Goede Nacht: Images of the Night in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Visual Culture

by

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Abstract

Goede Nacht: Images of the Night in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Visual Culture provides a comprehensive study of depictions of the night in Dutch art from seventeenth century, and of a number of different ways in which contemporary understandings of the nighttime informed artistic practice throughout the northern Netherlands. The dramatic increase in the production of such pictures, the impressive diversity of their compelling subjects, and their exquisite visual appeal demand scholarly attention. To better understand this complex topic, analysis focuses on the most frequently represented subject matter in Dutch nocturnal imagery—religious scenes, urban fires, labor and leisure—and contextualizes the meanings and functions of the remarkable pictures within relevant historical, religious, socio-economic and cultural associations and circumstances. The wide range of depicted subjects demonstrates the richness of such imagery and engages the sometimes conflicting cultural perceptions of the night among the Dutch at this time. Artists in various Dutch cities throughout the century produced the fascinating nighttime paintings and prints under discussion here. This dissertation examines paintings, prints, and drawings by artists including Leonaert Bramer, Hendrick ter Brugghen, Jan van der Heyden, Aert van der Neer, Egbert van der Poel, and Rembrandt van Rijn, among others.

To Jenica

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Introduction

"Darkness and night are mothers of thought."
-Dutch Proverb

A dark night sky dotted with a seemingly infinite number of stars presents an awe-inspiring and overwhelming sight, including for men and women in the seventeenth-century northern Netherlands who lived before the invention of electric lightbulbs and attendant light pollution. They resided in a relatively flat country with views largely unobscured by mountains, hills, or dense woods. The hours after nightfall took on a unique tenor in which certain activities, behaviors, and experiences often or sometimes exclusively occurred.

In many seventeenth-century Dutch paintings and prints, the night plays an active and prominent role in the generation of expressive effects and interpretive significance. This dissertation focuses on pictures of such subjects and examines the many related and sometimes conflicting cultural perceptions of the night among members of Dutch society. Chapters examine the most frequently represented subject matter in nocturnal imagery—religious scenes, urban fires, labor and leisure—and contextualize the meanings and functions of the remarkable pictures within relevant historical, religious, socioeconomic and cultural associations and circumstances. Many pictures discussed in this dissertation have been analyzed elsewhere in regard to considerations not directly related to the night. However, particular examination of the role played by nocturnal settings provides valuable insight into the ways in which Dutch artists and collectors understood and valued the expressive associations of nightfall.

During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Dutch nocturnal scenes—often referred to as *nachtjes* (little night scenes) or simply *nachts* (nights) in contemporary inventories—experienced a dramatic increase in production and popularity that continued into

the nineteenth century.[1] Despite the recent increase in research pertaining to the night in early modern Europe, the late-sixteenth and seventeenth-century pictures as a group have thus far received limited scholarly attention. As urban populations grew and street lighting systems developed, European culture experienced an "ongoing expansion of the legitimate social and symbolic uses of the night" or what historian Craig Koslofsky has referred to as "nocturnalization." This process, Koslofsky explains, "changed how the people of early modern Europe ate, drank, slept, and worked, restructuring their daily lives and their mental worlds."[2] A. Roger Ekirch describes how the early modern nighttime "embodied a distinct culture, with its own customs and rituals."[3] This distinct culture, newly shaped by and still evolving through the process of nocturnalization, captured the attention and imagination of Dutch society, as manifested especially in the visual arts. Depictions of the night both constructed and perpetuated prominent associations with and understanding of the hours after dark. This dissertation examines the reciprocal nature of this relationship and situates the nocturnal imagery within the complex circumstances surrounding the nighttime in the Dutch Republic.

The first chapter, "Seventeenth-Century Dutch Night Scenes, Art Theory, and the Market," describes the high level of esteem enjoyed by those artists who mastered the painting of night scenes. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, prominent Dutch art theorists prescribed how to render the special effects of nocturnal scenes and applauded those artists who were successful in doing so. The art market also valued such craftsmanship. The chapter begins with an analysis of art theorists' discussions of night scenes in contemporary publications. Those

[1] For example, the Dutch artist Petrus van Schendel (1806–1870) specialized in night scenes of nocturnal markets and vendors related to those produced by seventeenth-century artists including Egbert van der Poel, Gerrit Dou, and Cornelis Snellinck.
[2] Craig Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2–3.
[3] A. Roger Ekirch, *At Day's Close: Night in Times Past* (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2005), xxv.

writings include Karel van Mander's *Schilder-boek* (*Painter's Book*), 1603–4; Samuel van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst: Anders de Zichtbaere Werelt* (*Introduction to the Academy of the Art of Painting: Or the Visible World*), 1678; and Arnold Houbraken's *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen* (*The Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*), 1718, among others. The chapter concludes with three case studies of the artists Leonaert Bramer, Egbert Lievensz. van der Poel, and Aert van Der Neer, who specialized in nighttime imagery and either achieved acclaim, found commercial success, or both. Each of these artists recognized the demand for night scenes and established themselves within this sometimes lucrative niche.

Chapter Two, "The Night, Spirituality, and the Occult in and Dutch Art," investigates nocturnal scenes depicted as either a peaceful, meditative realm characterized by a closeness with God and distance from earthly distractions, or, conversely, as a deceitful and frightening world inhabited by demons and marked by the abandonment of reason. Leonaert Bramer, Hendrick ter Brugghen, and Rembrandt van Rijn among others set biblical scenes at night in order to create tranquil viewing experiences conducive to prayer and Christian reverence. Other artists, including Cornelis Saftleven and Dominicus van Wijnen, depicted menacing or mysterious nighttime environments with sinister subject matter. Traditional and contemporary theological writings reinforced both sets of cultural associations and suggest that viewers may have had diverse religious or spiritual readings of such Dutch pictures.

The third chapter, "Fires at Night in Dutch Visual Culture," focuses specifically on the genre of imagery known in contemporary inventories and writings as *brantjes* or "little fire scenes." Nocturnal scenes set in cities or villages and dramatically lit by catastrophic fires manifest contemporary concerns and fears associated with destructive urban conflagrations,

which resulted from both domestic and industrial accidents, as well as from intentionally set fires. During the seventeenth century, worrisome social circumstances characteristic of nighttime hours may be closely tied to the strong interest in such pictures. Those circumstances included the risk of accidental and intentional fires resulting from the large increase in urban populations, the rapid spread of tobacco smoking, and the threat of marauding, arsonist soldiers.

Throughout the Dutch Republic, the subject of nighttime fires captured the attention of artists, especially Jan van der Heyden in Amsterdam and Egbert Lievensz. van der Poel and his followers in Rotterdam. In addition to producing numerous prints that documented specific Amsterdam conflagrations, Van der Heyden invented new firefighting equipment to address the dangers posed by actual fires in early modern cities. *Brantjes* became closely associated with Van der Poel, who achieved fame during the seventeenth century as a renowned painter of village fires.[4] Almost all such catastrophic fire scenes take place after dark and thereby capture contemporary fearful associations between the night and the threat of large-scale, destructive fire. Van der Heyden and Van der Poel, along with other artists discussed in this chapter, drew on these common fears and associations to enhance the expressive effects of their fire scenes.

Chapter Four, "The Night in Dutch Depictions of Labor and Leisure," examines paintings of certain work and leisure activities, which only occurred after dark. Discussion also considers related cultural circumstances and developments that led to an increased interest in these subjects among collectors. The first section focuses on Egbert van der Poel's paintings of fishing-related nocturnal labor and the strong associations held by seventeenth-century viewers between the night and herring fishing practices. The industry's importance to the flourishing economy of the

[4] See Gerritt van Spaan, *Beschryvinge der stad Rotterdam en eenige omleggende dorpen* (Rotterdam: Hermannus Goddaeus, 1698), 422. Spaan refers to Van der Poel as the best painter of fire in the Netherlands.

Dutch Republic, especially in Rotterdam,[5] led to an association between herring fishing and native pride.[6] Artists capitalized on such cultural associations and set such subjects at night in order to describe the industry in the most compelling manner. More broadly, depictions of the vending of fish and other wares after dark by Van der Poel, Gerrit Dou, and Cornelis Snellinck also convey an understanding of the nocturnal hours as a time when industrious workers continued to labor tirelessly.

The second section of Chapter Four explores a variety of leisure subjects that take place at night. These include torch- and lantern-lit street celebrations by Van der Poel and Pieter de Molijn; theatrical musical performances by Jan Steen and Frans van Mieris the Elder; Twelfth Night (*Driekoningen*) scenes depicted by Jan van de Velde II, Rembrandt, and Van der Poel; and other nighttime leisure activities, including couples strolling by lantern- or moonlight. The chapter examines these themes of nocturnal labor and leisure and the ways in which artists characterized the nighttime settings in diverse ways.

This dissertation explores the significant questions raised by seventeenth-century Dutch depictions of the night concerning their meaning, function, and marketability. Numerous artists working in various Dutch cities produced pictures set at night featuring diverse subjects. At the same time, seventeenth-century viewers harbored a range of attitudes toward and associations with the night. By examining the cultural circumstances surrounding the dramatic increase in the production of such pictures and the impressive diversity of their compelling subjects, the

[5] For example, Rotterdam was among the cities to send representatives to the *College van de Grote Visserij* (Council of the large fisheries), which regulated Dutch fisheries. See Poulsen, *Dutch Herring: An Environmental History, c. 1600–1860* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 112.
[6] In his 1578 *Visboek* (*Fish Book*), Adriaen Coenen describes the herring as "our big golden mountain in Holland" ("*onsen grooten gouden berch in Hollant*"). See Adriaen Coenen, *Visboek* (Scheveningen: 1579), 25r. A complete copy of the *Visboek* is accessible online from the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague (Royal Library) at www.kb.nl/visboek.

interpretation of nocturnal scenes reveals the innovative and complex ways in which Dutch artists engaged with and shaped popular perceptions of the night.

Chapter I

Seventeenth-Century Dutch Night Scenes, Art Theory, and the Market

In the seventeenth-century Netherlands, writers about art, as well as painters and collectors valued night scenes as a distinctive category of imagery. Notarized household inventories described such pictures, in general, as "little nights" or *nachtjes*.[7] Authors of art theory and painters' biographies considered the ability to pleasingly portray the night, and especially nocturnal lighting effects, as a commendable talent. The ability of Egbert van der Poel, for example, to capture the complex raking light of the moon as it illuminates fishermen hauling in their catches, or the skill of Leonaert Bramer to shape long shadows cast by torchlight, as in his biblical and mythological scenes, demonstrated impressive craftsmanship.

Seventeenth-century viewers familiar with the publications written by contemporary theoreticians, who extolled the skill required to portray night scenes, also understood the challenge of naturalistically depicting nocturnal subjects. Such authors and their texts include Karel van Mander's *Schilder-boek* (*Painter's Book*), 1603–4; Jan de Brune the Younger's preface to the Dutch edition of Franciscus Junius's *De Pictura Veterum* (*On the Painting of the Ancients*), 1642; Philips Angel's *Lof der Schilder-konst* (*Praise of Painting*), 1642; Samuel van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst: Anders de Zichtbaere Werelt* (*Introduction to the Academy of the Art of Painting: Or the Visible World*), 1678; and Arnold Houbraken's *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen* (*The Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*), 1718. In the first part of this chapter, an examination of the texts written by such theoreticians will provide relevant background for

[7] Based on evidence from seventeenth-century Amsterdam inventories, contemporary audiences often referred to these pictures as *nachtjes,* although the terms *nacht* (night) and *nachtlicht* (night light) appear as well. Alternatively, many entries include brief descriptions of an artwork's subject matter followed by the words *bij nacht* (by night).

the discussion of individual works of art in subsequent chapters of my dissertation. In the second half of this chapter, theoreticians' qualitative opinions about night scenes will be followed with analysis based on quantitative data of the market demand for such nocturnal imagery.

Examination here of primary literary sources begins with the earliest seventeenth-century text to discuss the painting of night scenes, Karel van Mander's *Schilder-boek*, and then moves in chronological order through the subsequent four theoretical texts mentioned above. The primary goals and recommendations of each author and the cultural context concerning the publications will be discussed. Analysis of specific references to the craft of painting night scenes found in these theoretical texts will help determine how seventeenth-century Dutch viewers understood this artistic practice. Significant changes or developments that occurred in attitudes concerning such scenes will also be addressed.

First published in 1604 in Haarlem and widely circulated during subsequent years, Karel van Mander's *Schilder-boek* played a role in the early articulation of the canon of northern European artists and continues to influence the historiography of the field today.[8] The text consists of six books including an initial didactic poem, "Den Grondt der Edel vry Schilder-const" ("The Foundations of the Noble and Free Art of Painting"). In the poem, Van Mander describes the ideal characteristics of the art of painting, important themes, subjects and compositional arrangements. Subsequent volumes include three books containing biographical and critical commentary pertaining to those artists the author considers to be the best among the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans (*Het Leven der Oude Antijcke Doorluchtighe Schilders, soo wel Egyptenaren, Griecken als Romeynen* [*Lives of the Illustrious Ancient Painters including*

[8] For an extensive discussion of the continued influence of the *Schilder-boeck* in the development of the historiography of Netherlandish art from the seventeenth through late-twentieth centuries, see Walter S. Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*: *Karel van Mander's Schilder-Boeck* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

Egyptians, Greeks and Romans]); modern and contemporary Italian painters (*Leven der Moderne, oft Dees-tijtsche Doorluchtighe Italiaensche Schilders* [*Lives of the Modern or Contemporary Illustrious Italian Painters*]); and Netherlanders and Germans (*Het Leven der Doorluchtighe Nederlandtsche, en Hooghduytsche Schilders* [*Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters*]).[9]

Van Mander envisioned his magnum opus to instruct painters regarding their potential and what they should strive to achieve. He also touted the significance of Netherlandish culture and its place within the art historical tradition. In that context, Van Mander renders notable praise of certain artists who painted illusionistic night scenes. The author valued the abilities of those who naturalistically rendered the appropriate lighting effects and atmospheric conditions.

In his characterization of the best achievements by Netherlandish artists, Van Mander encouraged future painters to follow suit. In chapter one of the "Grondt" he addressed the book "to aspiring young picturers."[10] Van Mander described subject matter that he deemed particularly worthwhile, including history and landscape painting.[11] He also provided general goals toward which artists should strive, such as the illusionistic mimicking of nature and *netticheydt*, or meticulousness.[12] Van Mander argued for the merits of Netherlandish painters whose stature he positioned alongside that of canonic artists from the ancient world, including Egyptian, Greek and Roman masters, as well as from medieval, Renaissance and contemporary Italy. According to Walter S. Melion, "by shaping parallel histories of art, [Van Mander] fashions informed beholders equipped to recognize the distinctive aims of northern masters."[13]

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[9] The two final volumes of the *Schilder-boeck*, *Wtlegghingh op den Metamorphosis Pub. Ouidij Nasonis* (*Commentary on the Metamorphoses of Publius Ovidius Nasso)* and *Uvtbeeldinge der Figueren (Depiction of Figures),* are not relevant to the present discussion.

[10] "aen d'aencomende Schilder-jeucht." Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 25.

[11] See "Introduction: The Affinity of History and Landscape," in Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon,* 1–12.

[12] Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 31.

[13] Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 22.

Van Mander posited that the mastery of what he called *reflexy-const* held a central position among the specializations of Netherlandish artists. Melion stated that in Van Mander's commentary,

> [t]he pursuit of *reflexy-const* privileges descriptive criteria, gauging even figures as light-reflective surfaces. Instead of figuring gestures, the master dwells on the play of light ricocheting between limbs . . . [Van Mander] reserves special praise for painters whose figures distill the play of artificial light. By using candlelight to fragment the body into bright bursts of local description, they sacrifice legible posture, favoring instead the contrast between indeterminate fields of shadow and concentrated fall of light on hair and cloth.[14]

Paintings of nocturnal imagery, such as those by Gillis Coignet,[15] Leonaert Bramer,[16] and other seventeenth-century Dutch artists, almost always include the description of shadows cast across human bodies, candle or firelight, the division of human forms into fragments of dark and light tones, and the related abbreviation of distinct postures. As such these works exemplify in myriad ways the central concepts of *reflexy-const* described by Van Mander.[17]

By associating Netherlandish artists with *reflexy-const*, Van Mander suggested a significant relationship between the artists of his region and the painting of night scenes. According to him, the work of painters such as Gillis Coignet stood as a testament to this Netherlandish artistic ideal. In several places in the *Schilder-boeck*, Van Mander championed Coignet's ability to paint illusionistic night scenes, which display the Netherlandish mastery of the imitation of nature by demonstrating a command of the depiction of light and dark. Van Mander described Coignet's painting accomplishments entirely in terms of the mimicking of light and shadow at night, which differs in significant ways from the depiction of subject matter

[14] Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 73.
[15] Born in Antwerp, Coignet worked in Antwerp, Amsterdam, and Hamburg at different points in his career.
[16] Bramer lived and worked in his hometown of Delft except for the period 1616–27, which the artist spent in Italy and for the most part, specifically in Rome.
[17] Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon,* 73.

lit by daylight. Notably Van Mander's praise of Coignet focused upon those abilities rather than the artist's choice of subject matter, such as history and landscape painting, which Van Mander typically touted.

In the didactic poem "Den Grondt der Edel vry Schilder-const" ("The Foundations of the Noble and Free Art of Painting"), which opens Van Mander's publication, he mentions for the first time the merits of naturalistic night-lighting effects. In lines 42–44, he devotes three full verses to Coignet's paintings. Van Mander applaudes Coignet's general dexterity and command of his medium: "The Netherlandish-Italian[18] painter Coignet … for whom all paints were serviceable in everything wherever he used them; and no [kind of paint] dared in the least infringe his rules: they had to function and become what his thoughts had bid them."[19]

Van Mander continues by praising Coignet for his significant artistic accomplishments, including his rendering of nocturnal lighting effects.[20] Van Mander clearly understood the depiction of the night, as exemplified in Coignet's paintings, to be a specialized pursuit that he celebrated in a prominent place in the introduction of his book.[21] In a detailed explanation of how Coignet naturalistically mimicked nocturnal lighting effects, Van Mander wrote:

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[18] Coignet travelled through Italy during the 1560s, visiting Rome, Naples, and Sicily. Barbara Uppenkamp, "Gilles Coignet. A Migrant Painter from Antwerp and His Hamburg Career," *De Zeventiende Eeuw. Cultuur in de Nederlanden in interdisciplinair perspectief* 31(2015): 59, accessed October 23, 2016, DOI: http://doi.org/10.18352/dze.10125.

[19] "Congietten,/ Nederlandich Schilder Italianich,/ Wien alle verwen waren onderdanich,/ In als, waer hyse te wercke wouw setten,/ Iae geen en dorst in't alderminst zijn Wetten/ Overtreden, maer mosten doen en worden,/ nae t'gheen zijn ghedachten hen gaven orden." Hessel Miedema, ed., trans., *Karel van Mander: The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the First Edition of the Schilder-boeck (1603–1604)*, vol. 5 (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 1994), 7–8.

[20] In addition to receiving Van Mander's praise, Coignet led a successful career during his tenure in Amsterdam, where he ran a workshop. This fact reinforces the significance of my emphasis on Van Mander's praise toward Coignet in order to situate culturally seventeenth-century Dutch works of art, that depict the night. That Coignet so frequently painted night scenes implies a connection between his positive reception in Amsterdam and the appreciation of such pictures among Dutch audiences. See Uppenkamp, "Gilles Coignet. A Migrant Painter from Antwerp and His Hamburg Career," 58–59.

[21] H. E. Greve proposed in his 1903 *De bronnen van Carel van Mander voor "het leven der doorluchtighe Nederlandsche en Hoagduytsche schilders"* the existence of a personal relationship between Van Mander and Coignet as a possible reason for the author's decision to choose Coignet to fill this role. However, Miedema

> With paint he is miraculously able to let Pluto's territory burn or cause Troy to be destroyed or have Judith show Holofernes's head, with candles and torches as well as lanterns in the streets, the crowd gathering in the distance: as in the lottery that the governors of the Amsterdam Madhouse asked him to paint, not to mention other works of his.[22]

Specifically, Van Mander lauded here two of Coignet's night scenes: "A Judith with the head of Holofernes" (possibly *Judith Showing Holofernes's Head to the People of Bethulia*, 1586–94)[23] and a nocturnal lottery painting (possibly *The Drawing of the Lottery of 1592 for the Amsterdam Madhouse [Dolhuis]*, 1593).[24] Van Mander singled out these paintings for praise because he judged them a great success as night paintings. Notably, he did not celebrate these works for their historical, narrative, or social content nor did he praise Coignet's detailed brushwork or handling of anatomy. Instead Van Mander described the artist's ability to depict naturalistically the ephemeral play of light and darkness in his scenes of night; in worlds obscured by darkness, such as hellscapes (or "the realm of Pluto"); and in images of the burning

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suggests that Van Mander learned of Coignet through others, including Hans Vredeman and Cornelis Cornelisz., who likely knew the artist and/or his work. Miedema, *Karel van Mander*, 1.

[22] Met verwen can hy te wonder doen bernen / Plutonis stadt, oft Troyen doen te nieten, / Iudith snachts toonen t'hooft van Holofernen, / Met Toortsen en Fackels, oock met Lanternen / In de straten, t'volcx toeloop in 't verschieten: / Als de Lotery, die hem maken lieten / t'Amsterdam der Crancksinnighe vorstanders, / Sonder wat van hem noch te sien is anders." Karel van Mander, "Den grondt der edel vry schilder-const," in *Schilder-boeck*, ed. Hessel Miedema (Haarlem: 1604; repr., Utrecht: Haentjes Dekker & Gumbert, 1973), fol. 32v., caption 7, st. 42–44. Translated in Norbert Middelkoop, "Gillis Coignet and the Amsterdam Lottery of 1592: Locating an Extraordinary Night Scene," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 2, no.1–2 (2010): 2 DOI: 10.5092/jhna.2010.2.1.4. Coignet's nocturnal depiction of Judith with Holofernes's head is now in the in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Caen. The locations of the two other paintings mentioned by Van Mander, depictions of hell and of the burning of Troy, are unknown.

[23] Oil on panel, 62.5 x 149 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen.

[24] Oil on panel, 113 x 203.5 cm, Amsterdam Museum. In the Low Countries, lotteries developed into a popular system of commercial and economic exchange over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. By the seventeenth century, members of every Dutch social class had access to these events, which promoters advertised well in advance to both local and regional audiences. Art historian Sophie Raux identifies three principle types of early modern European lotteries: public utility lotteries held by civil or religious institutions, state lotteries for the common good, and the lotteries organized by private entrepreneurs for commercial ends. Such events typically awarded highly expensive objects including silverware, jewelry, and paintings. Large-scale, festive lotteries like that depicted by Coignet presented the Dutch public with captivating spectacles. See Sophie Raux, *Lotteries, Art Markets, and Visual Culture in the Low Countries, 15th–17th Centuries* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018), 16–28, 69.

of Troy, a subject most often set at night.[25] The choice of nocturnal settings for these scenes met the narrative requirements of the story, but also allowed the artist an opportunity to create a *tour de force* display of nocturnal lighting effects.

In the following verse, Van Mander further extolled the virtues of Coignet, who pushed beyond the inherent limitations of paint in his capture of the elusive light of fire and the stars: “And where [the paints] are incapable of bringing about the utmost of the intentions he [Coignet] had in mind, he went boldly with the son of Iapetus to the chariot of the king of the planets: for that his fire or source of light should appear as a reality, he artificially arranged by using gold that his fires should appear to glow, and that his light sources should twinkle like stars.”[26]

In this stanza Van Mander celebrated the “bold”[27] decision of Coignet to employ the reflective properties of actual sunlight to mimic light emitted by nocturnal subjects, such as stars and fires.[28] The ability to replicate the glow of fire, a phenomenon most notable at night, merited special acclaim by Van Mander. In this respect, Coignet incorporated gold in his paintings, which had pronounced reflective properties. Van Mander observed that Coignet inserted the light of the sun (“the king of the planets”) directly into his work, and thus as naturalistically as

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[25] See, for example, the three versions of *Aeneas Rescuing His Father from the Burning Troy* by Jan Breughel (one is in the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich and two almost identical pictures in private collections) or four of the at least five paintings of the same theme by Daniel van Heil (all are in private collections).

[26] “En waer sy t'uyterste zijns sins vermeten/ Noch zijn onmachtich te volbrenghen, boude/
Ginck hy toe met den sone van Iapeten,/ Aen den waghen des Conings der Planeten:/
Want op dat zijn vyer oft licht leven soude,/ Bracht hy dat constich te weghe met goude,/
Dat zijn vyeren ligghen groeyend' en blincken,/ En zijn lichten staen als sterren en pincken.”
Miedema, *Karel van Mander*, 7–8. “The son of Iapetus” refers to Prometheus, who legendarily defied the gods by stealing fire and gifting it to humanity. The parellel between Prometheus and Coignet suggests the latter’s ability to naturalistically depict fire and light.

[27] Some debate apparently existed concerning the use by artists of materials other than paint in making their imagery more naturalistic. See: Miedema, *Karel van Mander*, 7–8.

[28] Many day scenes include firelight, however, given the context of Van Mander’s discussion and of Coignet’s paintings, especially the examples mentioned previously and chosen for praise by Van Mander, the author likely referred at least in part to Coignet’s depiction of nighttime fires, such as the torches in *Judith Showing Holofernes's Head to the People of Bethulia* and *The Drawing of the Lottery of 1592 for the Amsterdam Madhouse [Dolhuis].* That Van Mander specifically referred to both works in the preceding verse increases the likelihood of this interpretation.

possible mimicked the glow and luminosity of light in his night scenes, so they "appear as a reality."[29] The resulting juxtaposition of actual reflected light and artificial darkness highlighted the painter's impressive ability to capture the dramatic optical effects associated with the night.

Van Mander's praise for Coignet's nocturnal imagery continued in the final volume of the *Schilder-boeck*, *Het Leven der Doorluchtighe Nederlandtsche, en Hooghduytsche*. In his entry "The Life of Gielis Coignet, Painter of Antwerp" the author stated:

> [Coignet] also had a subtle way of painting little night scenes very inventively, into which he frequently inserted embossed gilt lights of candles, torches or lamps which looked very real, although it is disapproved of and criticized by some because they believe that painters ought to represent everything with paint; but others think everything to the good which makes it look better and which best deceives the eyes of the beholder.[30]

This anecdote suggests that many in the seventeenth-century Netherlands admired the ability of an artist to fool the viewer's eye with the deceptively naturalistic depiction of nocturnal lighting effects, such as that from firelight. Furthermore, Van Mander's praise of Coignet's use of gold, instead of only oils and pigments, illustrated the primacy the author placed on naturalism in the production of such night scenes.

In his biography of Coignet, Van Mander also offered praise for a specific nighttime painting by the artist. He stated: "There is also in Amsterdam, in the office of the Old Men's home, a large piece, fourteen feet long and eight feet tall, with a lottery by night for that selfsame institution, with the location and the houses from life and all sorts of people with lanterns and other lighting, all very subtle and well executed."[31] The large night scene constituted a prominent

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[29] Miedema, *Karel van Mander*, 7–8.

[30] "Hadde oock een aerdighe manier van te maken Historikens in den nacht, seer versierlijck, ghebruyckende veel tijt verheven vergulde lichten van den Keerssen, Fackelen, oft Lampen, dat seer natuerlijck stondt: doch van eenighe versproken oft berispt, meenende dat den Schilder alles met den verwen uyt te beelden behoort: doch ander houden al goet wat den welstandt verbetert, en d'ooghe des aensienders best can bedrieghen." Miedema, *Karel van Mander,* vol. 1, 125.

[31] "Daer is oock van hem t'Amsterdam in't oude Mannen Gasthuys, in't Comptoor, een groot stuck, veerthien voeten langh en acht hoogh, wesende de Loterije voor t'selve Gasthuys, in der nacht, met de plaets en huysen nae t'leven, en

commission from the upper ranks of Amsterdam society. Such prestigious patronage plus the attention and primacy of place given to Coignet's night paintings in Van Mander's publication evidence the high regard the artist enjoyed for his nocturnal scenes.

In his theoretical publications, Van Mander also praised other Netherlandish artists who depicted night scenes. In "The Life of Hieronymus Bosch" he commended the painter for achievements in the naturalistic depiction of fire and firelight, a subject Bosch typically sets against a dark nighttime sky. Van Mander described the artist's "subtle and natural way with flames, fires, smoke, and vapours" as "amazing."[32]

Van Mander's biography of Flemish artist Gillis Mostaert also praised his painting of the nocturnal liberation of Saint Peter, which was in the possession of the noted art collector and friend of the author Melchior Wijntgis.[33] Wijntgis occupied a position not only as a prominent citizen of Middelburg and Master of the Mint, but also as the dedicatee of the *Schilder-boek* itself. In tribute, Van Mander wrote: "To the very respectable, honorable, and art-loving Mr. Melchior Wijntgis; former counsel and mint master-general of the United Provinces; Now mint master of country and county of Zeeland, my extraordinary gentleman and good friend."[34]

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alderley volck, met lanternen, en ander lichten, alles seer aerdigh en welghedaen." Miedema, *Karel van Mander,* vol. 1, 125.

[32] "[T]'is wonder wat daer al te sien is van oubolligh ghespoock: oock hoe aerdigh en natuerlijck hy was, van vlammen, branden, roocken en smoocken." Miedema, *Karel van Mander,* vol. 1, 306.

[33] Of Mostaert Van Mander states: "Many of his works are to be seen with art lovers. In Middelburg with Mr. Wijntgis there is a beautiful, large piece in which the Messrs Schets, as lords of Hoboken, are very solemnly received by the peasants – full of details and figures. There is also a Bearing of the Cross and a nocturnal perspective in which Peter is delivered by the angel and led out of prison; and various other things, excellently well executed. (Sijn wercken zijn by den Const-liefhebbers veel te sien. Daer is tot Middelborgh, by d'Heer Wijntgis, een schoon groot stuck, daer de Heeren Schetsen, als Heeren van Hoboke, seer statigh van dese Boeren werden ingehaelt, wesende vol werck en beelden. Noch isser een Cruysdrager, en een Perspeckt in der nacht, daer Petrus van den Enghel verlost, en uyt der vanghnis leydt: en verscheyden meer ander dinghen, uytnemende wel ghedaen.)" Miedema, *Karel van Mander,* vol. 1, 305.

[34] "Aen seer Achtbaren, Erentfesten, en Const-liefdigen Heer Melchior Wijntgis: eerst raedt, en generael Meester van der Munten der vereenighde Nederlanden: nu Meester van de Munt des Landts, en Graeflijckheyt Zeelandt, mijnen besonderen Heer en goeden vrient." Karel van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck* (Haarlem, 1604) fol. 4r, stanza 1–4. My translation.

Van Mander also offered praise for a painting of a dark scene by the Fleming Aert Mijtens "in which Christ is crowned [with thorns] by night."[35] The author regarded Mijtens as an exemplary artist and "an outstanding master who made the Italians say less often that Netherlanders have no proper approach to the painting of figures, or at least gave them enough reason and occasion to remain silent upon that matter, or to speak of us more moderately."[36] For Van Mander, Mijtens' painting of the nocturnal crowning with thorns offered proof of the abilities of the best Dutch and Flemish painters.

In the entry concerning the Utrecht painter Joachim Wtewael, Van Mander mentioned that "there is a very beautiful, art-full piece loosely composed in an upright format, excellent in drawing and colouring, with the scene of the shepherds summoned by night—that testifies sufficiently to what Joachim is capable of in art."[37] Again, Van Mander selected a nocturnal painting for particular acclaim as a testament to artistic abilities, which he described in some detail. Van Mander praised Wtenwael's artful (*constigh*) qualities and the painting's excellent coloring.

Van Mander also referred to the Bruges painter Lansloot Blondeel as having "had a wonderfully great knowledge of architecture and antique ruins, and of drawing fires in the night and suchlike."[38] In this instance, Van Mander praised a drawing and referenced the depiction of *brantjes* (little fire scenes) and *nachtjes* (little night scenes).[39]

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[35] "Daer Christus gecroont werdt in der nacht." Miedema, *Karel van Mander,* vol. 1, 314.
[36] "een treflijck Meester, die den Italianen heeft spaerlijcker doen verhalen, dat Nederlanders geen handelinghe in beelden hebben, oft heeftse stoffe genoech gegheven en oorsaeck sulcx te swijghen, oft maetlijcker van ons te spreken." Miedema, *Karel van Mander,* vol. 1, 314.
[37] "een seer schoon constigh stuck, in de hooghte los geordineert, uytnemende in zijn teyckeninge en coloreringe, en is daer de Herderen in der nacht gheboodtschapt worden, dat welcke ghenoech ghetuyght, wat Ioachim in de Const vermach." Miedema, *Karel van Mander,* vol. 1, 453.
[38] "Hy was een wonder verstandigh Man in Metselrije, en Antijcke ruinen, en van branden in der nacht teeckenen, en dergelijcke." Miedema, *Karel van Mander,* vol. 1, 77–79.
[39] The term *brantjes* often appears in seventeenth-century inventories in reference to conflagration scenes. See Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Crispiaen Colijns, March 20, 1612, WK 5073/944, records of

Many other *liefhebbers* (art lovers) shared with Van Mander an appreciation for such imagery. Later seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Netherlandish writers echoed his 1604 praise of the skillful portrayal of the night as an esteemed artistic ability, which they also associated with northern European artists. By 1642, publications in Dutch by two authors expressed their opinions concerning the depiction of the night and nocturnal lighting effects: Franciscus Junius's *De Pictura Veterum* with a preface in Dutch by Jan de Brune the Younger,[40] and Philips Angel II's booklet *Lof der Schilder-konst* (*Praise of Painting*).[41]

In *De Pictura Veterum*, Junius attempted to compile from ancient literature every comment concerning the visual and literary arts. As librarian to his English patron, the Earl of Arundel, whose extensive collection of antique sculpture earned him the nickname "the collector Earl,"[42] Junius acquired knowledge concerning attitudes toward and beliefs about art common among elite seventeenth-century European connoisseurs. The text of *De Pictura Veterum* deals extensively with ideas from ancient times concerning art and specifically the competition between poetry and painting.

As early as the second sentence of his preface, Jan de Brune clarified his motives for writing his text. He sung the praises of the Dutch vernacular used in this publication: "Our Dutch language, owing to I know not what natural inherent sweetness, is capable of bearing forth the

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notary Gerrit Jacobsz. Harinck in "Colijns, Crispiaen," The Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories, http://research.frick.org/montias/browserecordxl.php?-action=browse&-recid=1878; and Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Jan Vincenten Koster, September 29, 1622, WK 5073/954, records of notary Jan Dircx Van Beuningen in "Koster, Jan Vincenten," The Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories, http://research.frick.org/montias/browserecord.php?-action=browse&-recid=1760. See also Margriet Verhoef, "'Brantjes' en 'Maneschijntjes,' Over Lichteffecten in de Nacht," in *Rotterdamse Meesters uit de Gouden Eeuw*, ed. Nora Schadee (Zwolle: Waanders Uitgevers, 1994), 125–33, and Chapter Three of this dissertation for a discussion of *brantjes*.

[40] Four years earlier in Amsterdam, Joan Blaeu had published a Latin edition of Junius's book without De Brune's introductory statement.

[41] On October 31, 1641, Angel's comments had been presented as a speech given to the Leiden Guild of St. Luke on the occasion of the Feast of St. Luke.

[42] For more on Lord Arundel as a collector, see "The Years of Growth" and The Lights and Relics of Antiquity" in David Howarth, *Lord Arundel and his Circle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 53–76, 77–96.

Majesty of the greatest conceptions, a person's brains could engender, and thus were we diligent enough to prune and trim her with industrious care, she would bear numerous, superabundant fruit."[43] De Brune's statement informed his reader of the capacity for greatness inherent in his mother tongue and by extension the Dutch culture itself. From the beginning of his text, De Brune touted his homeland's merits and returned to the same theme throughout his discussion of art.

De Brune then turned to the long-standing debate between the virtues of painting, as opposed to those of sculpture or poetry, and stated definitively that the abilities of painters to illusionistically mimic every aspect of the natural world—"copy nature in all things"[44]—secured their place in the highest echelon of the art world. In a slight to poetry, De Brune cited the Greek historian Polybius, who said that our "eyes are much sharper witnesses … than our ears."[45] Nature may best be observed through sight rather than sounds, which, according to De Brune, could not reach "so far into the innermost movements of our emotions,"[46] as vision can.

To defend the superiority of painting over sculpture, De Brune recalled the legendary Greek painter Apelles and stated: "We say then that the Art of Painting is much more universal [than sculpture], that is, that it can copy nature in all things: for as well as being able to paint all manner of animals and other things to hand, it knows how to copy everything that can be seen, which is not possible for the Sculptor, for this reason Pliny said of Apelles that he had painted

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[43] "Onse Neerlandtsche tael, door ick weet niet wat natuerlijcke soetigheydt met haer gheboren, is bequaem om te draghen de Majesteyt vande grootste invallen, die yemandts herssenen konnen beswangheren, en soo wy neerstigh ghenoegh waren om haer met een arbeydsame vroetheydt te heghenen en te polijsteren, sy sou veel overvloediger vruchten draghen." Jan De Brune, preface, v***iii, in Franciscus Junius's *De Schilder-konst der Oude* (*On the Painting of the Ancients*) (Middelburg: Zacharias Roman, 1641).
[44] "natuer in alle ginghen kan naebootsen" De Brune, preface, v***iii.
[45] "D'oogen sijn veel scherper ghetuyghen, seydt *Polybius,* dan wel onse ooren." De Brune, preface, r***iiii.
[46] "de binnenste bewegingen onse ghemoeds" De Brune, preface, r***iiii.

things which could not be painted, such as bolts of lightning and cracks of thunder."[47] De Brune specifically included night scenes in his list of subjects and effects that display the virtuosity and ultimate superiority of the art of painting: "streams, light, air, mist, clouds, reflections and numberless other things such as the rising of the sun, dawn, night … and much else that sculptors cannot do."[48]

De Brune's evocation of Pliny the Elder's comments demonstrated clearly the qualities of art most important to the author of the preface, as well as those that corresponded best to the art of his home country. At the heart of De Brune's passage lay the northern European interest in naturalism described previously by Van Mander. De Brune believed that painters could surpass in greatness artists in other media because they could create the illusion of natural phenomena, such as bolts of lightning, which sculptors cannot replicate in sculpture. Characterized by obscure forms that emerge from darkness and by the ephemeral play of light and shadow, pictures of the night displayed the ability of an artist to "copy nature in all things." Illusionistic depictions of the night, therefore, held an esteemed place for De Brune, an erudite scholar in close contact with one of the great European collectors of his day. De Brune's admiration for such imagery surely aligned with that of many other *liefhebbers*, including readers of the Dutch edition of *De Pictura Veterum*.

Similarly, in his 1642 booklet *Lof der Schilder-konst*, Philips Angel offered special praise for painting, in general, and for the depiction of nocturnal subjects that strongly resembled De

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[47] "Wy seggen dan de Schilder-konst veel alghemeener te wesen, dat is dat sy natuer in alle dinghen kan naebootsen: want boven dat sy afmaelt allerley Dieren en ander tuyg dat men raken kan, weetse mee nae te bootsen alles wat men kan sien, het gheen de Beeldhouwers onmogelick is, hieromsey Plinius van Apelles dat hy geschildert hadde dinghen die men niet schilderen kan, als blixem-stralen en donderslaghen."De Brune, preface, v***iii.

[48] "sy stroomen, licht, locht, waessem, wolcken, weerschijn en andere oneyndelicke dinghen, als't opgaen van de Son, de morgenstond, de nacht...en wat'er meer van de Beeldhouwers niet gedaen kan worden." De Brune, preface, v***v.

Brune's remarks.[49] In a defense and promotion of painting intended to "deal the sculptors the final death-blow,"[50] Angel celebrated illusionistic painting of ephemeral natural phenomena, like moon- and starlight. He stated: "We say that the art of painting is far more general because it is capable of imitating nature much more copiously, for…[i]t can be used to depict a rainbow, rain, thunder, lightning, clouds, vapor, light, reflections and more of such things, like the rising of the sun, early morning, the decline of the sun, evening, the moon illuminating the night, with her attendant companions, the stars … none of which the sculptors can imitate."[51]

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[49] In fact, the two descriptions are so similar that the possibility Angel read De Brune's text and borrowed these ideas directly from him seems worth consideration. Angel gave his speech the year of the publication of De Brune's preface, which makes this scenario possible. Additionally, minor adjustments and differences suggest the two authors' arrival at similar conclusions without Angel's direct copying. For comparison, I include the full text of the De Brune and Angel passages here. From De Brune: "Wy seggen dan de Schilder-konst veel alghemeener te wesen, dat is dat sy natuer in alle dinghen kan naebootsen: want boven dat sy afmaelt allerley Dieren en ander tuyg dat men raken kan, weetse mee nae te bootsen alles wat men kan sien, het gheen de Beeldhouwers onmogelick is, hieromsey Plinius van Apelles dat hy geschildert hadde dinghen die men niet schilderen kan, als blixem-stralen en donderslaghen. Oock maken y stroomen, licht, locht, waessem, wolcken, weerschijn en andere oneyndelicke dinghen, als't opgaen van de Son, de morgenstond, de nacht , verwen van wateren, plumen van Voghelen, hayr van Menssen en Beesten, sweet, schuym en wat'er meer van de Beeldhouwers niet gedaen kan worden." "We say then that the Art of Painting is much more universal, that is, that it can copy nature in all things: for as well as being able to paint all manner of animals and other things to hand, it knows how to copy everything that can be seen, which is not possible for the sculptor, for this reason Pliny said of Apelles that he had painted things which could not be painted, such as bolts of lightning and cracks of thunder. They also make streams, light, air, mist, clouds, reflections and numberless other things such as the rising of the sun, dawn, night, the colours of waters, the feathers of birds, the hair of men and beasts, sweat, foam and much else that sculptors cannot do." De Brune, preface, v***v, in Franciscus Junius's *De Schilder-konst der Oude*. From Angel: "wy seggen dan, dat de Schilder-Konst veel al-gemeener is, om dat sy de Natuyre veel over-vloedelijcker weet na te bootsen: want boven dien dat sy aff-beelt alderley Dieren, als, Vogelen, Vissen, VVormen, Vlieghen, Spinnen, Ruspen, soo kanse ons oock verthoonen alderhande Metalen; onderscheydende de selve, als Goudt, Silver, Metael, Koper, Tin, Loodt, en wat des meer is. Men kan door haer uyt beelden den Regen-Boogh, Regen, Donder, Blixem, VVolcken, Waesem, Licht, Weerschijn, en dierghelijcke dinghen meer, als, 't opgaen vande Zonne: de Morgenstondt: het dalen van de Zonne: den Avondt: de Nacht-verlichtende Maen, met haer Leydtslieden, de Sterren: de Spiegelinghe in 't Water: het Hayr van Menschen: het schuymbecken der Paerden &c. van welcke de Beeldt-houwers gheen van allen weten na te botsen." "We say that the art of painting is far more general because it is capable of imitating nature much more copiously, for in addition to depicting every kind of creature like birds, fishes, works, flies, spiders and caterpillars it can render every kind of metal and can distinguish between them, such as gold, silver, bronze, copper, pewter, lead and all the rest. It can be used to depict a rainbow, rain, thunder, lightning, clouds, vapor, light, reflections and more of such things, like the rising of the sun, early morning, the decline of the sun, evening, the moon illuminating the night, with her attendant companions, the stars, reflections in the water, human hair, horses foaming at the mouth and so forth, none of which the sculptors can imitate." Philips Angel, and Hessel Miedema, "Philips Angel, Praise of Painting," trans. Michael Hoyle, *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 65 (1996): 239.

[50] "soo willen wy de Beeld-houwers den laetsten doodt-slach geven." Angel and Miedema, "Philips Angel," 239.

[51] "wy seggen dan, dat de Schilder-Konst veel al-gemeener is, om dat sy de Natuyre veel over-vloedelijcker weet na te bootsen...Men kan door haer uyt beelden den Regen-Boogh, Regen, Donder, Blixem, VVolcken, Waesem, Licht, Weerschijn,en dierghelijcke dinghen meer, als, 't opgaen vande Zonne: de Morgenstondt: het dalen van de Zonne:

In 1642, Angel's remarks represented theoretical, prescriptive thinking about the ideal qualities of the art of painting. As such they provide valuable insight into the comparable attitudes toward night scenes held by seventeenth-century Dutch connoisseurs and collectors. The stakes at hand at the time Angel wrote his *Lof der Schilder-konst* supported such a conclusion. In 1641 the Leiden painters appealed to the civic authorities to reinstitute the Guild of St. Luke, which had dissolved most likely during the Reformation. On the basis of Angel's prestige and erudition, the painters chose him to make the argument—a "promotional address"[52]—on their behalf. In his oration and subsequent publication, Angel represented his attitudes shared by the other Leiden painters and *liefhebbers*. Like Van Mander, De Brune and Angel, artists and collectors would have valued the skill involved in the depiction of night scenes, which Angel mentioned in his *Lof der Schilder-konst*.

Samuel van Hoogstraten's writings about the depiction of the night, as expressed in his 1678 *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst: anders de zichtbaere werelt* (*Introduction to the Academy of Painting, or the Visible World*), resemble those of Van Mander, De Brune, and Angel. First published in Rotterdam, *De Zichtbaere Werelt* includes nine chapters each named for one of the ancient muses: Euterpe (Song and Elegiac Poetry), Polyhymnia (Hymns and Sacred Poetry), Clio (History), Erato (Love Poetry), Thalia (Comedy), Terpsichore (Dance), Melpomene (Tragedy), Calliope (Epic Poetry) and Urania (Astronomy).

In keeping with the praise accorded to painting by Van Mander, De Brune, and Angel, Van Hoogstraten evoked each of the muses in the service of that art form. By organizing his treatise as such, the author suggested that painting possesses the best qualities not only of the

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den Avondt: de Nacht-verlichtende Maen, met haer Leydtslieden, de Sterren...van welcke de Beeldt-houwers gheen van allen weten na te botsen." Angel and Miedema, "Philips Angel," 239.

[52] Angel and Miedema, "Philips Angel," 251.

arts, but of the sciences as well. As the title suggests, Van Hoogstraten believed that painting can and should present to the viewer everything within the visible world.[53] However, he did not deem every subject to be of equal artistic value. Van Hoogstraten went into considerable detail describing their hierarchy in the chapter named for Clio, the muse of history. He explained that paintings of history subjects occupy the uppermost of the three levels or "*graden*"[54] of art.[55] The second level consists of the work of creators of "Cabinet-pieces of every kind"[56] including

> those that come with night-scenes, and fires, Shrovetides and mummeries; or with *Bambocciaden* or Jan Hagel farces, or Barbers' and Cobblers' shops, Alchemists and Sorcerers and earn the name of Rhyparographers (painters of small trifles), just as Pieraikos of old was called. Furthermore, I maintain that such choices are challenging enough, to make even the stoutest of spirits sweat, when they clamber up to the level upon which these charming things are to be found.[57]

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[53] In Arnold Houbraken's biography of Van Hoogstraten, the author mentioned being in the possession of the manuscript for a second volume focused on the invisible world. However, it remained unpublished and presumably no longer exists. See Hendrik J. Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses* (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 2000), 1:22.

[54] The author uses this term in the title of the subsection "Derde Hooftdeel, van der dryderley graden der konst" (Third Chapter: Concerning the three levels of art). Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding Tot De Hooge Schoole Der Schilderkonst: Anders De Zichtbaere Werelt*, trans., Charles Ford (Rotterdam: Fransois van Hoogstraeten, 1678) 75, accessed March 20, 2019, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/grondt/inleyding-tot-de-hooge-schoole-der-schilderkonst-anders-de-zichtbaere-werelt-rotterdam-1678.

[55] "Some are also inspired and driven to the highest and most distinguished level of the Art of Painting, which has all the others below it, which is the depiction of thought-provoking Histories: among these there are further distinctions, some are concerned with magnificence and high-degree, and work with shining gold and pearls and gemstones. Others seek out the tragic and mournful, and move one to feel compassion. Others summon up the Heroic deeds of the ancients, battles and destructive war. Others content themselves merely with painting likenesses of men and women, and discover it to be the most profitable business of all." "Zommige dan worden ook zoo tot den hoogsten en voornaemsten trap in de Schilderkonst, die alles onder zich heeft, geport en gedreven, welke is het uitbeelden der gedenkwaerdichste Historien: Onder deze is noch onderscheyt, eenige zijn ontrent prachtige en hoogstaetlijke bezich, en doen haer werk van goud en parlen en edele steenen blinken. Andere zoeken treurige en beklaeglijke, en bewegen het gemoed tot medelijden. Andere zwieren de Heldendaden der ouden, krijgen, en verdervende oorlogen in 't hooft. Andere vernoegen zich alleen met heeren en vrouwen gelijkenissen te schilderen, en vinden het zelve 't profijtelijkst van al." Van Hoogstraten, *De Zichtbaere Werelt*, 79.

[56] "Kabinetstukken van allerley aert." Van Hoogstraten, *De Zichtbaere Werelt*, 77.

[57] "Andere komen met nachten, en branden, vastenavonden, en mommerien her voor: of met bambootserytjes, of kluchten van Jan hagel, of met Barbiers en Schoenmakers winkels, en verdienen den naem van *Rhyparographi*, zoo wel als d'oude *Pyreykcus* voornoemt, alwaert maer met Goudzoekers, en Spookmakers. Nochtans houd ik al deeze verkiezingen hoog genoeg, om de braefste geesten te doen zweeten, eerze den trap van eere, daer deeze aerdicheden te vinden zijn, zullen beklouteren." Van Hoogstraten, *De Zichtbaere Werelt*, 77. The term *Bambocciaden* refers to tavern scenes named for the Dutch painter Pieter van Laer, also called Bamboccio. The name Jan Hagel similarly signifies low comic subject matter. Van Hoogstraten celebrates this second level of art by relating these themes to the work of the Greek painter Pieraikos, famous in the seventeenth-century Netherlands for achieving wealth and widespread acclaim despite his preference for humble subject matter such as donkeys and cobblers' shops. See Mariët Westermann, "Jan Miense Molenaer in the Comic Mode," in *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Dennis P. Weller, exh. cat. (Raleigh: North Carolina Museum of Art, 2002), 50.

Van Hoogstraten made a compelling case for the place of night scenes or "*nachten*," if they are charming enough, among those respectable works that sufficiently challenged and displayed the abilities of the painter. Although Van Hoogstraten did not clearly define the subject matter of night scenes, which belong to his second level, he probably did not include biblical or historical subjects set at night, which would warrant inclusion instead at the highest level of the hierarchy. His mention of fires, shrovetides, and other mummeries in tandem with night scenes suggests Van Hoogstraten may have referred to commonplace nocturnal events, including conflagrations and merrymaking.

In his reference to night scenes, Van Hoogstraten employed the specific term *nachten*, which implies that the subjects warranted their own category (or sub-category) of painting. Regardless of the parameters that the term may have had, Van Hoogstraten acknowledged depictions of the night as a sub-group within the larger art of painting. Although he ranked night scenes at the mid-level of his hierarchy, they nevertheless represented a valuable and artistically demanding pursuit.

In a later chapter concerned specifically with the depiction of light and darkness, and named for the muse of tragedy Melpomene, Van Hoogstraten developed his discussion further.[58] In his section entitled "Van veelerley Licht*"* ("Concerning various kinds of Light"), the author carefully described the depiction of the stars and moonlight:

> Stars and moon give a pale and ambiguous light; for even though the Moon, when it is full, is sufficient to allow you to see objects distinctly on mountains and in fields, whenever she impresses her beautiful form in a still stream, the otherwise

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[58] As to why Houbraken chose to discuss this matter in the chapter named for Melpomene, Charles Ford argued that "the Muse of Tragedy tells her stories though the alternation of light and dark, the play of fate, a succession of visibility and invisibility that is used by Van Hoogstraten to tell a history of the emergences and disappearances of painting in the world." Charles Ford, "Hoogstraeten's Invisible World, *Inleyding Tot De Hooge Schoole Der Schilderkonst*," University College London, accessed October 27, 2016, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/grondt/Inleyding/Introduction.

> pleasant woods nevertheless remain terrifying to look upon, and the hills and caverns are coloured with horror. I have seen a Moonlight (*Maneschijn*) with these characteristics done most naturally by Jan Lievens. A certain Piero della Francesca was praised for his depictions of night and darkness (*duisternessen*).[59]

Van Hoogstraten's allusions to terror and horror as the natural results of a painterly description of moonlight, as exemplified by a *Maneschijn* or moonlight scene by Jan Lievens,[60] suggested an interpretation of nocturnal pictures different from those mentioned in the earlier theoretical texts.

In the same chapter, Van Hoogstraten included praise for the skillful rendering of celestial lights, which he associated with paintings by Jan Lievens. He also referenced *duisternessen* or scenes that depict darkness, which he ascribed specifically to the fifteenth-century Italian painter Piero della Francesca. Van Hoogstraten's differentiation among varying types of darkness in nocturnal imagery, based perhaps on the source of light within a depicted space, suggested his appreciation for the richness and complexity of seventeenth-century Dutch night scenes.

While Van Hoogstraten recognized the substantial differences between various types of darkness and lighting in paintings, as manifested by his terms *Maneschijnen* and *duisternessen*, he also called attention to their similarities. In his discusson of the depiction of light, he perceived the scenes of moonlight and those of darkness to be interconnected because they shared qualities, including chiaroscuro and the obfuscation of forms. The nuances inherent within Van Hoogstraten's discussion of "light" would have been shared by contemporary viewers, who also understood and appreciated the visual subtleties in night scenes.

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[59] "'t Gesternt en de Maen geven een bleek en twijfelachtich licht; want schoon de Maen, alsze vol is, de voorwerpen van bergen en landouwen bescheydelijk genoeg laet zien, wanneerze haer schoone gedaente in een stille stroom afdrukt, zoo blijven nochtans de, andersins genoechlijke, bosschaedjen verschriklijk om aen te zien, en de heuvelen en spelonken zijn met vreeslijkheit geverwt. Ik heb een Maneschijn met deze eygenschappen op 't aldernatuurlijkst van *Johan Lievens* gezien. Eenen *Pieter Della Fransseka* wiert in 't uitbeelden van nachten en duisternissen geprezen." Van Hoogstraten, *De Zichtbaere Werelt,* 258–59.

[60] Born in Leiden, Lievens worked in a number of cities throughout his career including Leiden, Amsterdam, London, and Antwerp.

In the early years of the eighteenth century, Arnold Houbraken wrote *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen* (*The Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*), the initial volume of which first appeared in 1718. The second followed in 1719 and finally a third in 1721. Each contains many biographies of artists arranged chronologically. Like Van Hoogstraten, Houbraken both painted and wrote about art. While he penned *De Zichtbaere Werelt*, Houbraken apprenticed with Van Hoogstraten from 1674–78. Houbraken's publication included colorful, yet often unreliable biographies of roughly 550 seventeenth-century Netherlandish painters, along with his opinions about their work and his critical commentary about art in general.[61] In comparison with discussions by earlier writers about Dutch nocturnal pictures, Houbraken's observations demonstrate how attitudes toward such imagery changed in some respects over time or remained the same.

Houbraken's discussion of the depiction of night scenes reflects the influence of Enlightenment-inspired ideals and classicizing artistic preferences, which colored his entire book. He disfavored tonal and otherwise dark or dull painting and believed that the best art championed only the most beautiful and bounteous of God's creations.[62] In *De Groote Schouburgh*, Houbraken's most extensive discussion regarding night scenes appeared among his comments about paintings by Rembrandt.

Houbraken did not take issue with the depiction of the night, if so determined by the narrative. As long as a particular story called for darkness, its skillful execution should be praised. Houbraken himself painted at least two night scenes and reproduced others in the text of the *De Groote Schouburgh*. According to H. J. Horn, Houbraken merely opposed the practice of

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[61] For a detailed discussion of the concerns regarding inaccuracy and bias in Houbraken's biographies, see: "Arnold Houbraken as Anecdotist and Muckraker," in Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited,* 180–216.
[62] Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited,* 1, 5.

artists who, like Caravaggio, set scenes at night without a specific narrative reason for doing so, and thus "would turn day into night."[63]

Houbraken complimented the painter Jurriaen Ovens, whose nocturnal scene *The Conspiracy of the Batavians Under Claudius Civilis*, c. 1659/62, executed with Govert Flinck, replaced Rembrandt's rejected painting for the new Amsterdam city hall. He referred to Ovens as "an outstanding master of Histories and Night Scenes."[64] Houbraken, however, criticized Rembrandt's paintings for going "against nature" in making dark what could or should be brightly lit. He quoted the poem by Joost van den Vondel who observed that "Rembrandt, who, although his figures in the foreground of his scenes stood in full daylight, did not hesitate (against nature) to have the sky in the back exist in dark night."[65] The author's praise for Ovens and Flinck's painting shows how late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth-century Dutch *liefhebbers* still prized works set after dark despite changing tastes characteristic of classicists, like Houbraken.

The texts by Van Mander, De Brune, Angel, Van Hoogstraten, and Houbraken all praise art that naturalistically depicted nighttime scenes, although subtle differences distinguished aspects of the authors' observations and opinions. The following sub-section of this chapter will analyze the seventeenth-century northern Netherlandish market for pictures of nighttime subjects. Quantifiable evidence of the value and popularity of such paintings for collectors will indicate the extent to which the demand for nocturnal scenes conformed to, or diverged from the opinions expressed in the theoretical publications.

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[63] Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited,* 537.
[64] "een braaf meester in Historien en Nagtlichten." Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited,* 537.
[65] "*Rembrant* van ter zyde een streek geeft, die niet tegenstaande zyne beelden op den voorgrond van zyne tafereelen in klaren dag stonden, zig niet ontzag (tegens de natuur aan) de lucht van agteren in eenen duisteren nagt te verkeeren." Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited*, 478.

Night Scenes and the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art Market

In addition to the praise for night scenes espoused by Dutch art theorists of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the market itself provides evidence of the esteem in which such pictures were held by contemporary collectors. Observations related to the market for pictures of the night provide quantifiable evidence of their remarkable and sustained popularity in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. Such data support discussion here of three case studies of Dutch artists, who specialized in nighttime imagery and achieved acclaim, commercial success, or both. Their work will be considered in more detail in subsequent chapters of this dissertation. Those artists are Leonaert Bramer, Egbert Lievensz. van der Poel, and Aert van Der Neer. The artists' professional success and the widespread admiration their paintings enjoyed unmistakably demonstrate the distinctive status of nocturnal pictures in the northern Netherlands. Dutch audiences possessed a voracious appetite for such imagery.[66] Due to the highly specialized nature of the seventeenth-century Dutch art market, nighttime pictures created a noteworthy niche for some painters.[67]

Leonaert Bramer exemplifies the artists who made a name for themselves depicting nocturnal scenes. He sold many paintings and drawings to patrons from all over the Dutch Republic and earned the esteem of the most erudite *liefhebbers*. Appreciation for Bramer's work secured the artist a number of large-scale fresco commissions for important private and civic buildings in his hometown of Delft. Similarly, Egbert van der Poel produced a large number of

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[66] The development of the mezzotint printmaking process around the middle of the seventeenth century may have contributed to the popularity of night scenes in the Dutch Republic by making their production, at least in print, less painstaking. Cornelis Dusart, for example, produced many mezzotint prints with nocturnal subjects during the late seventeenth century. At the same time, mezzotint emerging as a technique may be related to a growing market demand for prints with nocturnal subject matter. The new technique presented an alternative to, for instance, Hendrik Goudt's use of crosshatching to create his laboriously worked night scenes. Likely, the popularity of mezzotint prints depicting imagery set after dark resulted from a combination of both the relative ease of their production as well as the cultural interest in night scenes.

[67] J. Michael Montias, "Cost and Value in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art," *Art History* 10, no. 4 (1987): 464.

extant nocturnal scenes. Imitations of Van der Poel's nighttime paintings by his followers, such as Adam Colonia, and copies of his work by Bramer and other respected, older artists further evidence the contemporary Dutch demand for portrayals of the night. Aert van der Neer also created and sold a vast oeuvre of night scenes, which garnered many followers.

In the following discussion of paintings in seventeenth-century Dutch collections by Bramer, Van der Poel, Colonia and Van der Neer, I will indicate, if known, whether an artwork pictured a night scene. In many cases, however, archival sources do not specify a work's subject matter or the time of day. Regardless of the depiction or not of a night scene in such images, the inclusion of works by these three artists in prestigious collections throughout the Dutch Republic indicates the high level of respect seventeenth-century *liefhebbers* had for their work. Because Bramer, Van der Poel, and Van der Neer built reputations for painting nocturnal subjects, the demand for their pictures among these sophisticated audiences illustrates the taste for their work and, consequently, for depictions of nighttime.

Leonaert Bramer's patrons closely associated him with the painting of nocturnal scenes. Although the artist's output also includes many works with daylight settings, he ultimately made a name for himself as a painter of nighttime subjects, including dramatic lighting conditions created by firelight (fig. 1.1). The artist's diverse and far-reaching audience, which extended from Delft to Amsterdam, The Hague, and almost every other relatively large Dutch city, consisted of learned and wealthy patrons. His esteemed clientele, broad commercial success, and his reputation as a painter of night scenes strongly indicate that *liefhebbers* valued Bramer's paintings throughout much of the seventeenth century.

Bramer's affinity for, and close association with the depiction of night scenes began early in his career.[68] Young Leonaert followed the path of respected and successful Netherlandish artists who came before him by travelling to Italy in order to further his knowledge of classical and Italian art and learning. While living in Rome intermittently between 1616 and 1627, Bramer helped to found, and participated as an active member of the *schildersbent* (group of painters) or *Bentvueghels* (Birds of a Feather), the artists' society that consisted primarily of Dutch and Flemish expatriates.[69] Over the course of this decade-long sojourn, Bramer painted many night scenes and subsequently acquired from his Italian colleagues the sobriquet *"Leonardo della Notte*" or *"Leonardo delle Notti*" (Leonardo of the night or nights). During his formative years as a young painter in Rome, Bramer's interest and skill in the painting of night scenes helped establish his professional reputation. Indeed, his fame in this regard must have been quite long-lived. Fifty years later, a 1666 Roman inventory still referred to Bramer by the earlier name, "Leonardo of the nights."[70]

Upon his return to Delft and during his mature career in the Netherlands, Bramer furthered his reputation as a painter of the night. Although only eleven of the artist's extant paintings can be convincingly dated, he produced many nocturnal scenes throughout his life. Nothing indicates that his affinity for painting or his ability to sell pictures waned. The catalogue of the 1994 Bramer exhibition at the Prinsenhof in Delft features reproductions of at least

[68] Bramer was born in Delft on Christmas Eve, 1596, to parents Hendrick Bramer and Christyntge Jans. Hendrick may be the artist Henricus Bramer, who painted equestrian pieces including a cavalry charge after which Leonaert produced an extant drawing. However, Henricus may instead have been Leonaert's brother, cousin, or other familial relation. Paul Huys Janssen, "Leonaert Bramer, his Biography as told by Documents," in Jane ten Brink Goldsmith, et al., *Leonaert Bramer 1596–1674, Ingenious Painter and Draughtsman in Rome and Delft* (Zwolle: Waanders Uitgevers, 1994), 13.
[69] Janssen, "Leonaert Bramer, his Biography as told by Documents," 15.
[70] Michiel Plomp and Jane ten Brink Goldsmith, "Leonaert Bramer the Painter," in Goldsmith, et al., *Leonaert Bramer*, 51.

nineteen of the artist's paintings of night scenes. Six other pictures most likely depict the night, which cannot be confirmed due to the poor quality of available reproductions.[71]

Bramer's strong interest in the depiction of night scenes can be further gleaned from the fact that he set at night his painting *The Dismissal of Hagar*, 1630s, a partial copy of Rembrandt's 1637 etching of the same subject in daylight. In Bramer's painting, the figure of Hagar and key elements of the composition clearly derive from knowledge of Rembrandt's 1637 etching.[72] Bramer restaged the original composition and included a prominent moon hanging in the visible portion of the sky, which Rembrandt chose to leave blank. Bramer emphasized his high level of skill as a virtuoso painter of night scenes with the insertion of the moon and the nighttime darkness.

Seventeenth-century Dutch audiences also admired Bramer as a draughtsman of nocturnal scenes. He incorporated nighttime scenes into several of his drawn series, including his illustrations of the exploits of the German literary figure Till Uilenspiegel, as well as his cycle describing scenes from the Spanish novel *La vida de Lazarillo De Tormes* (*The Life of Lazarillo de Tormes*). The former includes *Till Uilenspiegel Sieving Flour by Moonlight* (n.d.) and *Till Uilenspiegel Counting Monks Going to Mass* (n.d.),[73] both of which undoubtedly take place after sunset. Likewise, the latter narrative series contains the night scenes *Lazarillo Is Freed* (n.d.) and *Lazarillo's Wife and the Archpriest Being Captured at Night* (n.d.).[74] Other drawings in each of these series likely depict the night as well. As both a painter and as a draughtsman, Bramer excelled at, and depicted in great numbers moonlit and torchlit night scenes.

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[71] This count does not include works that almost certainly take place at night (as evidenced by the particular subject matter depicted), but which do not clearly show it. The presence of a moon or a black night's sky overtly signals to the viewer a work's nocturnal setting and theme.
[72] Plomp and Goldstein, "Leonaert Bramer the Painter," in Goldsmith, et. al, *Leonaert Bramer*, 57.
[73] Bremen, Kunsthalle, inv. nos. 525, 567.
[74] Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, inv. nos. 1275, 6470.

Contemporary documents that discuss and describe Bramer's work reveal the artist's penchant and well-established reputation for shadowy nighttime scenes. In 1635, the humanist Arnoldus Buchelius visited the home of the Utrecht painter Abraham Bloemaert. In a diary entry dated October 1, just seven years after Bramer embarked upon his mature career in his home country, Buchelius recorded having seen multiple paintings in Bloemaert's collection "by a certain Bramer of Delft, depicting the shadow of the night." In contrast, Buchelius made no mention of any other artists' names in his description of the many artworks he saw that day. He listed, for example, "flower pieces, and beautiful scenes showing the Virgin, a landscape with Corydon and Lysa" without identifying the relevant artists.[75] Buchelius also did not describe the subject or any other aspect of Bramer's paintings aside from their nocturnal settings. As a result, we might reasonably assume that by the mid-1630s in Utrecht, Bramer enjoyed a level of renown and that collectors recognized his facility in depicting the night.

Bramer's professional reputation as a painter of nocturnal scenes continued to grow throughout his long career and outlived him. In Arnold Houbraken's 1718 *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*, a portrait of Bramer provides proof of the longevity and pervasiveness of his reputation. In the engraving, a picture-within-a-picture depicts Bramer's printed likeness on a trompe-l'oeil piece of paper affixed to a rendering of a small torchlit painting of the incredulity of Thomas (fig. 1.2). The juxtaposition of the portrait and a scene set after dark signals the long-lived association between the artist and the type of dramatic lighting and nighttime subjects he depicted. The image that prefaces

[75] Buchelius's diary entry describing the art he saw during his visit with Bloemaert reads: "Invisi Abrahamum Blommartium. Vidi apud illum picturas floridas et elegantes marianes, rurestrem Coridontem cum sua Lysa, alias quoque Bramii cujusdam Delphensis noctium exprimens umbras." Arnoldus Buchelius, *Diarium, Res pictoriae, Notae Quotidianae et descriptio urbis ultrajectinae (1586–1639)*, Universiteitsbibliotheek Utrecht; cited in Janssen, "Leonaert Bramer, his Biography as told by Documents," 17.

Houbraken's discussion of Bramer immediately establishes the significance of the artist's nocturnal scenes in terms of his professional accomplishments and his legacy. For Houbraken, Bramer's ability to paint the night secured his place in the Netherlandish art historical canon and marked a Dutch cultural high point.

Bramer's elite patronage and high status among knowledgeable art collectors from all over the Dutch Republic also testify to his widespread renown and the demand for his pictures with nocturnal lighting effects. Almost immediately upon his 1628 return to Delft from Rome, Bramer carved out a strong reputation and found success in the art market. His patrons appear to have valued the nocturnal setting in Bramer's paintings as pictorial content itself, rather than only as a backdrop for other subject matter.

Patrons from Delft as well as other cities, including Amsterdam and The Hague, purchased Bramer's works, which he produced and sold in large numbers. Such success is especially impressive in light of the fact that at the time of Bramer's 1628 return to Delft, the city had not yet experienced its full artistic flourishing, which would peak in the 1650s as a result of the presence of painters including Egbert van der Poel, Carel Fabritius, and Johannes Vermeer.[76] In the early 1630s, Delft painters operated within a relatively small marketplace and artistic milieu, in contrast with those in more populous cities, such as Amsterdam. During Bramer's lifetime, fewer than 30,000 people lived in Delft[77] whereas 200,000 residents in Amsterdam comprised over ten percent of the total Dutch population.[78]

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[76] On Delft's art scene in the 1650s see Walter Liedtke, "The Delft School, Circa 1625–1675," in Frima Fox Hofrichter, *Leonaert Bramer 1596–1674, A Painter of the Night*, exh. cat. (Milwaukee: Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, 1992), 23 and J. Michael Montias, "Bramer's Patrons and Clients in Delft," in Goldsmith, et. al, *Leonaert Bramer,* 35.
[77] Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 35.
[78] Richard Paping, "General Dutch population development 1400–1850: cities and countryside" (paper presented at the First Conference of the European Society of Historical Demography (ESHD), Sassari/Alghero, Sardinia, Italy, September 25–27, 2014), http://www.rug.nl/research/portal/files/15865622/articlesardinie21sep2014.pdf.

Upon his return from Rome, Bramer remained in Delft throughout his long career as a member of the city's Guild of Saint Luke until his death in 1674. In 1654–55, 1660, and 1664–65, the Guild of Saint Luke appointed Bramer as *hoofdman* (headman.)[79] By 1637 Bramer served as sergeant in the civic guard and as one of a select company of militia officers and burghers of high social standing known as the "Brotherhood of Knights."[80] Despite Delft's small-scale artistic world, the level of renown Bramer achieved throughout the Netherlands evidences the enthusiastic taste of collectors in various Dutch cities for his work, which includes over 160 extant paintings and numerous drawings and sketches.[81]

In Delft, Bramer's high-status clientele included Johan Hogenhouck, a "doctor in both laws (*doctor in beijde rechten*),"[82] which referenced his doctoral degrees in both medicine and law. The professional title appears to have been rare and, as such, Hogenhouck must have been one of the most highly educated citizens of Delft. He married Anna van Berestein, a member of a Delft patriciate family and relative of many members of the *Vroedschap* (the group of notable burghers and likely candidates for positions as civic burgomasters and aldermen).[83]

Hogenhouck owned paintings by Bramer, including a "History of Loth," a "Philosopher," a "little waterfall" (*watervalleken*), and a "society piece" (*geselschap*).[84] He also possessed an impressive collection of works on paper, including albums of drawings by Willem Buytewegh, Claes Moeyaert, and Pieter van Laer, and drawings or prints[85] by Hendrick Goltzius, (Pieter?) Bruegel, Roelandt Savery, Lucas van Leyden, Abraham Bloemaert, Marten de Vos, Michel

[79] Janssen, "Leonaert Bramer," 23–24, 28.
[80] Janssen, "Leonaert Bramer," 17.
[81] "Wichmann Summary Catalogue of the Paintings, with Supplement" in Goldsmith, et. al, *Leonaert Bramer*, 277.
[82] Gemeentearchief Delft, Weescamer Archief, Boedel 810 I and II; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 36.
[83] Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 36.
[84] Gemeentearchief Delft, Weescamer Archief, Boedel 810 I and II; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 36.
[85] According to Montias the original document in the Gemeentearchief Delft states that Hogenhouck owned either drawings or prints by these artists, but does not specify any further information. See Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 36.

Angelo, Anthonio Tempesta, Uyttenbroeck, Hans Bologne, Christoffel Swart, Francois Perrier, Jan van de Velde, Frans Floris, Nicolaes van Aelst, and Georg Hoefnagel. In addition, he collected books on architecture and Roman antiquities. Only truly dedicated *liefhebbers* acquired such albums and works on paper.[86]

Delft inventories also reveal that Dirck Adriaensz. van Brantwijck, the owner of an important saw mill on the city's Oosteynde canal, and possibly an architect, collected "drawings, prints, artbooks, models, and rarities," including works by Bramer. Van Brantwijck possessed four *tronies*, two of which formed a pendant of a man and woman, and a large painting of Diogenes by the artist.[87]

Other important local businessmen also purchased Bramer's work. The collections of Abram Pietersz. Durven and Lambert Gysbrechtsz. Kruyck, who owned or partially owned potteries in the tremendously prosperous Delftware faience industry, contained numerous paintings by Bramer. Durven had acquired a half-share interest in the successful *De Porceleyne Schotel* (The Porcelain Dish) while Kruyck and his wife Judicgen Gerrits de Zulck together owned *De Dissel* (The Pole).[88] At the time of his 1640 death, Durven owned two paintings attributed to Bramer: a depiction of the story of Joseph and "a panel with figures (*een bort met personagies*)."[89] He may have also owned a third Bramer painting, which depicted the five wise

[86] Gemeentearchief Delft, Weescamer Archief, Boedel 810 I and II; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 36.
[87] Gemeentearchief Delft, inventory of the estate of Dirck Adriaensz. van Brantwijck, September 3, 1646, fol. 137; November 13, 1646, fol. 39–40, records of notary 1671, J. Van Beest; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 37.
[88] Gemeentearchief Delft, inventory of the estate of Abram Pietersz. Durven, records of notary 1644, H. van Ceel, fol. 158–61 and Gemeentearchief Delft, inventory of the estate of Lambert Gysbrechtsz. Kruyck and Judicgen Gerrits De Zulck, records of notary 1669, J. van Beest, fol. 22; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 38.
[89] Gemeentearchief Delft, inventory of the estate of Abram Pietersz. Durven, records of notary 1644, H. van Ceel, fol. 158–61; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 38.

and five foolish virgins.[90] However, the attribution of this work remains uncertain.[91] Kruyck and Zulck owned Bramer's painting of the adoration of Christ, which constituted the most expensive and only attributed work in their collection. Their estate also included another unattributed picture depicting the five wise and five foolish virgins, which may have been painted by Bramer.[92]

Local civic and political leaders of Delft also acquired Bramer's work. According to his marriage contract, the household goods in the possession of the former burgomaster Everard Dircx van Bleyswijck and his new wife Sara van der Burch at the time of their June 27, 1643, wedding included a painting by Bramer on view in the front hall of their home.[93] The display of Bramer's picture in the wealthy collector's prominent front hall reveals the esteem in which he held the artist's work.

Another Delft collector of Bramer's paintings, Boudewijn de Man held the lofty appointment of captain of the White Banner of the local civic militia as well as the position of the city's Receiver General of Taxes. Gerrit Cornelisz. van Santen, Delft's only seventeenth-century playwright, honored Boudewijn de Man with the special dedication of a *klucht* (farce), which testifies to the learnedness and artistic tastes of this distinguished patron.[94] De Man owned a painting by Bramer of the ship of Saint Peter, which sold for the price of 39 guilders at a 1644

[90] Gemeentearchief Delft, inventory of the estate of Abram Pietersz. Durven, records of notary 1644, H. van Ceel, fol. 158–61; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 38.
[91] A painting of the same subject attributed to Bramer appeared in a posthumous auction of works of art belonging to Durven's former his sister-in-law and business associate Elisabeth Cornelis Carn. Montias suggests that this may be the same painting referenced in the inventory of Durven's collection. See Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 40.
[92] Although not attributed in the 1641 inventory, the work may have been painted by Bramer, who favored this somewhat uncommon subject. See Gemeentearchief Delft, inventory of the estate of Lambert Gysbrechtsz. Kruyck and Judicgen Gerrits de Zulck, records of notary 1669, J. Van Beest, fol. 22; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 37–38.
[93] Gemeentearchief Delft, Betrothal and marriage files (New Church), the inventory in anticipation of Bramer's marriage, September 6, 1662, reproduced in records of notary 1937, G. van der Wel; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 39.
[94] Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 39.

auction of his collection.[95] The sum represented an unusually large amount paid for one of Bramer's works and yet was below average compared with the value of other paintings in De Man's substantial collection, which in total amounted to an astonishing sum of 6,139 guilders.[96]

Finally, the Delft solicitor Jonckheer Boudewjn Wilhelm van Muylwijck, who eventually rose to the position of *raedt* (counselor) to the Court of Holland before his death on July 30, 1661, remained one of Bramer's most socially prominent patrons to have held government office. Van Muylwijck owned no less than seven paintings by Bramer including four "antique tronties" (*anticque tronien*), and paintings described as "set in the arbor" (*omme int prieel te setten*) and a "Blessed Virgin" (*Lieve Vrou*).[97] The existence of Bramer's paintings in the collections of such civic leaders, who represented the upper echelon of Delft society, stands as a testament to the demand for his work.

Bramer also received some large-scale commissions. In the 1630s and just after his return from Rome, he contributed to the decoration of the palaces of the stadholder Frederik Hendrik, Prince of Orange, at Ter Nieuburgh and Honselaersdijk. On February 4, 1653, Bramer and his neighbor Anthony van Bronchorst agreed to a contract that stated the artist would paint a fresco on the walls of a corridor that ran between the homes of the two men.[98] Unusual in the Netherlands due to the region's relatively damp climate, the *al fresco* work requested by Van Bronchort evidences the level of respect that Bramer had earned by learning such a traditionally Italian technique. Four years later, Bramer painted a fresco in the garden house of the

[95] Gemeentearchief Delft, auction of the estate of Boudewijn de Man, March 15, 1644, records of notary 1861, Willem van Assendelft; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 39.
[96] Auction of the estate of Boudewijn de Man; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 39.
[97] Gemeentearchief Delft, inventory of the estate of Jonckheer Boudewjn Wilhelm van Muylwijck, December 10, 1665, records of notary 1870, Willem van Asendelft; cited in Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 40.
[98] Gemeentearchief Delft, contract between Leonaert Bramer and Anthony van Bronchorst, records of notary 1695, Willem de Langue; cited in Janssen, "Leonaert Bramer," 22.

Hoogheemraadschap Delfland (The Delft Polder Board).[99] Between 1660 and 1667 the artist received over 1000 guilders for painting and maintenance of frescos in the hall (*doelen*) of the Delft civic guard.[100] The latter opportunity likely came as a result of Bramer's membership in that group.[101] He also received commissions for tapestry designs, such as the set of eight drawings of marine subjects made in 1664 for the famous Delft weaver Maximiliaen van der Gucht. The finished tapestries were eventually sent to the Swedish field marshal Count Karl Gustav von Wrangel.[102] In 1667–69 Bramer resumed work on large-scale architectural decoration. During these years he completed a commission for an installation in the Grote Zaal of the Delft's Prinsenhof, which may have been wall paintings on canvas.[103]

Outside of Delft, Bramer also sold his paintings and drawings. At least thirteen paintings by the artist made their way into some of the 311 Amsterdam inventories, which J. Michael Montias surveyed, including the estates of the the art dealer Laurens Douci and the wealthy

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[99] Delft, Hoogheemraadschap van Delftland, Oud-Archief, Bijlagen van de rekeningen van de west – en oostambachten no. x808x, 1656, fol.ciiii; cited in Janssen, "Leonaert Bramer," 23.

[100] Gemeentearchief Delft, Stadarchief 1, nr.408/3 Lopende memoriaelen van dagelicxe besoignen vallende in burghemeesteren camera, February 4, 1660 fol. 71; April 26, 1660, fol. 72 verso; July 16, 1660, fol. 74 verso; January 7, 1661, fol. 81 verso; July 7, 1663, fol. 117; May 7, 1667, fol. 171; cited in Janssen, "Leonaert Bramer," 24.

[101] Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 63–64.

[102] These tapestries may never have been woven. See the letter from Dr. Åke Meyerson, Stockholm, Kungl. Livruskammaren, March 1, 1974 to Dr. K. G. Boon, which explains that Van der Gucht commissioned the designs and that Count Wrangel owned them; cited in Michiel Plomp, "Leonaert Bramer the Draughtsman," in Goldsmith, et. al, *Leonaert Bramer*, 200, 207 no. 62.

[103] Gemeentearchief Delft Stadarchief 1 no.408/3 Lopende memoriaelen van dagelicxe besoignen vallende in burghemeesteren camera, fol. 171; May 7, 1667; fol. 173, June 30, 1667; fol. 175, September 1, 1667; fol. 179, December 28, 1667; fol. 188 verso, January 7, 1668; fol. 185 verso, April 8, 1668; folio 188 verso, June 16, 1668; fol. 190 verso, August 9, 1668; fol. 191 verso, September 10, 1668; fol. 192 verso, October 13, 1668; fol. 194 verso, November 28, 1668 and Gemeentearchief Delft Stadarchief 1 no. 678, Reeckeningen van der thesaurier der stad Delft, 1667, fol. 137, May 7; fol. 139 verso, July 2, fol. 142, August 27; fol. 148, December 31; 1668, fol.188, January 7; fol. 137 verso, April 9; folio 142 verso 142, June 16; fol. 145 verso, August 9; fol. 146 verso, September 11; fol. 148, October 15; fol. 149 verso 150, December 1, 1669, fol. 133 verso, September 10; cited in Janssen, "Leonaert Bramer," 28.

collector Anthoni Gaillard the Younger.[104] Also, a lottery that took place in Leiden around the year 1640 included a painting by Bramer of an unspecified subject.[105]

In his *Kunstler-inventare*, Abraham Bredius recorded paintings by Bramer in the private collections of artists in Dordrecht,[106] The Hague,[107] and Haarlem,[108] as well as pictures in the hands of dealers in Rotterdam[109] and Middelburg.[110] In contrast, although paintings by the Delft artist Pieter Vromans commanded comparable prices and appeared in a similar number of inventories in that city as did pictures by Bramer, far fewer of Vromans' works were recorded in inventories of collections in other cities, including Amsterdam. The dealer Johannes de Renialme worked closely with Delft artists and at one time had in stock seven of the thirteen confirmed works by Bramer in Amsterdam, but he never sold any paintings by Vromans.[111] The relatively

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[104] Gaillard's painting depicts a nocturnal "Flight into Egypt (*een nacht, de vlucht van Egipten)*" while the temporal nature of Douci's painting of the "Three Kings (*drie coninghen*)" remains unknown. However, that Bramer frequently staged this subject matter after dark makes a nighttime setting likely for this work as well. See Bramer's *Journey of the Three Magi to Bethlehem* (New-York Historical Society, New York) and *The Adoration of the Magi* (Detroit Institute of Arts). Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Laurens Mauritsz Douci, December 21,1639, records of notary Willem Hasen, NA 1598, fol. 57–134, in "Douci, Laurens Mauritsz.," The Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories," accessed December 17, 2016, http://research.frick.org/montias/browserecord.php?-action=browse&-recid=1484; Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Anthoni Gaillard, January 18, 1669 NA 3505, records of notary G. Van Breugel, fol. 197, in "Gaillard, Anthoni (de jonge)," The Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories," accessed December 17, 2016, http://research.frick.org/montias/browserecord.php?-action=browse&-recid=1361. See also Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 43.

[105] The lottery's announcement is reproduced in C. Willemijn Fock, "Kunstbezit in Leiden in de 17de eeuw," in Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, C. Willemijn Fock, A. J. Dissel, *Het Rapenburg; Geschiedenis van een Leidse gracht* (Leiden: Afdeling Geschiedenis van de Kunstnijverheid, Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, 1990), Vol. Va, 3–36. See also Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 43.

[106] Regionaal Archief Dordrecht, inventory of the estate of Maria van Rommerswael, April 2, 1674, records of notary Hellu; cited in Abraham Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare. Urkunden zur Geschichte der holländischen Kunst des XVIten, XVIIten und XVIIIten Jahrhunderts* 4 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1917), 1374.

[107] Haags Gemeentearchief, inventory of the estate of Dirck van Westhaven, 1651; mentioned in Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* 2, 623.

[108] Noord-Hollands Archief, inventory of the estate of Cornelis Dusart, December 4, 1704, records of notary Melchoir Cleynenbergh; cited in Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* 1, 29.

[109] Inventory of Trijntge Pieters, overgelevert ter weescamer van Rotterdam, March 12, 1648; cited in Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* 5, 1635.

[110] Zeeuws Archief, inventory of the estate of Laurens Bernards, July 3, 1676; cited in Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* 3, 1052–53.

[111] In his sample of 311 Amsterdam inventories Montias found none of Vroman's work and in Rotterdam his name appears only in the stock of one dealer, Volmarijn. Montias argues that De Renialme must not have thought enough of Vroman's paintings to sell them, despite his typical interest in the work of Delft artists. Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 43.

frequent appearance of Bramer's name in inventories in most prominent seventeenth-century Dutch cities reflects his wide-spread popularity. The demand for his work, in general, would have included a taste for his nocturnal imagery.

Egbert van der Poel's paintings of nighttime scenes also present strong evidence of the appreciation for such pictures by seventeenth-century Dutch collectors. Born in 1621 in Delft, that is, twenty-five years after Bramer, Van der Poel likely drew inspiration for his own nocturnal pictures from the work of the older artist. From 1650 to 1654, his name appeared in the registration book of the Delft Guild of Saint Like. Afterwards, Van der Poel moved to Rotterdam where he resided and produced art until his death in 1664. Like Bramer, Van der Poel found great success in the market. The younger artist, however, specialized to an even greater degree in the depiction of nocturnal scenes. Paintings of village conflagrations lit by incandescent orange and yellow firelight and white and blue moonlit scenes of fishermen, who haul their catches onto the seashore, constitute the majority of Van der Poel's oeuvre (figs. 1.3–4). He also depicted nocturnal markets and celebrations by torchlight in city streets, among other themes. Since Van der Poel painted mostly night scenes, he would have almost certainly been known for that specialization. The sheer number of his extant depictions of village fires and fishing scenes stands as a testament to the strong market in the 1650s and early 1660s for his nocturnal pictures.

The contemporary trend in the seventeenth century toward painting specialization may help to explain Egbert van der Poel's market success, as indicated by the large number of extant works attributed to him. The open-market system of art production allowed for freedom on the part of the artists to determine their own painting specialities. Such flexibility likely contributed to the rise in popularity of night paintings and to the success of artists like Van der Poel, who made the decision to specialize in them. Van der Poel recognized an available niche in the Dutch

art market for a certain subgenre and adeptly filled it, which manifests his economic shrewdness. As such, art historians should take note of Van der Poel's wise marketing decisions. His choice to specialize in night scenes both substantiates Montias's claims concerning the compartmentalization of the Dutch art market during this period as well as my own proposition that collectors valued nocturnal scenes as a distinct subject subset.[112]

Van der Poel's professional success spawned a number of imitators. His contributions toward the creation of a niche market for *brantjes* and other typically nocturnal subjects caught the attention of fellow Rotterdam artists, including Adam Colonia, Phillip van Leeuwen, and Jan Wilm. Colonia produced numerous pictures of conflagrations that could be mistaken for those by Van der Poel. He also painted at least one night beach scene[113] and scenes of catastrophic fires, which also owe a great debt to the work of Van der Poel. Additionally, a painting of a torchlit street celebration set along the Delftsevaart in Rotterdam is reminiscent of Van der Poel's depiction of comparable festivity on the Oude Delft canal.[114]

Phillip van Leeuwen and Jan Wilm also painted *brantjes* in the manner of Van der Poel. Wilm's little-known artistic efforts resulted in an extant picture of a conflagration with coloration and composition clearly influenced by the art of Van der Poel and/or his followers.[115] Although none of Van der Poel's Rotterdam contemporaries achieved his level of commercial success, their imitations of his work manifest his considerable professional accomplishments as a painter of night scenes worthy of replication or influence.

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[112] Montias, "Bramer's Patrons," 43.
[113] Staatliches Museum Schwerin.
[114] Van der Poel painted at least four of these scenes set in alongside canals in Delft. *Celebrating in the Golden Age*, ed. Anna Tummers (Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2011), 130.
[115] Private collection.

Leonaert Bramer himself admired Van der Poel's pictures and drew a copy of one depicting a barn interior, which he included in a series of about 110 drawings produced around 1652–53 after paintings in Delft collections.[116] Bramer's drawn copy of Van der Poel's picture attests further to the contemporary esteem and appreciation for the younger artist's work.

In his 1689 *Beschryvinge der stad Rotterdam en eenige omleggende dorpen* (History of Rotterdam and some surrounding villages), the historian Gerritt van Spaan described Van der Poel as "the best painter of fire in all of the Netherlands."[117] Even late in the seventeenth century, the artist's renown as a painter of nocturnal subject matter, and especially *brantjes*, garnered him a great deal of praise. Van der Poel's night scenes played a significant role in the development of his favorable reputation.

The popularity of nocturnal paintings by Aert van der Neer in the Dutch Republic also merits attention. Although he did not belong to the circle of Delft and Rotterdam night painters associated with Bramer and/or Van der Poel, he established a strong reputation for his numerous moonlit scenes and nocturnal *brantjes* (figs. 1.5–6).[118] By March 16, 1629, he had married in Amsterdam and the wedding certificate recorded his profession as *schilder* (painter).[119] Like Van der Poel, Van der Neer quickly developed an interest in nocturnal subjects and began to paint them in great numbers. Although very few of his works are dated, he created hundreds of paintings throughout his career, which appear in many seventeenth-century Amsterdam

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[116] John Michael Montias, "A Postscript on Vermeer and His Milieu," *The Hoogsteder Mercury* 12 (1991), 44.
[117] "Egbert vander Poel was den besten Brandtschilder van gantsch Nederland." Gerritt van Spaan, *Beschryvinge der stad Rotterdam en eenige omleggende dorpen* (Rotterdam: Hermannus Goddaeus, 1698), 422.
[118] See "Aert van der Neer and the Moonlit Landscape" and "Conflagrations" in Wolfgang Schulz, *Aert van der Neer*, trans. Kristen Lohse Belkin (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 2002), 42–46, 62–65.
[119] Van der Neer's parents, Egerom van der Neer and Aeltje Jansdr., most likely lived in the town of Gorinchem at the time of Aert's birth in 1604. Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Van der Neer's certificate of marriage, issued March 16, 1629; cited in Schulz, *Van der Neer*, 10.

inventories, including those owned by artists and *liefhebbers* with impressive and valuable collections.[120]

The artist Otto Marseus van Schrieck, for example, who helped pioneer the genre of the forest floor still life (*sottobosco*), owned a painting by Van der Neer.[121]Another still life painter, Simon Luttichuys had a winter landscape by Van der Neer in his collection.[122] In 1668, Simon's brother Isaak, a portraitist, possessed two paintings by Van der Neer.[123] In 1689, the estate of the painter Cornelis Mebeecq included both a moonlit landscape and a daylit picture painted by Van der Neer.[124] Frederick Vroom, the son of the noted marine painter Hendrick Vroom, acquired two of the artist's moonlit scenes.[125]

In 1664, the Amsterdam painter Cornelis de Bie owned four paintings "after Van der Neer," that is, they were imitations or copies.[126] The inventory's reference to Van der Neer's name indicates that his prominence as a painter resulted in a notary recognizing his artistic style, which the paintings imitated. The existence of copies after Van der Neer's work shows that a market for his pictures existed. The investment by De Bie in four paintings "after Van der Neer" makes clear that the artist developed an excellent reputation over the course of his career.

Due to their striking similarities in style and subjects, including many nighttime conflagrations, the paintings by the Amsterdam artist Anthonie van Borssom, in particular, have

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[120] For an extensive list of inventories and other documents that list owners of Van der Neer's paintings, see: Schulz, *Van der Neer*, 14–15.
[121] Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Otto Marseus van Schrieck, concluded July 6, 1678, records of notary Cornelis van Polenburgh; cited in Schulz, *Van Der Neer*, 15.
[122] Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Simon Luttichuys, January 30, 1662, records of notary P. de Bary; cited in Schulz, *Van Der Neer*, 15
[123] Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Isaak Luttichuys, April 27, 1668, records of notary A. Lock; cited in Schulz, *Van Der Neer*, 15.
[124] Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Cornelis Mebeecq, March 11, 1689, records of notary P. van Akersloot; cited in Schulz, *Van Der Neer*, 15.
[125] Noord-Hollands Archief, inventory of the estate of Frederick Vroom, records of notary Nicolaes van Bosvelt, Haarlem; cited in Schulz, *Van Der Neer*, 15.
[126] Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Cornelis de Bie, October 19, 1664, records of notary C. Tou; cited in Schulz, *Van Der Neer*, 15.

been mistaken for those of Van der Neer. Van Borssom imitated Van der Neer's technique so closely that differentiation between their hands cannot be reliably accomplished.[127]

Van der Neer's clientele also included the sophisticated urban elite of Amsterdam, but perhaps in fewer numbers than Bramer enjoyed among his own patrons in Delft. The Amsterdam surgeon and *liefhebber* Joris van Hasselt owned two paintings by Van der Neer, including a moonlit scene.[128] The merchant Frederick Schellinger also acquired two landscapes by moonlight painted by Van der Neer.[129]

At the end of the seventeenth century, narrow artistic specializations and the general practice of marketing art toward speculative consumers began to decline. Although popular during the lives of Bramer, Van der Poel, and Van der Neer, rapidly produced, inexpensive works gave way to a rise in commissions and portraits, as well as greater demand for paintings that dated from earlier in the century. According to Montias, the late seventeenth-century collecting trend harkened back to practices common during the sixteenth century and resulted in works whose styles and subjects differ from those produced for a speculative audience.[130]

Seventeenth-century Dutch theorists and collectors considered depictions of nocturnal scenes to be a distinct and cohesive subset of pictorial types, despite the diversity of the images' subject matter. The special status that nighttime scenes enjoyed in the minds of seventeenth-century Dutch theorists, collectors, and other viewers warrants in-depth analysis of individual pictures, which has not previously been undertaken. In subsequent chapters of this study, depictions of nocturnal scenes will be considered within their art historical, historical, and

[127] For a discussion of Van Borssom's imitation of Van der Neer and the resulting issues with attribution see Schulz, *Aert van der Neer*, 43.
[128] Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Joris van Hasselt, drawn up after his death on May 10, 1680, records of notary De Winter; cited in Schulz, *Van Der Neer*, 15.
[129] Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of Frederick Schellinger, October 8, 1668; cited in Schulz, *Van der Neer*, 15.
[130] Montias, "Cost and Value," 464.

cultural contexts with focused attention on the role played by night in the generation of the paintings' meaning. An examination of the unique interpretive issues raised by these nighttime scenes can enrich our understanding of seventeenth-century Dutch visual culture.

Chapter II

The Night, Spirituality, and the Occult in Dutch Art

For Dutch men and women in the seventeenth century, the night carried a variety of spiritual implications. Longstanding perceptions of the hours after sunset as a time for peaceful religious reflection and closeness with God informed works with biblical subjects by various artists, including Hendrick ter Brugghen and Rembrandt van Rijn. Conversely, fears and superstitions linking the nocturnal world with the domain of Satan and his demonic minions simultaneously created a very different impression of the night in the minds of Dutch audiences. Depictions of occult subject matter by painters such as Cornelis Saftleven and Dominicus van Wijnen often called upon such notions to emphasize certain aspects of their work. In the following analysis, I discuss Dutch pictures of both biblical and occult subject matter that engage with these conflicting perceptions of the night. In doing so, I examine the different ways in which nocturnal settings play an important role in the generation of meaning in each group of images.

Night Pictures and Christian Worship

In several seventeenth-century Dutch paintings of contemporary church interiors and in other scenes that depict traditional Christian narratives, nighttime settings lend a calm and intimate ambiance suitable for devotional meditation and/or otherwise elicit spiritual viewing experiences. Anthonie de Lorme and Daniël de Blieck, for example, depicted nighttime scenes of church interiors (figs. 2.1–2). Paintings by Hendrick ter Brugghen of the Crucifixion and by Rembrandt of the Flight into Egypt exemplify nocturnal scenes with long-lived Christian stories

(figs. 2.3–4). In the generation of meaning in such pictures, the nocturnal settings play a fundamental role. They encourage Christian devotional practices by evoking popular understandings of the appropriateness of the quiet hours after sunset for prayer or spiritual contemplation.

A preliminary discussion of Early Christian, medieval, and subsequent seventeenth-century Dutch Christian texts, worship practices, traditions, and spiritual ideas will support my reading of certain night scenes—discussed in greater detail below—as devotional aids for viewers. Previous scholars have noted that despite the prevalence of Calvinist iconoclastic beliefs, some northern Netherlandish audiences still looked to artworks for devotional purposes. The Roman Catholic community in Amsterdam, for example, sought comfort and instruction in devotional imagery by Gabriel Metsu and other artists as the city confronted outbreaks of the plague in 1655–56 and again in 1663–64. Valerie Hedquist noted that both Catholic and Protestant books and pamphlets, which addressed the devastating effects of the plague, generally recommended prayer for the forgiveness of sins, as well as for healing. For many Catholics, such religious practices included the use of devotional images.[131] Publication of such prescriptive religious texts occurred every year in the seventeenth century, but in greater numbers during and following particularly severe outbreaks of the plague. In his program for the treatment of plague victims, the Delft Jesuit Lodewijk Makeblijde advocated in his *Troost der Siecken ende Verleden* (Comfort for the sick and dead) for specific healing aids, such as depictions of Christ on the cross.[132]

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[131] Valerie Hedquist, "Dutch Genre Painting as Religious Art: Gabriel Metsu's Roman Catholic Imagery," *Art History* 31, no. 2 (2008): 169.
[132] Ludovicus Makeblijde, *Troost der Siecken ende Verleden* (Antwerp, 1653). Described in Hedquist, "Dutch Genre Painting as Religious Art," 169.

Certain seventeenth-century Dutch Protestant audiences also employed devotional imagery. Margaret Deutsch Carroll argued that the progression of states in Rembrandt's etchings *Christ Presented to the People*, 1655, and *The Three Crosses*, 1653–c. 1660, corresponds to the meditational sequences found in some seventeenth-century Protestant devotional poetry, such as that of Rembrandt's friend and advocate Constantijn Huygens,[133] the northern Netherlandish statesman and writer, and the English poet John Donne. Huygens translated into Dutch the religious poetry of Donne with whom he was friendly.[134] The work of both poets records their personal experiences searching for spiritual insight and for a greater closeness to God. Carroll suggested that the succession of states in these prints by Rembrandt, which manifests the imperfect process of etching the plates, parallels some common artistic strategies employed by the authors in their religious poetry.[135] In this way, Rembrandt's meditational prints, like the poetry of Huygens, Donne, and others, attest "to the artist's personal engagement in coming to terms with the biblical subject matter and with the spiritual truths embedded in it," as they record a "history of [the artist's] striving."[136] According to Carroll, Huygens and other members of his intellectual social circle likely understood the relationship between such meditative poetry and Rembrandt's prints and engaged with them as devotional aids.[137]

Prints and paintings based on narratives from the bible garnered great praise, even among seventeenth-century Dutch Protestants, according to Els Stronk. She cited the preface to Franciscus Junius's *De Pictura Veterum* (*On the Painting of the Ancients*), 1641, written by Jan de Brune the Younger, a member of the Dutch Reformed church, to support her claim. In the

[133] Margaret Deutsch Carroll, "Rembrandt as Meditational Printmaker," *Art Bulletin* 63, no. 4 (1981): 603.
[134] Carroll, "Rembrandt as Meditational Printmaker," 586.
[135] Carroll, "Rembrandt as Meditational Printmaker," 587.
[136] Carroll, "Rembrandt as Meditational Printmaker," 604, 610.
[137] Carroll, "Rembrandt as Meditational Printmaker," 588.

preface, De Brune celebrated the persuasive powers of religious art by referencing Quintillian, who championed art even over rhetoric for its ability to emotionally impact an audience.[138] De Brune also acknowledged that Catholics in the past had very effectively used Christian imagery to inspire religious devotion, which reflected his own respect for and acceptance of biblical pictures. As an example, De Brune explained that historically the sight of a depiction of a Last Judgment above a portal in a Catholic church would, for Christians, "engage every nerve in their body to make their faith fruitful in good works."[139] Meanwhile he explains, when viewing the same artwork, an "unruly person of ill deeds" would often feel "their hearts so stirred towards things of God that, no longer bent on their own detriment, they realized they should receive the stamp of Godliness."[140]

Additionally, Stronks cited Philips Angel's *Lof der schilder-konst,* 1642, in which the author boldly asserted that "even the King of Kings, the everlasting and immutable God"[141] considered the visual arts to be an appropriate means through which to communicate important ideas. Angel called on his reader to "[b]ehold how worthy and valuable God considered art, because he wished it to be used to instruct his people, at the same time demonstrating other uses to which it could be put apart from decorating bare walls."[142] Angel's declaration that God wished for art to be instructive instead of just decorative suggests that the author believed in the

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[138] Els Stronks, *Negotiating Differences: Word, Image and Religion in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 114.
[139] "spanden al hun zenuwen uyt, om, hun geloof door de werken vet mekande" Jan de Brune, preface, v***iiii, in Franciscus Junius, *De Schilder-konst der Oude* (*On the Painting of the Ancients*) (Middelburg: Zacharias Roman, 1641). Translated in Stronks, *Negotiating Differences*, 115.
[140] "On-dadighe vrijlevige menssen daerenteghen," "wierden dickwils met sulcke God-voelijcke sinroeringen aengeblasen, dat sy hun selven niet meer versuymelick to kort doende, den stempel der godsaligheydt sagen t'onfangen" De Brune, preface, v***iiii, in Junius, *De Schilder-konst der Oude.* Translated in Stronks, *Negotiating Differences*, 115.
[141] "selfs den Coningh aller Coningen, die altijt-duerende en overanderlijcke selfs blijvende *Godt,*" Philips Angel, *Lof der schilder-konst* (Leiden: Willem Christiaens, 1642), 19. Translated in Stronks, *Negotiating Differences*, 115.
[142] "Siet daer, hoe waerdich en nut de selve van Godt geacht is geweest, dewijle hy door de selve sijn volck heft willen onderwijsen: en emt eenen te kennen gevende waer toe de selve meer gebruyct konde warden, dan om ylle muyren te vercieren" Angel, *Lof der schilder-konst*, 19. Translated in Stronks, *Negotiating Differences*, 116n24.

power of painting as an effective means of educating viewers in all types of matters, including spiritual ones.

The warmly received reintroduction of the picture bible in the Dutch Republic by Reformed publisher Claes Jansz. Visscher provided further evidence that many continued to use pictures for spiritual purposes, despite the widespread skepticism about religious imagery amongst seventeenth-century Netherlandish Protestants.[143] Stronks' study and those of others reveal that sixteenth-century iconoclasm in the Dutch Republic did not entirely bring to an end the use of art in the service of prayer and other devotional practices, and that Protestants and Catholics alike engaged with visual culture for spiritual purposes.

In particular, members of both faiths shared an entrenched understanding of the night as a special time when worshippers nurtured a closer bond with God through prayer and meditation. Almost from the birth of Christianity, nighttime prayers played an important role in the expression of piety. Early Christian authors frequently mentioned nocturnal religious meetings and worship practices, including dusk to dawn vigils, when devotees would pray. Written in the late third or early fourth centuries C. E., *Ad uxorem* (*To my wife*) by the theologian Tertullian warned his spouse against remarrying outside of the Christian faith. With regard to such a scenario, he suggested problems that could arise to Christian religious practice, including worship at night. Tertullian asked what new, possibly pagan, husband of his wife would "willingly bear her being taken from his side by nocturnal convocations" and "who without anxiety [would] endure her absence all the night long at the paschal solemnities [Easter vigil]."[144]

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[143] Stronks, *Negotiating Differences,* 104.

[144] "Quis nocturnis conuocationibus, si ita oportuerit, a latere suo adimi libenter feret? Quis denique sollemnibus Paschae abnoctantem securus sustinebit?" Tertullian, *Ad uxorem II* (The Tertullian Project, 2003), accessed February 23, 2017. http://www.tertullian.org/latin/ad_uxorem_2.htm.

In his influential mid-third century treatise on the Lord's Prayer, St. Cyprian also mentioned the value of nighttime worship. He endorsed nocturnal prayer and encouraged his audience to worship frequently at night. St. Cyprian referred to Luke 6:12 and stated

> [Christ] went away into the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God. But if He, Who was without sin, used to pray, how much more ought sinners to pray! And if He, keeping continual watch throughout the whole night, was offering unceasing prayer, how much more ought we to watch by night in oft-repeated prayer![145]

St. Cyprian's early theological discussion influenced much later Christian scholars, including the sixteenth-century Dutch humanist, Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, who in 1523 published his own interpretation of the Lord's Prayer. In many ways, his text parallels Cyprian's writing and thereby suggests the specific influence of the Early Christian author and the generally lasting influence of such religious beliefs on the spiritual ideas of early modern humanists.[146]

Similarly, in the fifth century *Vita S. Melaniae Junioris* (*Life of Saint Melania the Younger*), the author explained how early Christians regarded nighttime as a traditional and divinely inspired time for religious contemplation.[147] They based such ideas on biblical stories, such as that of Christ's nocturnal appearance to Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus. Melania, the founder of multiple convents, encouraged Christian worshippers to overcome weariness and rouse themselves from sleep before being fully rested in order to engage in nocturnal prayer.

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[145] St. Cyprian, *De dominica oration* (Irondale, AL: EWTN Global Catholic Network), accessed February 23, 2017. https://www.ewtn.com/library/SOURCES/LORDPRAY.TXT.

[146] For an in-depth discussion of this topic, see Hilmar M. Pabel, "Erasmus' Esteem for Cyprian: Parallels in Their Expositions of the Lord's Prayer," *Erasmus Studies* 17, no. 1 (1997): 55–69.

[147] The author of this text is the subject of some dispute; however, most often the text is attributed to Gerontius, a monk in Melania's Jerusalem monastery. Elizabeth A. Clark endorses this attribution and provides an analysis of this topic in Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Life of Melania the Younger. Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (New York and Toronto: Edwin Mellen Press, 1984), 13–24.

Melania's *Vita* observed that "[d]uring the night hours, [she] awakened the sisters for a service of praise, in accordance with the prophetic saying, 'I have come so late and have cried,' and again, 'In the middle of the night I arose in order to confess to you.'"[148] Melania advised "it is not helpful to arise for the nightly liturgy after we have sated ourselves with sleep. Rather, we should force ourselves to rise, so that we may receive the reward for the force we have exerted in the age to come."[149] The *Vita* also described

> nightly offices [of prayer that included] three responses, three readings and near the hour of daybreak, fifteen antiphons[150]…. They chanted at the third hour, she said, "because at this hour the Paraclete descended on the apostles, and at the sixth, because, at that hour the patriarch Abraham was deemed worthy to receive the Lord, and at the ninth, because according to the tradition of the holy apostles, at the ninth hour, Peter and John, while going up at the hour of prayer, healed the lame man."[151]

In further discussion of "evening prayers," Melania explained that "we ought to undertake them in all zeal, not only because we have passed the course of the day in peace, but also because in that hour Clophas [Cleopas] and the one with him were deemed worthy to travel in the company of the Lord after his resurrection."[152]

Beginning in the sixth century with St. Benedict's instructive text the *Regula Benedicti* (*Rule of Saint Benedict*), c. 530, nocturnal prayer became an official obligation of Benedictine monastic life. Benedict prescribed eight separate daily services, or canonical hours for his monks, each taking place at different times of the day. Nocturnal worship began before bedtime with the night prayer, *Compline*, after which monks would not speak in order to preserve the sacred silence of the night.[153] Nocturnal worship resumed again a little after midnight with the

[148] Clark, *The Life of Melania the Younger,* 59.
[149] Clark, *The Life of Melania the Younger,* 59.
[150] Clark, *The Life of Melania the Younger,* 59.
[151] Clark, *The Life of Melania the Younger,* 59.
[152] Clark, *The Life of Melania the Younger,* 59.
[153] Georg Holzherr, OSB, *The Rule of Benedict: An Invitation to the Christian Life*, trans. Mark Thamert, OSB (Liturgical Press: Collegeville, Minnesota, 2016), 335–36.

Night Offices, or *Vigils*, after which Benedict encouraged monks to stay awake to study the psalter or other readings until *Lauds*, the morning prayer.[154] His recommendation that his brethren use the night to learn and to think, but not speak about God, demonstrates that Benedict and his followers valued the time after dark for contemplation and devotion. Over time, the daily hours of prayer spread beyond monastic communities into the worship of the Christian lay public. The regular liturgical practices of churches throughout Europe included an evening service, or Vespers.[155]

Among many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Catholics as well as Protestants, the conception of the hours after nightfall as a time for meditation persisted. Following the 1550s publication of Venetian Luigi Lippomani's multiple volumes of *Sanctorum Priscorum Patrum Vitae* (The lives of the early saints), the availability of written accounts of the lives of saints, including those of Melania and Benedict, increased throughout Europe. By 1565, Petrum Zangrium Tiletanum republished Lippomani's volumes in Leuven in the southern Netherlands. Soon after, between 1570 and 1575, the German Laurentius Surius issued his own edition to which the Dutchman Jacobus Mosander added more *vitae* in his 1581 Cologne publication.[156] In 1579 in Krakow, the Polish Jesuit Piotr Skarga published his own version of the lives of the saints, which he based on the editions by Surius and Mosander. Finally, in 1643 in Antwerp in the southern Netherlands, Jean Bolland and Godfried Henskens produced their 68-volume hagiographical encyclopedia, *Acta Sanctorum* (Acts of the saints).[157]

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[154] Holzherr, *The Rule of Benedict,* 172.
[155] Robert F. Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: The Origins of the Divine Office and its Meaning for Today* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1986), 297–98.
[156] For discussion of the publication history of the Surius text, see: Francis J. Thompson, "The Popularity of Peter Skarga's Lives of the Saints Among the East Slavs," in *For East is East: Liber Amicorum Wojciech Skalmowski*, eds. Tatjana Soldatjenkova and Emmanuel Waegemans (Louvain: Peeters Publishers & Department of Oriental Studies, 2003), 123–24.
[157] Thompson, "The Popularity of Peter Skarga's Lives," 124.

Despite subject matter probably best suited to Catholic audiences, the far-reaching influence of the 1643 volumes about the lives of the saints extended to the officially Protestant northern Netherlands. In his 1667 *Beschryvinge der Stadt Delft* (Description of the city of Delft), Dirck van Bleyswijck cited the text of Surius and Mosander, which confirms the prolonged and widespread interest in the lives of the saints among readers in the Dutch Republic.[158] Long-standing nighttime Christian rituals, which included Vespers, Compline, Night Offices, and Easter and Christmas services, continued throughout Europe during the seventeenth century and further evidenced the long-lived association of the night as a time befitting prayer and intense spiritual contemplation, albeit with some alterations.

The Synod of Dort, held in Dordrecht from 1618–19, discussed the practices and established the rules for worship in Dutch Reformed churches and communities in the northern Netherlands. The Synod eventually concluded that "since the evening prayers are in many places found to be fruitful, each church following this practice shall do what it deems to be most edifying. But whenever there is the desire to eliminate them, this shall not take place without the judgment of classis [a governing body in certain Reformed churches], together with that of the authority for the Reformed religion."[159] Certainly, a considerable number of leading Dutch Protestants who participated in this Synod refused to abandon the nighttime traditions of their Christian forebears.

Religious developments, in particular among the Protestant denominations of Anabaptists, subsequently known in the Dutch Republic as Mennonites, expanded appreciation

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[158] Dirck van Bleyswijck, *Beschryvinge der Stadt Delft* (Delft: Arnold Bon, 1667), 311.
[159] Translation from Richard R. De Ridder, ed., *The Church Orders of the Sixteenth Century Reformed Churches of the Netherlands Together with Their Social, Political, and Ecclesiastical Context*, trans. Richard R. De Ridder with the assistance of Peter H. Jonker and Rev. Leonard Verduin (Calvin Theological Seminary, 1987), 554. Translated from Cornelis Hooijer, *Oude Kerkordeningen der Nederlandsche Gemeente (1563–1638)* (Zalt-Bommel: Joh. Noman en Zoon, 1865), 457.

for nighttime meditation. Anabaptists' nocturnal meetings resulted both from their belief that the night provided a calm and intimate ambiance for devotion, as well as from their fear of discrimination. Throughout Europe, persecuted Anabaptists sought religious refuge under the cover of nighttime darkness. Documented sources from Flanders, the Rhineland, Alsace, Switzerland, Wurttemberg, Hesse, and Tirol describe 34 nighttime meetings of Anabaptists and Mennonites, which took place between 1530 and 1618.[160]

Accounts of such assemblies frequently mention hundreds of participants, including city officials, ministers, and others curious about Anabaptist beliefs. The Lutheran minister Elias Schad, for example, reported to the Strasbourg city council about his 1576 infiltration of a nighttime meeting of Anabaptists. He recalled hearing the accents of travelers from a range of German cities and beyond. He also described a complex system of passwords and sentries used by the Anabaptists to maintain the secrecy of their prohibited nocturnal meetings, an observation that evidences the group's long-lived experience with nighttime assemblies. Elias Schad also mentioned that the Anabaptists escorted him out of the forest after they had a theological discussion concerning baptism and the nature of the church. He would not have been able to depart alone in the darkness of night.[161]

Although Dutch Anabaptists were not forced into meeting secretly in the dark to avoid religious oppression, they shared their religion's widespread embrace of the night as a time particularly suited for devotional pursuits. By the middle of the sixteenth century, many in the Netherlandish provinces and throughout Europe associated the Anabaptist movement with nocturnal liturgical traditions. In 1576, the prominent Friesland Anabaptist leader Menno

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[160] See Craig Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 53, 299n19.
[161] Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire*, 53 describes Schad's account in detail.

Simons, whose followers became known as Mennonites, published a defense of the religion's nocturnal practices. He cited scriptural evidence to argue for the night as a time that fostered spiritual growth and a closer connection to God.

> [Anabaptists] learn from the Scriptures that Moses and all Israel ate the Passover at night [Ex. 12]; that Jesus admonished Nicodemus at night [John 3:2]; that the church assembled at night to pray [Acts 12:12]; that Paul taught the Word of the Lord all night [Acts 20]; and that the first church assembled at night in order to break the bread of the Lord, as the historians report.[162]

Significantly, members of the varied seventeenth-century Dutch Christian denominations who embraced meditative, nocturnal worship had the financial means and the interest to collect paintings, which manifested such nighttime religious practices. Many of the denominations, including Anabaptists, wielded various powerful roles in society, although members of the Dutch Reformed Church held most governmental positions. In a given city, however, the latter often constituted a minority of the population.[163]

Nighttime Settings in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Church-Interior Paintings

Numerous seventeenth-century Dutch depictions of church interiors set in the darkness of night manifest the significance of nocturnal devotions in the northern Netherlands. At the same time, the imagery may have reinforced in viewers the significance of such religious practices and/or served as meditational aids. The theme of nocturnal scenes of church interiors must have been quite popular, as evidenced by the large number of extant examples of such pictures.[164] The

[162] Menno Simons, "Reply to False Accusations, 1552," in John C. Wenger, ed., *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, trans. Leonard Verduin (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1956), 566–67.
[163] Joke Spaans, "Reform in the Low Countries," in *A Companion to the Reformation World*, ed. R. Po-chia Hsia (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 131.
[164] For examples, see nocturnal church interiors by painters active in the Dutch Republic including Van Steenwijck the Younger (*Church Interior, Effects of Night*, c. 1610, oil on panel, 123 x 174 cm, Musée du Louvre), Jan van Vucht (*Candle-lit Church Interior*, c. 1646, oil on panel 19.1 x 22.9 cm, private collection), De Blieck (*Church Interior by Night, Possibly the Church of Middelburg*, 1652, oil on panel, 85.1 x 114.9 cm, private collection), and

paintings, however, have not been adequately discussed in art historical scholarship. Angela Vanhaelen's book on depictions of churches in seventeenth-century Dutch art, for example, does not address these captivating nocturnal paintings.[165]

Seventeenth-century Dutch painters of nocturnal views of church interiors may have explored the expressive effects of such scenes in order to make their own pictures as engaging as those of their previous and contemporary southern Netherlandish counterparts in Catholic Flanders. Flemish artists of nighttime scenes in church interiors include Hendrick van Steenwijck the Elder, who pioneered the genre; Hendrick van Steenwijck the Younger; Pieter Neefs the Elder; and Pieter Neefs the Younger. By the time Hendrick van Steenwijck the Younger moved from Antwerp to the Dutch Republic, he and his father had produced nocturnal church and prison interiors for many years.[166] Similarly, both Pieter Neefs the Elder and his son painted many Gothic church interiors and prison scenes set at night.

In contrast with the actual Gothic Catholic churches depicted in the paintings of Antwerp artists, seventeenth-century Dutch Protestant churches lacked large, elaborate pipe organs, altarpieces, other religious paintings, or sculptural decoration. As a result, some visitors to the Dutch Republic complained that the Protestant churches offered little visual interest.[167] Possibly

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De Lorme (with figures by Ludolf De Jongh, *Interior of a Church at Night*, 1660, oil on canvas, 101.6 x 131.13 cm, Los Angeles County Museum of Art).

[165] For general discussions of Dutch paintings of church interiors, none of which dedicate special attention to nocturnal scenes, see Walter Liedtke, *Architectural Painting in Delft: Gerard Houckgeest, Hendrick Van Vliet, Emanuel de Witte* (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 1982); Hugh Macandrew, *Dutch Church Painters: Saenredam's Great Church at Haarlem in Context*, exh. cat. (Edinburgh: National Gallery of Scotland, 1984); Sergiusz Michalski, "Rembrandt and the Church Interiors of the Delft School," *Artibus et Historiae* 23, no. 46 (2002): 83–193; and Angela Vanhaelen, *The Wake of Iconoclasm: Painting the Church in the Dutch Republic* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012).

[166] Van Steenwijck the Younger depicted the Liberation of Saint Peter on numerous occasions. See Van Steenwijck the Younger, *The Liberation of St. Peter*, oil on panel, 52.1 x 65.4 cm, Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena. His father seems to have depicted fewer nocturnal architectural interiors; however, nighttime scenes such as *Men Sleeping in a Room with Lighted Arches*, oil on canvas, 10.5 cm x 16 cm, Rijksmuseum, which likely shows sleeping prison guards (a traditional element of depictions of the Liberation of Saint Peter), may be the work of the elder artist.

[167] Vanhaelen, *The Wake of Iconoclasm*, 22–23.

in response, Dutch painters of Protestant church interiors took artistic license with their subjects in order to make their pictures more visually engaging. Some artists, such as the Rotterdammer Jan van Vucht, depicted imagined Catholic churches complete with organs and altarpieces.[168] Other painters, such as Emmanuel de Witte, included diverse figures in their church-interior paintings in order to create more compositional and narrative interest.[169]

Continuing a line of reasoning first posed by Gary Schwartz, Angela Vanhaelen argued that Pieter Saenredam, a Haarlem painter of Protestant church-interior scenes, treated the white walls and columns of the churches depicted in his paintings as a canvas. On those surfaces, he painted graffiti and textual adornments laden with symbolism that—in a phrase by Samuel van Hoogstraten borrowed by Vanhaelen—"explains something covertly."[170] Saenredam's strategy may have addressed the two issues central to painters of Protestant church interiors: first, how to make a space largely defined by its lack of ornamentation visually interesting, and second, how to paint something that manifests the actual repression of art, itself.[171] Vanhaelen noted that roughly contemporary with Saenredam's efforts, Anthonie de Lorme in Rotterdam resolved the same challenges, but in a very different way.[172]

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[168] Jan van Vucht and Anthonie Palamedesz., *Church Interior*, c. 1625–32, oil on panel, 79.37 x 103.19 cm, Spencer Museum of Art, Lawrence, Kansas.
[169] Liedtke, *Architectural Painting in Delft*, 12. Liedtke argues that in many of De Witte's church interiors "the figures are no longer the accessory 'staffage' of most earlier architectural paintings, but an integral part of the picture's content."
[170] "bedektlijk iets verklaert" Samuel Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding Tot De Hooge Schoole Der Schilderkonst: Anders De Zichtbaere Werelt* (Rotterdam: François van Hoogstraeten, 1678), 90. Cited in Vanhaelen, *The Wake of Iconoclasm*, 27 and Gary Schwartz, "Saenredam, Huygens and the Utrecht Bull," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 1, no. 2 (1966–67): 69–93.
[171] Vanhaelen, *The Wake of Iconoclasm*, 27.
[172] Vanhaelen, *The Wake of Iconoclasm,* 4. Vanhaelen stated that, deprived of the art that fills Flemish depictions of Catholic church interiors, De Lorme, in his *View of the Laurenskerk of Rotterdam* (1655, oil on canvas, 136 x 114 cm, Historical Museum of Rotterdam), focuses "instead on the looming pulpit to the right. Embellished with a sizable soundboard and references to a Bible verse, this center of the Reformed worship service dominates the scene." She continued, noting "in lieu of visual images, we see the Word." De Lorme, then, emphasized aspects of the Reformed liturgy in order to make the experience of viewing his painting more impactful and thought provoking. In addition to this strategy for adapting the church interior genre to Protestant imagery, I suggest that De Lorme often used nocturnal lighting effects to increase the visual and emotional impact of his work.

From early in his career, the successful De Lorme experimented in his paintings of the interiors of Dutch Reformed churches with depictions of the effects of candlelight and the resulting shadows on whitewashed walls. Possibly influenced by the paintings of the Antwerp artists, the Van Steenwijcks and the Neefs, De Lorme embraced the depiction of church interiors over time as one of his favorite subjects.[173] In his 1663 tour of the northern Netherlands, Balthasar de Monconys, art lover and councilor to the King of France, visited De Lorme's workshop and bestowed high praise on the artist for his church-interior paintings. In a journal entry recording the event, the connoisseur complimented De Lorme on his numerous paintings of the interior of Rotterdam's Laurenskerk. Later, after viewing the church itself, De Monconys described how, in person, he found the whitewashed space somewhat lackluster.[174]

In many of his paintings from the 1640s and 1650s, De Lorme confronted the plainness of Reformed-Church interiors by depicting the scenes at night.[175] The temporal setting afforded the use of dramatic lighting effects created by the candlelit chandeliers, such as that seen in his 1641 painting of a nighttime church interior (fig. 2.1).[176] In the picture, men stroll through a spacious Protestant church with unadorned walls and without sculptural decoration. The cord of a large chandelier bisects the composition and the lit candles cast reflected light off of the undulating walls of the space, resulting in intense juxtapositions of illumination and darkness. In the foreground, shadow partially hides a resting seated figure, while the bright colors of the

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[173] De Lorme likely passed through Antwerp when immigrating to Rotterdam from his birthplace of Tournai, or else visited the city at another time at which he may have seen nocturnal church interiors by these artists. Likewise, many Flemish pictures found their way to the northern Netherlands. For example, Bredius records two paintings, including a night piece by Hendrick van Steenwijck as having been in Amsterdam in 1617 after being purchased by Daniel van Geel from the Antwerp art dealer Anthony Goetkint. In Rotterdam, De Lorme could have seen paintings with a similar provenance. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* 7, 167.

[174] Vanhaelen, *The Wake of Iconoclasm,* 2–3.

[175] See De Lorme and Anthonie Palamedesz., *Church Interior at Night, with Figures*, c. 1640–45, oil on panel, 82.5 x 132 cm, Zanesville Museum of Art, Zanesville, Ohio, and De Lorme and Anthonie Palamedesz., *Church Interior by Night*, 1644, oil on panel, 112.2 x 157.4 cm, private collection.

costumes worn by men closer to the light source catch the viewer's eye. Dark and light orange tones fluctuate between the alternating surfaces of the ceiling's quadripartite vaults. The slivers of bright, almost white pigment, which run along the columns closest to the chandelier, contrast with their shadowy, black counterparts on the far side.

In De Lorme's painting, nighttime enlivens the otherwise plain appearance of the church's interior and creates a visually and spiritually engaging picture. Although the scene lacks obvious depictions of liturgical or devotional practices, the nighttime lighting effects alone evoke the painting's spiritual content. Just as text and graffitti in some of Saenredam's daytime images of Protestant church interiors encouraged a viewer's careful consideration, the depiction of the nighttime scene in De Lorme's painting suggests themes beyond the artwork's literal content.

The hours after sundown depicted in De Lorme's church-interior painting convey spiritual ideas closely associated with contemporary Christian religious practices. The tranquil, meditative qualities of the night transcend the picture's genre subject and highlight the majestic structure of the church space. Towering architecture, bathed in a warm and heavenly glow, dwarfs the tiny figures. De Lorme focused his attention on the church itself, rather than on the people inside, in order to create a work with a calming, meditative tone, despite the ostensibly secular nature of the anecdotal scene depicted.

De Lorme's decision to employ the nocturnal setting in the pursuit of his expressive goal reinforced the significance of the night hours in both seventeenth-century Dutch art and theology. Like Saenredam, De Lorme sought out innovative ways to paint Reformed church interiors accurately, while still engaging with meaningful religious ideas. In the early 1640s, both the aesthetic and spiritual ramifications of De Lorme's decision would have appealed to the growing market for pictures of church interiors.

In addition to Anthonie de Lorme, many other Dutch artists painted nocturnal church-interior scenes that captured the long-lived embrace of evening hours, more than daytime, as a conducive period for private worship and spiritual reflection. In the 1651 painting of a Protestant church interior seen at night, the Middelburg painter Daniël de Blieck likely shows a typical mid-seventeenth-century evening service in a Protestant Dutch church (fig. 2.2). The artist depicted three large, black windows that loom overhead and clearly reveal the painting's nocturnal setting. No light enters the space from the clerestory or from the lower windows. Instead, in the middle a chandelier illuminates the scene. The symmetrical composition of the painting and the geometric architectural elements of the depicted church emphasize the orderly nature of the liturgical proceeding and reinforce the painting's generally contemplative, tranquil tone.

A congregation of Dutch men and women listen intently as a minister in a pulpit leads an evening service. Some of the worshippers, including the women seated in the left half of the painting just below the minister, follow along with open bibles. Others stand or casually walk closer to get a better view. Everyone focuses intently, presumably listens carefully, and thinks deeply about the spiritual and religious topics under discussion. An approaching dog fails to distract one observer. A playful child slows to turn his head toward the speaker in the pulpit.

As manifested in the nighttime church-interior paintings by De Lorme and De Blieck, the ancient Christian tradition of evening worship persisted among those living in the post-Reformation northern Netherlands.[177] Although liturgical practices differed based on any number of factors, including the specific faith, denomination, church, or city in question, Protestants and

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[177] Article 64 of the Canons of Dort leaves the decision of whether or not to hold evening prayer services up to the individual church. De Ridder, *The Church Orders of the Sixteenth Century*, 554. Translated from C. Hoijer, *Oude Kerkordeningen der Nederlandsche Gemeente (1563–1638)* (Zalt-Bommel: Joh. Noman en Zoon, 1865), 457.

Roman Catholics in the Dutch Republic shared an appreciation for the quiet, reflective qualities of the night conducive to prayer and devotions.

Nighttime Settings in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Paintings of the Crucifixion

In multiple ways, Hendrick ter Brugghen's painting *The Crucifixion with the Virgin and Saint John*, c. 1624–25, engages with the long-lived religious tradition of nighttime worship and spiritual contemplation (fig. 2.3). Dressed in heavy robes, Mary and John the Evangelist stand to either side of the cross with gaping mouths, hands clasped in prayer, and eyes fixated upon Christ's pitiful form in front of them. Behind the three figures, small, golden, evenly distributed stars dot the night sky that fades from a muddy olive tone surrounding Christ's head and hands to an unearthly pale gold around the lower bodies of the two observers.

The sallow, gaunt body of Christ hangs lifelessly from the cross. Veins and bones protrude through his discolored skin, which wrinkles and folds at the waist. Thick strings of blood seem to be suspended in midair as they dangle impossibly from his hands, feet, crown, and side wound. A human skull sits atop a large bone in front of a tree stump at the base of the cross. Small stones litter the barren ground.

The night sky in Ter Brugghen's painting has been interpreted in various ways by scholars. However, none sufficiently accounts for the role the nocturnal setting plays in the expression of the picture's transcendent spiritual content. In the most straightforward art historical analyses of Ter Brugghen's nighttime setting, several studies have pointed to descriptions of the crucifixion recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Each of the three evangelists described how a "darkness" came over the land while Christ suffered on the

cross.[178] More specifically, Helmet Nickel contended that Ter Brugghen's choice of a nocturnal setting in *The Crucifixion with the Virgin and Saint John* may have been influenced by the total solar eclipse in Rome on October 12, 1605, and the annular solar eclipse in the Netherlands on May 21, 1621, which the artist may have seen.

I suggest, however, that the biblical sources and Ter Brugghen's possible experience of astronomical phenomena would likely have played a secondary role in the generation of expressive effects in his painting. Instead, I argue that the painting's nocturnal setting engaged first and foremost with the Christian tradition of worship and religious reflection after nightfall. The painting's setting conveys a subdued, contemplative tone befitting the picture's function as a devotional aid. Most likely, seventeenth-century viewers in Utrecht, the Catholic Bishopric in the northern Netherlands, and the city in which Ter Brugghen lived, would have understood the painting's dark and starry background in such a devotional context.

Throughout the history of art, depictions of the crucifixion often evoked a supernatural setting,[179] which, I argue, would have been understood by the majority of viewers as a night scene. As early as the late sixth century, some depictions of the crucifixion included a sun and a moon.[180] The tradition continued throughout the sixteenth century, as seen in the paintings of Dutch artists, including Pieter Pietersz. the Elder, 1555–1603, and pictures by Flemish artists working in the circle of Gillis Mostaert the Elder, such as the painting from c. 1550–98 (figs.

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[178] Walter Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2007), 112; and Helmut Nickel, "The Sun, the Moon, and an Eclipse: Observations on 'The Crucifixion with the Virgin and Saint John,' by Hendrick Ter Brugghen," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 42 (2007): 121. See the Gospels of Matthew (27:45), Luke (23:44, 45), and Mark (15:33).
[179] For the purposes of this study, I exclude similar works with more ambiguous settings and which do not recall the experience of the night.
[180] See Rabbula Gospels, *The Crucifixion*, c. 586, tempera on vellum, Biblioteca Laurentiana, Florence, MS. Plut. I, 56, fol. 13a, c.

2.4–5). Often in such scenes, the sun appears to glow a dull red due to the oppressive black clouds that surround it.

In some pictures, including a painting attributed to a follower of Mostaert, c. 1550–98, a lone celestial body resembles the red sun seen in other paintings produced by this group of artists (fig. 2.6). However, the painting by a follower of Mostaert lacks the depiction of both a sun and a moon, which prevents conclusive identification of the red circle surrounded by dark clouds. Due to the black sky, however, viewers would have likely interpreted the circle as the moon and the scene itself as a night piece. The apocryphal text *The Report of Pilate to the Emperor Claudius*, c. 550, stated that, "[at] his Crucifixion the sun was darkened; the stars appeared and in all the world people lighted lamps from the sixth hour until evening; *the moon appeared like blood*."[181] (emphasis mine). Viewers familiar with this textual account of the events surrounding Christ's death would most likely have interpreted the red circle as a moon in the painting by the follower of Mostaert.

Subsequent Dutch artists also depicted a night sky in their paintings of Christ on the cross, which illustrates the widespread conception of the nocturnal subject. Mysterious darkness blots out the sky in many crucifixion scenes, for example, those by Karel van Mander, 1559;[182] Rembrandt, c. 1633;[183] Leonaert Bramer, c. 1635;[184] Govert Flinck, 1643–49;[185] Joachim von Sandrart, c. 1654 and c. 1661;[186] Karel Dujardin, 1661;[187] and Gabriel Metsu, 1660–65 (fig. 2.7).

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[181] Montague Rhodes James, trans., *The New Testament Apocrypha,* (1924; repr., Berkeley: Apocryphile Press, 2004), 154. Quoted in Colin J. Humphreys and W. G. Waddington, "Astronomy and the Date of the Crucifixion," in *Chronos, Kairos, Christos: Nativity and Chronological Studies Presented to Jack Finegan,* eds. Jerry Vardaman and Edwin M. Yamauchi (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1989), 173.
[182] *Landscape with Snow and the Crucifixion*, oil on panel, 67 x 11.7 cm, private collection.
[183] *Raising of the Cross*, oil on canvas, 95.7 x 72.2 cm, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.
[184] *The Raising of the Cross*, oil on panel, 79 x 59 cm, Akademie der bildenden Künste, Vienna.
[185] *The Crucifixion of Christ*, oil on panel, 119.2 x 89.2 cm, Kunstmuseum, Basel.
[186] *The Crucifixion*, oil on canvas, Schottenkirche, Vienna; *The Crucifixion*, oil on canvas, 325 x 215 cm, Kapuzinerkirche, Linz.
[187] *The Crucifixion*, oil on panel, 97 x 84 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

In Bramer's depiction of the raising of the cross, 1630, an unidentified light source visible through the hazy darkness in the upper left corner of the panel casts the silvery glow of moonlight over the figures and hillside (fig. 2.8). In Von Sandrart's and Metsu's paintings, a reddish celestial body—as in the painting by a follower of Mostaert—must be the moon (fig. 2.6). In the upper left of Metsu's painting, the sliver of the blood-red moon remains mostly hidden behind dark clouds.

During the seventeenth century, some worshippers in the northern Netherlands may have known of the nocturnal *Small Crucifixion*, c. 1511/1520, by the German artist Matthias Grünewald, thanks to a popular engraved reproduction of the painting by Raphael Sadeler, published in 1605 (fig. 2.9). In the print, the stars visible in Grünewald's original picture disappear, but the moon remains, prominently placed above Christ's contorted left hand. Despite the tortured figure of Christ, both the engraved and painted versions of Grunewald's *Small Crucifixion* convey a sense of tranquility similar to that exuded in Ter Brugghen's painting due, in part, to the presence of the night sky.

The other numerous nocturnal depictions of Christ on the cross, in which the nighttime setting plays an active role in conveying a meditative tone, reinforce the enduring resonance of the starry sky in Ter Brugghen's *Crucifixion with the Virgin and Saint John*. Likely intended as an altarpiece for use in an Utrecht Catholic *schuilkerk*, or clandestine or semi-clandestine church,[188] Ter Brugghen's painting inspires spiritual contemplation. The tortured hands and twisted torso of Christ, along with the strings of bright-red, dripping blood, silhouetted against the dark sky, illustrate the agonizing crucifixion and clearly express his physical pain. The

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[188] For more on Utrecht's *schuilkerken* see the overview provided by Benjamin Kaplan in Benjamin Kaplan, George Keyes, Ben Olde Meierink, and Angelique Bakker, *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht During the Golden Age*, exh. cat. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), 65–71.

awestruck figures of Mary and John model reactions for the viewer, who, upon seeing the altarpiece, would empathetically imagine Christ's depicted suffering.

Both Catholic and Dutch Reformed viewers of Ter Brugghen's painting would have recognized the implied connection between themselves and the crucified Christ.[189] In its 1546 "Decree Concerning Original Sin," the Catholic Council of Trent affirmed the importance of belief in this specific tenet of the faith by quoting a passage from the Epistle to the Romans: "By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned."[190] Likewise, in section eight of *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, "The Nature of Sin," 1536, the Protestant John Calvin explained that "[original sin] seems to be a hereditary depravity and corruption of our nature, diffused into all parts of the soul, which first makes us liable to God's wrath."[191]

Previous scholars' observations about Ter Brugghen's painting similarly posited that the picture probably functioned as a Catholic devotional aid. In 1997, Leonard Slatkes noted the painting's "iconic structure" and declared in reference to the work's frontal and symmetrical composition, "it is difficult to find another seventeenth-century Dutch painting of such high quality that is also so deliberately archaic."[192] In 2007, Walter Liedtke asserted that Ter Brugghen sought to "recapture the expressive power" of late Gothic and Early Renaissance devotional images, or *Andachtsbilder*.[193] To support his claim, Liedtke describes how the

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[189] Ter Brugghen likely followed the teachings of the Protestant faith. He married his wife in a Reformed church and the baptisms of his four children took place in Reformed churches. However, he never became a member of a particular congregation and as such his religion has been the subject of some scholarly debate. For a summary of the relevant scholarship on this topic, see Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings,* 108.
[190] Rom. 5:12, quoted in *The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, trans. Rev. H. J. Schroeder, OP (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1978), 22.
[191] John Calvin, *Calvin's Institutes: A New Compend*, ed. Hugh T. Kerr (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989), 57.
[192] Leonard J. Slatkes in Kaplan et al., *Masters of Light,* 151–53.
[193] Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings,* 109.

painting's compositon repeats a traditional arrengment found in devotional Netherlandish prints and paintings from as early as the fifteenth century.[194]

I agree that the archaic composition of Ter Brugghen's painting resembles imagery akin to icons from centuries past, which fostered a spiritual realm. However, scholarly discussions have not considered the picture's nighttime setting that would have further informed the painting's devotional function for a contemporary audience. In addition to the iconic or archaic composition of Ter Brugghen's *Crucifixion*, the gold stars in the picture's nighttime sky recall earlier *Andachtsbilder*. The reflective golden stars in the c. 1624–25 Utrecht painting evoke, for example, the glimmering fields of gold leaf applied to the background of the unattributed southern Netherlandish *Crucifixion with a Carthusian Monk*, c. 1470 (fig. 2.10). As a devotional work probably intended for private worship in a monk's cell, the earlier painting depicts a Carthusian monk who kneels at the foot of the cross. He would have functioned as a model and stand-in for the viewer, inspired to join in prayer and in consideration of Christ's sacrifice.[195]

The gold stars in Ter Brugghen's devotional painting, however, depict a more naturalistic starry sky than seen in the otherworldly golden field in earlier iconic religious scenes. Both Ter Brugghen's night scene and the c. 1470 Cleveland panel, however, suggest mystical content. Ter Brugghen's use of gold for the stars in his *Crucifixion* evokes both spiritual ideas and actual nocturnal worship. Despite the likelihood that Ter Brugghen's painting originally hung in a Catholic *schuilkerk*, the depicted scene engaged with nighttime devotional traditions, in general,

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[194] Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings,* 110. For another discussion of archaism in Ter Brugghen's *Crucifixion*, see Natasha Seaman, "Materiality and the Presence of the Past in Hendrick ter Brugghen's 'Crucifixion,'" *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 74, no. 4 (2011): 489–516.

[195] In Ter Brugghen's painting, however, the figures of Mary and Saint John assume the intercessory role, as evidenced by their gazes, gestures and what Liedtke described as their "everyday figure types." Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings,* 109.

that would have been familiar to both Catholic and Protestant viewers in the northern Netherlands.

Nighttime Settings in Rembrandt's Depictions of the Rest on the Flight into Egypt

Whereas the depiction of the night in Ter Brugghen's *Crucifixion* appears to have engaged most strongly with Catholic pictorial traditions, the calm, meditative tone of the nocturnal setting in Rembrandt's *Landscape with Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, 1647, would have resonated with viewers of all Christian denominations (fig. 2.11). In Rembrandt's painting, darkness dominates the composition, which evokes a peaceful mood. More than any other compositional or iconographic element, the nighttime setting suggests the spiritual content and meditative tenor of the picture. Absorbed into the landscape, the holy family—the ostensible subject of the work—actually occupies a small portion of the painting's composition. Only the protective glow of the fire prevents them from disappearing entirely.

In the lower part of Rembrandt's expansive nocturnal landscape, a fire warms the holy family as they huddle together. Nearby a shepherd (or, more accurately, cowherd) tends the fire while his companion stands alongside their cattle. Another man and several more cows navigate the nightscape by lantern-light, while they approach the fireside group. The warm orange and white tones emitted by the blaze reflect off the unmoving pool of water, which runs along the base of the composition. The firelight also illuminates the foliage and shoreline, which surround the holy family and their companions.

The lower-right half of the painting consists primarily of shadow and partially obscured geographical forms. Above the landscape, a burst of moonlight on the right pierces the dark night sky. The moon appears to have just reached a visible height as it climbs above the hilly terrain.

Its light points toward a large building, probably Herod's temple, situated atop the hillside. Several glowing windows dot the exterior of this structure. The nocturnal atmosphere in Rembrandt's painting exudes a sense of peacefulness and tranquility that supercedes the threat of any peril represented by Herod's looming edifice. The nocturnal setting creates a calming ambiance designed to encourage meditation on the plight of the holy family and, more generally, the life of Christ.

Rembrandt's composition may have been based upon Hendrick Goudt's 1613 engraving after Adam Elsheimer's painting *Flight into Egypt*, 1609[196] (figs. 2.12–13). In both Rembrandt's painting and Goudt's engraving, a group of shepherds accompanies the holy family around a fire and under a moonlit sky. The comparatively large holy family in Elsheimer's painting, their central compositional position, and the fact they do not share a fire with the shepherds represent significant differences from their counterparts in Rembrandt's later painting. The latter scene downplays the holy figures in order to enhance night's role in the generation of the picture's meaning. Rembrandt's nighttime setting creates a more contemplative and even mystical viewing experience than seen in Elsheimer's painting.

Rembrandt must have been captivated by the subject of the holy family's flight into Egypt as he produced several other depictions of the subject: a 1627 painting set at night and eight etchings (fig. 2.14).[197] The prints include two with daytime settings dating from 1626 (Bartsch 59) and 1627 (Bartsch 54), and four with nocturnal settings, which date from 1633 (Bartsch 52); 1644 (Bartsch 57); 1651 (Bartsch 53); and 1654 (Bartsch 55) (figs. 2.15–2.18). The

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[196] Shelley Perlove and Larry Silver, *Rembrandt's Faith: Church and Temple in the Dutch Golden Age* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 171.

[197] Another version of this scene (*The Flight into Egypt*, c. 1640, oil on panel, 52 x 49.1 cm, formerly London, collection of Lord Wharton) exists that has sometimes been attributed to Rembrandt and which is also set at night; however, the Rembrandt Research Project credits this painting to a pupil, likely Ferdinand Bol. See Josua Bruyn, Bob Haak, Simon H. Levie, Pieter J. J. van Thiel, and Ernst van de Wetering, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings II, 1631–34* (Dordrecht, Boston, and Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1986), 603.

time of day or night in Rembrandt's 1645 etching (Bartsch 58) is not clearly indicated compared with his earlier prints; however, the scene appears to be daylit due to the cursory etching. In an additional print of the theme etched on a previously worked plate with an incised day-lit landscape by Hercules Seghers, Rembrandt burnished an area and added the holy family, which transformed the scene into the *Flight to Egypt*, c. 1652 (Bartsch 56).[198]

Significantly, six out of Rembrandt's nine depictions of the flight into Egypt, including both of his painted versions from 1627 and 1647, feature nighttime settings (figs. 2.11, 2.14–18). Three scenes that appear to take place during the day include a sketch, 1627 (Bartsch 54) and one of Rembrandt's earliest etchings, 1626 (Bartsch 59), which has a raw and experimental quality characteristic of an artist still fine-tuning his craft. The 1626 etching exists today in only three states.[199] Two of Rembrandt's most striking etchings of the theme, which date from 1644 (Bartsch 57) and 1651 (Bartsch 53), focus so much on the nighttime setting that—as in his 1647 Dublin painting—darkness overtakes the scene and obscures much of the picture (figs. 2.16–17). In both etchings with nighttime settings, lantern light dramatically illuminates the holy family. All of these pictures evoke the experience of navigating through the dark at night. In doing so, they engage the viewer in the spiritual world of nocturnal hours, which would have inspired devotional meditation in many seventeenth-century Dutch viewers.

Rembrandt seems to have depicted nighttime versions of the flight into Egypt more frequently than any other artist. The theme, however, also appealed to the southern Netherlandish artist Peter Paul Rubens, who painted a copy after Elsheimer in 1614 and devised his own

[198] Gary Schwartz, ed., *The Complete Etchings of Rembrandt: Reproduced in Original Size* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1994), 48–54; Bartsch 52–59.
[199] Schwartz, *The Complete Etchings of Rembrandt*, 54.

painted compositions in 1614 and in the 1630s (figs. 2.19–21).[200] Only a few Dutch artists other than Rembrandt produced such imagery. Those who did included an unknown student of Rembrandt (likely Ferdinand Bol), 1634, Barent Fabritius, 1639–73 (likely another student of Rembrandt), and Adam Colonia, 1665 (figs. 2.22–24). Rembrandt's personal fascination with this nighttime scene seems to have influenced his followers, and other artists like Colonia, to also create nocturnal versions of this theme. However, that so few Dutch artists without a direct connection to Rembrandt did so makes his production of such imagery in relatively large numbers noteworthy.

In depicting this subject at night, initially Rembrandt possibly felt the influence of his teacher, Pieter Lastman. In 1608 Lastman, a friend of Elsheimer, painted a version of the scene likely set at night, which does not contain stars (fig. 2.25). The branch of a tree and cloud coverage obscure the moon and the sky depicted in varying tones of dark and light blue. Unlike Elsheimer, Lastman downplays the role of the night and emphasizes instead the narrative details of the story including the affection of Mary for her child and the threat of Herod in his ominous temple. In his versions of this scene Rembrandt gives primacy not to the holy family, but to the darkness that surrounds them and to the light emitted by the moon, lanterns, or bonfires.

Ernst van de Wetering suggested that Rembrandt's fascination with the effects of artificial light, such as fire or torchlight, amidst the dark inspired his repeated return to this theme. He argued that in the case of the Dublin painting the artist "was commenting on Elsheimer's treatment of light and reflections."[201] Van de Wetering does not, however, offer any explanation beyond purely technical curiosities. I suggest that, in addition to this interest in

[200] For the dating of this drawing see Helen Braham and Robert Bruce-Gardner, "Rubens's 'Landscape by Moonlight,'" *Burlington Magazine* 130, no.1025 (1988): 580.
[201] *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings V: The Small-Scale History Paintings*, ed. Ernst van de Wetering (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), 457.

dramatic lighting effects, Rembrandt must have found the theme inspiring due to the meditational tone conveyed by the work's nocturnal setting.

In her discussion of the night sky in Renaissance art, and specifically in Elsheimer's *Flight into Egypt,* Deborah Howard described the German artist's painting as an image marked by a sense of "religious mystery," in which a sublime nocturnal landscape and starry sky remind the viewer of god's awe-inspiring power.[202] Rembrandt's nocturnal flight into Egypt imagery corresponds to this description in that his night skies also create an other-worldly tenor conducive to meditation and contemplation. For this reason, both Rembrandt's interest in the technical aspects of the depiction of night as well as the symbolic significance of the evening's darkness should be taken into consideration when studying his numerous depictions of this subject.

A brief examination of Rembrandt's painted night scene of *Abraham Entertaining the Angels*, 1646, provides additional evidence that the artist used nocturnal settings to make the viewing of some works a more contemplative experience (fig. 2.26). Eric Jan Sluijter described how, from the 1640s, Rembrandt often "banished all action and reaction and avoided any indication of dialogue" in his history scenes in order to force the viewer "to think about what is going on in the minds of the persons depicted."[203] In earlier pictures, Sluijter explains, the artist strove to depict sudden movements, such as a falling knife or a man tumbling head over heels, adding that these "were spectacular images, but in the end unsatisfactory" because they engaged more with dynamic action than with human emotion.[204] In an attempt to make his viewer think

[202] Deborah Howard, "Elsheimer's Flight into Egypt and the Night Sky in the Renaissance," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 55, no. 2 (1992): 223.
[203] Eric Jan Sluijter, "How Rembrandt Surpassed the Ancients, Italians and Rubens as the Master of 'the Passions of the Soul,'" *BMGN: Low Countries Historical Review* 129, no.2 (2014): 83.
[204] Sluijter, "How Rembrandt Surpassed the Ancients," 81.

more deeply about the emotional states of the depicted historical and biblical figures, Sluijter perceptively explains, Rembrandt decided to eschew action and dialogue and instead focus on conveying a calm, silent, and ultimately contemplative tenor.

In a lecture delivered at the Frick Collection on June 14, 2017, Johanna Sheers Seidenstein echoed these sentiments as she discussed Rembrandt's 1646 painting of *Abraham and the Angels* (fig. 2.26). She compared the small nocturnal scene to an earlier painting *Abraham Sacrificing with His Son Isaac*, 1634, calling the 1646 picture "as emphatic a reversal of his 1634 painting as one could imagine" (fig. 2.27).[205] She went on to suggest that the later painting actually marks a turning point in Rembrandt's career in which he began to focus more on the conveyance of the inner workings of the human mind than on the depiction of dramatic somatic actions in a given narrative.[206] Instead of showing the most sensational event in the story, as in his 1634 painting when the angel stays Abraham's hand just before he kills his son, Rembrandt opted to focus in the 1646 work on a quiet nocturnal moment in which God, accompanied by two angels, enjoys a meal provided by Abraham and his wife Sarah, who remain unaware of the trio's true identities.

The dark sky visible in the upper left of the 1646 painting communicates the work's nocturnal setting and supplants the temporal ambiguity of the 1634 picture. Rembrandt's decision to set the 1646 scene after dark exemplifies his artistic developments, which Sluijter and Seidenstein noted. The choice of a nocturnal setting in the 1646 painting conveys a sense of tranquility in order to encourage the viewer's contemplative and spiritual reflection on the

[205] Joanna Sheers Seidenstein, "Rembrandt, Abraham, and the Dynamics of Revelation" (presentation given at the Frick Collection, New York City, June 14, 2017), http://www.frick.org/interact/joanna_sheers_seidenstein_%E2%80%9Crembrandt_abraham_and_dynamics_revelation%E2%80%9D.
[206] Seidenstein, "Rembrandt, Abraham, and the Dynamics of Revelation."

thought processes of those depicted in the scene. The depiction of night in this painting and the stilled nature of the chosen moment create a scene that allows the viewer to be "free to project his own feelings and emotions onto the image," as Sluijter observed.[207]

Nighttime settings in still other Dutch pictures of religious subjects also convey a reflective, peaceful tone. They demonstrate the longevity and widespread appeal for nocturnal settings for religious subjects. Rombout van Troyen's *Saint Christopher Carrying Christ on His Shoulders Across the River*, c. 1605–55, for example, depicts a prominent moon and a quiet, nocturnal landscape.[208] In addition to his *Raising of the Cross,* discussed above, Leonaert Bramer painted many other meditative nighttime scenes, including several depictions of the life of St. Peter likely from the 1630s,[209] an *Adoration of the Magi* from the late 1630s,[210] and a *Journey of the Three Magi to Bethlehem,* 1638–40.[211] The same nocturnal setting and ambiance also characterizes several paintings produced by Dutch artists active primarily in the second half of the seventeenth century, such as Cornelis Snellinck's *The Magi Following the Star of Bethlehem*, 1614–69,[212] and many paintings by Godfried Schalcken, including *The Holy Family with St. John and St. Elisabeth*, 1695–99, *The Mocking of Christ*, 1700–6, and *The Penitent Mary Magdalene*, 1656–1706.[213]

<u>Night Pictures and the Occult</u>

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[207] Sluijter, "How Rembrandt Surpassed the Ancients," 83.
[208] Oil on panel, 22.5 x 37.8 cm, private collection.
[209] *The Denial of St Peter*, c. 1626, oil on slate, 32 x 52 cm, William and Sharon Treul Collection, Milwaukee and *The Liberation of St. Peter*, c. 1625, oil on slate, 45.7 × 63.5 cm, Los Angeles County Museum of Art.
[210] Oil on copper, 28 x 34 cm, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen.
[211] See chapter 1, fig. 1.1.
[212] Oil on panel, 34 x 28 cm, Museum Sainte-Croix, Poitiers.
[213] Oil on canvas, 164 x 110 cm, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen; oil on canvas, 145 x 112 cm, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich; oil on panel, 26 x 21.2 cm, Staatliches Museum, Schwerin.

Dutch images of the occult and related sinister subject matter frequently depict a menacing or mysterious nighttime environment. Portrayals by Cornelis Saftleven of the night as a perilous, unnatural time include paintings of demons or monsters tormenting Saint Anthony. Witchcraft scenes by Dominicus van Wijnen vividly describe the infamous rituals associated with the nocturnal sabbaths of witches. While many in the Dutch Republic regarded witchcraft and occultism with much skepticism, such pictures reinforce the fact that early modern European superstitions about the night informed Dutch art and culture despite the co-existence of Cartesian rationalism.[214]

Such imagery perpetuated a long-lived northern European iconographic tradition, especially strong in prints, which employed a highly conventional and recognizable pictorial vocabulary. Some elements commonly seen in nocturnal witchcraft scenes include women riding on the backs of flying goats, broomsticks, and other forms of night flight;[215] nude figures; corpses; billowing cauldrons; swords; severed hands (commonly referred to as the Hand of Glory); bones; gambling accoutrements, including playing cards and dice; and rural settings. The 1565 engraving published by Hieronymus Cock after Pieter Breughel the Elder's *St. James and*

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[214] For a general overview of the seventeenth-century Dutch cultural understanding of witchcraft, see "Seeing Witches: Thinking about Witchcraft in the Netherlands" in Claudia Swan, *Art, Science, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Holland: Jacques de Gheyn II (1565–1629)* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 157–74. In general, Swan suggests that many Dutch men and women grew skeptical of the widespread persecution of women, or "witch craze," occurring in other European countries. However, this attitude resulted largely from a lack of faith in the abilities of humans to meddle in the supernatural. As a result, in literature on the subject, including Jan Weir's 1563 *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (*On the Tricks of Demons*) and Reginald Scot's 1584 *The Discoverie of Witchcraft,* the devil often shoulders the blame for maleficent occurrences. Swan states that the explanation of the matter of witches offered by Weir, a Netherlander, relies on "equal parts skepticism, belief in the power of the Devil, and faith in the powers of human imagination." Swan, *Art, Science, and Witchcraft*, 158.

[215] Traditionally witches were believed to fly to sabbaths by night on broomsticks, pitchforks, or on the backs of animals. The concept, known as nocturnal transvection, is mentioned in the influential fifteenth-century handbook on recognizing and preventing witchcraft by Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum* (*Hammer of Witches*), published in Strasbourg in 1487. See Leonardas Vytautas Gerulaitis, "Rise and Persistence of a Myth: Witch Transvection," *Fifteenth Century Studies* 33 (2008): 108.

the Magician Hermongenes, as well as Andries Stock's c. 1610 engraving of a sorcery scene after Jacques de Gheyn II's design include many of these elements (figs. 2.28–29).

In her study of the art of De Gheyn, a prolific creator of witchcraft scenes who was active in the seventeenth century throughout the northern Netherlands, Claudia Swan examined how his artistic depictions of supernatural phenomena may have been understood. De Gheyn produced such images within a culture interested in the naturalistic depiction of people, places, and things. Pictures of sorcery, such as the engraving after De Gheyn, would not have been read literally, Swan argued, but as a vivid portrayal of the illusion of witchcraft.[216] This may be true for some viewers; however, I suggest that such a general approach to these pictures ignores the diversity of audiences these works may have had. While some Dutch men and women harbored skeptical views of the concept of witches, others may have feared them or at least entertained the idea that they might exist. I address these images not as works of fiction or as documents of observable phenomena, but as emotionally impactful works of art intended to invoke in their viewers a sense of enigmatic fear regardless of one's opinion concerning the reality of witches. Superstitions and fantasies exist outside of rational thought, and such ideas inform the depictions of nocturnal occult subject matter under discussion here.

Additional Dutch depictions of occult activities set at night further illustrate the prevalence of the pictorial manifestation of these beliefs in late sixteenth and seventeenth-century northern Netherlands. In Hendrick Goltzius's c. 1588 chiaroscuro woodcut *Demogorgon in the Cave of Eternity*, Demogorgon, a powerful and mysterious figure described by the Italian Renaissance humanist Boccacio as an omnipotent pagan diety and, in the seventeenth century, by John Milton as one of the demons accompanying the fallen Satan, practices sorcery under the

[216] Swan, *Art, Science, and Witchcraft*, 123.

stars (fig. 2.30).[217] Leonaert Bramer's painting *Lazarus Brought to Abraham by Angels,* c. 1630, appears to depict a nocturnal version of hell, while both his *Scene of Witchcraft*, c. 1628–30, and *Scene of Sorcery*, c.1635,[218] show Sabbaths that take place under a clear night sky (fig. 2.31). Cornelis Saftleven also staged occult scenes at night in his *Temptation of Saint Anthony*, 1629, in which only the rays of light behind Anthony keep the darkness and monsters at bay (fig. 2.32). In Saftleven's *Job Plagued by Evil Spirits*, 1631, the darkened night sky adds to the terror evoked by the demons, who torment the old man (fig. 2.33).

Seventeenth-century Dutch depictions of occult rituals were informed more by long-lived conventional iconography than by the actual belief-systems of artists, viewers, and collectors. The nighttime setting in such pictures of the occult, which inspired fear through fantasy, augmented the imagery's dreadful tenor and intensified the sense of foreboding. In their creation of emotionally heightened scenes, artists exploited the cultural perception of the night as a time when fearful thoughts often ran rampant.

Like the nocturnal occult imagery, however, some theological writings by Dutch as well as foreign authors characterized night as a time in which reason recedes and the supernatural prevails. Such texts may have informed occult imagery to some extent. The writings of Jacob Böhme, the Lutheran mystic, for example, juxtaposed the qualities of good and evil inherent in all things. He contrasted the virtuous light of God and the sun, which illuminates the day, with the sinful dark night and its companion, the moon. Throughout the seventeenth century, presses

[217] Jon Solomon, "Boccaccio and the Ineffable, Aniconic God Demogorgon," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 19, no. 1 (2012): 32.
[218] Oil on panel, 31 x 47.5 cm, Národní galerie v Praze, Prague; Oil on copper, 27 x 36 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Bordeaux, Bordeaux.

in the Netherlands posthumously republished Böhme's writings in Dutch, Latin, and German, editions.

Additional theological writings may have also informed the association between occult subject matter and the night in Dutch imagery. In 1569 in Leiden, Henry Verbiest published *De Spectris, Lemuribus et Magnis Atque Insolitis Fragoribus, Variisque Praesagitionibus (Of Ghosts and Spirits Walking by Night, Strange Noises, and Various Suppositions*).[219] The latter work reissued in Latin the earlier influential text by the Swiss Reform theologian Ludwig Lavater concerning supernatural spirits and the night. Lavater's writings repeatedly cite the shunning of God's light by the devil as evidence that the nighttime elicited the most threatening evil or deceptive influences and beings.

In 1681, Paulus Vink of Gorinchem published a Dutch edition of Lavater's text entitled *Van de Spooken, Nagt-Geesten, en Andere Diergelijke Verschijningen* (*Of Ghosts, Night Spirits, and Other Such Apparitions*),[220] which included engraved illustrations. Many of the images depict the hours after sunset as a time when unholy phenomena took place. The book's frontispiece pictures nocturnal animals, such as the owl and bat, consorting with unnatural entities, including skeletons, witches, and demons, as well as the snake, the preeminent purveyor of evil and sin among the animal kingdom. By the 1660s in European visual culture in general, nocturnal animals, such as owls and bats, had long served as the associates of evil and deceit.[221]

In the seventeenth-century Netherlands, in particular, strong ties existed between the night, and the owl and the bat—two purportedly debauched and devilish creatures. To Dutch

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[219] Ludwig Lavater *De Spectris, Lemuribus et Magnis Atque Insolitis Fragoribus, Variisque Praesagitionibus* (Leiden: Henry Verbiest, 1569).
[220] Ludwig Lavater, *Van de Spooken, Nagt-Geesten, en Andere Diergelijke Verschijningen*, Paulus Vink, trans. (Gorinchem: Paulus Vink, 1681).
[221] See "Bat" and "Owl" in Hope B. Werness, *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Animal Symbolism in Art* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2003), 29–32, 303–8.

audiences, these nocturnal animals signaled the devil and his evil minions at worst, and the presence of folly at best. Common thinking presumed that one who preferred the mysterious night to the clarity and order of the day had nefarious intentions.

In seventeenth-century Dutch imagery of an ominous night scene, an owl and/or bat contributed additional frightening connotations. An owl and a bat appear, for example, in a popular image of the personification of *Nacht* (Night), designed by Dirck Barendsz., engraved by Johann Sadeler, 1582, and copied later by others (fig. 2.34).[222] Hendrick Goltzius' chiaroscuro woodcut, *Nox* (Night), 1588–90, also includes an owl, which flanks a nude woman in a chariot pulled by bats (fig. 2.35). In *Nacht*, 1590–97, engraved by Adriaen Collaert after a design by Maerten de Vos, fluttering bats accompany the reclining figure of night, who lies on a cloud underneath a starry sky (fig. 2.36).

Many seventeenth-century Dutch nighttime images depict the nocturnal animals in direct association with activities unbecoming a Christian, or with those considered immoral, evil, or associated with the occult. In Adriaen van de Venne's engraving of *Damon in Lodippe's Lair,* published in the first edition of Jacob Cats's *Alle de Wercken* (*Complete Works*), 1655, several bats and owls accompany the witch Lodippe in her lair (fig. 2.37).[223] She possessed the power to command the moon and she fit comfortably amongst the creatures of the night. In a number of paintings by Cornelis Saftleven, an owl, a bat, or both join league with a band of demons who torment Saint Anthony or participate in other nightmarish revelries and occultic practices. In Saftleven's *The Temptation of Saint Anthony,* 1629, for example, an owl and a bat watch over a party of demonic revelers who have occupied Saint Anthony's cave (fig. 2.38). Likewise, the

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[222] For another, later version see anonymous, after Johann Sadeler (I), after Dirck Barendsz., *Nacht*, 1667–1736, engraving, 134 x 187 mm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.
[223] Jacob Cats, *Alle de Wercken* (Amsterdam: Jan Jacobsz. Schipper), 1655.

demon who grabs the back of Dives in Leonaert Bramer's badly damaged *Lazarus Brought to Abraham by Angels*, c. 1635, appears to be an amalgam of a human and a bat, while a monster with the head of an owl emerges from the ground at right (fig. 2.31).

Dominicus van Wijnen's *The Witches' Sabbath by Moonlight*, c. 1674–98, also demonstrates an artist's use of a nocturnal setting with various ominous elements, including a bat, to convey a mysterious and menacing tone in a depiction of the occult (fig. 2.39). The painting incorporates many iconographic conventions of earlier witchcraft scenes, including the depiction of a nocturnal setting with a prominent moon. A naked old woman rides a flying goat over a smoking cauldron from which ghostly faces emerge as monsters and other figures gather around. Two corpses, a second unclothed woman, a bat, and a specter, who crawls through a hoop affixed to gallows from which hangs one of the corpses, intensify the frightening tone of the picture. Similar scenes by Van Wijnen feature the same eerie, moonlit setting.[224] The numerous nighttime scenes with monsters, witches, bats, and/or owls depicted by Dutch artists demonstrate the long-lived and widespread conception of the night with its creatures as a time that induced fear and trepidation.

Cornelis Saftleven's *The Vision of the Sunday Child*, 1660

In Cornelis Saftleven's remarkable painting, *The Vision of the Sunday Child*,[225] 1660, the nocturnal setting again establishes a context for fearsome and diabolic imagery, and contributes significantly to the work's especially puzzling and unsettling tenor (fig. 2.40). The night shrouds

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[224] See Dominicus van Wijnen, *Sorcerers and Witches by Torchlight During a Black Mass*, fl. c. 1674 –98, oil on canvas, 122.5 x 93 cm, private collection, and Dominicus van Wijnen, *Der Hexenmeister* (*The Sorcerer*), fl. c. 1674–98, oil on canvas, 75 × 62.5 cm, private collection.

[225] I have been unable to determine the significance of the title, *The Vision of the Sunday Child,* ascribed to the work by the Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen. Undoubtedly this information would benefit the analysis of this painting.

the bizarre depicted subject matter in secrecy and enhances the cryptic, shadowy character of the scene. In the painting, frightening demons and mysterious, preternatural rituals create a generally disturbing spectacle. Among a crowd of lavishly dressed monsters, a ragged and aged sorcerer stands, holds an open book, and looks toward a glowing orb, which flies through the sky. He points a long stick at a depiction of a crescent moon on the ground before him that bears the profile of a human face. The image of the moon appears in the outer border of a large, circular diagram in the middle of which the man stands. Stars also appear along the border, while a bloody sword, a bell, claw-like hand, a red heart, and objects of chance, such as playing cards and dice, lie strewn about the interior of the circle. Amongst these objects on the ground appear additional stars and some illegible text.

Looking upward, the sorcerer appears to observe a relationship between the moon drawn on the ground and the perplexing phenomenon visible in the night sky, which includes a yellow moon with the same human face as depicted on the ground, and many stars, including one that issues a mysterious beam of light to earth. Bats, monsters, and spectral human figures fly through the night sky. Some hold burning broomsticks or shoot fire from various orifices.

To the man's right and outside of the circle, a group of monsters and fools gamble and smoke while others carry weapons, including polearms and a crossbow, and advance toward a fortified town in the distance. Behind them, monsters make music and engage in circus tricks, including tightrope and stilt walking. A mysterious glow bordered by depictions of the signs of the zodiac surrounds these performers. Before the background city gates stand a group of figures, likely stirred by the bizarre occurrences in the foreground or by the enormous, three-headed monster perched atop an exterior tower. On a small hillside at the painting's right, a man dressed in an ostentatious red outfit watches the foreground rituals.

Most seventeenth-century Dutch viewers of Saftleven's painting would not have understood what transpired in the depicted scene. The resulting confusion would have contributed to the shadowy, secretive character of the work, which exposed ideas and concepts to viewers they probably could not, and according to contemporary mores, should not have understood. Evidence suggests, however, that certain seventeenth-century audiences would have been familiar with at least of some of the ritualistic significance of Saftleven's depiction.

For those familiar with the concepts conveyed in Henricus Cornelius Agrippa's well-known *De Occulta Philosopha Libri III* (*Three Books of Occult Philosophy*), first printed in 1531 in Paris, Cologne, and Antwerp, the occult symbolism in Cornelis Saftleven's painting would have been familiar. In 1563, Jan Wier, a Delft author, doctor, former student of Agrippa, and an occult expert in his own right, published his extensive treatise on demonology, *De praestigiis daemonum* (*On the Tricks of Demons*).[226] Weir's publication manifests the broad reach of the ideas expressed in Agrippa's *De Occulta.*

Several of the symbols depicted in Saftleven's *The Vision of the Sunday Child* received prior explication in Chapter 23 of book two of Agrippa's *De Occulta*: "De Geometricis figuris atq; corporibus qua virtute in Magia polleant, & quae quibus elementis coveniant atq; caelo" (Of Geometrical Figures and Bodies, by what virtue they are powerful in Magic, and which are agreeable to each Element, and the Heaven). Readers familiar with Agrippa's ideas, which by the middle of the seventeenth century had been widely published throughout Europe, would have recognized familiar symbols and themes in Saftleven's *The Vision of the Sunday Child*.

[226] Jan Wier, *De praestigiis daemonum* (Basel, 1563).

Agrippa began his discussion with the identification of the circle as the "largest and most perfect" of all geometrical figures, and thus "the most fit for bindings and conjurations."[227] He continued, "they who adjure evil spirits, are wont to environ themselves about with a circle."[228] As if following Agrippa's advice, the conjurer in Saftleven's painting stands in the middle of a circle as he conducts his ritual.

Also according to Agrippa, the pentagram, prominently situated in the center of the sorcerer's circle in Saftleven's painting, possesses a "very great command over evil demons."[229] In Chapter 29, the author elaborated upon the occult significance of the moon, which also appears in Saftleven's painting, as a key element in the ritual. Agrippa described how those engaged in occult pursuits "must observe the Moon opportunely directed to this; for thou shalt do nothing without the assistance of the Moon."[230] In Saftleven's painting, the phase of the moon corresponds to that in *De Occulta*, and the depicted central figure conducts himself exactly as directed by Agrippa.

Many of the elements in Saftleven's painting also parallel ideas about the night expressed in the philosophy of Jacob Böhme, whose work first appeared in the Dutch Republic in 1631. At that time, Böhme's follower Abraham von Franckenberg, along with Veit Heinrichs, published a part of Böhme's commentary on Genesis, *Mysterium Magnum* (*The Great Mystery*).[231]After the

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[227] "omniu aplissima, et perfectissima," "ligationibus et exorcismis aptissima censetur." Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, *De Occulta Philosopha Libri* III (Lyon: Beringos Brothers, 1550), 254. Translation by James Freake in Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim and Donald Tyson, *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, ed. Donald Tyson, trans. James Freake (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 2004), 330.
[228] "Unde qui malos daemones adiurat, circulo sese comunire solet." Agrippa, *De Occulta*, 254. Translation by Freake in Agrippa and Tyson, *Three Books*, 330.
[229] "in malos demones habet imperiu." Agrippa, *De Occulta*, 254. Translation by Freake in Agrippa and Tyson, *Three Books*, 330.
[230] "quin etiam lunam ad hunc obserues opportune directam: nihil enim sine lunae beneficio perfeceris." Agrippa, *De Occulta*, 254. Translation by Freake in Agrippa and Tyson, *Three Books*, 357.
[231] Jacob Böhme, Johannes Tauler, and Abraham von Franckenberg, *Iosephus Redivivus Das ist Die Vberaus Lehr vnd Trostreiche Historia von dem Ertzvatter Joseph* (Amsterdam: Veit Heinrichs, 1631).

theologian's death, friends and followers disseminated to Amsterdam publishers the vast majority of Böhme's writing. By 1653, almost all of his work had been published in Dutch language editions, which the wealthy Amsterdam perfume merchant, Abraham Willemsz van Beyerland, had mostly translated and republished. In the Dutch Republic, Böhme's writings quickly assumed an important philosophical niche and led to a resurgent interest in mysticism, or so-called "mystical spiritualism."[232]

To those familiar with Böhme's work or basic philosophy, the moon depicted in Cornelis Saftleven's witchcraft scene would have indicated sin or folly. The picture's emphasis on lunar imagery accentuates a theme that runs throughout Böhme's body of work: the negative qualities of the moon balance the positive qualities of the sun. The moon relates to the night, evil, and the temptation to sin, while the sun complements the daytime, goodness, and triumphant virtue.[233]

To those viewers of Saftleven's painting who were familiar with Ludwig Lavater's *De Spectris* (republished in 1569 in Leiden), the menacing depiction of night in the landscape painting suitably hosts the devilish activities playing out on the panel. Lavater explained in his *De spectris* that specters and apparitions, such as the translucent figures in the sky in Saftleven's painting, "do appear still in these days both day and night, but especially in the night . . . . For he who is the author of these things, is called in the holy scriptures the Prince of darkness, and therefore he shunneth the light of God's word."[234] As outlined in this text, according to Lavater,

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[232] "Preface" in Frank van Lamoen, *Abraham Willemsz van Beyerland. Jacob Böhme en het Nederlandse hermetisme in de 17e eeuw*, exh. cat. (Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica: Amsterdam, 1986), in an English translation at "Spreading the Word. The Earliest Editions of Jacob Böhme," accessed April 20, 2017, http://www.ritmanlibrary.com/collection/mysticism/spreading-the-word-the-earliest-editions-of-jacob-bohme/.

[233] Andrew Weeks, *Boehme: An Intellectual Biography of the Seventeenth-Century Philosopher and Mystic* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 73.

[234] Quoted in Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire,* 362n11, see Ludwig Lavater, *Of Ghostes and Spirites, Walking by Night: and of Straunge Noyses, Crackes, and Sundrie Forewarnings: Which Commonly Happen Before the Death of Men: Great Slaughters, and Alterations of Kingdoms* (London: Thomas Creede, 1596), 90. The book's title was altered somewhat for publication in English.

the darkness of the night clearly corresponded to the absence of the light of God and thus to the pursuits of the devil.

Early modern European accounts suggest that actual rituals, such as that depicted in Saftleven's picture, as well as witches' sabbaths, also a popular subject for seventeenth-century Dutch artists, almost universally took place at night. In particular, the confessions of accused practitioners of witchcraft illuminate the ways in which government and legal authorities viewed the relationship between witchcraft and the night. In extracted confessions, the emphasis placed by authorities on the role of the night suggests that even learned and prominent Europeans held superstitious beliefs about the menacing nature of the hours after dark. Confessions typically came as a result of torture and thus more closely represent the beliefs of the accusers than the accused.[235]

Even though fewer witchcraft trials occurred in the Netherlands than elsewhere in Europe,[236] paintings like that of Cornelis Saftleven attest to some seventeenth-century Dutch cultural associations between the night and the devil. Confessions by the accused in other northern European countries repeatedly link the night hours with witchcraft. Convicted of witchcraft in 1587 in the jurisdiction of the imperial abbey of St. Maximin (near Trier), Feylen Suin admitted that shortly after her first encounter with the devil, which took place "on a Thursday night," the demon returned a second time "as she sat by the fire to spin and the children were asleep."[237] After the devil "had his way with her," Suin climbed atop a black dog and rode to a field where many others had already gathered; "[s]he danced there, leaping to the

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[235] Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire*, 33.
[236] Koslofsky identifies the "heartland" of witchcraft persecution in Europe during the early modern period as "the area of eastern France and the Holy Roman Empire from the duchies of Luxemburg and Lorraine to the prince-bishoprics of Würzburg and Bamberg." Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire*, 29.
[237] Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire*, 36.

left in the air in the Devil's name."[238] In 1617, Isabel Becquet of Guernsey confessed she attended the devil's sabbaths only "when her husband remained all night fishing at sea."[239] She added the Devil had sent Collette Du Mont, another woman from Guernsey also accused of witchcraft, to retrieve her for a nocturnal sabbath.[240] Between 1587 and 1640 in the Rhenish villages of Longuisch and Kirsch, 97 women and men sat trial for witchcraft. The majority admitted to encountering the devil for the first time at night.[241]

In the Netherlands, fervent discussions of witchcraft in contemporary publications led many to regard practitioners not as supernatural, but as crazy, foolish, or otherwise misled by the devil. [242] As a result, seventeenth-century Dutch nighttime depictions of idlers, fools or ne'er-do-wells, which include owls or bats, have much in common with Dutch depictions of witches. In some pictures, the owl functions as a sign of folly and, therefore, a facilitator of, or accomplice in the work of the devil. Like occult or magical practices, wrongheaded and immoral actions, such as laziness and gluttony, lead the depicted figure(s) away from the teachings of the bible. Owls also assist the devil with his various temptations.

Paintings by seventeenth-century Dutch artists, such as Frans Hals's *Malle Babbe,* 1633, and Jan Steen's *The Drunken Couple*, c. 1655–65, as well as prints by or after Cornelis Dusart, including *Wij Zijn Zeven* (*We Are Seven*), 1695, and *Het Gevoel* (*The Feeling*), 1670–1704, pair disorderly and inebriated figures with images of an owl (figs. 2.41–44). In Cornelis Bloemaert's engraving *The Wise Owl*, c. 1625, the bird itself fails to embrace reason and morality (fig. 2.45). The accompanying text, "*Wat baetkeers off bril, als den WL niet sien en Wil* (What good is

[238] Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire*, 36.
[239] Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire*, 36.
[240] Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire*, 36.
[241] Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire*, 35.
[242] See note 214.

candle or glasses when the owl does not wish to see)," alludes to the creature's unprincipled tendencies. The open bible on the table in front of the bird reveals the passage "*Ghij en sult niet dootslaen, Ghij en sult niet stelen* (Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not steal)." Despite having spectacles and a nearby lit candle to help the owl see, the stubborn bird ignores these foundational Christian tenets and remains in the dark.

In seventeenth-century Dutch imagery, bats, like owls, often accompany fools or immoral figures, as seen in the print *Monnik en een Vleermuis* (*A Monk and a Bat*), c. 1693–1700, designed by Dusart and engraved by Jacob Gole (fig. 2.46). The print appeared in Dusart's *Renversement de la Morale Chrétienne par les désordres du Monachisme* (Reversal of Christian morality by the disorders of monasticism), 1693–1700, a book that features satirical illustrations of ill-behaving monks and nuns. In the print, a bat floats over the tonsured head of a monk below whom the text in French reads: "*Ie me fais un plaisir de n'avoir rien appris, Ie crois sans examen, et j'en suis fort contente: Ie mange et bois toûjours, et rien ne me tourmente, Et suis plus en repos, que tous ces grands* (I am glad I did not learn anything, I believe without examination, and I am very happy: I eat and drink always, and nothing torments me, And I am more at rest than all the great minds)."[243] The depicted monk lives a life of ignorance unbefitting his station as a man of learning, who should spend his days studying the bible and in contemplation of Christian theology. The bat, the monk's sole companion, also lives its life in darkness.

In the frontispiece of Pieter Jansz. Quast's *T'Leven Der Boeren* (The lives of farmers), c. 1640–c. 1670, etched and engraved by Salomon Savery after a design by Quast, a bat with a demonic human face hangs in the air above a group of idlers, who play cards (fig. 2.47). The

[243] Cornelis Dusart, *Renversement de la Morale Chrétienne par les désordres du Monachism* vol. 2 (Holland [likely Amsterdam]: Boek en Print Verkoopers, c. 1695), fig. 21.

creature spreads its wings to reveal the title of the print series. The pictured bat joins a group of male and female peasants who smoke, drink, and gamble. The men wear hats with ostentatious feathers. As evidenced by the rickety table and chair, the group inhabits a disreputable local inn. Although the scenes that include a bat by Cornelis Dusart and Pieter Quast do not overtly feature the occult, the presence of the bird reinforces the night as a time when reason, logic, and morality recede and impulsive, animal instincts flourish.

In both depictions of Christian and occult subject matter, the night often plays a crucial role in the generation of meaning and in shaping the experience of viewing. Conceptions of the night as a time for quiet reflection and religious meditation resonate in many Dutch religious pictures from the seventeenth century, which depict biblical subject matter set after dark. Conversely, culturally entrenched fears and superstitions about nocturnal monsters and witches and the devilish character of the evening hours added a frightful note to the spectatorship of even those skeptical of the existence such creatures. The nighttime setting in all of these artworks functions as a powerful device for creating highly evocative pictures by engaging in diverse ways with two very different understandings of the night.

Chapter III

Fires at Night in Dutch Visual Culture

In the seventeenth century, the northern Netherlands saw a great rise in the popularity of the pictorial genre referred to in contemporary inventories as *brantjes,*[244] or nocturnal scenes set in cities or villages and dramatically lit by catastrophic fires. Artists in Amsterdam and Rotterdam painted the majority of extant Dutch conflagration scenes, almost all of which take place during the night. The latter city became something of a hub for the production of these images beginning in the second half of the 1650s.

During the mid- through late-seventeenth century, Amsterdam artists who depicted multiple nocturnal conflagrations include Aert van der Neer and Jan van der Heyden. The work of these painters varies substantially. Van der Neer's fire landscapes set against a dark sky display the artist's interest in the aesthetic effects of large-scale conflagrations seen from a distance (fig. 3.1). Van der Heyden produced printed images that document nocturnal blazes in Amsterdam and also illustrate newly developed firefighting techniques (fig. 3.2).

In Rotterdam, a group of painters of nighttime fires, who followed in the footsteps of Egbert Lievensz. van der Poel, includes Adam Colonia, Philip van Leeuwen and Jan Wilm,

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[244] Based on analysis of seventeenth-century Amsterdam inventories, notaries typically refer to fire scenes as *brantjes* (little fires) or *brandts* (fires), or as a *brandt* followed by a description such as *van Troijen* (of Troy). See respectively Gemeentearchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Joan Wolters, April 4, 1670, 138.0025, records of notary Dirck Danckertsz. in "Wolters, Joan," The Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories, accessed online October 16, 2017, http://research.frick.org/montiasart/browserecord.php?-action=browse&-recid=1196; Gemeentearchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Gillis van Coninckslooo, March 1, 1607, 733.0170, records of notary G. Jacobs in "Conincksloo, Gillis van," The Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories, accessed online October 16, 2017, http://research.frick.org/montiasart/browserecord.php?-action=browse&-recid=30566; Gemeentearchief Amsterdam, auction of the estate of Symen Thonisz., January 9, 1635, 653.0002, records of notary Daniel Jansz. van Beuningen in "Thonisz., Symen," The Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories, accessed online October 16, 2017, http://research.frick.org/montiasart/browserecord.php?-action=browse&-recid=8368.

among others.[245] A single painting of a nocturnal fire signed by a member of the Viruly family of Rotterdam painters—likely Willem Viruly II[246]—predates the work of Van der Poel and includes pictorial elements later favored by the younger artist and those working in his style. Such features include a low perspective; a blazing fire as the single light source; a focus on foreground details, including genre elements; people's reactions; and the presence of marauding soldiers (fig. 3.3). Similarly, Van der Poel's younger brother, Adriaen Lievensz. van der Poel, who worked in Leiden, produced paintings nearly indistinguishable from those of Egbert, including numerous nocturnal conflagrations, moonlight beach scenes, and nighttime markets.[247]

Such images differ significantly from the flame-licked hell landscapes or the biblical and mythological fire landscapes of predominantly Flemish painters active mostly in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The artists include Hieronymus Bosch, Joachim Patinir, Pieter Brueghel the Elder, Herri met de Bles, Jan Breughel the Elder, and the brothers Gillis and Frederik van Valckenborch, who continued to produce frightening, fiery scenes into the early seventeenth century. At least into the 1620s in the northern Netherlands, Jacob Isaacsz. van Swanenburg, the Leiden painter and early teacher of Rembrandt, continued the tradition by painting numerous hellscapes featuring burning buildings juxtaposed against dark skies.

During the middle of the seventeenth century, the theme remained a favorite of Flemish artists, including Brussels painter Daniël van Heil, who continued to produce biblical and mythological nocturnal fire scenes. In addition to such subjects, Van Heil painted imagined

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[245] Pieter de Bloot produced a nocturnal conflagration painting in this style now in a private collection. (*Nocturnal Landscape with a Fire*, c. 1616–58, oil on panel, 38 x 49.5 cm, private collection).
[246] Margriet Verhoef, "'Brantjes' en 'Maneschijntjes,'" in *Rotterdamse Meesters uit de Gouden Eeuw*, ed. Nora Schadee*,* exh. cat. (Rotterdam: Historisch Museum, 1994), 130–31.
[247] Adriaen apparently worked mostly in Leiden, but was in Rotterdam in 1664. Whether or not he worked in the city, the Van der Poel brothers certainly influenced one another and Adriaen's conflagration scenes resemble those produced in great numbers in Rotterdam. See: August Goldschmidt, "Egbert van der Poel und Adriaen van der Poel," *Oud Holland* 40 (1922): 65–66.

blazes and well-known historical conflagrations, including that which destroyed the Antwerp City Hall on November 4, 1579. Daniël's son Theodoor van Heil produced images of burning cities very similar to those of his father. Fellow Antwerp painters Joos de Momper and his nephew Frans de Momper, who lived and worked in the northern Netherlands in the late 1640s, also depicted ancient, modern, and imagined conflagrations set at night.

The mid-seventeenth-century pictures by northern Netherlandish artists largely omit traditional religious or mythological narratives, which had been characteristic of their predecessors' work. The earlier scenes feature conflagrations as either one element in a larger landscape or as a backdrop to a narrative, such as Aeneas escaping from Troy or Lot and his daughters fleeing a fiery Sodom. However, the mid- to late seventeenth-century Dutch paintings and prints most often depict either documented local calamities, such as those resulting from domestic and industrial accidents, or they portray imaginary blazes set in fictional Netherlandish cities and villages.[248] Significantly more numerous than images of daytime fires, the popular Dutch conflagration scenes set at night include the dramatic use of chiaroscuro. In these pictures, the effects of the dark of night work in tandem with other elements, such as marauders, bucket brigades, crumbling buildings, smoke, flames, and showering sparks to convey chaos, fear, uncertainty, and an overall distressing tone.

[248] Still, seventeenth-century depictions of local, documented conflagrations remained firmly rooted in the tradition of ancient city fires. Along with obvious visual parallels, that numerous painters including Daniël van Heil and Joos and Frans de Momper produced a wide variety of types of conflagration scenes including both contemporary and historical subjects evidences this fact. Notably, the death inventory of Amsterdam textile manufacturer Hans Borremans includes a painting attributed to Matthias Withoos initially recorded by the notary as a painting of the burning of Troy ("schilderije vertoonende d'brant Troyen") but later amended to describe it as a burning of the Dutch city of Amersfoort instead. That this mistake could be made demonstrates that in 1664 the two traditions remained closely intertwined for some viewers. See Stadsarchief Amsterdam, inventory of the estate of Hans Borreman, March 14, 1664, 216.0002, records of notary V. Swanenburgh in "Borreman, Hans," The Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories, accessed online October 16, 2017, http://research.frick.org/montias/browserecord2.php?-action=browse&-recid=1587#A0002.

An Ever-Present and Growing Threat

The popularity of such mid-seventeenth-century Dutch pictures of nocturnal conflagrations in local settings suggests that the theme captivated relatively large numbers of contemporary viewers. Heightened awareness and fear of such actual events surely played a central role in the rise of, and sustained interest in this artistic phenomenon. As one of the prime triggers of urban crises, out-of-control blazes could irrevocably alter victims' lives overnight. Without warning, those affected lost property, real estate, sources of livelihood, loved ones, and even entire communities. Densely populated cities, in particular, offered an environment conducive to the rapid spread of fire. Flames easily jumped between contiguous structures, such as canal houses, called *grachtenpanden*. Even the buildings in most hamlets and rural villages stood in close proximity, which allowed flames to spread easily among them. Numerous paintings by Egbert van der Poel prominently feature such events.[249]

Although destructive conflagrations had long posed a significant and constant threat, during the seventeenth century such events became an even more pressing concern. Anxieties surrounding the outbreak of fires must have weighed heavily on the minds of Dutch viewers of paintings of nocturnal conflagrations. As a result, familiarity with contemporary attitudes and fear of fire, in general, must preface any in-depth discussion of such pictures and the specific role played by their nighttime settings.

In early modern European cities, blazes often broke out, but typically during the nighttime hours. Most accidental fires could be extinguished before they became too severe. To put out relatively manageable fires, individuals applied vinegar, snow, manure, urine, and wet

[249] A. Roger Ekirch, *At Day's Close: Night in Times Past* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2005), 50.

clothes.[250] Between 1500 and 1750, the English experienced at least three hundred fires, each consuming ten or more buildings, which shows the prevalence of large-scale blazes in European cities and villages during this period.[251] In response to urban fires, French authorities enacted extensive preventative legislation.[252]

Between the years 1654 and 1690, Jan van der Heyden, an artist as well as the inventor of the fire hose, and his son Jan van der Heyden, the Younger personally witnessed seventy-five fires in Amsterdam, which they describe in their 1690 firefighting manual, the *Brandspuitenboek* (*Fire Hose Book*).[253] To stress the importance of their invention of the fire hose, they provide considerable insight into the widespread and constant fears concerning conflagrations. In part one of their book, they write:

> How necessary it is to safeguard ourselves with effective tools against the dangers of fire, experience from all around has taught us only too abundantly. Hardly a city exists which has not suffered considerable damage through fire and there are many which have completely or for a major part been destroyed by it and buried

[250] Penny Roberts, "Agencies Human and Divine: Fire in French Cities, 1520–1720," in *Fear in Early Modern Society*, eds. William G. Naphy and Penny Roberts (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 13.

[251] Christopher R. Friedrichs, *The Early Modern City 1450–1750* (New York: Longman Publishing, 1995), 277. While an expansive body of literature exists pertaining to early modern English fires, their Netherlandish counterparts have been largely overlooked, apart from discussion primarily by art historians of the art and inventions of Jan van der Heyden and the fires described in the *Brandspuitenboek* (*Fire Hose Book*, a firefighting manual and compendium of accounts of Amsterdam conflagrations, with illustrations by Jan van der Heyden). For literature on English fires see: Roberts, *Agencies Human and Divine*, 26n4. For Van der Heyden, see Anonymous, "Firefighting in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam," *Duits Quarterly* 12 (1968): 10–16; Peter M. Molloy, "Foreword," and Lettie Stibbe Multhauf, "Introduction," in Jan van der Heyden and Jan van der Heyden the Younger, *A Description of Fire Engines with Water Hoses and the Method of Fighting Fires now used in Amsterdam,* 2nd ed., trans. Lettie Stibbe Multhauf (Amsterdam: Jan van der Heyden, 1735; facsimile, Canton, MA: Watson Publishing International, 1996), vii–xviii and xix–xxi.; Susan Donahue Kuretsky, "Saving Amsterdam: Jan van der Heyden and the Art of Firefighting," in *Urbs Incensa: Ästhetische Transformationen der brennenden Stadt in der Frühen Neuzeit,* eds. Vera Fionie Koppenleitner, Hole Rößler and Michael Thimann (Berlin and Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2011), 159–74; Susan Donahue Kuretsky "Jan van der Heyden and the Origins of Modern Firefighting: Art and Technology in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam," in *Flammable Cities: Urban Conflagration and the Making of the Modern World*, eds. Greg Bankoff, Uwe Lübken, and Jordan Sand (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 23–43; Michelle V. Packer, "Rising from the Ashes: Fire Prevention as Social Transformation," *Dutch Crossing* 39, no. 2 (2015): 160–85.

[252] See Roberts, *Agencies Human and Divine,* 9–27.

[253] Jan van der Heyden and Jan van der Heyden the Younger, *Beschryving der nieuwlyks uitgevonden en geotrojeerde slang-brand-spuiten en haare wyze van brandblussen, tegenwoordig binne Amsterdam in gebruik zynde* ["*Brandspuitenboek"*], 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: Jan van der Heyden, 1735), 9–43. Text does not vary between first and second editions. All page references are from the second edition.

> under the ashes. Examples are so plentiful and grievous that nobody can be found who would doubt the usefulness of such tools, and therefore everybody has tried to be supplied against such calamities with the best available.[254]

Clearly, the threat of fire produced one of the foremost fears in the minds of seventeenth-century northern Netherlandish men and women.

Both in the Dutch Republic and elsewhere in Europe, the widespread use of wood as a building material led to many accidental fires. Highly combustible roofing played a particularly significant role. Roofs that included grass, thatch, sod, and wooden planks resulted in structures topped with what amounted to kindling. Sparks made such materials vulnerable and allowed fires to jump quickly among rooftops with the aid of the wind. Thus, massive sections of a city could be destroyed.[255]

Additionally, every home had a hearth, the fire from which provided light and heat for cooking and staying warm, especially in the colder months. In many rooms, particularly those without a hearth, candles and oil lamps also afforded these necessities. Stray sparks could easily ignite a building, particularly if belched onto the roof from a chimney stack or left unattended by a sleeping resident during the night. Reports of apparel igniting when left too near a flame suggest that even the clothing of the period could present a fire hazard.[256]

In Amsterdam since at least the fifteenth century, regulations existed designed to decrease such risks. Such laws required citizens to shout out warnings if their homes caught fire; to provide their own buckets, ladders, fire hooks, and troughs; and to otherwise assist with

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[254] "Wat nootzakelykheit het heeft, zich door bequaame middelen voor d'ongevallen van brand veilig te stellen, heeft de ervarentheit aan alle zyden maar al overvloedig geleert. Nauwlyx vind men Steeden die door brand geen merkelyke schaade hebben geleeden; gelyk 'er veele t'eenemaal, andere grooten deels, door zyn vernielt en onder de as begraven. De voorbeelden hier van zyn zo menigvuldig en beklaaglyk, dat men niemand vind, die aan het nut van zodaanige middelen twyfelt: en derhalven heeft zich ieder, met de bequaamste die bekent waaren, getracht tegens die onheilen te voorzein." Van der Heyden and Van der Heyden the Younger, *Brandspuitenboek*, 1, translated in Van der Heyden and Van der Heyden the Younger, *A Description of Fire Engines*, 9.

[255] Stephen J. Pyne, *Fire: A Brief History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 107.

[256] Ekirch, *At Day's Close*, 51.

firefighting efforts. Lighting fires indoors without a suitable stone fireplace or leaving lit candles too close to wooden walls or partitions could result in heavy fines. In 1521, Charles V introduced new regulations regarding the use of flammable building materials in Amsterdam. He also reorganized the city into five fire districts, each headed by a fire master.[257] In addition to frequent accidental fires in the early modern period, many substantial conflagrations broke out as a result of intentional actions. The numerous looters, often soldiers, included in scenes of fires, and particularly in those paintings produced by artists active in Rotterdam, evidence the cause of widespread fear of arson in the Netherlands.[258]

In the dedication of their *Brandspuitenboek*, the Van der Heydens explain that their newly invented firefighting engine resulted in diminished fears among residents concerning arson.[259] Later in the book, they provide tangible evidence of this fear as the text describes a contentious October 1662 event in which the attic of an Amsterdam bakery, filled with bundles of twigs, peat, and firewood, caught fire along with that of a neighboring house. Although quickly extinguished, lingering doubts about the fire's origin remained. According to the Van der Heydens, some believed that the building's foreman set the fire on purpose. Suspicions arose due to the fact that the baker had just married a woman previously courted by the foreman. Additionally, the latter party had not only escaped the fire unharmed and with his possessions, unlike other inhabitants of the affected area, but he also stole from the baker's wife.[260] Regardless of the guilt or innocence of the foreman, the accusation itself illustrates how the

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[257] Anonymous, "Firefighting in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam," 15.

[258] Fire and arson played a significant role in early modern warfare, another pressing threat in the seventeenth century Netherlands, as soldiers often pillaged and burned occupied cities. The 1579 sack of Maastricht by Spanish troops, for instance, led to the death of a third of that city's population. Additionally, the burning of property or even people to satisfy the numerous demands of besieging forces, called *brandschatting* in Flemish, further reinforces the close connection between soldiers and the practices of arson and looting. See Julius R. Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 56–57.

[259] "Opdracht" in Van der Heyden and Van der Heyden the Younger, *Brandspuitenboek*, n.p.

[260] Van der Heyden and Van der Heyden the Younger, *Brandspuitenboek,* 19.

threat existed of conflagration used as a weapon, which fueled further fears alongside apprehension of accidental incendiary events.

In 1695, concerns relating to large-scale, intentionally set fires led to the imposition of penalties by the Dutch States General against roaming bands of gypsies carrying arms and threatening arson in the region.[261] As such, large-scale urban conflagrations must have been one of the most constant and pressing fears associated with life in an early modern city. A painting of a conflagration, such as those under consideration in this chapter, could have stimulated many of the same fearful emotions to various ends. While such concerns undoubtedly existed in previous eras, social changes taking place during the period in which these pictures grew in popularity also contributed to the escalation of public interest in the depiction of conflagrations.

A number of contemporary developments in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, including the rise in urban populations, the spread of tobacco smoking, and the beginnings of industrialization, all exacerbated the problem of urban fires.[262] Economic historian Richard Paping has described in detail the rapid population growth that occurred in many Dutch cities during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[263] After 1550, the northern Netherlands transitioned into the most urbanized region of the world. From 1620 to 1665, Amsterdam's population doubled in size from 100,000 to 200,000 residents.[264] This growth would have increased the risk of large, highly destructive fires. The increased number of people living in Dutch cities resulted in the more frequent use of all types of fire, presence of more flammable materials, and expanded opportunities for human error resulting in a destructive blaze.

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[261] Ekirch, *At Day's Close*, 53.
[262] For an overview of the history of fire safety, see Pyne, *Fire: A Brief History*, 102–18.
[263] Richard Paping, *General Dutch Population Development 1400–1850: Cities and Countryside*, paper presented at the First Conference of the European Society of Historical Demography (ESHD), Sassari/Alghero, Sardinia, Italy September 25–27, 2014, 12, accessed online October 16, 2017, http://www.rug.nl/research/portal/files/15865622/articlesardinie21sep2014.pdf.
[264] Paping, *General Dutch Population Development 1400–1850*, 13.

In the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, the rapid spread of tobacco smoking also raised fears about fire. Various developments illustrate the significant expansion of tobacco smoking in the Netherlands over the course of the century. Men and women embraced the New World practice of tobacco smoking, which quickly developed into a common pastime. First championed for its medicinal properties, tobacco became a subject of fascination for scientists, academic doctors, and potion-selling quacks alike. Even alchemists explored the potential of the novel plant.[265] Regulations regarding tobacco's use first appeared in the Netherlands in the late sixteenth century.[266] Writing in 1598, Flemish historian Emmanuel van Meeteren explains that tobacco had only become known in Europe in the previous twenty or twenty-five years.[267] Numerous late-sixteenth century herbals and scientific publications mention the plant.[268] By 1660, pipe-makers in Gouda formed a guild and the city rapidly became the center of a flourishing new industry. Their pipes became famous throughout Europe.[269]

Smokers typically used clay pipes lit with either a tinder-box or a hot coal stored in a brazier. If left unattended, either could start a fire. Tinder-boxes most often consisted of a wooden tray divided into two or three parts. In the simpler form, one compartment held flint and steel for striking a spark and the other contained tinder made from one or more organic materials, including specific fungi, carbonized linen, or moldered tree-bark soaked in potash and saltpeter. Larger varieties included a compartment for sulfur-tipped matches or small pieces of wood used to carry a flame. The highly combustible tinder and matches could easily ignite the entire box if

[265] Georg A. Brongers, *Nicotiana Tabacum: The History of Tobacco and Tobacco Smoking in the Netherlands* (Groningen: Theodorus Niemeyer, 1964), 24–29.
[266] Brongers, *Nicotiana Tabacum*, 21.
[267] Brongers, *Nicotiana Tabacum*, 19.
[268] Brongers, *Nicotiana Tabacum*, 17.
[269] Brongers, *Nicotiana Tabacum*, 36.

exposed to a stray spark. Although metal tinder-boxes gradually replaced the flammable wooden variety during this period, many in the Netherlands still used the older, riskier type.[270]

Additionally, the presence of tobacco-braziers (*tobaksconvooyr*) in most Dutch households presented yet another fire hazard. Braziers held smoldering peat or live coals that would be used to light a pipe with the aid of sulphur-tipped matches made from dried nettle or hemp.[271] As no lids enclosed these vessels, coals might be knocked out or discharge sparks, which could lead to a disaster. Additionally, many smokers simply used tongs to take coals from a fireplace or another open fire.[272]

The presence of these combustible materials and the increased handling of coals and fire in early modern Dutch dwellings presented a very real threat to the multitude of tobacco smokers and their neighbors. Regulations pertaining to the use of tobacco in public spaces provide additional evidence of the close connection between smoking and outbreaks of urban fire. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, laws banning the smoking of tobacco in certain public places in order to decrease the risk of accidental fire existed in Gouda, Haarlem, and Leiden. As late as 1808, the Leiden magistracy renewed such a law, which reflects the long-lived threat of conflagrations in the early modern period and later.[273]

Advances in industrialization over the course of the seventeenth century brought with them additional concerns related to fire safety. Oil mills proved particularly prone to conflagrations. As the pressing of seeds to extract oil (*olieslagerij*) used both for human consumption and in the manufacturing of soaps and dyes became the domain of oil windmills

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[270] Brongers, *Nicotiana Tabacum*, 107–8.
[271] See Pieter Claesz, *Tobacco Pipes and a Brazier*, 1636, oil on wood, 49 x 64 cm, The Hermitage, St. Petersburg for examples of a brazier and this type of matches, called spills.
[272] Brongers, *Nicotiana Tabacum*, 112.
[273] Brongers, *Nicotiana Tabacum*, 36–37.

(*oliewindmolen*), instead of workhorses, the industry became much larger and the processes much riskier. Windmills required furnaces stoked with peat, and the vast number of such mills in operation by the end of the seventeenth century substantially increased the likelihood of an accident leading to a disastrous event.[274]

Not coincidentally, Egbert van der Poel's frenetic depiction of the great fire that destroyed most of the village of De Rijp in 1654 prominently features windmills (fig. 3.4). The inferno began after eleven o'clock at night on January 6 as a result of the loss of control of one of the town's wind-powered hemp mills (*hennepmolen*). How did the fire start? Perhaps a drowsy miller momentarily ignored the potential danger from the mill after a powerful storm moved into the area. Strong winds might have quickly transported sparks and flames through the village and to surrounding areas.[275]

Several seventeenth-century Dutch historical developments, including the commonplace arrangement of fire insurance, initially related to oil mills, underscore the widespread existence of fears about conflagrations. Mutual insurance policies organized by guilds developed in northern Europe during the late sixteenth century, but were prevalent first in the Netherlands among oil millers in the Zaan region. These tradesmen began to draw up mutual agreements protecting their materials, products, and eventually even the mills themselves. One such contract included up to 145 mills by the middle of the eighteenth century and illustrates the impressive scale of the industry. Mutual fire insurance contracts soon spread to other regions and industries throughout the Netherlands.[276] In addition to such insurance agreements, fire insurance for

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[274] J. P. Van Niekerk, *The Development of the Principles of Insurance Law in the Netherlands from 1500 to 1800* (Kenwyn, Cape Town: Juta, 1998), 423–24.
[275] The catastrophic event is described in detail in *Hollantsche Mercurius* (Haarlem: Pieter Casteleyn, 1654), 4. Adapted slightly to modern Dutch by Molen Database in "(hennenkloppers), De Rijp," Molen Database, accessed online November 28, 2017, http://www.molendatabase.org/molendb.php?step=details&tbnummer=16167.
[276] Van Niekerk, *Insurance Law in the Netherlands,* 424.

individuals first appeared during the mid-seventeenth century and became commonplace by the end of the eighteenth century.[277] These significant developments in seventeenth-century Dutch economic systems underscore the extensive societal impact that resulted from the outbreak of fire.

The efforts by the Van der Heydens to create new and better means of fighting large-scale urban fires further underscore the frightening nature of such contemporary scourges. As they explained, the older firefighting engines and tools "caused more damage at fires than benefits."[278] Largely ineffective, primitive firefighting equipment exacerbated the threat of a destructive conflagration and increased the anxiety surrounding such an event. The rapid growth and urbanization of the Dutch population, the increased popularity of smoking, the presence of flammable materials in the home, the developments in industrialization described above—combined with such outmoded firefighting equipment—made the outbreak of highly destructive fires more common in the seventeenth century than ever before. A conflagration became one of the most persistent and tangible threats to the Dutch people, rivaled perhaps only by the plague or warfare. As they contemplated paintings of nocturnal blazes, seventeenth-century viewers harbored fears about such devastating fires.

Fires and the Night

A viewer's sense of fear evoked by a picture of a burning village or urban locale resulted from both social circumstances and artistic decisions made by painters. Working in tandem with

[277] Van Niekerk, *Insurance Law in the Netherlands,* 424n36.
[278] "[M]eerder naadeel als nut by de branden deeden." "Opdracht" in Van der Heyden and Van der Heyden the Younger, *Brandspuitenboek*, n.p., translated in Van der Heyden and Van der Heyden the Younger, *A Description of Fire Engines*, 3.

the horrific realities surrounding the subject of conflagration scenes, nocturnal settings exacerbated concerns and thus enhanced the menacing tenor of these scenes. Seventeenth-century Europeans, including those in the Dutch Republic, understood very well the close connection between fires and nighttime.

In the winter months in northern Europe, cold nights necessitated a warm fire. After dark, such fires could very easily get out of control. Large-scale conflagrations most often broke out after a family retired for the night. Prior to falling asleep, individuals may have left a hearth or furnace burning, or forgotten to snuff out a candle. If not caught in time, these everyday mistakes turned into life-changing events, which could destroy or irrevocably alter entire neighborhoods. Following sundown, any reading, writing, needlework, or cooking, along with most other tasks, required candles, lanterns, oil lamps, or other artificial light sources. Sparks flew from hearths and chimney stacks, settling on wooden floors or highly flammable roofs. Sleep rendered denizens unaware and thus unable to act quickly in order to stifle a potential blaze.

In many ways, the coming of night and the risk of urban conflagration presented a unified threat for early modern Europeans. Although not all of these destructive blazes occurred at night, evidence from a variety of European locales suggests the likelihood that most fires broke out during the evening hours. For instance, of the seventy-five fires described by Jan van der Heyden and Jan van der Heyden, the Younger in the *Brandspuitenboek*, forty-one are recorded as beginning at night while the authors mention only eight daytime fires. The authors do not refer to a time of day in relation to the remaining twenty-six fires discussed in the book.[279]

Similarly, many conflagrations that occurred in France between 1520 and 1720 began at night, as evidenced by contemporary restrictions and concerns regarding the use of fire after

[279] Jan van der Heyden and Jan van der Heyden the Younger, *Brandspuitenboek*, 9–43.

dark. Early eighteenth-century French regulations required that private fires be covered, raked over, and enclosed by the evening in hopes of reducing the potential of an outbreak during such vulnerable hours.[280] The Old French phrase "cuevre-fu," which means "fire cover," informed the English word "curfew."[281] In Nantes, concerns about members of the city's nightwatch, who carried open flames and lit fires to keep warm during the winter months, encouraged the use of enclosed lanterns and the enactment of restrictions concerning the types of vessels allowed for use in transporting a flame from place to place.[282]

Roger Ekirch has described how the night provided the ideal conditions for a destructive blaze. He cites sources from Elizabethan England, colonial North America, and the early modern Netherlands that warn against cinders dropped from candles onto tables and floors, the use of candles in bed, the placement of a candle where a rat might tip it over, and the mishandling of candles by servants working late at night.[283] Fears about such accidents undergirded the Dutch experience of the night. The popular eighteenth-century Netherlandish manual on household affairs, *De ervarene en verstandige Hollandsche huyshoudster* (The experienced and knowledgeable Dutch householder), first published in 1753, describes the problem of careless maids at night.

> The servants must go to bed in the evening immediately after their people, for otherwise they burn too much light and fire. Also that untimely washing and splashing doesn't do, but is harmful and costs too much soap. And darning hose, done by the maids in their bedrooms by candlelight, is very dangerous, for when such a maid, being fatigued, falls from her chair, thus fire can start from the candle, of which there are many examples.[284]

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[280] Roberts, *Agencies Human and Divine*, 11.
[281] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "curfew, n.," accessed January 23, 2017, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/46020?redirectedFrom=curfew&.
[282] Roberts, *Agencies Human and Divine*, 11.
[283] Ekirch, *At Day's Close*, 52.
[284] "De Dienstboden moeten des Avonds, aanstonds na haar Volk na Bedde gaan; want anders verbranden zy veel Licht en Vuur; ook deugd dat ontydig wassen en plassen niet, maar is schadelyk en kost veel zeep; en het koussen stoppen, dat de Meiden op haar Slaapkamer by de kaars doen is zeer gevaarlyk, want zondanig een Meid, door Vermoeidheid dan in staap op haar Stoel vallende, so kan door de Kaars brand ontstaan, waar van veele voorbeelden

Additionally, Ekirch explained that workplaces were particularly vulnerable to night fires. Sometimes many professionals, including bakers, brewers, and tallow-chandlers, maintained large fires throughout the night because an extinguished fire in an oven or furnace increased costs. Nearby stockpiles of fuel, such as wood and coal, added to the danger presented by such nocturnal activities. As a result, reports indicate that bakeries and breweries had an especially high rate of fire-related incidents.[285] Millers also often labored during the night because they depended on a sufficient amount of wind, regardless of the hour.[286] As a result, milling had an especially great risk of fire-related accidents.

Intentional conflagrations were also most frequently started at night. With little chance of detection or prevention under the cover of darkness, arson provided soldiers and others with a means to exact revenge for personal grudges, to pillage Dutch cities, and/or to terrorize residents.[287] Whether related to an industrial or domestic accident, or to a deliberate act of aggression, the likelihood of a blaze gaining momentum to the point of becoming highly destructive greatly increased during the nighttime hours.

Evidence culled from contemporary newspapers, which experienced a great surge in popularity during the seventeenth century, further reveals the associations made by Dutch readers between the night and destructive large-scale fires. Numerous reports of nocturnal conflagrations show both the frequency of such events as well as the public's familiarity with them. In addition to witnessing or hearing about night fires in their own towns, newspaper

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zyn." *De Ervarene en Verstandige Hollandsche Huyshoudster* (Amsterdam: Bernardus Mourik, 1753, reprint Amsterdam: NT Gravius, 1780), 32. Partially quoted in Ekirch, *At Day's Close*, 52. Translated in Marybeth Carlson, "Domestic Service in a Changing City Economy: Rotterdam, 1680–1780" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1993), 158n5.

[285] Ekirch, *At Day's Close*, 52.

[286] Richard Leslie Hills, *Power from Wind: A History of Windmill Technology* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 3.

[287] Ekirch, *At Day's Close*, 54.

readers learned of similar, frequent events in other cities and countries. On February 23, 1683, for example, the *Amsterdamse Courant* (Amsterdam Courant, or Newspaper) reported a fire that broke out after a violent nocturnal thunderstorm. Fortunately, in a timely manner the townspeople extinguished the flames.[288] Such stories reminded readers of the imminent threat of fire at night.

More tragic accounts demonstrated the connection between nighttime and conflagrations in a more disturbing way. The *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant* (Sincere Haarlem Courant) of July 15, 1683, for example, described a fire in Warsaw that began around midnight on June 26 due to the neglect of a servant (*knecht*), which resulted in the destruction of most of a city street. The report explained that on the previous Monday, another fire at night occurred in the nearby town of Villanova (now Warsaw's Wilanów district) and caused damage worth over 100,000 guilders. A second account included more detail, elaborating on the nature of losses, which included "two of the king's best driving horses, three carriages, many other wagons, and also some people."[289]

News from Roermond published on October 21, 1692, in the *Amsterdamse Courant* stated that three nights earlier, a large fire broke out between the cities of Aachen and Maastricht.[290] A particularly shocking report from the Tuscan port city of Livorno that the *Amsterdamse Courant* published on August 23, 1692, described a nighttime fire, which began in a shop and destroyed more than four hundred houses.[291] Such newspaper articles that detailed

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[288] "Nederland," *Amsterdamse Courant*, February 23, 1683, accessed online October 16, 2017, https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010758989:mpeg21:a0010.
[289] "[D]e twee beste Gespannen Paerden van de Koninginne, 3 Carossen, veel ander Ty-tuyg, en oock eenige Menschen," "Polen, Pruyssen, & c.," *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, July 15, 1683, accessed online October 16, 2017, https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011224886:mpeg21:p002.
[290] "Nederlanden" *Amsterdamse Courant*, October 26, 1683, accessed online October 16, 2017, https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010758993:mpeg21:p001.
[291] "Italien," *Amsterdamse Courant*, August 23, 1692, accessed online October 16, 2017, https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010707638:mpeg21:p001.

violent nocturnal conflagrations would have reinforced the connection between the night and the outbreak of fire in the minds of Dutch readers.

The range of precautionary measures that the seventeenth-century Dutch instituted to prevent fires, in general, were especially vital at night. As described above, various regulations determined limits on the storage of flammable materials; defined building codes; relegated the operations of dangerous trades to remote locations; mandated fire inspections; established efficient alarm and rapid response systems; and strategically placed firefighting equipment throughout the city. Additionally, seventeenth-century Dutch night watchmen were required to keep an eye out for fires. Watchmen not only patrolled the streets, but trumpeters stationed in bell towers also maintained their outlooks and blew their horns to alert firefighters of a blaze. Watchmen could be fined for failing to report a fire. The nighttime lamplighters, whom the Van der Heydens supervised, had their own responsibilities in this regard. They received payment for early fire warnings.[292]

Pictures of Night Fires

An overview of the pictures of fire scenes produced by the most prolific seventeenth-century Dutch artists, including a characterization of noteworthy regional variations as well as distinguishing characteristics of individual paintings, will illuminate both the prominence and the significance of the nocturnal settings in Dutch conflagration scenes.[293] Such pictures were produced in the greatest numbers by Amsterdam and Rotterdam artists.

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[292] Peter M. Mollot provides a detailed discussion of firefighting regulations in the seventeenth-century Netherlands in the foreword to Van der Heyden and Van der Heyden the Younger, *Brandspuitenboek*, xii.
[293] I determined the most prolific creators of seventeenth-century Dutch depictions of fires based on the number of extant works and consideration of literature concerning the topic.

No significant relationship between the two Amsterdam artists who depicted multiple nocturnal conflagration scenes appears to have existed. Aert van der Neer painted numerous imaginary *brantjes* for sale on the art market, while Jan van der Heyden produced prints to document specific fires and to illustrate his *Brandspuitenboek.* However, one fire that notably captured the attention of both painters, as well as that of many other Amsterdammers, destroyed the city's Old Town Hall on the night of July 7, 1652.

In the immediate aftermath of this conflagration, artists repeatedly memorialized the momentous incident. Beginning in 1639, a replacement for the building had already been planned. The demolition of the aging structure and construction of the new one had begun. Nevertheless, the unexpected blaze shocked a large crowd of spectators. The fire inspired a widespread response from artists,[294] including Jan Beerstraaten, Cornelis de Bie,[295] Jan de Baen, and Jan van der Heyden (figs. 3.5–8). Just days after the outbreak, Rembrandt visited the site and drew a picture of the ruins of the Old Town Hall, which became a popular destination for curious citizens from throughout Amsterdam. In 1652, Beerstraaten depicted the post-fire remains of the structure, as did Renier Nooms (figs. 3.9–10).

Cornelis de Bie's 1653 painting of the inferno resembles the composition and tenor later popularized in scenes by Egbert van der Poel and the Rotterdam painters in which a large crowd of firefighters, victims, and onlookers stand before a burning building shown from a low point of view. In such scenes the conflagration serves as the only light source, which results in a dramatic *contre-jour* effect in the depiction of the figures. However, De Bie's and Egbert van der Poel's pictures differ dramatically from the numerous conflagration scenes by the Amsterdam painter

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[294] Lorne Darnell, "A Voice from the Past: Pieter Saenredam's *The Old Town Hall of Amsterdam*, Historical Continuity, and the Moral Sublime," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 8, no. 2 (2016), DOI: 10.5092/jhna.2016.8.2.6.
[295] This artist is not to be confused with the contemporary Flemish author and art historian Cornelis de Bie.

Aert van der Neer. Van Neer likely produced more nocturnal conflagration scenes than any Dutch painter of the seventeenth century, aside from the Rotterdammer Egbert van der Poel.

Archival documents place Van der Neer's birth in Gorinchem in the year 1604, making him the eldest of the three most prolific seventeenth-century Dutch painters of nocturnal fires. While meagre information pertaining to his youth survives, his certificate of marriage shows that he wed in Amsterdam in 1629 and by that time had established himself as a painter. The document records his profession as "*schilder*" (painter) and his age as twenty-five.[296] According to Arnold Houbraken, Van der Neer had previously been employed as either a house servant to, or manager of the estate of the Lord of Arkel, a member of a powerful local family who had historically ruled Gorinchem prior to their surrendering control of the city in 1412 to Duke William of Bavaria (William IV of Holland).[297] Van der Neer produced several hundred paintings, typically of a relatively small size and created for a speculative market, along with a number of larger, likely commissioned works.[298]

For Van der Neer, the night did not generate distinctive meaning within a picture, but instead reinforced that which was already present in his landscape pictures, irrespective of temporality. The presence of the night enriches the expressive effect, but does not play as central a role as that seen in similar settings in works by other fire painters, discussed below. Wolfgang Schulz describes Van der Neer's preoccupation with "the poetry of a moonlit evening or nocturnal landscape … [through which he] offers his personal, spiritual view of the essence of nature." Continuing, Schulz proposes that such moonlit paintings

[296] Wolfgang Schulz, *Aert van der Neer* (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 2002), 10.
[297] The term used by Houbraken to define Van der Neer's position, "*majoor*," is ambiguous and according to Wolfgang Schulz may be translated as either house servant or manager of an estate. See Arnold Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*, vol. 3 (The Hague, 1753, reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 172 and Schulz, *Aert van der Neer*, 10.
[298] Schulz, *Aert van der Neer*, 14.

> convincingly convey man's position between the worlds of reality and dream [due to the fact that in] its distribution of light and shade, the moon's radiance imbues reality with a sense of mystery; the scene becomes spiritual . . . [The artist's] understanding of and empathy with nature and its mood were not born of his preoccupation with evening or nocturnal landscapes; they were part of his being.[299]

Schulz argues that Van der Neer's interest in moonlit landscape pictures does not stem from the artist's specific interest in the night because his landscape paintings, even without the presence of moonlight and darkness, display an equivalent use of lighting effects to convey spiritual ideas about nature.[300]

Staging landscapes after dark presented Van der Neer with the opportunity to vary his palette and to present his viewers with a variety of expressive color schemes. Daytime landscapes could include contrasts of shadow and sunlight, while a nocturnal scene might be presented in the silvery gray and pale yellow tones characteristic of moonlight. A picture lit by a conflagration allowed for a compelling third possibility. The depiction of a village fire observed from a distance presented the artist with the opportunity to paint a conventional landscape, but to render it in refreshingly novel ways, that is, described in bright oranges and warm yellows juxtaposed against the blackness of the night.

In contrast to works by Van der Poel and Van der Heyden, Van der Neer's experimentation with such aesthetic effects in the depiction of conflagrations lacked reference to concerns about destructive fires in contemporary life. Arthur Wheelock points out that Van der Neer's paintings of large-scale nocturnal village fires do not differ significantly from his sunset landscapes, and "are more atmospheric than terrifying."[301] While Van der Poel and his

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[299] Schulz, *Aert van der Neer*, 47.
[300] Schulz, *Aert van der Neer*, 47.
[301] Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., "Accidents and Disasters," in *Time and Transformation in Seventeenth-Century Dutch A*rt, ed. Susan Donahue Kuretsky, exh. cat. (Poughkeepsie, New York: Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, 2005), 79.

Rotterdam followers no doubt also recognized the dynamic coloristic effects possible in fire scenes, their work engages with the subject matter of destructive nocturnal fires in a more complex manner than does that of Van der Neer.

Analysis of several of Van der Neer's paintings of night landscapes lit up by fire reinforces my reading of such pictures. Van der Neer focused attention not on the emotions of those affected by the depicted fire, but on the coloristic and atmospheric effects made possible by firelight. The artist's pronounced interest in such aesthetic concerns, equally evident in his moonlit landscapes and those set at dawn or dusk, dictates the viewing experience more than the specifics of temporal settings or the presence of people or animals (figs. 3.11–12). These experimentations with natural lighting effects characteristic of varied, yet specific times of the day appealed to buyers due to their freshness and novelty, Schulz explains, as they comprised a new genre of landscape imagery, in the development and popularization of which Van der Neer played an integral role.[302]

The village fire scene now in the Nivaagaards Malerisamling in Nivå, Denmark, reveals how Van der Neer's *brantjes* manifest aesthetic interests, rather than evoke fear in the viewer (fig. 3.1). The picture shows a conflagration witnessed from just outside the city limits and opposite a body of water, which separates the viewer from the hazardous area immediately adjacent to the blaze and lessens the threat posed by the event. Several cattle casually graze in the marshy area in the center of the picture, seemingly unfazed by the nocturnal catastrophe. Unlike the cattle, staffage captivated by the destructive event taking place before them stand along the bank of the canal at right. Barely visible, Van der Neer renders them with dabs of reddish-brown paint. The most prominent onlooker gestures excitedly toward the imperiled

[302] Schulz, *Aert van der Neer*, 42.

village. Black fills nearly the entire upper half of the panel, but red, orange, and white tones indicate the presence of the conflagration in the center of the composition and are reflected in the foreground waterway. Clouds of gray smoke tinted orange by the nearby flames drift through the night sky above the mill at right, which itself glows vibrant crimson. Tiny points of red describe the play of the light on the stern of the small boat in the panel's lower right. The artist's decision to distance the viewer compositionally, not only from the vicinity of the fire, but from that of the onlookers as well, essentially mutes any risk or sense of excitement associated with the blaze. Instead, aesthetic concerns, including striking color combinations and the skillful depiction of naturalistic lighting effects, receive attention.

Van der Neer employs a similar viewpoint in numerous other paintings of nocturnal fires, including two paintings now in private collections. One is on canvas and the other on panel (figs. 3.13–14). In the example on canvas, as in the Nivå panel, an out-of-control fire consumes a village at the left of the composition while townspeople removed from the center of the action watch the event unfold. Here, the tiny, silhouetted figures move across a bridge, presumably to join a distant crowd of people standing closer to the blaze, or to watch from a small boat floating on the canal. The water again reflects the warm orange and yellow tones of the blaze. Van der Neer once more includes a mill, which similarly stands at right opposite the conflagration and, at least for the moment, out of harm's way. The inclusion of this building in the scene contributes to the sense of calm characteristic of Van der Neer's *brantjes*. Although fires could spread with frightening speed and a windborne spark might soon ignite the mill, the presence of the structure unaffected by the disaster offers a peaceful counterpoint to the burning village. Perhaps the viewer is reminded that life will continue despite hardship and loss.

In the second painting, a row of houses occupies the space of the mill depicted in the Nivå panel and the painting on canvas described above. Still, the epicenter of the blaze remains at the left of the composition while *contre-jour* staffage figures stand along the bank at right and watch the spectacle unfurl from a safe distance. Additional figures populate boats and a landing in the picture's lower left. Several gesture toward the inferno. Again, the viewer watches from a distance, removed even from the space of the other bystanders and, thus, far from any emotional turmoil they may be experiencing. Van der Neer expertly directs his audience's attention toward his work's technical and aesthetic merits and away from fears commonly associated with nocturnal conflagrations.

The presence of works by numerous imitators of Van der Neer, such as Anthonie van Borssom, points to the contemporary taste for such pictures (fig. 3.15).[303] Rather than any interest in the night itself or its popular associations with destructive fires, the marketability of moonlit landscapes and other works featuring the lifelike depiction of distinct types of natural lighting likely encouraged Van der Neer's production of the conflagration scenes under discussion here. The striking resemblance between many of his landscapes, both with and without the presence of a blaze, supports this point.

Van der Neer's moonlit nocturnal landscapes, such as the example in Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, bear a notable resemblance to his village fire paintings, such as the Nivå panel (fig. 3.11). Likewise, the vibrant skies in Van der Neer's scenes set at sunrise or sunset, including the Frankfurt am Main panel, often appear remarkably similar to those in his nocturnal

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[303] See Schulz, *Aert van der Neer*, 14. Numerous pictures closely resembling Van der Poel fire paintings and attributed to followers in Amsterdam exist. For other examples see after Aert van der Neer, *Fire at Night*, 1650–1699, oil on canvas, 64.1 x 56.8 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art; after Aert van der Neer, *Nocturnal Conflagration*, 1600–1650, oil on panel, 38.1 x 54.4 cm, Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main; and after Aert van der Neer, *Burning City with Full Moon*, oil on panel, 1650–1699, 37.8 x 49.5 cm, private collection. The latter two, almost identical paintings are presumably copies after the same work by Van der Neer.

conflagrations and thus convey parallel expressive effects (fig. 3.12). In both this sunset scene and in many of Van der Neer's fire paintings, including the Nivå panel, a glowing red and yellow light set on a distant horizon illuminates faraway buildings and radiates into the darkness, which surrounds them. The work of Van der Neer and followers, including Van Borssom, suggests these artists' fascination with the compelling depiction of color and light more so than a specific interest in the devastating effects of nocturnal urban fires.

In contrast with scenes by Van der Neer, pictures by Van der Poel and Van der Heyden, the younger painters of nighttime fires, dedicate their attention and direct that of their viewers to the catastrophic impact of such an event. They stage their conflagration pictures after dark in order to emphasize concerns commonly associated with both the night as well as with conflagrations, and to intensify the expressive effects of their imagery. While the bystanders in Van der Neer's paintings typically watch helplessly from a distance, those in fire pictures by Van der Poel and Van der Heyden most often scramble about among the chaos of the burning buildings as they attempt to subdue the blaze with bucket brigades; evade violent gangs of looting soldiers; or make off, themselves, with stolen property. A closer examination of these works reveals the significantly different reasons why Van der Neer, on the one hand, and these younger artists, on the other, chose to set their depictions of destructive village and city fires at night.

The *brantjes* of Egbert van der Poel, the second eldest of the three Dutch fire painters presently under discussion, display a particularly compelling departure from those of Van der Neer. Little information pertaining to Van der Poel's childhood and early career exist—including the identity of his teacher. His baptism took place at the Oude Kerk in Delft on March 9, 1621.

Delft records of the Guild of St. Luke show that by 1650 he had established himself as a landscape painter.

Van der Poel appears to have developed an interest in disaster imagery following the *Delftsch*e *Donderslag* (Delft Thunderclap) of 1654, when a powder magazine containing around 90,000 pounds of gunpowder exploded destroying nearly a quarter of the city and killing hundreds of its inhabitants, including the painter Carel Fabritius. Reports tell that the blast could be heard from as far away as the island of Texel, over seventy miles to the north of Delft. The event captured the attention of artists including Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, Daniel Vosmaer, and most of all Van der Poel. Approximately twenty depictions by Van der Poel survive of the incident or its aftermath.[304]

On the basis of burial records of the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft, Margriet Verhoef suggests that the painter lost his daughter in the explosion, although both Verhoef and Axel Rüger have rejected as anachronistic the notion that Van der Poel's repeated depiction of the catastrophe served a therapeutic function for him.[305] Rather, he likely realized at that point in his career that the market responded hungrily to disaster imagery and found the theme lucrative. Soon after the Thunderclap, Van der Poel moved to Rotterdam where he spent the remainder of his life producing his unique form of *brantjes* in great numbers, eventually earning the reputation as the best fire painter in the Netherlands.[306]

In his conflagration scenes, Van der Poel focuses on the human experience of witnessing, fighting, or fleeing from a large-scale blaze in a manner closer to that depicted in De Bie's image

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[304] Axel Rüger, "Egbert van der Poel, *A View of Delft after the Explosion of 1654*," in *Vermeer and the Delft School*, ed. Walter Liedtke, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art and London: National Gallery, 2001), 328.
[305] See Verhoef, "'Brantjes' en 'Maneschijntjes,'" in *Rotterdamse Meesters*, ed. Schadee, 128–29; and Rüger, "Egbert van der Poel," 326.
[306] "Egbert vander Poel was den besten Brandtschilder van gantsch Nederland." Gerritt van Spaan, *Beschryvinge der stad Rotterdam en eenige omleggende dorpen* (Rotterdam: Hermannus Goddaeus, 1698), 422.

of the 1652 burning of Amsterdam's Old Town Hall than that seen in Van der Neer's relatively static fire pictures (fig. 3.6). As in *Nocturnal Fire and Plundering in a Village*, Van der Poel typically chooses a lower viewpoint than depicted in numerous works by Van der Neer (fig. 3.3). This perspective casts the beholder as participant, rather than spectator. When seen from the vantage point of the ground, the urgent efforts of the men on the roof fighting the fire with buckets and ladders appear to require the assistance of the viewer.

Additionally, Van der Poel's pictures do not depict compositional barriers, such as the canals in Van der Neer's paintings, which distance the onlooker from the action and from the threat of the fire. In *Nocturnal Fire and Plundering in a Village*, a busy crowd of looting soldiers and frantic townspeople populate the composition's middle ground. A fleeing man runs toward the left edge of the picture as cavalrymen, who wear distinctive armor and carry swords, hunch over and evaluate stolen property. In the center, a man identified as a soldier by the musket he carries over his shoulder absconds with three large hogs. Alongside them, another man drives a horse and wagon, which carries a mother and her small child through the bedlam. Upon close inspection, the scene becomes even more disturbing as the distant throng of people at right includes a soldier with an aggressively raised sword and a woman, who seems to reach out to comfort a figure with an exposed bottom, possibly the victim of sexual assault. In the distance, a church spared from the blaze, at least for the moment, looms tellingly over the violent, immoral spectacle. To the right of the church, the moon positioned in the sky unambiguously reminds the viewer that the subject takes place after nightfall.

Van der Poel chose a night setting for *Nocturnal Fire and Plundering in a Village* in order to augment the distressing tone, which characterizes this and numerous other conflagration scenes by the artist and his followers in Rotterdam. While Van der Neer incorporated a

nocturnal setting into his work primarily as a means to experiment with coloristic effects, Van der Poel's engagement with the night draws on the complex understandings of that time of day held by his audience and described earlier in this chapter. He stages his conflagration imagery at night in order to make his pictures both truer to life and emotionally engaging. Common fears associated with the hours after darkness included the increased likelihood of large fires breaking out, such as from arson. Further, the widespread conception of the night as a time in which bandits, or simply the randomness of chance, could take away loved ones, valuables, homes, and even entire communities also underlies Van der Poel's conflagration imagery. In his art, nocturnal imagery and fire's accompanying associations play an integral role in the construction of meaning.

The distressing, frantic mood captured in Van der Poel's paintings strongly recalls that of a 1623 scene of a nocturnal battle by Esaias van de Velde, most likely created in The Hague as the artist lived there from 1618 until his death in 1630 (fig. 3.16). Verhoef has posited a plausible connection between the two artists.[307] The Rotterdam painter Willem Viruly II had contact with Jan van de Velde, a cousin of Esaias' and an etcher and painter also from Rotterdam, but active primarily in Haarlem. Viruly produced a painting of soldiers plundering a village at night in 1637, passages of which bear a close resemblance to Esaias van de Velde's 1623 panel (fig. 3.17).[308] Both works include a primary figure on a rearing horse (although seen from opposite sides), a second rampant horse beneath a repoussoir tree, and a similar tower of flame, along

[307] Wheelock cites Cornelis Bloemaert's *Ignis* (Fire), engraving, from his *The Four Elements* series, c. 1615–25, after a drawing of 1605–15 now at the University of Leiden and by his father Abraham Bloemaert, who also produced fire scenes, as a possible source of inspiration for Van der Poel. See Wheelock, "Accidents and Disasters," 199–200, 201n2, and, for Abraham Bloemaert's drawing, J. Bolton, ed., *Old Master Drawings from the Print Room of The University of Leiden* (Leiden: Prentenkabinet der Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, 1986), 50. The print's nocturnal, rural setting and narrative elements such as the figure's panicked gestures support this notion.
[308] Viruly's son, Willem Viruly III, may also be responsible for the panel, but contact between the elder Viruly and Jan van de Velde points toward Viruly II as its creator. See Verhoef, "'Brantjes' en 'Maneschijntjes,'" 240.

with their shared nocturnal settings. Viruly's emulation of these elements evidences the possible connection between the work of Van der Poel and this battle scene by Van de Velde, even if the former artist never actually saw the younger artist's painting, but was familiar with it through Viruly's painting.

In regard to tenor, the similarities between the two works by Van der Poel and Esaias van de Velde likely evidence the former artist's desire to convey in his *brantjes* a frightening tone not unlike that previously expressed by Van de Velde in his military picture. Verhoef suggests that Van de Velde developed interest in martial subject matter in the 1620s due both to the conclusion in 1621 of the Twelve Years Truce and the fact that he lived in The Hague. The end of the truce resulted in renewed hostilities with Spain while The Hague served as the center of Dutch military power. For these reasons, Van de Velde sought to appeal to his local market's interest in dynamic wartime subject matter.[309]

Esaias van de Velde's decision to set the 1623 painting at night allows for his rendering of striking coloristic effects, namely the juxtaposition of fire and darkness. A burst of flame that devours the tent in the center of the panel issues sparks and rises high into the black sky. To the left of the crumbling structure, a mass of foot soldiers brace themselves against an oncoming cavalry charge. A sea of riders wearing suits of armor fills the space to the right of the central conflagration and recedes toward a distant city on the horizon dominated by a large church. A leafless tree at the panel's far right and partially illuminated by the fire functions as a repoussoir, leading the viewer's eye back toward the column of flame, which dominates the scene. The lively composition coupled with the subject matter and dramatic lighting effects, afforded by the picture's nocturnal setting, creates a rousing image.

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[309] Verhoef, "'Brantjes' en 'Maneschijntjes,'" 240.

Many of these same qualities can be seen in paintings by Van der Poel, with the addition of specific cultural associations with the night, which are absent from Van de Velde's panel. Whether or not Esaias van de Velde's painting directly inspired that of Viruly, the latter work surely had a profound influence on Van der Poel, whose numerous depictions of conflagrations borrow a great deal from Viruly's menacing scene. In addition to also being set at night, the low vantage point, throng of frightened peasants, domineering soldiers on horseback, and buildings engulfed in towers of flame all appear in paintings by Van der Poel and his followers.

Viruly and Van der Poel may have appropriated the nocturnal setting from Van de Velde's panel, but they incorporated it in a novel and more complex manner than did their predecessor. While Van de Velde's numerous battle scenes may or may not be set after dark, in the *brantjes* by the Rotterdam painters the night plays an essential role in the creation of meaning. In such pictures, the artists draw specifically on a cultural preoccupation with the night as a time when fire could break out unexpectedly as a result of arson or, more likely, domestic and industrial accidents.

In contrast to Van der Poel's paintings with fires, which consistently take place after nightfall, many of Van de Velde's military pictures feature daylight settings, such as depicted in his 1614, 1625, and 1630 scenes of cavalry skirmishes (figs. 3.18–20). The artist's drawing of a nocturnal bonfire in a village evidences the fact that his interest lay more in the chiaroscuro effects possible in nighttime scenes lit up by flame than in conveying any specific cultural associations with the night (fig. 3.21). Like Van der Neer, Van de Velde primarily experiments with temporal settings for the purpose of creating aesthetically interesting pictures.

A night scene by Van der Poel that does not feature looting or soldiers reinforces my reading that the artist's depictions of nocturnal conflagrations engaged contemporaries' fear of,

and distress from nighttime fires. By comparing this painting to a related work set during the daytime by Salomon Savery, I illustrate how the tone of Van der Poel's painting relies largely on its nocturnal atmosphere. Both artists depicted the fire that destroyed much of the village of De Rijp in 1654; however, Savery produced a print of the event while Van der Poel painted the scene (figs. 3.4, 3.22). The difference in medium itself implies that the latter artist intended his rendition to evoke a more powerful, emotionally evocative viewing experience than did Savery in his primarily informative print. Perhaps intended for inclusion in a book or otherwise as an image accompanying text, the print documents and describes the event. Divided into two registers, the image shows De Rijp both before and after the outbreak of the fire. As such, the print provides information regarding the extent of the damage. Inside a cartouche in the upper register, explanatory text reads: "1654: Door deerste Brand SNachts na drie Koninghen Verbranden wel seshonderd wooninghen. 1657: En op Sint' Maertens nacht, syn hier vyftigh huysenvergaen door 't vier (1654: Because of the first fire at night after Three King's [Epiphany], some six hundred dwellings were burned. 1657: And on St. Maertens' night, fifty homes here were lost because of the fire)." On the other hand, Van der Poel's painting stirs emotions by simulating the witnessed experience of the event at the expense of delivering as comprehensive an account of the fire.

The upper register of Savery's print shows an aerial view of the village tellingly surrounded by its many windmills, one of which would ignite the destructive blaze. In the lower register almost the entire community has been consumed by flame. A windmill to the left of the print's center issues a column of smoke that carries the ash and sparks, which ignite the rest of the town, including its large church and several other mills. Citizens move through the streets carrying ladders or escape into the field located in the image's lower right. In the immediate right

foreground a family gathers to observe the chaos from a hilltop. They have numerous possessions with them, including furniture and two cows.

Although Van der Poel's painting may have been influenced by Savery's print, the depiction of the same fire differs significantly, particularly in regard to the former's inclusion of a nocturnal setting. In Van der Poel's scene, the view of the city from its main roadway, the placement of mills and figural groups, and even the specific positioning of the boats in the canal and the harbor at right mirror those in the printed version. However, the bright, clear sky in Savery's interpretation makes the fire less oppressive. Alongside changes in these two pictures in regard to the depicted time of day, alterations to perspective and the placement of staffage result in a more moving scene in Van der Poel's painting.

The difference in expressive effect owes a great deal to Van der Poel's incorporation of a nocturnal setting. Despite mention made by Savery in the accompanying text that these events took place at night, he chooses a daylight setting for his print in order to make clearer the descriptions of the specific fires and their impact on the village of De Rijp. Such goals differ significantly from those of Van der Poel, who opted to set his scene at night in order to help provoke an emotional reaction from his viewer. The darkness of night in Van der Poel's painting creates a frightening tone evocative of contemporary fears regarding the night as a time particularly prone to devastating incidents, like the fire depicted here. The concern of the viewer lies not with the town of De Rijp and the specific nature of that fire, but with the idea of a village conflagration in a broader sense, which Van der Poel also evoked in his depictions of generic fires.

The family in the foreground of the Savery etching functions in a manner similar to that of the placid bystanders in Van der Neer's conflagrations. The mother prays calmly with her

child. One cow watches while the other stares back at the viewer, seemingly unaware of, or unconcerned with the fire wreaking havoc in the distance. The viewer identifies with the disengagement of the family and animals, which are close to the picture plane and described in detail. The viewer thereby takes on the role of a spectator at rest, who presumably has escaped any immediate danger.

In Van der Poel's painting, on the other hand, the artist lowers the viewpoint slightly and depicts the townspeople larger in comparison to the buildings and surrounding landscape. The figures on the hillside sit farther away from the viewer and on a plane roughly equal to that of the men and women, who make their way down the road, in the direction of the viewer and away from the burning village behind them. By distancing this figural grouping from the spectator, Van der Poel removes a pictorial feature that could have separated those in the immediate path of danger from the viewer's position, presumably on a hillside. As a result of this decision, the relatively subdued emotions of the family become less of a factor in the image. Instead, the viewer's focus turns entirely toward the conflagration and the actively fleeing occupants of De Rijp, who run toward the viewer on the dramatically foreshortened road, perpendicular to the picture plane. Van der Poel's compositional and temporal changes transform the tone of the scene from one of controlled, detached observation to unnerving, emotional involvement.

Van der Poel's numerous followers also employed nighttime settings in fire scenes to evoke feelings of danger and distress in viewers. In depictions of village conflagrations by Adam Colonia and Philip van Leeuwen, for instance, the night helps to generate a fearful tenor befitting the scenes' terrifying subject matter (figs. 3.23–24). That many younger artists imitated Van der Poel's work so closely manifests the appeal of the nighttime conceptions, as well as the interest collectors must have had in this theme. Although Verhoef explains that such pictures did not

appeal to the upper echelon of Rotterdam collectors, as evidenced by the absence of such paintings from relevant inventories, the number of extant paintings of this type proves that an extensive demand existed for such scenes among middle-class Rotterdammers from the mid-to-late seventeenth century.

According to Verhoef, the paintings' typically small size and the wholesale nature of their production suggests they may have been offered to buyers shopping in the city's markets and fairs, which facilitated a vibrant art trade.[310] Such a broad swath of art buyers in Rotterdam, who found this type of nocturnal conflagration imagery so appealing, indicates that *brantjes* resonated deeply with many Dutch men and women. In no small part, the pictorial appeal derived from the incorporation of the night, which evoked highly specific experiences and emotional reactions commonly associated with fires. As expressive descriptions of a specific aspect of life in the seventeenth-century northern Netherlands, these nocturnal conflagration paintings captivated Dutch audiences.

Viewers' feelings of trepidation or unease in front of the pictures of nocturnal fires may have found their parallel in similar experiences before other popular depictions of seventeenth-century Dutch disasters. Arthur Wheelock has described the popularity of disaster pictures in Dutch art of the seventeenth century, citing a universal and timeless human fascination with such events as one explanation for their frequent appearance in both contemporary and historical works of art. He explains how disasters create a sense of fear and concern that turns quickly into empathy for those affected, and that Dutch paintings and prints of disasters always include a person or group of people with whom the viewer can immediately identify.[311] Unlike Savery's daylight picture in which the family of bystanders on the hillside encourage the viewer to

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[310] Verhoef, "'Brantjes' en 'Maneschijntjes,'" 129.
[311] Wheelock, "Accidents and Disasters," 73, 81.

consider the scene from their relatively safe perspective, Van der Poel's audience identifies instead with the men and women who panic in the streets and fields surrounding De Rijp.

Wheelock has also stressed the significance of didactic messages in such disaster pictures. These messages could be biblically inspired and function as a sort of *memento mori* encouraging viewers to live morally with the knowledge that each day could be their last. Alternatively, disaster images sometimes offer more practical advice, as in the case of the illustrations in Van der Heyden's *Brandspuitenboek,* which Wheelock characterizes as a "marvelous promotional piece," which describes the importance and functions of the author's newly invented firefighting equipment.[312] Van der Heyden's illustrated publication sought to alarm the viewer in order to make his fire engines desirable. The nocturnal settings in his most dramatic pictures reinforce this reading of his conflagration imagery. While the moralizing and instructive messages suggested by Wheelock no doubt factor into the Dutch public's interest in fire scenes, additional considerations bear further discussion as well.

Analysis of another seventeenth-century Dutch pictorial theme unrelated to disasters provides a useful interpretive parallel to the nocturnal fire pictures under discussion here. Richard Helgerson describes how paintings of soldiers accompanied by young women in domestic spaces, which were produced in the 1650s and 1660s, ask their viewer to grapple with disconcerting subject matter.[313] While such paintings do not rely on a nocturnal atmosphere or frantic tone, as do Van der Poel's pictures of nighttime conflagrations, the scenes appealed to audiences, according to Helgerson, due to their ability to stimulate an emotional response related to a particularly pressing social concern. As Helgerson explains, by buying these paintings and

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[312] Wheelock, "Accidents and Disasters," 81.
[313] Richard Helgerson, "Soldiers and Enigmatic Girls: The Politics of Dutch Domestic Realism, 1650-1672," *Representations* 58 (1997): 49–87.

hanging in them in their homes "Dutch householders … were, in effect, gaining cognitive and emotional control over the threat the paintings so artfully evoke."[314]

In much the same way, by possessing a visualization of the threat of a large-scale nighttime conflagration, audiences would—at least to some extent—alleviate their fears by gaining a sense of control over the emotions associated with these much-dreaded events. If a painting could evoke the same types of feelings that one might actually experience when facing a destructive nocturnal fire, then the act of viewing that image approximates that trauma and dilutes or defers the very real fears associated with it. Although Van der Poel's skillful rendering of naturalistic lighting effects and the dramatic juxtaposition of contrasting colors in such pictures must also have made them desirable commodities, the role played by the presence of the nighttime setting in shaping the appeal and meaning of his *brantjes* should not be underestimated.

Further consideration of Van der Heyden's illustrations for the *Brandspuitenboek* also reveals a nighttime setting that contributes to an emotionally evocative picture by intensifying widely held fears relating to conflagrations. Born to Mennonite parents in Gorinchem, he moved to Amsterdam in 1650. Like Van der Neer and Van der Poel, little information exists pertaining to Van der Heyden's early artistic training. He made major contributions to the development of the cityscape genre, which primarily included architectural subjects. In addition to his artistic career, Van der Heyden worked primarily as a civic official and inventor and became very prosperous doing so. In 1670, he became the overseer of Amsterdam's new system of street lighting and in 1672, he, alongside his brother, was appointed one of the city's joint fire chiefs. Van der Heyden developed safer and more effective systems for both lighting city streets and for

[314] Helgerson, "Soldiers and Enigmatic Girls," 62.

fighting fires, both of which proved to be highly successful and widely influential. The *Brandspuitenboek* continues to be celebrated as the foundational document in the history of modern firefighting.[315]

As noted by Michelle Packer, many of the illustrations in Van der Heyden's book frighten the viewer in a manner similar to that of Jan de Baen's 1652 etching of the fire in Amsterdam's Old City Hall (fig. 3.7). In their interpretations of this scene, both artists highlight the public panic and sense of frenzy, which characterized such events.[316] Notably, both etchings also feature nocturnal settings, although Van der Heyden's print shows a somewhat less frantic scene. Everyone in Van der Heyden's picture fights the fire instead of fleeing. The more distant viewpoint reveals other buildings on Dam Square. In addition to accurately describing the circumstances surrounding the episode in both pictures, the nighttime helps to convey to the viewer something of the panicked mood and disorder felt by the depicted men and women. While De Baen likely hoped to appeal to a market interested in emotionally evocative disaster pictures, Van der Heyden sought to make clear the need for his new fire engines by conveying to his audience in visceral pictorial details the horrors of large-scale fires.

The presence of the night in Van der Heyden's depiction of a fire on the Oude Schans, which broke out in a merchant's house on the night of December 5, 1658, contributes to an atmosphere of panic by fostering well-known fears a viewer would have associated with such events (fig. 3.2). Van der Heyden's depiction of the fire expresses these anxieties in a particularly compelling manner. In the print, a throng of tangled figures run in various directions and gesticulate wildly as a building, engulfed in flames, begins to crumble overhead. Some

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[315] *Time and Transformation*, ed. Kuretsky, 201.
[316] Michelle Victoria Packer, "'Aenschouwer, siet, hoe alle dingh verkeeret!' Envisioning Change in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Cityscape" (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2013), 30.

individuals fight the fire, but most seem too confused or frightened to be of much help. A sea of shocked faces and flailing arms recedes into the darkness in the background while billowing smoke and flames fill the night sky in the upper part of the picture. The collapse of the building will undoubtedly lead to the injury or even death of some of the people in the tightly packed crowd filling the street below, or of the firefighters climbing the ladders. Clearly, the image's creator intended for this nighttime scene to alarm the viewer.

In contrast, Van der Heyden's daytime scene that depicts a 1682 fire in the De Bruinvis soap factory differs significantly because it lacks a comparable emotional effect (fig. 3.25). In this diagrammatic print, Van der Heyden does not frighten the viewer by evoking danger in order to convince him of the need for the fire engine. Instead, Van der Heyden assuages the viewer's fears by demonstrating the effectiveness of his invention. The soap factory picture displays the effective use of the new devices and accompanies a groundplan indicating the proper position of the fire engines and hoses. By including in the *Brandspuitenboek* both frightening, nocturnal scenes and more subdued, primarily informative pictures, Van der Heyden constructs a very compelling argument in support of the necessity, as well as the effectiveness of his new firefighting equipment.

The nocturnal settings that frequently appear in frightening depictions of conflagrations play an essential role in the creation of meaning in such pictures. Without the presence of the night, such fire scenes would seem less menacing to the viewer and they would not evoke the same distressed response. The night's ability to contribute such expressive effects resulted from a long-lived awareness of the hours of darkness as a time when the outbreak of destructive fires greatly increased. Recognizing this cultural significance, artists such as Egbert van der Poel and

Jan van der Heyden created nocturnal scenes of fires in order to intensify already alarming subject matter.

By looking closely at paintings and prints by Adriaen van der Neer, Egbert van der Poel, and Jan van der Heyden, the significance of fire scenes set at night becomes clear. On the one hand, Van der Neer included nocturnal settings in his paintings of conflagrations primarily for aesthetic reasons. As such, the depiction of the night does not, in itself, generate meaning. Similar to Van der Neer's moonlit and sunset landscapes, his relatively peaceful firelit landscapes impart a calming tenor.

On the other hand, night's darkness depicted in a painting of a fire could reinforce fears associated with catastrophic conflagrations. Nocturnal fire pictures by Van der Poel and Van der Heyden intentionally drew on these widespread beliefs to shape the expressive effect of their works. The nighttime's ability to evoke specific emotions as a result of contemporary social issues associated with fire made it a popular subject for such artists working primarily in the second half of the century, who sought to create captivating and desirable works of art.

Chapter IV

The Night in Dutch Depictions of Labor and Leisure

Certain labor and leisure activities that took place only after darkness fell captured the attention of many Dutch artists and collectors during the seventeenth century. Specific cultural circumstances led to an increased interest in this subject matter. Moonlit scenes of fishing and related itinerant market imagery, for example, describe and celebrate an economically successful industry, which relied heavily on nocturnal labor. Such paintings convey connotations of hard work and diligence. Night also enhanced the specific traditions and attendant pleasures of leisure activities that included torch- and lantern-lit street celebrations. Consideration of such depictions of nighttime labor and leisure within the context of relevant socioeconomic and cultural circumstances shows how artists employed nocturnal settings to emphasize the diligence and industriousness of their subjects or, conversely, to convey a convivial or carefree mood.

Working Late

Seventeenth-century Dutch artists painted certain nocturnal labor activities—for the most part fishing and related market scenes. However, they never or very rarely depicted other well-known nighttime jobs, such as the work of urban watchmen, sanitation workers,[317] lamp-lantern

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[317] Jan Wagenaar, *Amsterdam in zyne opkomst, aanwas, geschiedenissen, voorregten, koophandel, gebouwen, kerkenstaat, schoolen, schutterye, gilden en regeeringe* (Amsterdam: Yntema and Tieboel, 1760–68), vol. 3, 47–48. Beginning in the late sixteenth century, Amsterdam established regulations concerning *nagtwerken* (night workers), who cleaned and removed household waste from cesspits connected to household *privaaten* (privies).

caretakers,[318] bakers,[319] and millers.[320] In nocturnal fishing scenes by Egbert van der Poel and Adam Colonia, the nighttime setting showcases the dedication and hard work of the fishermen who make the industry possible. They toil throughout the darkness of night to the great benefit of their local economy and that of the Dutch Republic. In contrast to such nocturnal fishing scenes, the nighttime practices that almost never appear in seventeenth-century Dutch visual culture may not have generated the same pride or visual interest for art collectors.

The relative lack of paintings of certain well-known nighttime activities may also have resulted from the fact that those endeavors did not produce great profits or an international reputation for the Dutch Republic in a manner comparable to that of fishing and fish exports. Further, such activities may not have been deemed particularly noteworthy because laborers throughout Europe carried out similar tasks. However, while fewer in number and presumably less popular than scenes with fishing-related content, pictures of other nocturnal labors did exist, such as paintings of market scenes unrelated to fishing.

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[318] Lettie S. Multhauf, "The Light of Lamp-Lanterns: Street Lighting in 17th-Century Amsterdam," *Technology and Culture* 26, no. 2 (1985): 249. Lamp caretakers worked during the night as part of their regular duties.

[319] Bakers often labored through the night in order to prepare for the following day's demand. In 1634, young women in Wormer began their shifts in a bakery at midnight and worked through the night (A. Th. van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion and Society in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, trans. Maarten Ultee [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991], 10). A widely distributed book that features the popular character Till Eulenspiegel confirms the cultural association between commercial baking and the night. By 1510, an unknown German publisher printed an edition of *Ein kurzwelig lessen von Dil Ulenspiegel* (the spelling "Eulenspiegel" first appears in later sixteenth-century additions), which describes ninety-five of the character's comic misadventures. By 1580, editions of the book existed in Dutch, Flemish, Latin, Danish, Polish, Czech and probably Italian (Paul Oppenheimer, "A Philosophical Rascal?," in *A New History of German Literature*, eds. David E. Wellbery, Judith Ryan, et al. [Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004], 209). In the twentieth story, "How Till Eulenspiegel sifted flour by moonlight into the courtyard," the title character appears as a "baker's boy" instructed to sift flour during the night. Eulenspiegel requests a light to guide his work and the master baker reprimands him: "I am not giving you any light. To this day I have never given any of my baker's boys any light. They have had to sift by moonlight. Well, you will have to do so too." (*Till Eulenspiegel: His Adventures*, trans. Paul Oppenheimer [New York: Routledge, 2001], 37).

[320] Richard Leslie Hills, *Power from Wind: A History of Windmill Technology* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 3. Millers often labored during the night because they depended on sufficient wind for milling regardless of the time of day/night.

The vending of goods after dark provided Rotterdam painters, in particular, with another pictorial context in which to depict the night as a time for industriousness. Pictures by Rotterdam artists Egbert and Adriaen van der Poel and Cornelis Snellinck demonstrate their cultural appreciation of the nighttime hours as a time of diligence and hard work, when sleepless vendors sell fish, pancakes, vegetables, or fruit. These artists set scenes at night to help convey a sense of the resolve and fortitude of their sympathetic subjects. Indeed, Rotterdam painters made the subgenre of scenes of nocturnal labor a local specialty in the second half of the century. Nowhere else in the Netherlands did artists depict scenes of nocturnal labor in such great numbers.[321]

The practice of fishing after dark and the importance of fisheries to the local Rotterdam economy no doubt played a significant role in establishing the popularity of night fishing scenes in that city. However, the more general interest in nocturnal labor cannot be as readily explained. Aside from the considerable influence of Van der Poel, whose *oeuvre* is characterized above all else by his frequent depiction of the night, no compelling explanation of this local phenomenon seems to exist. The large number of extant scenes of nocturnal labor produced by Van der Poel testifies to the popularity of the subgenre in Rotterdam and offers at least a partial explanation as to why other painters working in the city, such as Snellinck, may simultaneously have embraced the theme. Artists would have observed local art-market activity and responded to the apparent interest in such imagery.

[321] The nineteenth-century artist Petrus van Schendel, who lived and worked in Rotterdam from 1832 until 1838, also specialized in the painting of nighttime market scenes similar in appearance and content to those discussed in this section and often set in the streets of Rotterdam. Van Schendel's marked interest in this theme and his staging of a number of such pictures specifically in Rotterdam supports the notion that a local tradition of depicting night markets existed and persisted in the city.

The interest of multiple Rotterdam artists, including Van der Poel and Snellinck, in the pictorial theme of nocturnal labor seems to have developed concurrently. The nighttime labor scenes probably first appeared around the same time as both artists' other paintings of subjects set at night. Although Snellinck did not specialize in night scenes to the same degree as his younger colleague, he did produce a number of such images, including two market pictures discussed below.[322]

The dating of many paintings of nocturnal subjects by both artists remains undetermined. Regardless of the exact nature of the development of this specialization in Rotterdam, both Snellinck and Van der Poel likely began painting their night scenes of labor during the 1650s. Museum Rotterdam records the date of 1650s for Snellinck's *Rotterdam Cityscape, Fruit Market by Candle and Moonlight, with Statue of Erasmus*, and the Národní Galeri, Prague provides the date of circa 1650 for his *Cityscape at Night with Fruit Seller and a Number of Children* (figs. 4.1–2).

Van der Poel painted his first nocturnal subjects, including labor scenes, during this decade as well. His first *brantjes*, or nocturnal conflagration pictures, date from after the artist's move to Rotterdam following the explosion of the Delft gunpowder magazine in 1654. Van der Poel's general interest in night scenes may have inspired him to begin painting nighttime labor at around this same time. Before moving to Rotterdam, he primarily depicted winter landscapes, market scenes, and barn interiors.[323] However, at least one of Van der Poel's four extant depictions of nocturnal celebrations on city streets, set before the *Gemeenlandshuis* (Communal Land House) in Delft, probably predates his move to Rotterdam (fig. 4.3). This undated

[322] Another painting by Snellinck, *The Magi Following the Star of Bethlehem*, 1614–69, in the Museum Sainte-Croix, Poitiers, also has a nocturnal setting.
[323] Axel Rüger, "*Barnyard Scene (A Dutch Peasant's Backyard)*," in *Vermeer and the Delft School*, ed. Liedtke, 328.

celebratory scene could have been painted at any point during the painter's early career in Delft, and as such may predate Snellinck's night scenes. However, comparison with compositionally similar, dated paintings of torchit street parties by Van der Poel suggests that he most likely painted the work in the 1650s, around the same time that Snellinck produced his first known paintings set after dark.[324]

Paintings of Herring Fishing and Related Nocturnal Pursuits

Egbert van der Poel and followers in Rotterdam, including Adam Colonia, painted many moonlit scenes of fishermen, who pack the night's catches into barrels or auction them off to potential customers on the beach. By describing in detail the practices of the very successful herring fisheries, in particular, these pictures captivated a viewership very familiar with the processes by which landings of herring made their way from the North Sea to marketplaces throughout Europe. Behind the laborers and vendors in such scenes, vessels make their way back to shore or are dragged onto the sand. In Van der Poel's *Seashore by Moonlight*, 1660–64, for example, fishermen carry baskets containing the night's catch while other figures meander down the path toward the distant city, all by the light of the full moon (fig. 4.4). As in other beach and fishing scenes by Van der Poel, such as the paintings in Galleria Spada, Rome, and Musée de Grenoble, the view includes the landing, selling, and perhaps transport of fish to market (figs. 4.5–6).

Many Dutch viewers of nighttime fishing and fish-market pictures would have recognized the significance of the nocturnal setting to the socioeconomic success of the industry.

[324] Axel Rüger has argued that the 1654 date of the Delft scene seems plausible due to stylistic parallels between it and the dated works, including two other nocturnal celebration paintings by the artist that date from 1654 and 1659. For discussion of the dating of Van der Poel's nocturnal celebration paintings see Axel Rüger, "*Celebration by Torchlight on the Oude Delft*," in *Vermeer and the Delft School*, ed. Liedtke, 326.

Those with direct ties to fisheries understood especially well the importance of the night depicted in these pictures. As such, the nocturnal settings in Van der Poel's fishing scenes played a crucial role in the creation of meaning for their audiences.

To better understand how nocturnal settings generate meaning in Van der Poel's paintings, one should first consider the relationship between the local herring fishing industry and the seventeenth-century Dutch economy, and herring fishing and the night. Even today herring remains a significant component of the Dutch cultural identity, which stems in part from the outsized role of the small fish in establishing the Dutch Republic as a leader in the seventeenth-century global economy. Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude determined that in the first half of the seventeenth century, herring fisheries provided more jobs and earned higher revenues than any other Dutch industry.[325] In his 1578 *Visboek* (Fish book), Adriaen Coenen, a resident of the fishing village of Scheveningen, describes the herring as "our big golden mountain in Holland."[326] A 1580 act issued by the States General considered the herring fisheries to be among the most important industries in the nation.[327]

During Van der Poel's lifetime, the nighttime held a traditional place of importance especially for those in pursuit of North Atlantic herring, which feed mostly during the nighttime. As such, North Sea fisheries traditionally operated primarily after dark. The herring's diet consists principally of plankton, small fish, and larvae, which they catch by swimming with mouths open, filtering out the edible material as they go. Adults of a size and firmness ideal for

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325 Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 266.
326 "onsen grooten gouden berch in Hollant" Adriaen Coenen, *Visboek* (Scheveningen: 1579), 25r. A complete copy of the *Visboek* is accessible online from the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague (Royal Library) at www.kb.nl/visboek.
327 Christiaan van Bochove, "The 'Golden Mountain': An Economic Analysis of Holland's Early Modern Herring Fisheries," in *Beyond the Catch: Fisheries of the North Atlantic, in the North Sea and the Baltic, 900–1850*, eds. Louis Sicking and Darlene Abreu-Ferreira (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009), 209.

human consumption—known in the seventeenth century as *vollen,*[328] which ultimately demanded the highest price at market—stay in the deeper waters during the day and come to the surface to feed after dark.[329]

In a fishing town such as Rotterdam, the economic significance of the herring industry to the city as well as to the nation would not have been lost on members of the art-buying public. In the fourth book of his *Urbium Praecipuarum totius Mundi* (Principal cities of the entire world), the sixteenth-century German geographer Georg Braun discusses Rotterdam. He claims that "its citizens are wealthy, have a renowned herring fishing industry and conduct trade with foreign countries."[330] This text, first published in 1588, shows that by the end of the sixteenth century, Rotterdam's fame as a fishing hub extended even beyond the Netherlands and the city's residents took pride in the success of the herring industry.

The importance of herring fishing to the Netherlandish people, however, extended much farther back than the sixteenth century. In his *Der Naturen Bloeme* (The flower of nature), c. 1270, an adaptation of *De natura rerum* (The nature of things) by the philosopher and theologian Thomas of Cantimpré, the Dutch poet and translator Jacob van Maerlant includes a verse, which praises herring and its divinely inspired benefits to life in the Low Countries.

> Allec[331] is the herring's name,
> a beautiful and graceful fish,
> as the *Liber rerum* says,
> that grows mainly,
> as you well know,
> between Norway and England.

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[328] Bo Poulsen, *Dutch Herring: An Environmental History, c. 1600–1860* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 165.
[329] Fisheries and Oceans Canada, "Atlantic Herring," accessed February 27, 2018, http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/sustainable-durable/fisheries-peches/herring-hareng-eng.htm.
[330] "Ciues opuleti, marina nauigatione celebrem halecum piscationem, & exteram mercaturam exercent" Georg Braun and Franz Hogenberg, *Liber Quartus Urbium Praecipuarum totius Mundi* (London: Peter von Brachel, 1588), 13.
[331] In medieval Latin, "allec" refers to the herring. See Robert I. Curtis, "'Negotiatores Allecarii' and the Herring," *Phoenix* 38, no. 2 (1984): 147.

It is said that all sea fish
in the season in which they are caught
are to be at their best.
He moves westward in the fall,
like the birds do.
Although he is small, he is tasty and good.
Fresh he is excellent,
when he is salted he can last a long time.
He only lives off water,
he does not eat anything else.
God's infinite mildness
sent him to us in the fall
in such large groups,
that many thereby escape famine.
He hides in the winter
in the deepest of the sea.[332]

Van Maerlant celebrates herring for its beauty and taste. He also notes that the fish lives primarily in the waters of the North Sea "between Norway and England." Its presence, thanks to God's benevolence, allows the Netherlandish people to escape famine. Notably, Van Maerlant wrote his text in Dutch, instead of the Latin more typical for scholarly works of the time, which made the work an accessible resource and, thus, augmented its cultural impact. Fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Dutch language copies of *Der Naturen Bloem* survive today and testify to the text's long-lived popularity and influence in the Netherlands.[333]

Those members of the Dutch public who resided in fishing cities, and particularly those living in Rotterdam with Van der Poel, understood the significance of the fishing industry to the success of their local and the national economies. From the early sixteenth century until the end

[332] Allec es des harincs name/ Een visschelkiin scone ende bequame/ Also als liber rerum seghet/ Die alre meest te wesene pleget/ Ende beste dus esset becant/ Tusschen norweghen ende ingelant/ Inden tiit datmene vaet/ Seghetmen dat al zee visch state/ In sine ghetidichede ten besten/ In heerfste tiit hi ten westen/ Als oec dat gheuoghelte doet/ Al es hi cleine hi es waert ende goet/ Varsch so es hi soete ter curen/ Ghesouten so mach hi langhe duren/ Biden watre leeft hi allene/ Anders nut hi groot no clene/ Die miltheit gods al onghegront/ Sent ons desen ter erefst stont/ Met menichten so dur groot/ Dat menich daer bi comt vter not/ An winter tiit warsi hem decken/ In die diepe see dar wech trecken. From a copy of Jacob van Maerlant's *Der Naturen Bloeme* (Utrecht or Flanders, c. 1350), 112r, in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague. Jacob van Maerlant's original manuscript has not survived.
[333] A fifteenth-century copy is also in the collection of the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague.

of the eighteenth century, the Republic enjoyed prominence as the chief provider of herring to all of Europe. In the seventeenth century, the beaches of fishing villages, such as those in the coastal town of Scheveningen, located near Rotterdam,[334] attracted pleasure-seeking city dwellers who sought out the freshest fish sold there by vendors when local fishermen returned with the night's catch.[335] Van der Poel painted Scheveningen and its beaches populated with fishermen, fishmongers and customers on a number of occasions. Dutch beach scenes with fishing subject matter would have appealed especially to those living in coastal cities, such as Rotterdam and Scheveningen, with strong fishing traditions and economies.

Having resided in both Rotterdam and Delft, another city whose economy relied a great deal on its fisheries, Van der Poel would have been aware of the economic contributions to those communities and the civic pride such success generated. The formation of the *College van de Grote Visserij* (Council of the large fisheries) in 1566 or 1567 demonstrates the significance of Dutch fisheries to the Republic's economy, in general, and to cities with strong fishing economies, in particular. The council consisted of representatives from port cities in the two principal administrative districts of the province of Holland: the Noorderkwartier and Zuiderkwartier. Throughout the seventeenth century, only Enkhuizen sent representatives to the

[334] Although unsupported by documentary evidence, August Goldschmidt has suggested that Van der Poel himself spent several months in Scheveningen during the year 1648. August Goldschmidt, "Egbert van der Poel und Adriaen van der Poel," *Oud Holland* 40 (1922): 59.

[335] Simon Schama, "Culture as Foreground," in *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1987), 77. Obtaining the most desirable, freshest herring remains a Dutch cultural preoccupation. The arrival of the *Hollandse Nieuwe*, or *Nieuwe Haring* (new herring), marks the beginning of herring season each year, once the fish have reached a fat content of at least 16 percent. Strict government regulations determine what can be called *Hollandse Nieuwe*. Prior to refrigeration, salted fish became saltier over the course of a year, and thus the last fish remaining before the new herring season could sometimes be inedible. The arrival of the new herring brought with it much celebration and continues to be met with excitement even today. See Heleen van Lier, "Hoe zit dat toch met die Hollandse Nieuwe?," *De Volkskrant*, May 31, 2011, https://s.vk.nl/s-a2439805/.

College from the Noorderkwartier, while representatives from Rotterdam, Delft, Brielle, and Schiedam in the Zuiderkwartier all held seats.[336]

In contrast with Rotterdam artists, Hendrick Cornelisz. Vroom and Jan van Goyen from Haarlem, and Jeronimus van Diest from The Hague rarely set their many scenes with fishing vessels, fishmongers, and fish auctions at night (figs. 4.7–9).[337] Instead, such paintings most often describe daytime atmospheric qualities and identifiable architecture in the communities in which the industry was most successful. Frequently, Vroom, Van Goyen, and Van Diest depict flourishing local ports filled with ships, or fishermen who go about their work near the familiar grassy dunes of the Dutch Republic's North Sea coastline. In doing so, the pictures champion the recognizable locales associated with the fishing industry.[338] Lawrence O. Goedde noted that throughout the seventeenth century seascape pictures typically emphasized circumstantial detail in order to to celebrate local customs, the depicted town, their people, and the economic and cultural prosperity that seafaring had brought to them.[339]

With a similar intent to celebrate local places and industry, Van Goyen and Van Diest also painted recognizable beaches along Holland's North Sea coastline. The backgrounds of such scenes often include local landmarks in order to convey a sense of pride of place. For instance, the recognizable tower of Scheveningen's Oude Kerk can be seen in the distance in Van Diest's

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336 Poulsen, *Dutch Herring*, 112.
337 Occasionally other artists also set scenes with similar subject matter at night. For an example, see Hendrick de Meijer or Pieter Bout, *Fish Sale on the Beach at Full Moon*, 1645/1665, private collection.
338 For a general discussion of pride of place in cityscapes with local industry or economic themes, see Linda Stone-Ferrier, "Views of Haarlem: A Reconsideration of Ruisdael and Rembrandt," *Art Bulletin* 67, no. 3 (1985): 417–36. Stone-Ferrier describes the manner in which depictions of Haarlem's neighboring communities with linen-bleaching fields instilled a sense of pride in local audiences. By including the recognizable city of Scheveningen in his fishery scenes, Van der Poel's paintings express a similar sense of local pride.
339 Lawrence O. Goedde, "Seascapes as History and Metaphor," in *Praise of Ships and the Sea*, exh. cat. (Rotterdam: Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen and Berlin: Gemaldegalerie Staatliche Museen Berlin, 1996), 63–66.

The Shore at Scheveningen (fig. 4.9). Viewers proud of the cities and towns in which they lived found these familiar elements appealing.

Similarly, Van der Poel's nocturnal fishing scenes appealed to viewers' pride in their cities of residence, the fishing industry that that did so much to support them, or both. While specificity characterizes such paintings, the artist places greater emphasis on the representation of particular activities than on recognizable places. Indeed, those familiar with the fishing industry would have had no difficulty finding details in Van der Poel's paintings in which they took great pride.

Van der Poel's *View of a Beach by Moonlight*, for example, describes each step in the process of landing, unloading, and transporting fish to a nearby village (fig. 4.5). At far right, the fishing vessels approach the shoreline on which four ships have already landed. Laborers unload cargo while others lower sails or fill baskets with the evening's catch. A man in a red shirt kneels to secure fishing nets. At left, a woman balances a large basket filled with fish on her head, presumably to support a heavy load during transport, while a distant group walks down a road that leads toward a town visible on the horizon.

By emphasizing widely understood associations with the fishing industry, including the practice of working at night, Van der Poel's paintings extol a traditional local activity. He sought to remind viewers of shared regional experiences. As such, Van der Poel's depictions of nocturnal fishing practices typically feature generalized Dutch seaside locations (fig. 4.10). Although some of the artist's paintings, such as *A Moonlit Beach Scene with Fishermen Unloading Catch*, include a tower reminiscent of that seen in numerous daytime depictions of the beach at Scheveningen by Van der Poel and other painters, the presence of the night often overwhelms such references in the former artist's scenes of seaside fishermen (figs. 4.4–6). In

such images, moonlight highlights the activities on the depicted foreground beach, but leaves the shadowy background city obscured in darkness.

By the seventeenth century, however, not all fishing operations needed to function after dark. The *haringbuizen*, or herring busses, of the large-scale Dutch commercial fisheries stayed at sea for weeks or months before they returned to land. Fishermen working on such vessels did not always haul their catches ashore at night, as depicted in numerous paintings by Van der Poel. Yet the popularity of these paintings of fishing and fish markets set after dark evidences the fact that the nighttime remained tied in popular cultural perception to the practice of herring fishing and fish marketing.

Further analysis of historical Dutch fishing practices offers an additional explanation for the persistence of associations between fishing and the night. Herring busses themselves could not legally deliver their catches to the mainland until after July 15. However, from 1632 onwards, Dutch regulations permitted smaller cargo ships called *ventjagers* to retrieve barrels of herring from ships still in the fishing grounds.[340] This allowed fishermen to sell high-priced, early-season herring from the beginning of the fishing season on June 24.[341] Presumably, such activity took place during the daytime after the previous night's catch had been packed. After collecting barrels during the day, the fishermen aboard *ventjagers* could unload their catches on the shore in the evening. They may have then sold the freshly caught fish directly on the beach. Since fisherman aboard the large busses did not return to land daily, Van der Poel likely shows the relatively frequent arrival of the *ventjagers* and their fresh herring in his depictions of

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[340] Poulsen, *Dutch Herring*, 113.
[341] From 1604 onward, the governmentally regulated Dutch herring season began on the eve of St John's day, June 24, and lasted until January 31. Poulsen, *Dutch Herring*, 43–44.

fishermen unloading ships by night on the beaches near Rotterdam or Scheveningen. *Seashore by Moonlight* exemplifies such paintings (fig. 4.4).[342]

On the far-flung Dutch busses travelling to herring-rich Scottish waters, much of the work still took place after dark due to the habits of herring. Netherlandish fishermen began their labors after nightfall, setting out a long string of driftnets, known as a *vleet*,[343] to be hauled back in the following morning, likely before sunrise.[344] Fish swimming to the surface to feed during the night would be caught in these nets.

In addition to herring's nocturnal feeding habits, the glistening of their scales in the moonlight informed cultural associations between the fish and the night. Van der Poel carefully captured this phenomenon in his depiction of fishermen working on beaches after nightfall, including in *Fishermen on the Beach with a Full Moon* (fig. 4.10). Nineteenth-century English writing on the topic of the Dutch fishing industry, which describes connections between the hours after sunset and the work of herring fishermen, references the glistening scales of the fish. In the tenth volume of *The Naval Chronicle*, 1803, an anonymous author describes the Dutch industry as one of the world's most celebrated suppliers of herring, and in doing so remarks on the reflected moonlight off of the fish's scales. The author explains that "the herring is accustomed to follow the light of the moon, and during the night it emits a sort of light that spreads in the air. These fish accordingly discover themselves and betray their motions: it is for this reason that they are generally caught at night."[345] As evidenced by Van der Poel's emphasis on this particular play of light on fish scales, contemporary viewers of his *Fishermen on the*

[342] Definitively identifying the ships in these paintings as either busses or *ventjagers* presents difficulties as oftentimes older busses modified to be purely cargo vessels would be used as *ventjagers.* Poulsen, *Dutch Herring*, 113.
[343] Poulsen, *Dutch Herring*, 137.
[344] That work began before sunrise on these busses seems likely as crews would need to quickly pack the previous night's catch into barrels and between layers of salt in order to maintain freshness. Poulsen, *Dutch Herring*, 84.
[345] Anonymous, "Herring Fishery," in *The Naval Chronicle*, vol. 10 (London: J. Gold, 1803), 321.

Beach in the Moonlight likely understood the association between the moonlight and herring fishing.

Another nineteenth-century English writer also describes a specific connection between North Sea herring fishing and the night. With regard to the Dutch and other prominent North Sea fishery operations, the 1855 edition of Oliver Goldsmith's eighteenth-century natural history text *A History of the Earth, and Animated Nature*, explains that fishing for Atlantic herring "is never carried out but in the night, and the darkest nights, accompanied by a slight breeze, are the most propitious."[346] At the time of this commentary, Dutch fisheries operated in much the same manner as they had during the seventeenth century, which makes this later account relevant to discussion of the industry in previous centuries.[347] The longevity of herring fishing and its prescribed practices suggests that during Van der Poel's lifetime, Dutch fishermen operated under similar assumptions about the importance of the night to herring fishing as those described in Goldsmith's text.

Vending Goods at Night

Although few in number when compared to the many paintings of fishing, pictures by several artists, including Van der Poel, present another type of nocturnal labor: the vending of goods from a stall that are often, but not always related to fishing. In such images, Van der Poel, fellow Rotterdam painter Cornelis Snellinck, and Gerrit Dou of Leiden all describe a nocturnal

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[346] Oliver Goldsmith, et al., *A History of the Earth, and Animated Nature*, vol. 2 (Glasgow, Edinburgh, and London: Blackie & Son, 1853), 315.

[347] Poulsen, *Dutch Herring*, 43–44. Dutch fishing operations remained under largely consistent regulations, which had been imposed in the early seventeenth century by the *College van de Grote Visserij*. The *College* standardized technological and procedural factors concerning Dutch fisheries, which greatly assisted in the industry's rise to supremacy over rival North Atlantic operations. By the final decades of the sixteenth century, the *College* held jurisdiction over the entire Dutch industry including the catch, processing, distribution and marketing of salted herring. It strictly regulated the size and use of fishing gear, such as driftnets, and the length of fishing seasons with the threat of heavy fines levied for any deviation.

setting that showcases tireless labor and hard work. In the moonlit scenes of female vendors at market stalls with a wide variety of goods, including fish, pancakes, fruits, and vegetables, the sales taking place do not necessitate a nighttime setting. However, in staging such pictures after dark, artists conveyed the diligence of the principal subjects by showing them hard at work late in the night or in the very early morning.

Van der Poel's *Fish Market at Night*, for example, depicts a seated woman who sells fish by the light of a large lantern (fig. 4.11). A standing customer with a bucket on her arm gestures toward a hefty salmon on the table before the vendor. Baskets filled with fish rest on the ground at the salesperson's feet. Men, women and children populate the areas surrounding the central pair of female figures. In the panel's upper left, the masts and sails of ships rise into the sky. The bright light that illuminates the face of the seated woman and the central commercial exchange conveys the important role she plays in the larger economic system, as suggested by the ships' presence in the background. Even late at night, this vendor works tirelessly and exemplifies the ideal industrious worker.[348]

In his lively *Fish Market on a Quay at Night*, Adriaen van der Poel also engages with both the economic system surrounding fisheries and the shared experiences of the night as a time for work (fig. 4.12). By lantern light, merchants and shopkeepers discuss their wares, as a crowd of people gathers around them. The nocturnal economic activity demonstrates the tenacity of the depicted figures and celebrates their persistence. The shimmering fish in the lower left of the

[348] A more tightly focused painting of an elderly oyster vendor attributed to Van der Poel appears in the records of online auction websites without any information concerning the current whereabouts or provenance of the work. See "Oyster Stall by Egbert Lievensz van der Poel," Artnet, accessed May 22, 2018, http://www.artnet.com/artists/egbert-lievensz-van-der-poel/oyster-stall-JWjAnPuSXABIRPuC8RWl_w2. The woman in this image offers an oyster to an unseen customer, again underscoring the economic role of the principal subject. This scene most likely takes place during the day as it includes no artificial light source and the woman's face appears to be illuminated by sunlight and not by the orange and yellow light of a flame. Most of Van der Poel's market scenes take place out of doors, yet here the vendor stands in a darkened interior space and peers out from a window, removing any obvious indicator of time of day.

panel remind the viewer of the role of nighttime laborers in the prosperous Dutch fishing industry.

A similar engagement with nocturnal vendors can be seen in Egbert van der Poel's depictions of pancake makers (figs. 4.13–14). In both pictures, an elderly woman sits beside a large lantern and sells her goods to a female figure whose back is turned toward the viewer. The attention placed by Van der Poel on the economic exchange suggests a sympathetic interpretation of the role of the steadfast nighttime vendor, who, although tired and slouched, continues her work.

Artists working outside of Rotterdam, including Gerrit Dou, also painted depictions of the night as a time for hard work. As seen in Van der Poel's paintings, Dou's pancake bakers appear diligent and venerable. The women demonstrate their perseverance by virtue of their nocturnal work, while others sleep. Dou's scenes share with Van der Poel's pictures the emphasis on the economic transaction taking place at night. By directing the viewer's attention toward the exchange, Dou—like Van der Poel—seeks to highlight the role of the baker as a generator of capital, albeit a modest one, within the thriving Dutch economy. As Ronni Baer notes in reference to Dou's depiction of a pancake baker, now in the Uffizi Gallery, "the composition is organized around the play of hands in the center of the painting (fig. 4.15). It is the transaction, which thereby receives emphasis, that separates this picture from other representations of pancake bakers."[349] Dou also painted a picture, now in Munich, of an outdoor pancake baker working by candlelight (fig. 4.16). Through the use of gesture and lighting, the painting principally focuses on the face of the vendor and stresses an exchange between two women in the semidarkness.

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[349] Ronni Baer, "The Paintings of Gerrit Dou (1613–1675)," (PhD diss., New York University, 1990), catalogue 61.3.

Van der Poel's and Dou's pancake bakers, who work by candlelight, allude to long-lived cultural associations with the pancake baker as a diligent worker. Ronni Baer compares Dou's paintings of pancake bakers to a circa 1620 print of the same subject by Jan van de Velde II, which shows a seated baker diligently cooking food for four hungry children (fig. 4.17). As in Van der Poel's and Dou's painted depictions of pancake bakers at night, she holds her knife, presumably slicing apples to flavor her pancakes. The inscription below the image reads: "Get up: already the baker is selling to boys their breakfast, and the crested fowls of dawn are crowing on all sides."[350] The text, from Martial's *Epigrams*, encourages industriousness and associates hard work with bakers.

Similarly, Cornelis Snellinck's and Adriaen van der Poel's paintings of fruit or vegetable market scenes set after dark convey the resolve of the vendors who work tirelessly late into the night. In both artists' pictures, the nocturnal vendor occupies an important role both compositionally and within the economic and cultural fabric of the depicted community. In Snellinck's depiction of a nocturnal fruit market on the east side of Rotterdam's Grotemarkt with the statue of Erasmus, a vendor observes a group of children who make music and dance while other figures, including couples and mothers with small children, occupy the surrounding streets (fig. 4.1). The woman selling fruit, seated in the midst of this crowd and surrounded on all sides by her wares, has attracted the figures to this spot and has stimulated a system of economic exchange. Houses recede along the Westnieuwland behind the *contre-jour* statue of Erasmus, which is dramatically lit by the moon hanging in the sky. The scene conveys a bustling evening in a lively community in which the fruit vendor occupies an important place.

[350] Surgite: iam vendit pueris ientacula pistor/ cristataeque sonant undique lucis aves. Translated in Baer, "Gerrit Dou," 61.2 n1.

In a nearly identical scene by Snellinck, *Cityscape at Night with Fruit Seller and a Number of Children*, the fruit vendor works late at night while all around her children play and couples move idly through the streets (fig. 4.2). Again, she occupies an important place, both compositionally and in her role in the community. Related works by other Rotterdam artists also celebrate the tireless labor of the depicted vendors. In Adriaen van der Poel's treatment of a fruit or vegetable seller in his painting *Market Scene at Night*, 1641–86, a diligent worker oversees a productive economic system (fig. 4.18).[351] Lantern light illuminates a centrally placed female vendor who stoops in a doorway as she distributes her goods to the crowd surrounding her. As in other paintings of nocturnal laborers by Egbert van der Poel, Dou, and Snellinck, she works hard to the benefit of her community. In depictions of work performed after dark by each of these artists, the nighttime setting evidences a cultural appreciation of the hours following sunset as a time that the industrious remain hard at work.

Fellowship and Frivolity

Over the course of the seventeenth century, the hours after sunset also became linked in the minds of many Europeans, including those living in the Dutch Republic, with recreation and celebration. Night enhanced the specific traditions and attendant pleasures of certain leisure

[351] A painting of a woman selling vegetables including carrots placed prominently in the painting's lower right, and attributed to the school of Van der Poel appears in the records of online auction websites, but without any information concerning the current whereabouts or provenance of the work. See "Artist Egbert Lievensz Van Der Poel (school)," FindArtInfo, accessed May 22, 2018, http://www.findartinfo.com/english/art-pictures/3/158/1/Panel/page/871.html. Once again, a female vendor sells goods to a young woman while surrounded by a small crowd and illuminated by a large lantern. The carrots may have been included by the artist in order to celebrate a prominent local industry in a manner similar to that of herring in Van der Poel's fish market scenes. For a discussion of the economic and cultural importance of the Dutch vegetable market, and especially of the newly developed "Hoornse wortel" (the variety of bright orange carrots depicted here), see Linda Stone-Ferrier, "Gabriel Metsu's Seventeenth-Century Dutch Market Paintings and Horticulture," *The Art Bulletin* 73, no. 2 (1989): 442–48. Stone-Ferrier explains that the areas surrounding Rotterdam became well-known for vegetable production in the second half of the seventeenth century.

activities. Many Dutch painters and printmakers created artworks that relied at least in part on nocturnal settings to better convey the ambiance of general relaxation or specific festivities and traditions in the evenings. Such occasions include torch- and lantern-lit street celebrations, as seen in paintings by Egbert van der Poel and Pieter de Molijn, and theatrical musical performances influenced by the *commedia dell'arte*, which Jan Steen and Frans van Mieris the Elder painted. Festivity also includes specifically nocturnal holiday celebrations related to Twelfth Night (*Driekoningen*) depicted by Jan van de Velde II, Rembrandt, and Van der Poel. Artists also portrayed other nighttime leisure activities, including couples walking by lantern- or moonlight. Such pictures of nocturnal recreation and celebration describe and extol localized festivity and fellowship, which may have promoted native traditions and/or contemporary mores. These depictions of relaxation or celebration demonstrate yet another facet of the seventeenth-century Dutch understanding of, and appreciation for the nighttime.

Numerous contemporary cultural developments help to contextualize this phenomenon. Specifically, Dutch literature provides valuable insights into seventeenth-century perceptions of the night as a time frequently associated with leisure, amusements, and fellowship. New civic regulations instituted in many Dutch cities allowed for greater mobility and access to streets after dark, culminating in the 1669 introduction in Amsterdam of a highly effective lighting system designed by Jan van der Heyden. This new technology rapidly spread throughout the United Provinces and Europe. Although Amsterdam instituted street lighting in an effort to make the city safer, the new system also led to a general increase in both sanctioned and unsanctioned nocturnal activity.[352] Additionally, over the course of the century the increased emphasis on

[352] Amsterdam originally introduced Van der Heyden's street lighting system in an effort to decrease the number of drowning deaths due to people falling into canals in the dark, halt criminal activity, and aid in the work of firefighters. However, complaints of prostitution in the city streets increased drastically in the years following the

nocturnal spectacles, festivities, and celebrations of Northern European court society, which Craig Koslofsky refers to as "the nocturnalization of daily life at the court,"[353] would influence the leisure culture of Dutch *burghers* and the lower classes as well.

Perhaps due in part to the diverse cities in which artists produced pictures of nocturnal recreation and celebration, a variety of themes appear in their many representations. Works created in various locations throughout the Netherlands depict processions of *Driekoningen* star singers (*sterrenzangers*), a practice widespread throughout the country. Similarly, other paintings picture more generalized content, including couples strolling or meeting at night. However, specific thematic traditions did develop in several cities. In Rotterdam, Van der Poel and followers, including Philip van Leeuwen, produced numerous paintings of torchlight street celebrations similar to those first created in the 1650s by Van der Poel in Delft. In Leiden in the mid-1670s, artists including Jan Steen, and later in the decade Frans van Mieris depicted the moonlight serenades of theatrically dressed merrymakers.

Dating from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the earliest Netherlandish pictures to feature subjects of nocturnal leisure include prints of urban festival scenes and theatrical processions. Such prints appear in series that depict the times of the day. Examples include engravings of the theme of night by Johannes Sadeler, Egbert van Panderen, Adriaen Collaert, and Jan Saenredam after depictions from comparable series by, respectively, Dirck Barendsz., Tobias Verhaecht, Marten de Vos, and Hendrick Goltzius (figs. 4.19–22).[354] By 1601,

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implementation of this system. See Benjamin B. Roberts, *Sex and Drugs before Rock 'n' Roll: Youth Culture and Masculinity during Holland's Golden Age* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 116.

[353] Craig Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 110–18.

[354] Although copying an earlier engraving by the Dutch artist Dirck Barendsz., credited on Sadelar's print as "Theod. Baern. Amsterodamus," Sadeler published his in Cologne and not in the Netherlands. However, his Flemish family's wide-reaching connections throughout the northern and southern Netherlands and Germany and their success as publishers assures that audiences in the Dutch Republic had access to this image. Similarly, Van Pandereren's print after an original by the Antwerp artist Tobias Verhaecht and published in that city by Theodoor Galle likely

Jacob Matham engraved a scene of *Nox* (Nighttime) after Karel van Mander that includes a nocturnal, torch-lit procession of men and women seen in the distance behind a group of gods and allegorical figures (fig. 4.23).

By the late sixteenth century, many Dutch men and women associated nocturnal hours with such festive occasions. Seventeenth-century literary sources testify to this practice. In several of his 1662 epigrams (*puntdichten*), the poet and dramatist Jan Vos deals with the subject of nighttime recreation. In "The Night" (*De Nacht*), Vos contrasts the burdensome daytime hours with the relaxing night, when people find peace and allow their everyday concerns to subside temporarily.[355] He also writes in "Jan the Night Drunkard" (*Jan de Nachtslemper*) about a man who looks forward to the nighttime as an opportunity to indulge himself with drink.[356] In another epigram, Vos writes of a nightwalker (*nachtlooper*) named Koen who has become so accustomed to wandering the streets after sunset that he, like the owl, possesses a unique ability to see in the darkness.[357] Nightwalkers, such as Koen, typically sought the company of women, although they often engaged in general recreation or mischief as well.[358] These literary sources demonstrate popular notions of the nocturnal hours as being closely associated with leisure, fellowship, and a departure from the more rigid rules and moral expectations of daytime. Indeed, a close analysis

circulated throughout the northern Netherlands. Van Panderen himself had in fact moved to Antwerp from his birthplace of Haarlem. He worked at various times in his career in both Amsterdam and Antwerp. Collaert, also a successful Antwerp publisher and member of a publishing dynasty, would also have produced prints with an international market in mind. Both Dutch and Flemish audiences found the nocturnal setting of these celebratory scenes equally appropriate and familiar. For an overview of cultural and artistic exchange, including that of prints, in the early modern Low Countries see Karolien De Clippel and Filip Vermeylen, "In Search of Netherlandish Art: Cultural Transmission and Artistic Exchanges in the Low Countries, an Introduction," *De Zeventiende Eeuw: Cultuur in de Nederlanden in Interdisciplinair Perspectief* 31, no. 1 (2015): 2–17.

[355] "De Nacht ontlast het volk, en streelt de matte leên/ De rust heeft met de zorg der menschen niet gemeen." "De Nacht" in *Alle de gedichten van den poëet Jan Vos* (Amsterdam: Jacob Lescaille, 1662), 384.

[356] "Jan gast en drinkt by nacht; ja in een maant wel acht maal: 't Is vreemt, Jan is niet Geus, en houdt nochtans van 't nacht maal." "Jan de Nachtslemper" in *Alle de gedichten van den poëet Jan Vos*, 484.

[357] "Koen komt bij nacht op straat, zeidt hy, en weet te zien. Dat hoort zoo: want een uil weet best by nacht te vliên." "Koen de Nachtlooper" in *Alle de gedichten van den poëet Jan Vos*, 412.

[358] Benjamin B. Roberts discusses the early modern European phenomenon of nightwalking. See Roberts, *Sex and Drugs before Rock 'n' Roll*, 154–55.

of late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century depictions of nighttime leisure not only supports this assertion, but also provides insight into how such images encouraged the proliferation of these night associations throughout the Dutch Republic.

Sadeler's 1582 engraving presents the sleeping Nox, the personification of the night, whose open mouth emits a cloud of darkness (fig. 4.19). Behind him sits a seated couple obscured by shadow. The man plays a lute. In the background, another man accompanies a veiled woman led by a musician and two so-called linkboys (*toortsdrageren*) or torch-carrying boys, who could be paid to guide urban pedestrians after nightfall. They walk through the nocturnal landscape toward a palatial entryway. The accompanying text explains that the dark of night provides an opportunity for both "misdeeds" (*mala…haec*) and "crime" (*scelus*), as well as "games" (*ludos*) and "amusements" (*iocos*).[359]

The same caption appears beneath Egbert van Panderen's engraving of the night, c. 1590–1637, from his series after Tobias Verhaecht's scenes of the times of the day (fig. 4.20). In Van Panderen's engraving, three musical companies populate an Italianate cityscape. The largest group parading through the print's lower-left foreground wear elaborate theatrical costumes and headgear including either pointed hats, hats adorned with feathers, or turbans. Far away in the street behind them four swordsmen fight and illustrate the misdeeds mentioned in the print's inscription. However, the celebratory aspect of the night dominates the scene as the majority of the depicted figures, and particularly those in the foreground who are illuminated most prominently by torchlight, seem to enjoy the music and each other's company. The violent clash among swordsmen occupies a relatively small portion of the picture.

[359] "Inducit terris densas Nox atra tenebras./ Ad mala saepe facis licet haec, ansam que ministret/ Audenti quodcunque scelus, quo caeca ruit mens:/ Attamen ipsa suos et habet ludosque, Iocosque,/ commodaque interdum. Sed qui sapit, ille tenebras/ Exosus; Lucem, ne forte offendat, amabit."

Adriaen Collaert's engraving, produced before 1597, also shows a musical company's procession by night through a city street (fig. 4.21). On the left, spectators observe the group from the illuminated window and balcony of a palatial home. In the distant cityscape, a group led by a linkboy and a man holding a reliquary approach a house in which a sick person lies in bed. Three others, one of whom kneels in prayer, attend to the reclining figure. Other townsfolk seen through doors and windows either work or prepare for sleep. On a shadowy cloud that hangs in the air above the scene, lies the slumbering personification of the night, shown as a nude male complemented by bats and stars. The poem *Nox* by the contemporary poet and linguist Cornelis Kiliaan appears beneath the picture and describes the depicted activity.[360] The text notably foregrounds the tendency of people to use nighttime to engage in "frivolity" (*nugas*).[361] Although both image and poem also include sleep, and likely death,[362] among the depicted nocturnal occurrences, the celebratory or recreational view of nighttime takes precedence over any other experiences of the night.

Jan Saenredam's c. 1595–98 engraving of evening festivities, after an original print from Hendrick Goltzius's series of the times of the day, also includes a procession of elaborately costumed nocturnal revelers escorted by a linkboy (fig. 4.22). This company, seen through a window (or perhaps depicted in an especially well-lit picture hanging on the wall) in the print's upper right, includes a figure who wears a large, pointed hat and another with several feathers

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[360] Kiliaan often composed poems to accompany works published by the workshop of Philips Galle. Galle published this print and employed Collaert as an engraver. Likely, Kiliaan composed his poem in accordance with preexisting imagery by De Vos or Collaert. See Manfred Sellink, "Philips Galle (1537–1612): Engraver and Print Publisher in Haarlem and Antwerp" volume 2 (PhD Diss.,Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 1997) 194, n. 84.

[361] "Nox nigrans caesis obducit cuncta tenebris,/ Et nugas, somnos, somnia, spectra fouet./ Qualibet ad mortis tendunt anamalia noctem/ Cum Puero Iuuenis Descrepitusq(ue) perit."

[362] The religious procession and figure lying in bed likely imply an association between the night and death or illness. This interpretation of the image corresponds to Kiliaan's verse, the second half of which explains that "They attend to the animals of the night through any sort of death. When a young boy dies decrepit." ("Qualibet ad mortis tendunt anamalia noctem/ Cum Puero Iuuenis Descrepitusq(ue) perit").

extending from his cap. They walk beneath the personification of the night, now depicted as a woman, who again rests on a cloud in a dark, starry sky. She wears a crescent moon on her head, which both indicates her allegorical role and serves as a festive hat of her own. The larger, indoor scene shows a merry company including two amorous couples, an extravagantly dressed man who wears a fool's cap around his neck and pours liquid into a vessel, and a young musician playing a stringed instrument. The inscription beneath the picture explains how Hesperus, the evening star, drives sadness and mourning away, gladdens the hearts and minds of men, and repels cares.[363] Once again, this image and its accompanying text illustrate in no uncertain terms the cultural association between the night and recreation.

The specific forms of festivity depicted in prints circulating within the northern Netherlands in the late sixteenth century warrant further scrutiny. Over the course of the following century, many Dutch artists would incorporate in their work both theatrical clothing inspired by the *commedia dell'art*e, a form of masked theater that developed in Italy around the middle of the sixteenth century, and a nocturnal setting as a context for carefree or even illicit behavior. Masks performed the dual function of conveying one's participation in festivity while obscuring an individual's identity to avoid social stigma or even punishment. Like the dark of night, a mask could provide a liberating sense of anonymity and the inclusion of theatrical garb in a work of art helped to emphasize for many Dutch viewers its celebratory, uninhibited tone.

In each of the four engravings described above, the nocturnal revelers wear costumes inspired by the *commedia dell'art*e. By the late sixteenth century, many northern Netherlandish viewers recognized these theatrical outfits, even as visits by Italian comedians remained rare.[364]

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[363] "Tristiciam, et luctus abigit procul Hesperus omnes,/ Exhilaratqué hominum mentes, curásque repellit."
[364] The only recorded sixteenth-century performance of a *commedia dell'arte* troop in the northern Netherlands occurred in 1598 in Leiden. During the seventeenth century, only a performance in Nijmigen in 1679 is documented.

Costume historian Marieke de Winkel attributes the presence of *commedia dell'arte* figures in paintings and drawings by Rembrandt, for example, to the widespread proliferation within the Dutch Republic of foreign prints of Italian theatrical players.[365]

As initially noted by Charles Sterling in his formative study of early paintings of the *commedia dell'arte* in France, expatriate Flemish artists produced the majority of images of Italian comedy during the sixteenth century.[366] Sterling credits this phenomenon to the popularity of the *commedia dell'arte* at the French court and the contemporaneous presence of numerous southern Netherlandish artists who worked or studied there.[367] In her more extensive examination of the history of pictures of the *commedia dell'arte*, M. A. Katritzky also remarks on the role of Flemish painters and printmakers in creating many of the initial images of Italian theatrical players. She notes that the Flemish artist Jan van der Straet, called Stradanus, who lived and worked in Florence from about 1550 onwards, depicted three Italian comedians in a composition known through both an engraved copy and two extant painted versions.[368] While in Italy, Van der Straet also taught the Florentine artist and engraver Antonio Tempesta, whose prints of February from his two series of engravings depicting the twelve months of the year feature groups of Italian comedians performing in city streets (figs. 4.24–25). Tempesta's prints

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See Robert L. Erenstein, *Een Theatergeschiedenis der Nederlanden* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996), 129.

[365] Marieke de Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy: Dress and Meaning in Rembrandt's Paintings* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 245. De Winkel identifies a print by Jacques Callot as an especially likely source for Rembrandt's *commedia dell'arte* imagery.

[366] According to Sterling, four out of the seven pictures discussed in his article "are by a Flemish hand, or at least strongly suggest Flemish influence," and "the makers of most of the sixteenth-century engravings of Italian comedians are Netherlanders: [Pieter] Perret, Julius Goltzius, J. [Jacques] Honervogt, and [Hans] Liefrinck." Charles Sterling, "Early Paintings of the Commedia dell'Arte in France" *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of* Art, n.s. 2 (1943): 31. While Katritzky has shown that Ambrosius Francken I, another Flemish artist, likely created the work attributed by Sterling to Liefrinck (Liefrinck's name appears on the print in question to identify him as publisher), Sterling's assertion about the popularity of *commedia dell'arte* among Flemish artists remains valid. M.A. Katritzky, *The Art of Commedia: A Study in the Commedia dell'Arte 1560–1620 with Special Reference to the Visual Records* (Amsterdam and New York: Editions Rodopi B.V., 2006), 119.

[367] Sterling, "Early Paintings," 31.

[368] Katritzky, *The Art of Commedia*, 121–22.

would inspire direct copies by members of the Sadeler dynasty of Flemish printmakers and publishers (fig. 4.26).[369] Due in part to the popularity of *commedia dell'arte* imagery among prominent Flemish artists and print publishers, by the seventeenth century most Dutch artists depicting nocturnal festivities understood that the presence of figures in theatrical garb evoked a celebratory tone appropriate for images of nighttime revelry.

Although many *commedia dell'arte* pictures feature an ambiguous or daytime setting, some important works set after dark provided the foundation for later depictions of nocturnal merrymaking. The Flemish Van Valckenborch family played an important role in the development of northern Netherlandish depictions of festivity set at night. The brothers Lucas and Marten van Valckenborch both depicted Italian comedians, and Marten's sons Gillis and Frederick van Valckenborch produced a number of paintings set at night of large crowds, including masqueraders and musicians.

Gillis Coignet, another Flemish artist who also painted pictures of nocturnal festivals and other boisterous assemblies, moved to the northern Netherlands following the fall of Antwerp in 1585 and the subsequent depression in the art market, growing political instability, and increased religious intolerance. He became a burgher of Amsterdam in 1589 and led a workshop there with many apprentices.[370] In 1592 he painted a picture of a nocturnal lottery in Amsterdam that hung in the Governors' Room of the city's mental asylum (*Dolhuis*) (fig. 4.27). Dutch artists and writers, including Karel van Mander and, later in the century, Olfert Dapper and Caspar

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[369] Katritzky, *The Art of Commedia*, 122. Katritzky suggests that numerous other Flemish pictures, including works featuring revelers and performers dressed as *commedia del'arte* players by Jan Brueghel the Elder, Louis de Caullery, and Sebastian Vrancx and his circle, also show the direct influence of Antonio Tempesta's prints. Additionally, Tempesta's student Jacques Callot produced the widely circulated Balli de Sfessania cycle, which depicts numerous theatrically dressed dancers. See Katritzky, *The Art of Commedia*, 123–37.
[370] Barbara Uppenkamp, "Gilles Coignet. A Migrant Painter from Antwerp and his Hamburg Career" *De Zeventiende Eeuw. Cultuur in de Nederlanden in interdisciplinair perspectief* 31, no. 1 (2010): 60–61.

Commelin, remarked on the success of the painting.[371] In his *Schilder-boeck*, Karel van Mander praised Coignet's lottery painting, along with two more of the artist's night scenes.[372] Many Dutch pictures produced during the seventeenth century would include a festive nocturnal atmosphere akin to that depicted by Coignet in this painting. Shared experiences of the night as a celebratory time, including lotteries and other street parties, led to a mutual interest in this theme among numerous late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch artists.

Nocturnal lotteries occurred regularly in Dutch cities. As explained by Van Mander and described by the inscription on the original frame, the board of governors of Amsterdam's *Dolhuis* commissioned Coignet to produce the painting commemorating the nighttime lottery held in 1592 to raise money for a building expansion project.[373] The lottery drawing began on August 14 of that year and continued day and night until October 20.[374] Similarly, the lotteries in Leiden in 1596 and Haarlem in 1606 took place during both the day and nighttime hours.[375] Such events afforded celebration and fellowship as well as performances by both professional actors and amateur mountebanks. Due in part to the relative frequency of opportunities for Dutch women and men to engage in nocturnal celebration, the night became a setting closely associated with large-scale festivity of the type depicted by Gillis Coignet.

Other contemporary developments also helped to reinforce the cultural connection between the night and recreation in the northern Netherlands. The increased presence of chambers of rhetoric (*rederijkers*) in Dutch society led to new occasions for theatrical

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[371] Norbert Middelkoop, "Gillis Coignet and the Amsterdam Lottery of 1592: Locating an Extraordinary Night Scene," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 2, no.1–2 (2010): 2 DOI: 10.5092/jhna.2010.2.1.4.
[372] See page 13.
[373] "Door 't mildt inleggen der goeder burgeren wys bedacht / Is dit huys met dees lotery A˚ 1592 in beter staet gebracht" (By means of the gentle input of the good and wise citizens, this house was brought into a better state through this lottery A˚ 1592). See Middelkoop, "Gillis Coignet and the Amsterdam Lottery of 1592," 2–3.
[374] Middelkoop,"Gillis Coignet and the Amsterdam Lottery of 1592," 6.
[375] Middelkoop, "Gillis Coignet and the Amsterdam Lottery of 1592," 4.

performances and attendant nocturnal revelry. The flourishing of *rederijker* culture in the Dutch Republic likely contributed at least in part to the increased production of pictures of nocturnal celebrations during the seventeenth century. By 1568, approximately seventy chambers of rhetoric existed in the northern Netherlands and around 175 chambers flourished in the southern Netherlands. The Dutch Revolt led to the expansion of *rederijker* culture from Flanders to the Dutch Republic. Many chambers of rhetoric in the southern Netherlands ceased their activities until the Twelve Years' Truce, which began in 1609, due to the threat of war and governmental repression. Flemish and Brabantine *émigrés* displaced from their homelands opened numerous new chambers of rhetoric in the northern Netherlands. By the end of the Twelve Years' Truce in 1621, *rederijkers* had established around ninety chambers throughout the Dutch Republic, and their performanes and related nighttime festivities had become familiar events to most residents of Dutch cities.[376]

Rederijkers staged plays on festive occasions, including at the time of public lotteries, as seen in Coignet's depiction of the 1592 lottery in the streets of Amsterdam.[377] These chambers often performed at night, and in doing so they provided Dutch audiences with new opportunities for sanctioned revelry after dark. Coignet's painting shows the outdoor stage, audience, and festive atmosphere of a *rederijker* performance.[378] Underscoring the significance of the *rederijkers* to the success of the lottery, the deconsecrated chapel of St. Margaret's Convent can

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[376] See Anne-Laure Van Bruaene and Sarah Van Bouchaute, "Rederijkers, Kannenkijkers: Drinking and Drunkenness in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Low Countries" *Early Modern Low Countries* 1, no. 1 (2017) DOI: http://doi.org/10.18352/emlc.4

[377] Kromm explains that, following an initial event in Antwerp in 1574, theatrical performances staged by *rederijkers* became "folded into the process" of staging lotteries and eventually became an integral aspect of these festive occasions. See Jane Kromm, "The Early Modern Lottery in the Netherlands: Charity as Festival and Parody," in David R. Smith, ed., *Parody and Festivity in Early Modern Art: Essays on Comedy as Social Vision* (Burlington and Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 55.

[378] E. Ellerbroek-Fortuin, *Amsterdamse Rederijkersspelen in de Zestiende Eeuw* (Groningen/Batavia: J.B. Wolters, 1937), 117. Ellerbroek-Fortuin suggests that this painting should be seen as a representative example of a contemporary rederijker performance.

be seen against the night sky at left, which, since 1583, had been occupied on the top floor by a chamber of *rederijkers* known as The Eglantine (*De Eglantier*).[379]

Especially during the hours after sunset, other lotteries similarly provided many Dutch women and men with an opportunity for entertainment and sanctioned revelry, often with the assistance of *rederijker*s. In Leiden in 1596, a competition between chambers of rhetoric took place at a lottery to raise funds for local building projects. In 1595, Isaac van Swanenburgh created a poster to advertise the event. Jane Kromm describes the theatrical quality of the figural groupings in the poster as the result of both Van Swanenburgh's mannerist tendencies as well as the "high drama" of lottery drawings and their "theatrical collateral events."[380] A 1606 lottery organized to benefit the Haarlem Old Men's House (*Oude Mannenhuis*) attracted twelve different chambers of rhetoric. For a lottery held in Amsterdam in 1610, *rederijkers* requested permission to hold private performances for paying audiences, the funds from which would benefit local charitable institutions.[381] Due to both the increased presence of *commedia dell'arte* performers and chambers of rhetoric in the Dutch Republic during the second half of the sixteenth century, public plays and performances became closely linked with festivals and celebration. The night, similarly associated by many in the northern Netherlands with fellowship and recreation, provided artists with an ideal setting for such revelry.

Returning to Coignet's painting, the nocturnal setting plays an important role in evoking the festive atmosphere. Fireworks streak across the sky while torchbearers illuminate a large, outdoor stage on which sit a number of well-dressed men, likely the *Dolhuis* governors, the

[379] Middelkoop, "Gillis Coignet and the Amsterdam Lottery of 1592," 13.
[380] Kromm, "The Early Modern Lottery in the Netherlands," 57.
[381] Kromm, "The Early Modern Lottery in the Netherlands," 58.

clerks who administer the lottery, and the inspectors who monitor the event.[382] Norbert Middelkoop suggests that Coignet's ability to depict the night led to the *Dolhuis* governors' decision to award him this commission, which suggests their understanding of the significance of the nocturnal setting to the subject matter.[383] The night allows for the presence of these fireworks, torches, and their accompanying tenebristic lighting effects, which add to the picture's festive and exciting tenor.

According to Karel van Mander, David Vinckboons appears to have shared Coignet's interest in the subject of nocturnal lotteries as the artist later painted one himself. That painting, the location of which is unknown, depicted a lottery that took place in 1603.[384] Although born in Mechelen, Vinckboons moved to Amsterdam at a young age and produced the painting for a nothern Netherlandish audience. Artists including Coignet and Vinckboons, and patrons like the *Dolhuis* governors understood the capacity of a nighttime setting to convey the exuberant and convival tone associated with early modern Dutch lotteries.

By the early seventeenth century, many depictions of nocturnal revelry had few ties to lotteries, the *rederijkers*, or professional theater. Instead, they depict more generalized nocturnal revelry, as seen in an engraving, for example, in Crispijn de Passe's 1612 manual for would-be university students *Academia sivr speculum vitae scolasticae* (The university, or mirror of student life), which includes a group of Leiden students in a moonlit street wearing masks and extravagant clothes while serenading a woman (fig. 4.28). She looks out from an open

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[382] Middelkoop,"Gillis Coignet and the Amsterdam Lottery of 1592," 4. Fireworks, which require a nocturnal setting, came to be associated with large-scale nighttime festivities, including courtly celebrations, lotteries, and street parties. See Koslofsky, *Evenings Empire*, 97–101 and Kevin Salatino, *Incendiary Art: Representation of Fireworks in Early Modern Europe* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1997) for discussions of fireworks displays at European courts.
[383] Middelkoop,"Gillis Coignet and the Amsterdam Lottery of 1592," 7.
[384] Middelkoop, "Gillis Coignet and the Amsterdam Lottery of 1592," 7.

window.[385] A poem inscribed beneath the scene warns students that any nighttime revelry of the type shown could result in severe punishment doled out by night watchmen with clubs. Accompanying commentary, also in the form of a poem, repeats this warning and elaborates. The verse describes the students as drunk and threatens them not only with bodily harm, but imprisonment as retribution.[386]

In her discussion of De Passe's *Academia*, Ilja M. Veldman confirms both the reality of the popular student pastime of carousing in the city's streets at night as well as the brutal punishments for such behavior. Veldman cites an entry in the diary of Leiden professor of law Everadus Bronchorst who, along with a group including students went out on the night of December 16, 1607, for an evening of merrymaking. The company's uproarious laughter attracted the attention of a night watchman who fatally shot one of the offending students on the spot.[387] On at least one occasion, University of Leiden professor of Greek and Latin Daniel Heinsius cancelled lectures for the day by affixing a note to his door that read: "Heinsius will not lecture today due to last night's drinking binge."[388] While many saw as a cause of concern the increasing association of the nighttime with the opportunity for recreation and celebration, particularly among young people,[389] De Passe's engraving of a nocturnal serenade in Leiden exemplifies the continuing interest of artists to depict such festivity.

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[385] Although De Passe mentions Leiden University by name only once in his *Academia*, his inclusion of engravings of the university's library, anatomical theater, and *hortus botanicus,* along with the city's *balonspel* (balloon game) playing field, make it likely that De Passe looked specifically to Leiden's university culture as a model for his detailed description of contemporary student life. Ilja M. Veldman, "Studentenleven omstreeks 1612: Crispijn de Passe's *Academia*," *De Boekenwereld* 15 (1998/1999): 345–46, and 353.

[386] See Ilja M. Veldman, *Profit and Pleasure: Print Books by Crispijn de Passe* (Rotterdam: Sound and Vision Publishers, 2001), 165, for translations from Latin by Clara Klein of both the inscription and accompanying commentary.

[387] See Veldman, *Profit and Pleasure,* 47. Veldeman additionally cites as evidence of the popularity of such behavior two examples of drawings from the *album amicorum* of Johann Michael Weckherlin. These drawings show student serenades in the streets of Tubingen and Stuttgart, with the latter being explicitly set at night.

[388] Roberts, *Sex and Drugs before Rock 'n' Roll*, 85.

[389] As evidenced by Heinsius's night of binge drinking, not only young people participated in nocturnal revelry. As early as the late fifteenth century, Sebastien Brant recognized this fact. In his *Das Narrenschiff* of 1494, Brant refers

Some early seventeenth-century Dutch nocturnal paintings, such as Pieter de Molijn's c. 1625 celebratory scene on the Grote Market in Haarlem, do not present a specific or easily recognizable event (fig. 4.29). However, the picture's nocturnal setting evokes the sense of carefree frivolity also illustrated in the Flemish prints depicting the theme or allegories of the night, discussed above. The low vantage point in De Molijn's painting places the viewer amid a frenzied crowd populated by a wide variety of people, including well-dressed couples and boisterous children. A large, centrally placed torch or brazier made from an elevated barrel filled with pitch or tar illuminates the festive scene. Three other tar-barrel torches burn in the background. The presence of several fashionably dressed couples in the crowd suggests that this type of raucous nighttime party appealed to a variety of classes, including the wealthy burghers who comprised the majority of the market for paintings.

In another painting dated 1625, De Molijn depicts a woman selling fruit to children by lantern light while a crowd of youths and adults illuminated by a roaring bonfire dance and play in the middle ground (fig. 4.30). A large torch burns above the gathering of nocturnal revelers, which recedes into the distant cityscape. De Molijn pictured these scenes after dark in order to evoke the night as a time when men and women of all ages and classes set aside their everyday concerns and engaged in festivity and frivolity.

In the 1650s and 1660s, Egbert van der Poel and his follower Philip van Leeuwen painted similar nocturnal street parties (figs. 4.3, 4.31). However, their pictures present a view from a more distant vantage point and thereby remove the viewer from the locus of the action. Van der Poel's *Celebration by Torchlight on the Oude Delft*, the most well-known of his several densely populated, torch-lit street scenes, may depict a specific event, but more likely shows a

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to similar behavior from all types of offenders, including students, clergy, and laypeople. See Veldman, *Profit and Pleasure* 120, note 42.

generic party on the streets of Delft.[390] While the location of the gathering can be easily determined by the presence of the well-known Communal Land House (*Gemeenlandshuis*), prominently illuminated at left, Axel Rüger suggests that the lack of any clues to specify the context decreases the likelihood that this painting depicts one particular event.[391] Instead, the type of popular nocturnal recreation that appears in Van der Poel's pictures probably occurred regularly.[392] On the occasion of a nighttime festival, local governments or sometimes private individuals supplied the type of tar- or pitch-filled braziers seen in this painting and many other images, including several by Van der Poel; De Molijn, such as *Nocturnal Celebration at the Grote Markt in Haarlem,* c. 1625; and Cornelis Dusart, including the mezzotint *De Vrede Maakt Mij Gaande* (*Peace Gets Me Going*) 1695–1704 (fig. 4.32).[393] The latter depicts a woman with fireworks, who celebrates the September 5, 1695, conquest of Namur by King William III.

Later in the century, Leiden artists also painted a number of festive night scenes. The subject of musical companies, in particular, became a favorite of some painters, including Jan Steen and Frans van Mieris the Elder. Steen's c. 1675 depiction of a moonlit nocturnal serenade shows a group of theatrically dressed musicians and performers on an urban doorstep (fig. 4.33). A man, seen in silhouette with his back turned toward the viewer, pulls a doorbell to alert the residents to the troop's presence. Four figures in the middle ground play instruments or sing while two costumed men watch from behind. One of the latter figures wears a *commedia dell'arte* type of mask identified by its large pointed nose, similar to that of the character of

[390] Another scene by Van der Poel with the same subject matter that was also set in Delft appeared on the art market in 2009. See M.E. Houtzager, *Collectie J.C.H. Heldring te Oosterbeek*, exh. cat. (Utrecht: Centraal Museum 1960), 20-1, cat. no. 26, reproduced fig. 41. A painting of a torchlight celebration in a less readily identifiable setting and also attributed to Van der Poel sold at auction in 2003.
[391] *Vermeer and the Delft School,* ed. Walter Liedtke, 324–26.
[392] That other pictures associated with the circle of Van der Poel depict similar events further supports the generic nature of the scene depicted in Van der Poel's *Celebration by Torchlight on the Oude Delft*.
[393] Simon Groenveld and Jacques Dane, *1648: Vrede van Munster, feit en verbeelding* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1998) 13, caption 3, also cited in *Vermeer and the Delft School,* ed. Walter Liedtke, 324.

Zanni. The other sports a purple turban. One of the musicians has placed several feathers in his hat. These figures may represent itinerant musicians, or they could be local amateurs enjoying a night of recreation and amusement.[394]

By the time Steen painted his nocturnal serenade scene, musicians and performers had been a part of Netherlandish nightlife for a century, as depicted in prints and paintings of the theme of night discussed above. At least three Leiden artists other than Steen also depicted the familiar subject of musicmaking at night during the final quarter of the seventeenth century. Steen's close associate in Leiden, Frans van Mieris the Elder, painted a nocturnal serenade, which dates from c. 1678–80 (fig. 4.34). Van Mieris's company includes a woman, who sings and plays a stringed instrument while watched by a masked man and a figure wearing a turban and seen from behind. A linkboy's torch and a partially obscured, but glowing moon illuminate the scene. That an unknown artist painted an extant contemporary copy of Van Mieris' night scene suggests the positive reception of the original.[395]

Finally, a painting attributed to Matthijs Naiveu shows a moonlit street in which a boisterous group of musicians in *commedia dell'arte* costumes perform before three men, one of whom peers out from behind the door of a palatial home (fig. 4.35). Like Van Mieris, Naiveu

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[394] Liedtke believes the musicians in Steen's painting must be actors since they are dressed in some cases as identifiable characters. However, the multivalent image would have also recalled more general nocturnal revelries and courtship rituals for some viewers, particularly those living in the university town of Leiden, who were familiar with the rowdy antics of the city's young, student population. Amateur performers as well as professional actors would wear costumes relating to *commedia dell'arte* on festive occasions. See Walter A. Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), 482. An anonymous etching in the Rijksmuseum's print collection (Bartsch El 22) stylistically associated with Rembrandt, Constantijn van Renesse, and Jan Lievens shows a serenade performed by a group of singers and a man playing a hurdy-gurdy. Although traditionally associated with Rembrandt, the art historian Eduard Trautscholdt reattributed the print to Renesse in the Thieme-Becker, while Dimitri Rovinski labeled it as made in the style of Lievens. If any of these attributions are accurate, this scene likely reflects life in Leiden during the seventeenth century. All three artists lived and worked in Leiden at various points in their careers. See Dmitri A. Rovinski, *L'oeuvre gravée des élèves de Rembrandt et des maîtres qui des gravé dans son goût: 478 phototypes sans retouches* (St. Petersburg, 1894), cat. no. 22, cited at https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/RP-P-OB-12.834.

[395] Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 482.

trained in Leiden with Gerard Dou. However, he most likely painted this canvas, along with the majority of his dated paintings of theatrical subjects, after his move to Amsterdam. These three late-seventeenth century nocturnal serenade paintings attest to the appeal of the depicted subject matter at the time.

Although not as prevalent as depictions of nocturnal processions of theatrically dressed revelers, numerous nighttime scenes of amorous couples were depicted by artists working throughout the seventeenth century. The setting in these paintings, prints, and drawings emphasizes their subject matter by evoking popular understanding of the nighttime as a romantic context or otherwise conducive to intimate exchanges between couples.

In his study of northern Netherlandish youth culture, Benjamin P. Roberts notes the importance of "nightwalking" as a contemporary courtship ritual. The term refers to a variety of social practices, including the meeting of mixed gender pairs or larger groups, who walked and caroused together at night. On the island of Texel, the term *kweesten* referred to a form of nightwalking in which men entered women's bedrooms through windows intentionally left open at night. On the former island of Marken, a phase of courtship known as *beurzen* involved youths meeting regularly in the evening.[396] Then under the cover of darkness, couples repaired to boats where, presumably, they engaged in sexual activities.[397]

Some rural communities sanctioned nightwalking and helped regulate the courtship process by establishing norms.[398] However, Roberts notes that nightwalking remained primarily a rural phenomenon. Lacking the social controls of *beurzen* and *kweesten*, the night before the

[396] The construction of a dike in 1957 connected Marken with the mainland, making it a peninsula.
[397] Roberts, *Sex and Drugs before Rock 'n' Roll*, 154–55.
[398] Roberts explains these courtship rituals in detail, along with specific, proscribed sexual behavior and related punishments for young men who deviated from these expectations. See Roberts, *Sex and Drugs before Rock 'n' Roll*, 155.

introduction of extensive streetlighting systems presented unsupervised city youths with the opportunity to engage in proscribed activities including sex.[399] Roberts cites Gillis Quintijn's moralizing treatise, *De Hollandsche-Lijs met de Brabandsche Belij* (Holland's Tortoise with Brabant's Greenhorn), 1629 to support this conclusion. Quintijn describes groups of young people in Haarlem at night who "caroused through the streets … turning over flower boxes, hanging cats by their tails, ringing doorbells and disturbing the sleeping public" before they "retreated to the dunes where they fornicated."[400]

Such unsanctioned, urban nocturnal activities appear in a number of seventeenth-century pictures, although they are sometimes relegated to a secondary role within the composition. Jan van de Velde's print of night, for example, which belongs to a series of the times of the day, depicts an elaborately dressed group of men and women on the Buitenhof in The Hague (fig. 4.36). A pair of linkboys carrying brightly lit torches draws the viewer's attention away from a centrally placed couple, who quietly observes the reflection of the moon in the canal.

Contemporary literary evidence also alludes to the romantic qualities of the night as an intimate meeting time for couples. In an untitled poem, or *Liedeken* (Song), which appeared in the 1622 edition of the author's *Groot Lied-Boeck* (Great Songbook), Gerbrand Bredero describes a young couple who attempt to meet clandestinely under the moonlight. The poem's narrator, having embarked under the cover of night to meet his lover, laments upon reaching their meeting place:

> I see the grey clouds straying,
> Across the moon, so clear;
> I see my poor self staying
> In lonesome misery here.
> My dearest, hear me praying

[399] Roberts, *Sex and Drugs before Rock 'n' Roll*, 155.
[400] Roberts, *Sex and Drugs before Rock 'n' Roll*, 155.

Console me, lend me ear![401]

Bredero's *Avondt-Liedt* (Evening Song), also from his *Groot Lied-Boeck,* and an engraving illustrating the poem by Jan van de Velde similarly characterize the night as a likely time for young couples to meet. (fig. 4.37). The print shows a man rushing after a woman who flees by night into a city street. She raises her hand to protest his advances while he opens his mouth to plead with her. Bredero's poem explains that the man in the image seeks to serve as the woman's escort in order to keep her safe in the darkness. A lantern above them illuminates the nocturnal street scene. Although the text reveals that the man ultimately fails to convince the woman of his intentions, Van de Velde includes a content couple walking together and led by a linkboy in the distance.

Another early 1620s print by Jan van de Velde in which a couple stands before the entryway of a house more explicitly conveys the amorous ramifications of the night (fig. 4.38). Venus watches approvingly from her throne atop a cloud while the man and the woman hold hands in the darkness. The woman places her left hand over her heart, suggesting her feelings of love. In each of Van de Velde's prints, the nocturnal setting facilitates the intimate, romantic interactions depicted and would be understood by contemporary audiences as the appropriate setting for this type of subject matter.

In a c. 1614–30 watercolor scene in a friendship album (*album amicorum*) belonging to Michael van Meer, a man and woman appear in a secluded nocturnal forest setting (fig. 4.39). An inscription above identifies them as a "gentleman and a young female Dutch citizen talking and walking in the moonlight."[402] The man embraces his partner while a crescent moon denotes the

[401] "Ick sie het swerrick drijven/ Ick sie de claare Maan,/ Ick sie, dat ick moet blijve/ Alleen mistroostich staan!/ Ach lief, wilt mij gerijven/ Met troostelijck vermaan!" Translated in Maria A. Schenkeveld, *Dutch Literature in the Age of Rembrandt: Themes and Ideas* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1991), 157.
[402] "Een Edelman met een jonghe hollandtse borgers vrouw in maneschijn spaikeren gander."

picture's nighttime setting, which augments the romantic atmosphere by drawing on contemporary understandings of darkness as a time for courtship. Among the upper classes, such nighttime courting—when less raucous than those trysts described by Gillis Quintijn—appears to have been socially acceptable for mature men and women.[403]

Similarly, in a painting attributed to Gerrit Lundens from 1655–70, a couple press closely together as a lantern illuminates their faces, which appear to glow in the dark night (fig. 4.40). In a 1695–1708 drawing by Ludolf Bakhuysen, an elegantly dressed man and woman walk together at night (fig. 4.41). They turn toward one another and hold hands. A linkboy with a torch leads them and a servant follows carrying luggage, which suggests an arrival or departure. Bakhuysen's depiction of the couple's amorous interaction shows that their romantic relationship should be seen as a central element in the nighttime picture.

In addition to nocturnal street parties and lovers' trysts, nighttime celebrations of certain holidays, such as Twelfth Night, appeared in Dutch paintings throughout the seventeenth century. Anke A. van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven describes the transition by the end of the sixteenth century from the liturgical to the domestic celebration of Twelfth Night, which increased in popularity during the seventeenth century. In Dutch cities, groups of star singers festively dressed as the three magi, traveled door to door, carried an illuminated star symbolizing the star of Bethlehem, and sang various Twelfth Night songs.[404] According to Van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven, this tradition derived from earlier *rederijkers* plays as well as from the practice of student choristers, who performed in the streets. By the seventeenth century, all classes of people

[403] Individuals from all classes participated in romantic night strolls. Van Meer was wealthy and at home in noble circles. See June Schlueter, "Michael van Meer's *Album Amicorum*, with Illustrations of London, 1614–15," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (June 2006): 306.
[404] For more on Twelfth Night songs, see Anke A. van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven, "The Celebration of Twelfth Night in Netherlandish Art," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 22, no. 1/2 (1993/1994): 68.

participated in outdoor, nocturnal Twelfth Night celebrations, often collecting donations of food and drink to be dispensed as charity to those in need.[405]

Van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven identifies the earliest depiction of star singers as Jan van de Velde II's 1630 engraving after Pieter de Molijn (fig. 4.42). In this print, three singers stand in a doorway illuminated by a lantern while a large procession of other star singers moves through a dark city street behind them. Additionally, a group of prints by A. (possibly Abraham) Theodore, Rembrandt, Pieter van de Voorde, and Cornelis Dusart depict star singers and their audiences (figs. 4.43–46). Although Van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven describes a painting of a nocturnal Twelfth Night procession by an anonymous follower of Jan Steen as the only extant picture of the theme in that medium, a painting of the subject formerly attributed to Van der Poel sold at auction in 1999.[406] Another painting of star singers by Egbert van der Poel appeared on the market in 2010 (fig. 4.47).[407]

In such images of nocturnal Twelfth Night celebrations, as in the depictions of other nighttime festivities, darkness provides a setting particularly well-suited to the sanctioned revelry and play. Together, the pictures of nocturnal recreation showcase the liminal period between the end of the day and the dawn of a new morning when Dutch men and women relaxed and engaged in playful behavior. Such pleasures were not always suitable for, or tolerated during daylight hours.

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405 Van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven, "The Celebration of Twelfth Night in Netherlandish Art," 68.

406 See "Nachtelijk tafereel met een optocht met lantaarns: Driekoningen," RKD-Nederlands Instituut voor Kunstgeschiedenis, accessed December 17, 2018, https://rkd.nl/explore/images/59843.

407 Van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven, "The Celebration of Twelfth Night in Netherlandish Art," 68. Steen painted the popular Twelfth Night subject of the King's Feast on a number of occasions. At least one of the pictures, dated 1662 and in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, includes a prominent view through a doorway into a nocturnal city street populated by a group of star singers. However, this picture's primarily indoor setting distinguishes it from the other images under consideration here. For the 2010 Van der Poel painting, see "Nachtelijk tafereel met kinderen met een lantaarn: Driekoningen," RKD-Nederlands Instituut voor Kunstgeschiedenis, accessed December 17, 2018, https://rkd.nl/explore/images/225922.

The prominence of festive or leisure imagery in night scenes produced throughout the northern Netherlands during the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries manifests the significant role played by such nocturnal activities in daily lives. Likewise, depictions of nighttime fishing-related activities and market scenes also evidence the way in which Dutch audiences experienced the hours after dark. At the same time although in different ways, both groups of pictures also affirmed and perpetuated such cultural associations with the night.

Conclusion

The preceding chapters have examined previously unexplored nocturnal settings that play a key role in the generation of expressive effects in many seventeenth-century Dutch paintings, prints, and drawings. I have addressed artworks with respect to Netherlandish cultural conceptions of the night and discussed their evocation of a variety of sometimes conflicting experiences, ideas, and emotions. Tranquil biblical scenes and church interiors set after dark encourage meditation conducive to Christian religious practice. Frightening visions of nocturnal demons and witches, and devastating village and city fires, which illuminate black skies, conjure threats both supernatural and real. Depictions of fishermen and street vendors working by moonlight inspire thoughts of industriousness and tenacity, while images of revelers and lovers under the stars suggest a fun and frivolous nighttime world. These thematically, geographically, and chronologically diverse pictures manifested and in turn shaped significant cultural attitudes about the night in the early modern Dutch Republic.

Beginning in the later decades of the sixteenth century and continuing throughout the seventeenth century, the proliferation of artworks with nocturnal settings demonstrates viewers' pervasive interest in the nighttime. The increased attention paid to the night in the visual culture of this period stems, in part, from the wide variety of both old and new activities associated with the hours after sunset. Consideration of the historical and social contexts surrounding the production and interpretation of these works of art affords a better understanding of them.

The interpretive questions that provided the framework for this study were varied: What subject matter appears most frequently in seventeenth-century Dutch night scenes? Why did so many Dutch artists working throughout the century choose to set these particular subjects after dark? Why did representations of specific nocturnal subjects appeal to a variety of viewers living

in a number of different Dutch cities? Which contemporary sociocultural circumstances and changes might have influenced, or have been influenced by the fascinating group of paintings, prints, and drawings under discussion? In order to answer these questions, artwork has been carefully examined within various historical contexts, including that of Christian spiritual practices and beliefs; witchcraft and occultism; the growing threat of fire, both accidental and as the result of arson; the Dutch herring fishing industry and attendant feelings of cultural pride and accomplishment; the growing accessibility of the night due to expanded street lighting systems; and the increase in spectacles and celebratory traditions during the hours after sunset.

The artists who created the paintings, prints, and drawings addressed in this dissertation chose a nocturnal setting to draw on a variety of popular notions associated with the night that made such works particularly captivating to collectors. Although this imagery includes a diverse range of themes that would engross an array of viewers for different reasons, the nocturnal setting in each picture engages with specific sociocultural realities that would have been immediately apparent to viewers.

Many Dutch artists carved out a niche for themselves within the highly specialized and chiefly speculative art market.[408] Scenes set at night provided some painters and printmakers with just such a career opportunity. Dutch art theorists and observers sang the praises of painters of night scenes. In Philips Angel's 1642 booklet *Lof der Schilder-konst* (*Praise of Painting*), a defense and celebration of the art of painting, the author lauds the ways in which some artists depict "the decline of the sun, evening, the moon illuminating the night, with her attendant companions, the stars … none of which the sculptors can imitate."[409] In his 1678 *Inleyding tot*

[408] J. Michael Montias, "Cost and Value in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art," *Art History* 10, no. 4 (1987): 464.
[409] "het dalen van de Zonne: den Avondt: de Nacht-verlichtende Maen, met haer Leydtslieden, de Sterren...van welcke de Beeldt-houwers gheen van allen weten na te botsen." Philips Angel, and Hessel Miedema, "Philips Angel, Praise of Painting," trans. Michael Hoyle, *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 65 (1996): 239.

de hooge schoole der schilderkonst: anders de zichtbaere werelt (*Introduction to the Academy of Painting, or the Visible World*), Samuel van Hoogstraten marvels at Jan Lievens' ability to naturalistically recreate in paint the light of the moon.[410] Such observations by prominent art theorists evidence both an awareness of the difficulties of painting convincing night scenes as well as a special appreciation for this unusual artistic ability.

Likewise, analysis of seventeenth-century Dutch auction records and inventories provides compelling market-based evidence that suggests a wide variety of contemporary *liefhebbers* and others desired night scenes. High-status clientele in Delft enthusiastically collected the work of Leonaert Bramer, a noted specialist in nocturnal subjects. In Rotterdam, Egbert van der Poel's numerous paintings of nighttime scenes encouraged many imitators. Artists working in that city, including Adam Colonia, Phillip van Leeuwen, and Jan Wilm, painted works set after dark inspired by those of Van der Poel. In Amsterdam, Aert van der Neer similarly earned a reputation as a frequent painter of night scenes. His work, too, entered the collections of prominent citizens and inspired the imitation by other artists, who also hoped to find success in the city's competitive art market.

The group of artists working in the adjacent cities of Delft and Rotterdam and consisting of Bramer, Van der Poel, and the latter's followers produced more paintings of night scenes than any other artists in the Republic. Bramer's established prominence in Delft during Van der Poel's early life and career suggests that the elder Delft master influenced the younger artist. A

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[410] Samuel Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding Tot De Hooge Schoole Der Schilderkonst: Anders De Zichtbaere Werelt*, trans., Charles Ford (Rotterdam: François van Hoogstraeten, 1678) 259, accessed March 28, 2019, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/grondt/inleyding-tot-de-hooge-schoole-der-schilderkonst-anders-de-zichtbaere-werelt-rotterdam-1678.

drawing Bramer produced after a painting by Van der Poel attests to the two artists' mutual admiration.[411]

Jan van de Velde II, from either Rotterdam or Delft, but active primarily in Haarlem, also depicted numerous night scenes in engravings and etchings. The prints often show the influence of, or are copies after the work of the German artist Adam Elsheimer, who set a number of his paintings after dark. Van de Velde most likely copied Hendrik Goudt's engraved reproductions of Elsheimer's paintings. Although primarily active in Utrecht, Goudt probably received training as a printmaker in The Hague,[412] which notably shared an art market with Delft.[413] Without further research into the distinctive regional interest in night scenes, no certain conclusions can be drawn about the specific influence among artists. However, the significance of their shared spheres of cultural and artistic exchange is evident.

The market for night scenes in Delft and Rotterdam reached a zenith during the career of Egbert van der Poel. In the mid 1650s, he most likely recognized the market in Delft for Leonaerdt Bramer's night scenes and adopted the depiction of nocturnal lighting effects and subject matter as his own specialty. Initially, Van der Poel depicted raucous celebrations on city streets. However, by 1655—after his move from Delft to Rotterdam—Van der Poel developed additional favorite nighttime subjects, including fishermen on the dunes, market vendors, and village fires or *brantjes*. By this time, he displayed a keen understanding of the art market and an eagerness to cater to, and profit from its appetites. Following the 1654 explosion of the Delft gunpowder magazine, which destroyed nearly a quarter of the city and killed hundreds of people,

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[411] Joaneath A. Spicer, "The Role of Printmaking in Utrecht during the First Half of the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 57 (1999): 111–12. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20169145.
[412] Spicer, "The Role of Printmaking,"111–12.
[413] Walter Liedtke has described the shared art market of The Hague and Delft, which he attributes to cities' proximity to one another. See Walter Liedtke, "Delft and the Delft School: An Introduction," in *Vermeer and the Delft School,* ed. Walter Liedtke, 12.

Van der Poel began producing nighttime pictures of the incident or its aftermath in great numbers. Approximately twenty such depictions by Van der Poel survive.[414] His extraordinary production of scenes within the subgenre of nocturnal imagery further illustrates his lucrative approach to the business of painting. Ultimately in Rotterdam, the demand for night scenes proved equall to or even greater than in Delft. Even after Van der Poel's death in 1664 at the age of forty-three, his followers continued to produce nocturnal scenes in his style to such an extent and in large number that their paintings are often nearly indistinguishable.

Because most Dutch pictures from the seventeenth century feature daytime settings, those scenes set at night have invited special consideration. In Rotterdam and Delft, in particular, but also throughout the Dutch Republic, artists set works at night for a wide variety of reasons. In the artworks discussed in this dissertation, a nocturnal setting contributed in significant ways to the viewer's engagement with, and understanding of the pictured scene. I have analyzed images of the most popular and frequently depicted subject matter set after dark; however, other works of art with themes not addressed here may also incorporate cultural perceptions surrounding the concept of the night, including but not limited to those discussed in this dissertation. This study has suggested new contexts in which to interpret certain imagery produced in the northern Netherlands between the late-sixteenth and early-eighteenth centuries. In doing so, these investigations have led to a more in-depth understanding of the fascinating and meaningful role played by the night in Dutch paintings, prints, and, drawings from this period.

[414] Axel Rüger, "Egbert van der Poel, *A View of Delft after the Explosion of 1654*," in *Vermeer and the Delft School,* ed. Walter Liedtke, 328.

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