges. Colored imprimaturas were applied locally over a fawn-colored ground. Thin, fluid paint layers are subtly blended, exploiting darker underlayers, and modified with light glazes and scumbles. The fading of a fugitive yellow pigment imparts a blue tonality to the leaves, which overlap the completed vase.



Philip van Kouwenbergh, *Flowers in a Vase*, 1976.26.2

The bottom edge and lower left corner are extensively damaged and reconstructed. A small loss is found in the red flower at center. Moderate abrasion overall has exposed darker underlayers, altering the tonal balance. The painting was lined in 1969, prior to acquisition.

Provenance: Viscount de Beughem, Brussels; by inheritance to Mr. and Mrs. William D. Blair, Washington.

THIS DECORATIVE STILL LIFE is one of the few signed works by this relatively unknown Amsterdam painter. The execution is fairly broad, and the colors are deep and rich. Van Kouwenbergh has displayed his floral arrangement around an elaborate earthenware urn situated at the edge of a stone ledge. The composition is organized along a diagonal that is not embellished with intricate rhythms of blossoms or twisting stems. In this respect the artist belongs to the tradition of late followers of Jan Davidsz. de Heem (q.v.): Elias van den Broeck, who may have been his teacher, and Rachel Ruysch (1664–1750), with whom his still lifes are sometimes confused.¹ None of Van Kouwenbergh's few known paintings are dated, which means it is impossible to establish a meaningful chronology for his work. Nonetheless this painting should probably be dated early in his career because of its stylistic similarities to paintings by Van den Broeck.²

Van Kouwenbergh includes here many of the plants found in paintings by Jan Davidsz. de Heem

and his followers, including roses, poppies, morning glories, white lilacs, and stalks of wheat. He also incorporates insects: a banded grove snail, two centipedes attacking each other, and a butterfly. In De Heem's still lifes, for example, *Vase of Flowers*, 1961.6.1, flowers, wheat, and insects are often imbued with symbolic meaning related to the cycle of life or Christian concepts of death and resurrection. The philosophical concepts underlying De Heem's carefully conceived compositions may have been understood by Van Kouwenbergh, but too little is known of his oeuvre to be able to judge this with certainty. In this painting the rather whimsical sculptural element surmounting the urn would seem to set a tone quite contrary to the weighty messages De Heem sought to convey.

Notes

1. See Meijer 1988a, 319. Meijer has been able to assemble an oeuvre for the artist of fewer than twenty still-life paintings.

2. Van Wagenberg-Ter Hoeven 1991, 253–254, has proposed a date at the end of the seventeenth century on the basis of the palette and the appearance of the wheat. She expressly compares this painting with another undated still life at Stourhead House, Wiltshire (National Trust) (her fig. 2).

References

- 1985 NGA: 217, repro.
1991 Van Wagenberg-Ter Hoeven: 252–255, color repro.

Judith Leyster

1609–1660

JUDITH LEYSTER was born in Haarlem and baptized there on 28 July 1609. Her father, Jan Willemsz., was the owner of a brewery called the “Leyster” (*lodestar*), from which the family took its surname. Little is known of Leyster's early training, but she clearly made a name for herself at a very young age: she is mentioned as an active artist in Samuel Ampzing's description of the town of Haarlem, which was published in 1628 when she would have been just nineteen years old.¹

Not long thereafter, Leyster's family moved to Vreeland near Utrecht, and many have speculated that at this time she came under the influence of the Utrecht *Caravaggisti*. Nevertheless, the dramatic ef-

fects of indirect, artificial lighting that these painters typically employed are not entirely paralleled in any of her canvases. It seems more likely that the superficial similarities to the style of the Utrecht *Caravaggisti* came by way of Frans Hals' circle of painters in Haarlem. By September 1629, Leyster's parents had moved to Zaandam, near Amsterdam, although it is not clear how long she remained with them there before returning to Haarlem. She was certainly back in her native town by November 1631 when she was a witness at the baptism of one of the children of Frans Hals (q.v.).

No records survive to prove that Leyster studied with Hals in his studio, but a number of her works