

SIXTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON DC 20565 • 737-4215 extension 224

## PAINTING BY JORDAENS DISCOVERED

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### Hand of Flemish Master Confirmed by Infrared Photography

Washington, D. C. June 19, 1969. An outstanding feat of connoisseurship by a British art scholar--confirmed by infrared photography--has led to a major acquisition by the National Gallery of Art, it was announced today by John Walker, Director. Portrait of a Man by the Flemish master Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678) has been purchased through the Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund and will go on view Friday (June 20) in Lobby D.

For more than a century the picture hung in Perthshire, Scotland, in a remote country house belonging to Lord Kinnaird. Several years ago, Mr. Walker was looking at private Scottish collections and saw this brilliant portrait of a cavalier posed beside a curtain drawn back to reveal a stormy landscape. Struck by the beauty of the picture, he was surprised to be told by the owner that the portrait had been ascribed both to Velazquez and Rubens.

"I was puzzled and fascinated by such completely diverse attributions," the Director said. "And so I asked to have the picture photographed and to be permitted to consult Michael Jaffé of Cambridge University, a leading Rubens authority." With what Mr. Walker described as "remarkable astuteness,"

Mr. Jaffé responded at once, "My impression, a very strong one, is that it is an early work by Jordaens, not by Rubens. The landscape, among other things, is a clear indication."

Mr. Jaffé then went to Scotland to see the painting and further reported: "I told Lord Kinnaird I was more than ever convinced that the handsome three-quarter length of a man in a hat was an early Jordaens--a real masterpiece!"

Lord Kinnaird agreed to part with the portrait temporarily so that it could be studied further. The 350-year-old panel was transported to the National Gallery of Art, where, with infrared photography, the artist's characteristically abbreviated signature ("Jo.f.") was discovered at the lower right.

"Attributions of pictures are often problematical," Mr. Walker said, "and it is a rare event when science discloses a signature supporting, as it does in this case, the connoisseurship of a distinguished scholar."

Jordaens was deeply influenced by Rubens, for whom he was a studio assistant in Antwerp and there is considerable cross-influence noted between Jordaens and van Dyck, a younger assistant in the same studio. After the death of Rubens, Jordaens attained highest renown within his own country as a painter of history and genre scenes. A contemporary, Balthasar Gerbier, described him in 1640 as "prime painter here," and Jordaens was paid the handsome sum of 240 guilders by Rubens' heirs to complete two unfinished paintings by the master that were commissioned by Philip IV of Spain.

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Black-and-white photographs and color transparencies are available from William W. Morrison, Assistant to the Director, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. 20565, Area Code 202, 737-4215.



**Scan of photocopy of photograph. Photograph is located in the Press Release files.**