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PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN, BY FRANZ HALS.  
RECENTLY PURCHASED.

## PAINTING BY FRANZ HALS ACQUIRED

A half length figure of a woman (Plate 1) has been acquired by purchase for the permanent collection. This fine example of the middle period of the master (circa 1635) comes from the well known collection of Baron Von Oppenheim, which was dispersed at public sale in Cologne in 1918. It is a well known work, published in Hofstade de Groot's book "Dutch Masters of the Seventeenth Century," number 380, in W. R. Valentiner's book on Franz Hals, number 118, and in Dr. Wilhelm Bode's book on Franz Hals, number 157.

This portrait of a wife is turned three quarters to the left. She is dressed in dark clothes, with a white ruff at the neck and her head covered by a white cap. The picture is 61 centimetres high and 53 centimetres wide, and is signed with the monogram of the painter, and following this is given the age of the sitter, who was in her thirty-second year.

It is gratifying to have so important an example of Franz Hals, who with Rembrandt stands highest among Dutch painters, and whose works are the inspiration of much modern portraiture.

The art of the Netherlands, so pleasantly influenced by the love of nature, the simple living and the homely pride of this sturdy northern race, found its truest expression in the seventeenth century, after the

complete withdrawal of the religious and political domination of Spain. With religious freedom came a violent reaction against religious pictures. The reformed church lent no encouragement to artists to embellish their edifices with biblical themes, but their buildings took on a plain and austere aspect. Unlike the grand manner of Italian art, a style is here developed in which fidelity to nature becomes paramount. These people of the north loved the solid comfort of their homes and the broad landscape overhung with gray skies, which they had wrested from the sea. They were a race of strong purpose, filled with joy of life and pride of self, and the painting of this period reveals these national traits. The temperament and environment of the Dutch people are perfectly reflected in their art. Dutch art of the XVII Century is truly democratic, dealing with portraiture, still life, landscapes and the little incidents of every day life. It was about this period that Admiral Tromp, with a broomstick at the masthead of his flagship, was engaged in sweeping his enemies of the Spanish Main from the North Sea, and the healthy commerce of Holland began to fill the coffers of the merchants and the thrifty burghers. With their new-found wealth and their pride of self, they furnished an incentive to portraiture which brought

this phase of painting to the highest attainment it has reached. The names of Hals and Rembrandt are only stellar lights which outshine a host of excellent portraitists of the period. Guilds and corporations and military companies were numerous, and the custom of having their officers painted in groups gave rise to those masterpieces by Franz Hals which grace the walls of the Haarlem Museum and those other master works of his contemporary, Rembrandt, such as "The Anatomy Lesson," "The Night Watch" and "The Syndics of the Drapers."

We have examples of some of the numerous contemporaries of Franz Hals in our collection, notably the "Portrait of Tycho Brahe" by Cornelius van der Voort, and the portraits by Nicolas Elias and Jan de Bray, and in these one may see

the scrupulous fidelity of Dutch portraiture of the period.

The reason Hals stands out pre-eminently among his many associates is that he characterizes the personality of his sitter more ably. The gaiety and exuberance of life emanating from his painted subjects singles them out from the works of his contemporaries. The animated expression of the comfortable, well-to-do woman in our picture shows this quality to a remarkable degree.

This power of portrayal is accompanied by a crispness of technique and a masterly firmness of brush that delight the eye, and his spontaneity of craftsmanship, as evidenced particularly in his later works, places him among the greatest painters of all time.

C. H. B.

## MODERN PAINTINGS ACQUIRED

A "Self Portrait" by Vincent Van Gogh and an interior from the brush of Henri Matisse have been recently acquired by purchase for the permanent collection. These two works, exemplifying the so-called movement of post-impressionism, bring the examples of modern French painting fairly well up to date.

Cézanne, departing from impressionistic methods, instead of giving "impressions" of the visible by pure broken color spots, as had his predecessors Monet, Pissarro and their

associates, developed a sense of construction and gave the substance of things by color. Among his leading followers upon whom he exerted a powerful influence were Van Gogh and Gauguin, not long since known as "Les Fauves" (the wild men). Henri Rousseau and Henri Matisse have been associated with these names. They were the pioneers in post-impressionism, creating in a primitive way and depicting the elemental and significant.

The early art training of Matisse was thorough and complete. He

learned technique in the great French schools, as well as in the Louvre, where he made faithful copies of the early masters. After having painted conventionally from

him expression by line. He tried to feel the picture rather than to plan it by thought.

His home is ordered, immaculate and attractive. He, himself, is the



INTERIOR, BY HENRI MATISSE.  
RECENTLY PURCHASED.

1895 to 1899, he fell under Cézanne's spell. He did not use color imitatively, but decoratively and for harmony. He sought composition, movement, rhythm and the expression of feeling. Drawing meant to

model head of a family, wholesome and systematic. He admires the great paintings of the past, having patiently studied Chardin's technique, and, in a more general way, the art of Goya, Dürer, Rembrandt,

Corot and Manet. But, when he paints, he expresses his own creation rather than anything external to himself. He does not admire sophistication. In his opinion the artist should dip from the freshly flowing spring itself.

He not only gains inspiration from his own emotions, but he believes that he expresses most clearly when doing so most simply. He was therefore sympathetic to Cézanne's and Gauguin's primitive tendencies, and even the rude carvings of African aborigines were refreshing to him.

The "Interior," recently purchased, shows the artist's love for color. The blue green and burnt orange impress us, whether pleasantly or otherwise. The organization of his composition, his arbitrary drawing for the sake of expression, and his extreme simplification in suggesting the component parts of this picture are all typical. In connection with the accusation, almost invariably made, that Matisse distorts natural form, we have his own words that, in addition to suggesting things for the sake of emotional effect, he used their outlines and masses for decorative effect.

With this in mind, we may more sympathetically study the "Interior," and know that eventually we can look on it with the proper perspective which time alone will give. Surely a man who in prosperity will turn for refreshment from dry, conventional imitation and, who in his

own life is wholesome, human, sane and well ordered, must be sincere and have good reasons for painting as he does. Critics should at least approach his creative efforts with an open mind.

The "Self Portrait" by Vincent Van Gogh is doubly important, as a visualization of the underlying spirit of the artist's work, and as a typical example of his good painting. He was born in Groot Zundert, Holland, in 1853, and early evidenced a desire to create and to assist in the progress of the world. He was possessed by a divine fire that continually threatened to consume him. Before he began to paint, he was a successful art dealer, teacher and clergyman in England, France and Holland. Finally, in 1881, with the assistance of Anton Mauve, he entered the field of painting, studying with thoroughness and devotion in Holland, Belgium and France.

About three-fifths of Van Gogh's pictures were painted in Arles between 1887 and 1889. They were spirited landscapes and still lifes possessed of life that threatened to burst its bonds. Art seemed a very essential part of Van Gogh's being.

When painting, he was in ecstasy, striving ever toward perfection. His manner recalls El Greco's, which was no more vital and only more religious because biblical and largely for the church.

Whether the work be landscape, still life or portrait, it is concentrated and animated. Van Gogh's

unique brush work, his palette with its Prussian blue, yellow, emerald and olive green and red, served to emphasize this. His trees, grasses, clouds and mountains are dynamic. He realized that the world does not

His pictures are decorative in their tapestry quality, which permits of little modeling or sculpturesque treatment. It seemed as if the more Van Gogh withdrew into his own world, the better he painted.



SELF-PORTRAIT, BY VINCENT VAN GOGH.  
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stand still, but is moving on and toward perfection. He pictures rather the spirit of the universe than anything incidental, material or temporal, desiring thus to interpret the power of the divine creator or of the painter himself.

Although he might have continued successfully in other endeavors, he preferred to experiment, to create in a progressive way.

In life as well as in art Van Gogh was always helping others, and was never self seeking. His abnegation



of self for the universal, the abstract and the spiritual, finally affected him to such an extent that he brought about his own destruction, July 28, 1890.

As one looks at his self-portrait,

he sees in it the magnetic, dynamic and powerful mind that conceived spirited canvasses which have influenced so many toward the more abstract point of view of post-impressionism.

R. P.

## MUSEUM NOTES

The appeal of the color print is universal, and to meet a growing demand, the Print Department of the Institute has recently selected a group of color prints which, adequately mounted and framed, are to be circulated in the same manner as the library issues books.

The prints cover a wide range. The primitive Italians, the early German and Flemish masters, the great men of the Renaissance, and modern French, Spanish, and American artists, are all represented. The prints may be borrowed for a period of one month, without the privilege of renewal, and will be issued to all persons holding library cards.

The chief aim of this small group is to give esthetic pleasure to those who may use them. They were assembled primarily for use in the home, though the collection is for the free use of students and teachers as well. The prints may be had upon application at the Library of the Institute, and the collection will be supplemented as it grows in usefulness.

I. W.

The Children's Museum has recently acquired examples of peasant work which it is believed will be both interesting and instructive. Through the Russian Red Cross representative in London, it was possible to buy two linen peasant costumes beautifully stitched in color, some of the head bands worn by the women, woodcarving, inlaid work and other articles. The Museum's collection of wood carvings were further greatly enriched by the purchase last summer of a group of Swiss figures illustrating the various types of peasants in their characteristic attitudes; also African native work. Some English peasant pottery, wooden bowls and boxes decorated in color, and examples of leather work have also recently been purchased. In November this newly acquired material, together with work from the Black Forest which the Museum acquired a year ago, will be on exhibition in the Children's Museum Room.

G. A. G.

Through the co-operation of Colonel Frank J. Hecker, Julius H. Haass and the Founders Society, three important examples of Rembrandt, covering both his earlier and later periods, were shown during the summer. The Founders Society loaned the "Portrait of a Bearded Old Man" of patriarchal type, with a plum colored cap, on which it has recently taken an option. Mr. Haass loaned the "Portrait of Hendrickje Stofels," the artist's second wife, a recently acquired work dating about 1650. Colonel Hecker loaned the "Portrait of Uriel d'Acosta," the Portuguese philosopher, which he has owned for many years, and which represents the later period.

The educational programme for the season includes a special course of lectures to Detroit school teachers in the Detroit Teachers College. It consists of an introduction to the Fine Arts, a study of the theory of aesthetics, a survey of art history, an appreciation of art in Detroit, including the Art Institute offerings, and finally the methods whereby the younger generation may come to love the beautiful.

As in the past, special programmes relating to the Fine Arts will be presented each Sunday afternoon at 3:30 o'clock in the auditorium of the Art Institute. These commence November fourth with a Chamber Music Society concert.

Informal gallery talks by members of the staff will be given in the galleries Sundays at 4:30 P. M. These will deal with the art objects of both permanent collections and temporary exhibitions. They begin in November.

A special lecture programme is being arranged for Tuesday evenings during January and February. This, like all other events at the Art Institute, is free to the public. I. B. Stoughton Holborn, Aymar Embury and Howard Giles are three of the authorities who will speak.

Exhibitions of paintings from the permanent collections, loans of reproductions, slides, books and craft objects and talks by the Educational Secretary will continue at the schools as in the past. Lectures may be scheduled for classes, organizations and individuals on request.

A museum guide book is being compiled for the various departments to supplement information in the catalogue.

The Recreation Commission of the City of Detroit is conducting its classes in drawing and painting each Friday evening from 7:30 to 9:30 o'clock, at the Art Institute. A jury will award gold, silver and bronze medals at the end of the season's work.