

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS
ARRETEE AU 6.10.93

- . Mde Françoise Baligand, Musée de la Chartreuse, Douai, France
- . M. Pr. Hans Belting, Munich, Allemagne
- . M. Knut Berg, Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo, Norvège
- . Mlle Irène Bizot, Réunion des Musées Nationaux, Paris, France
- . M. Alessandro Bettagno, Fondation Cini, Venise, Italie
- . M. Per Bjurström, Stockholm, Suède
- . M. Alf Boe, Oslo Kommune, Oslo, Norvège
- . M. George Breeze, Cheltenham Art Gallery, Cheltenham, Angleterre
- . Mde Görel Cavalli-Björkman, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Suède
- . M. Marco Chiarini, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, Italie
- . M. Timothy Clifford, National Gallery, Edinburgh, Ecosse
- . M. Dirk de Vos, Musées de Bruges, Bruges, Belgique
- . M. Theodor Enescu, Musée National, Bucarest, Roumanie
- . Mde M. Rosa Figueiredo, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbonne
- . M. Johann G. Von Hohenzollern, Bayerische Staatsgemälde sammlungen,
Munich, Allemagne
- . M. James Holloway, National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, Ecosse
- . M. Robert Hoozee, Museum Voor Schone Kunsten, Gant, Belgique
- . Mde Viviane Huchart, Musée de Picardie, Amiens, France
- . Mde Aune Jääskinen, Museum of Foreign Art Sinebrychoff, Helsinki,
Finlande
- . Mde Catherine Johnston, National Gallery, Ottawa, Canada
- . M. Konstanty Kalinowski, Muzeum Narodowego, Poznan, Pologne
- . M. Jacques KuhnMunch, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Valenciennes, France
- . Mde Agnieszka Lawniczakowa, National Museum, Poznan, Pologne
- . M. R. de Leeuw, Rijksmuseum Vincent Van Gogh, Amsterdam, Hollande
- . M. Dewey Mosby, Picker Art Gallery (Colgate University), Hamilton, U.S.A
- . M. Miklos Mojzer, Szépművészeti Muzeum, Budapest, Hongrie
- . M. Henk Van Os, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Hollande

- . Mde Jane Rice, San Diego Museum of Art, San Diego, U.S.A.
- Mlle Marie-José Salmon, Musée Départemental, Beauvais, France
- Mde Birgitta Sandström, Zornsamlingarna, Mora, Suède
- . M. David H. Trapnell, International Centre for Wildlife Art, Gloucester,
Angleterre

PROGRAMME DE LA REUNION ICFA

BUDAPEST 13 - 16 OCTOBRE 1993

- 13 octobre : Arrivée à Budapest
- 14 octobre : 9H s/ : Incription
- 10H : Réunion de Bureau du Comité ICFA
- 10H30-11H : Session Plénière. Introduction par Miklos Mojzer
- 11H - 12H : Conférence par H. Van Os : Introduction au problème du Chef-d'oeuvre absolu "La Ronde de Nuit de Rembrandt"
- 12H-13H30 : Interventions de Françoise Baligand, D. De Vos, Tim Clifford
- 13H30 : Fin de session
- 13H30-14H30 : Lunch
- 14H30-16H : Interventions de Görel Cavalli-Björkman, Jane Rice, Johann Von HohenZollern
- 16H : Discussion et commentaires par le Pr. Dr. Hans Belting
- 16H45 : Fin de session
- 17H : Réception offerte par Miklos Mojzer
- 15 octobre : Matin : Départ pour Esztergom et Gran. Déjeuner à Esztergom
- Après-Midi : Székesfehérvár, Stuhlweissenburg et Zsambék
- 16 octobre : 9H - 9H30 : Session Plénière du Comité ICFA
- 9H30 : Interventions de Th. Enescu, M. Chiarini, M. Piotrovski et Alf Boe.
- 12H : Bilan de la Session
- 12H30-13H30 : Lunch
- 14H : Visite du chateau de Buda, du Musée Historique et du Musée des Beaux-Arts
- 18H : Diner au Restaurant "Gambrinus"
- 17 octobre : Départ

COMPTE-RENDU DE LA REUNION DU BUREAU DU COMITE ICFA
TENUE LE JEUDI 14 OCTOBRE A 10H DANS LES LOCAUX DU
MUSEE DES BEAUX-ARTS DE BUDAPEST

Présents :

H. Van Os (Président)	J. Kuhn munch (Secrétaire)
Maria Rosa Figueiredo	A. Bettagno
C. Johnston	J. Holloway
Görel Cavalli-Björkman	I. Bizot
G. Von Hohenzollern	S. Sachs
F. Baligand (Trésorière)	K. Berg

Le nouveau Président H. Van Os remercie notre hôte, le Docteur Miklos Mojzer, Directeur du Musée des Beaux-Arts de Budapest pour son hospitalité ainsi que le Secrétaire, Jacques Kuhn munch pour la préparation de cette réunion, la première tenue dans un ex-pays de l'Est.

La liste des collègues désirant être membres-votants de l'ICFA est ensuite examinée. Il y a relativement peu de candidatures ; seules six d'entre elles sont retenues. Malgré ses 471 membres (votants et non votants), ce comité doit recruter de nouveaux membres et le Secrétaire demande aux collègues de faire un effort en ce sens.

Le Président rappelle le programme de cette réunion ; le lieu de la réunion en 1994 est évoqué. Après un échange de vue, ce sont les U.S.A. qui sont retenus et plus particulièrement Boston, Hartford. Des supports financiers seront demandés afin que tous puissent y participer.

Fin de la réunion de Bureau.

COMPTE-RENDU DE LA SESSION PLENIAIRE DU COMITE ICFA
TENUE AU MUSEE DES BEAUX-ARTS DE BUDAPEST
LE JEUDI 14 OCTOBRE A 11H

Présents :

S. Sachs	: Detroit	K. Berg	: Oslo
A. Boe	: Oslo	F. Baligand	: Douai
K. Kalinowski	: Poznan	J. Kuhn munch	: Valenciennes
D. Trapnell	: Gloucester	G. Breeze	: Cheltenham
Th. Enescu	: Bucarest	H. Van Os	: Amsterdam
G. Cavalli-Björkman	: Stockholm	D. De Vos	: Bruges
R. Hoozee	: Gand	M. Chiarini	: Florence
P. Björström	: Stockholm	J. Rice	: San Diego
J. Holloway	: Edinbourg	R. de Leuw	: Amsterdam
T. Clifford	: Edinbourg	H. Belting	: Munich
G. Von Hohenzollern	: Munich	A. Lawniczakowa	: Poznan
Mde Poupeiza	: Bucarest	A. Bettagno	: Venise
V. Huchard	: Amiens	C. Johnston	: Ottawa
M. R. Figueiredo	: Lisbonne	D.F. Mosby	: Hamilton
B. Sandström	: Mora	I. Bizot	: Paris
A. Jääskinen	: Helsinki	M.J. Salmon	: Beauvais

Le Président souhaite la bienvenue à l'ensemble des membres du Comité et remercie le Dr. Miklos Mojzer pour son accueil. Ce dernier, après quelques mots de bienvenue, fait part des modifications intervenues dans les excursions du 15 octobre. H. Van Os rappelle le programme de cette réunion : La notion de chef d'oeuvre absolu et les problèmes liés aux attentats et guerres civiles dans les musées. Enfin, A. Boe doit nous parler de ses mécènes japonais.

Nous entrons alors dans le vif du sujet. Henk Van Os présente Hans Belting, critique d'art qui suivra nos travaux et fera la synthèse de nos débats consacrés au problème du "chef d'oeuvre absolu". La Ronde de Nuit de Rembrandt, conservée au Rijksmuseum a été le point de départ de l'exposé du Président :

The Rijksmuseum was meant to be a shrine for Rembrandt's Nightwatch. The gallery of honor is a cathedral interior with the Nightwatch as its high altarpiece. In 1885 the construction of the museum was finished. Only twenty years later the Nightwatch was moved to an additional building because, there, the light was much better. Although the light was undoubtedly better, this new location was considered to be totally wrong : one had moved the national high altarpiece to the sacristy. The Nightwatch came back in the "Cathedral interior" but was hung in a different place. Tracing the history of the manipulation of this masterpiece up till the present day, one is able to disclose many aspects of Dutch nationalism. Although the hatred of modernists against neo-gothic architecture played an important role in the history of the presentation of the Nightwatch. My predecessor Simon Levie decided to bring the Nightwatch back to its original location. However, he did not just reconstruct its nineteenth century environment. The architect Wim Quist did it away with nearly all the decorative elements presenting the gallery of honor in its bare structure. He "calvinised" so to speak the shrine of the Nightwatch and transformed the catholic cathedral into an ascetic structure "à la Saenredam". The gallery of honor can be considered as an early example of postmodernism inspired by respect for the original staging of a masterpiece.

Après avoir évoqué le constant problème que pose le chef d'oeuvre absolu, souvent considéré comme le meilleur représentant de l'art national, il revenait à nos collègues de présenter le chef d'oeuvre absolu de leur musée, ou du moins celui qu'ils considèrent comme tel.

Robert Hoozee intervient le premier :

He discussed some aspects of the presence of an absolute masterpiece within the context of a medium sized museum.

"Christ Carrying the Cross" one of two paintings by Hieronymus Bosch in the museum of Ghent is widely reproduced and discussed as an exceptional composition. Apart from its art historical meaning this work appeals in many different ways to the general public, for instance as a religious work, as a "proto-cubist" enigma, etc. The museum must make the work accessible for this variety in the public interest, and should at the same time try to preserve the original devotional context in which the work originated.

The precise function of this work is not known. We ignore for whom or for what kind of environment it was made. It was bought from an English private collection in 1902 by the "Friends of the Museum" and given to the museum in the same year. When the panel underwent a thorough restoration in the 1950ies this process was supervised by an international committee, indicating that the importance of the painting surpassed the mere responsibility of the present owner, albeit a museum.

At this moment the panel is presented amidst other works of the same period with no particular emphasis on the work. There may be other ways to present the painting and to attract special attention to it. Solemn isolation of this one work in a special room is one solution, but it may destroy intimate contact which is now possible.

Jane Rice retrace ensuite l'historique d'une nature morte de Juan Sanchez Cotan conservée au San Diego Museum of Art "Coins, choux, melons et concombres". Elle fait partie du petit nombre de natures mortes documentées de cet artiste. La composition montrant seulement des fruits et légumes était une innovation. Contemporain du Greco, Sanchez Cotan fait figure de novateur dans cette oeuvre peinte vers 1603 dont le pendant serait à Grenade. Le tableau de San Diego proviendrait de Joseph Bonaparte qui l'aurait confisqué aux collections royales espagnoles. Après cet aperçu historique, Jane Rice présente ce chef d'oeuvre dans le contexte muséographique de son musée.

Nous revenons à des cas plus généraux avec l'exposé de Tim Clifford. Notre ami pose d'emblée le problème. Y a t-il chef d'oeuvre absolu ? Quelle idée peut-on s'en faire ? Chaque grand musée possède le sien : Le Louvre avec Mona Lisa, la Villa Borghese avec Bernini, le Prado et ses Velasquez. Si l'Histoire de l'Art les reconnaît comme tels, l'idée de chef d'oeuvre absolu varie et évolue avec le temps. Marcel Proust fait d'un tableau topographique, la Vue de Delft de Vermeer une oeuvre mondialement connue. A cela, s'ajoutent des contraintes touristiques, archéologiques et économiques qui faussent le jeu. On arrive ainsi à une notion subjective qui ne satisfait que l'esprit moderne d'aujourd'hui, parfois dénué d'esprit critique alors que les véritables critères sont laissés pour compte.

Nos travaux se poursuivent avec l'intervention de Johann Georg Von Hohenzollern et Görel Cavalli-Björkman qui nous ont communiqué les textes suivants (cf. annexes).

Il convenait enfin à Hans Belting de faire la synthèse de ces divers exposés.

He addresses the topic of the masterpiece as it exists today, in a historical fashion. He is about to write a book on the subject which will cover the last two centuries. Accordingly, his talk was dedicated to the same period, beginning with the opening of the Louvre and ending with present days' movies. The museum, from the very beginning, was reserved for the cult of famous masterpieces, and at the same time resisted their independence from matters of chronology and art history. The shift from the art scene to the general public contributed to a wild growth of the absolute value of the classical work of art to which the poets and writers contributed on their part. The masterpiece soon symbolized old art and therefore was attacked by the avant-garde artists who first tried to emulate the masterpiece and then declared its further production impossible.

Today, the masterpiece is a target of memory and serves to define a category of works of art which underlie a number of definitions, such as :

- created by a famous artist
- owner of a famous history
- original of countless copies
- the big treasure of a museum
- a picture with a secret
- a painting with a disputed context and finally
- our last hope in the eternal life of art.

Interrompus par une journée d'excursions dans les sites prestigieux de la Hongrie qui nous ont conduits dans les boucles du Danube, à Zsambék, Esztergom, Visegrad et Szentendre, nos travaux ont repris le lendemain 16 octobre par des exposés de nos collègues Marco Chiarini et Theodore Enescu. Ils ont fait part de leurs réflexions suite aux attentats de Florence et aux événements de Roumanie.

The recent explosion which occurred in Florence in the vicinity of the Galleria degli Uffizi and the two which followed in Rome, causing serious damage to San Giorgio in Velabro and St John Lateran, represent a new form of terrorism involving not only civilians and their places of work but directed also at works of art. The car-bomb which exploded behind the Uffizi building seems to have had this precise scope, even though the violence of the explosion caused the death of five persons and completely disrupted the homes, offices and shops of an entire street. Without going into the reasons for these terrorist attacks in Florence and Rome, our concern is to discover ways of preventing further disasters of this kind. The first problem naturally involves the protection of areas surrounding the most important monuments and museums (which are inevitably those most likely to attract attacks of this kind). Here one is faced with almost insurmountable difficulties insofar as the buildings which house most major Italian museums are not only in themselves historical edifices but nearly always situated in the city centre. The case in point involving the Uffizi shows how difficult it would be to create a structural defence around the building. An alternative would be to have a patrol constantly guarding the building night and day, but this solution also presents problems. Certain precautions might, to some extent, help to diminish the damage caused by explosions of this kind : the presence of bullet-proof glass covering the surface of many paintings prevented damage from the shattered glass of skylights and windows and might have saved the three paintings (two paintings by Honthorst and one by Manfredi), whose painted surface disintegrated as a result of the enormous pressure caused by the explosion. However, one must conclude that there is little one can do to discourage or foresee this kind of terrorist action, which may also be connected in some way with the war in Yugoslavia during which numerous historical and artistic buildings have been involved in destructive attacks.

Le Musée des Beaux-Arts de Bucarest réunit plus de 120 000 objets. Il eut à subir, pendant de longues années, les restrictions budgétaires du régime communiste. Les 22-24 décembre 1989, de graves événements surviennent à Bucarest. C'est la chute du régime qui s'amorce. Des éléments incontrôlés de la Securitate pénètrent dans les salles et tirent dans tous les sens, y compris sur la foule rassemblée sur la place du Palais. Les canons de l'armée répliquent à leur tour en tirant sur le musée, tandis que la Securitate met le feu sur son passage, brûlant ainsi deux tapisseries du XVIIe siècle. Le plus grave est l'incendie de l'atelier de restauration des peintures (25 tableaux détruits) ; la bibliothèque, le bureau du Département d'Art Médiéval et toute la documentation furent anéantis. De même, plus de 200 tableaux furent transpercés par les éclats d'obus et les balles. Le musée était en ruine. Les restaurations, longues et coûteuses, vont être entreprises en partie par les pays d'Europe de l'Ouest (France, Allemagne, Pays-Bas) et les U.S.A. Il ne reste plus maintenant qu'à reconstruire et espérer des jours meilleurs.

Tous les musées ne connaissent pas les mêmes difficultés. Afl Boe, Directeur depuis 16 ans du Musée Munch à Oslo, conserve un ensemble exceptionnel d'oeuvres de cet artiste. Le musée a été récemment modernisé et des expositions ont été présentées à Tokyo à l'invitation du mécène Idemitsu. Trois peintures sont prêtées chaque année pendant 15 ans dans trois musées différents. Elles sont accompagnées de gravures. L'argent collecté va dans un Institut de recherche. Malgré ces revenus, le Musée est toujours à la recherche de partenaires financiers.

Notre séance plénière se termine avec cet exposé. Il revient à Françoise Baligand de dresser, pour la dernière fois, le bilan financier. Le solde créditeur est de 19 995,61 FF. Viviane Huchard est élue trésorière à main levée. H. Van Os annonce que la prochaine réunion aura lieu à Boston et à Harford à la fin du mois d'octobre 94 avec des visites de musées privés. Il conviendra de faire appel aux bourses de fondation pour que le plus grand nombre de participants soient présents. Françoise Baligand propose de travailler sur les chefs d'oeuvre non localisés (volets de triptyques, oeuvres documentées en mains privées ou non retrouvées après la guerre). On envisage une publication avec des fiches diffusées aux membres de notre Comité, aux chercheurs et aux membres de l'ICFA.

Avant de clore la séance, le Président rappelle, pour 1995, l'invitation des membres français à se rendre dans le Nord de la France (Amiens, Lille, Douai et Valenciennes). Cette proposition est acceptée à l'unanimité.

Tous remercient Miklos pour son accueil et chacun promet de se revoir l'année prochaine.

Annex

The absolute masterpiece - Alte Pinakothek München

In contrary to other great museums the Alte Pinakothek in Munich owns no painting which we could declare to be an absolute masterpiece. The Dresden Gallery has the Sixtina by Raphael, the Berlin Gallery in Dahlem "the Man with the Golden Helmet" formerly by Rembrandt, the Louvre the Mona Lisa, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam the Nightwatch etc. The Alte Pinakothek owns very many famous paintings among them the "Columba" altarpiece by Rogier van der Weyden, the Madonna Tempi by Raphael, the "Four Apostles" by Dürer, the "Battle of Alexander" by Albrecht Altdorfer, the "Honeysuckle-Bower", the "Battle of the Amazones" or the "Last Judgement" by Rubens and among many others the "Erasmus and Maurice" altarpiece by Matthias Grünewald. It is one of the outstanding masterpieces of the Early German school painted by Grünewald, whose real name was probably Mathis Neithardt Gothardt, or perhaps Mathis Neithard, called Gothardt. No artist amongst Dürers contemporaries has given such far-reaching speculation due to his largely unknown biography as Grünewald. The artist retreats behind his work in an almost medieval manner. From 1516 to 1526 he worked for Cardinal Albrecht von Brandenburg, Prince Elector and Archbishop of Mainz, Chancellor of the Holy Empire. The Erasmus-Maurice Altar entered the collection in Munich by the secularisation of the properties of the electors and archbishops of Mainz as a work by Albrecht Dürer. This was no wonder, because Grünewald as an artist was completely unknown in the beginning of the 19th century. Even if the era of Dürer and Grünewald is known as the age of Dürer, in some respects, the painterly quality of his work is superior to Dürer. Grünewalds sense of colour was far more developed and discriminated in a quite different way from that of Dürer, whose art was governed first and foremost by graphic concepts.

This panel formed part of the new altar furnishings for the collegiate church of St. Maurice and St. Mary Magdalen in Halle on the river Saale that Cardinal Albrecht von Brandenburg commissioned some time prior to 1525. Many other altars from different painters among them Lucas Cranach and his school have been placed at the

same time in the whole church. Most of them are conserved in the gallery of the Aschaffenburg castle which is under the administration of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen. The panel presents the two saints Erasmus and Maurice together. The first was bishop of Antioch during the persecution of the Christians under Diocletian. His attribute is the windlass with which he was disembowled and martyred. Maurice was the leader of the Thebian Legion. A meeting between these two men, who both lived around 300 a.Chr., is not documented either in their biographies or in legend. There is thus something to be said for interpreting this painting as a depiction of Erasmus relieving Maurice the victorious leader of the Thebian Legion. The Erasmus cult, which was instigated by Cardinal Albrecht von Brandenburg, and the revival of the veneration of St. Maurice in Halle are now regarded by scholars as having provided the motive behind the commissioning of this panel. As far as we know Albrecht took care of every detail in all the paintings and works of art commissioned for Halle. Grünewald's contemporaries would have noticed that the artist portrayed St. Erasmus with the physiognomy of the ruling prince of the church, the chancellor of the Holy Empire at that time, Cardinal Albrecht von Brandenburg. Brother of the Elector Joachim I. Nestor of Brandenburg, Albrecht was one of the most powerful personalities in the Empire. His favourite residence was the Moritzburg in Halle. As a result of the advanced reformation in Magdeburg and Halle he changed his designated place of burial in 1540 from the Collegiate church in Halle to the cathedral of Mainz. This is the reason for the many works of art from Albrecht's collection in Aschaffenburg castle, the summer residence of the Electors and Archbishops of Mainz. The crests of the bishoprics of Mainz, Magdeburg and Halberstadt conspicuously placed at his feet underline his important position in the Empire.

Albrecht has erected 1520 a silver statue of St. Maurice in the Collegiate church of Halle which resembles very much to the figure of the saint in the panel. Most probably Grünewald copied this statue for his painting. As recent research from Ulrich Steinmann has attempted to prove, there are probably allusions to contemporary events in this picture. The figure of Maurice, who

was also the patron of the Holy Empire, bears a victors laurels. He can be interpreted as an allusion to the highest representative of the Empire, Emperor Charles V., who had apparently worn the same equestrian armour on the statue and in the painting on the occasion of his entry into Aachen for his coronation as King in October 1520. Following a tradition he has given the armour to the city of Halle. Thus Charles V. in the figure of St. Maurice, is recieved by Albrecht, the Primate of the Empire, who had placed his personal influence behind the election of the Emperor, and who appears here in the form of St. Erasmus, the patron saint of the princeley house of Hohenzollern-Brandenburg. This magnificent picture is a homage to Charles V. who had emerged victorius from the election and who had hastened from distant Spain to Germany for his coronation. The other theories about the representation are not convincing: The meeting between the two Saints; the "Conversion of Maurice by Erasmus"; the "Christianing of Maurice by Erasmus"; the "Allegorie on the introduction of the cult of St. Maurice in Halle". After Louis Réau the two saints are "comme la personification de deux temperaments: Le Flegmatique et le Sanguin".

The juxtaposition of the two saints is particulary fascinating, contrasted even in the colour of their skins. This is achieved with the utmost sensibility for surface treatment and for rich colour values. The painting has been worked up on colour alone in an almost impressionist manner.

The painting still brises the medieval spirit of the great primitive german altarpieces from the 15th century and is in the same time a masterpiece of the german renaissance (which never really existed). The Four Apostles by Albrecht Dürer and the Erasmus and Maurice altar are probably the two most important monumental paintings in german art history. Even if the Grünewald altar never had the fame like the Sixtina or the Mona Lisa, it is regarding its history, its iconography and its importance for german art history, one of the most important masterpieces not only in the Alte Pinakothek.

Dr. Johann Georg Prinz von Hohenzollern

Juan Sánchez Cotán

Spanish, 1560-1627

Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber, c. 1602

Oil on canvas

27 1/8 x 33 1/4 inches (69 x 84.5 cm)

Gift of Anne R. and Amy Putnam

1945:43

Q*uince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber* is one of the most famous Spanish works of art in the United States. It is one of a small number of documented still lifes by the seventeenth-century still-life painter Juan Sánchez Cotán. At the time this picture was painted, still-life elements only appeared as decoration in paintings usually depicting religious or classical stories. This composition, which shows only fruits and vegetables, was a daring innovation. Sánchez Cotán would have been a leading figure in the avant-garde of his day and was a contemporary of El Greco.

Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber was painted in Toledo, Spain, sometime before 1603. At that time Toledo was the religious and intellectual capital of Spain. The picture is first mentioned in an inventory associated with the will Sánchez Cotán made prior to entering a Carthusian monastery. He became a lay brother in the charterhouse at Granada in 1603. It has been suggested that the austerity of Sánchez Cotán's still lifes is in some way associated with his religious calling. Whatever the connection it is certainly true that the Carthusians practiced contemplation and self-denial.

The subject is a small collection of fruit and vegetables arranged in a window setting, possibly a *cantarrera*, or "cooling space," in a Spanish house. The hanging fruit may look strange to modern eyes but in Spain at that time this was a common way of preserving produce from pests. All of the produce is ordinary, but Sánchez Cotán carefully considers the composition of his still life, arranging the fruits and vegetables in a precise curve that moves both vertically and horizontally. Descending objects project

successively outward until the cucumber, which extends over the ledge, seems to thrust forward into the viewer's space.

Another still life by Sánchez Cotán, in the Museum de Bellas Artes, Granada, might be considered a pendant to the San Diego Museum of Art piece, since it completes the curve begun in *Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber*. Yet another in the Art Institute of Chicago repeats the San Diego Museum of Art composition exactly but adds to the space four suspended birds, including a large duck and a partridge.

The San Diego Museum of Art painting has had an interesting history since its first mention in the inventory of 1603. In 1809 it seems to have been a part of a group of paintings confiscated from the Spanish Royal Collection by the French under the command of Joseph Bonaparte. When Joseph Bonaparte fled Spain in 1813 he took with him 1,500 wagon loads of booty. In 1815 he moved to New Jersey under the assumed name, "Comte de Survilliers," and a year later had a collection of some 200 paintings he had taken from Spain sent to him. Three years later in 1818 the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts displayed a work by Juan Sánchez Cotán entitled *Still Life-Quince, Cabbage, Melon, & C* [sic]. In 1844 Joseph Bonaparte died, and the following year, when his grandson began to sell off paintings belonging to the estate, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts again displayed a still life by Sánchez Cotán that was said to be for sale. After that time the painting disappeared for an entire century until it reappeared and was purchased by Anne R. and Amy Putnam for the San Diego Museum of Art.

H.W.

Annexes.

Görel Cavalli, Björkman.

A Masterpiece

Trying to choose one picture from Nationalmuseum, Stockholm I will consider three criteria:

- 1) The artistic quality of the picture
- 2) The national and historical significance of the picture.
- 3) The public appeal of the picture

Nationalmuseum has its strength in three areas, Netherlandish art of the 17th century, French art of the 18th century and Swedish art from the Renaissance onwards.

Hors concours in the Netherlandish collection is without any doubt Rembrandt's *Claudius Civilis*. One problem is, however, that the picture still officially belongs to the Royal Academy of Art.

An equivalent role in the French collection plays *The Triumph of Venus* by Francois Boucher which also symbolizes the close cultural ties that existed between France and Sweden in the 18th century.

To find one picture in the Swedish collection which is quite outstanding is more difficult. The artistic development in Sweden had two peaks, one during the second half of the 18th century, one at the end of the 19th. The most beloved Swedish picture might be Anders Zorn's *Midsummer Dance* which has its nostalgic associations to every Swede. But there are many options.

By mere coincidence the Nationalmuseum houses three pictures of utmost national importance for three countries:

Rembrandt's *Claudius Civilis* for the Netherlands
Goya's *Spain, Time and History* for Spain and
Pilo's *The Coronation of Gustavus III* for Sweden.

Claudius Civilis' importance is unquestionable. It depicts the oath made by the Batavians to rise against the Romans a parallel to the struggle for the liberty of the Netherlands and originally ordered for the town hall of Amsterdam. The history of Goya's picture is unfortunately unknown but it seems to commemorate the first democratic constitution of Spain in 1812. The constitution was painted in an insignificant little book that Spain holds in her right hand. Pilo's coronation of Gustavus III is to some extent a political document, ordered in 1777, five years after the coronation and begun in 1782, ten years after the event depicted. In 1772 the king had staged a bloodless revolution transferring the power to the king from the parliament. The political message was controversial and in 1792 the King was murdered by a representative of the opposition. The picture was never finished but is still one of the most important works of Swedish 18th century art.

In a Dutch Museum Rembrandt's *Claudius Civilis* would certainly have been chosen the Masterpiece of the museum as well as the Goya would have been in a Spanish. Although the *Coronation of Gustavus III* is executed by Sweden's most important painter of the 18th century the picture is met with more respect than esteem. It does not have the immediate appeal we are talking about here.

Turning to the third criterion, the public appeal of a picture a number of non artistic and non historical factors are of great importance.

It is obvious that a portrait of a sweet young girl or lady has great advantages. And she might preferably be a little mysterious. Mona Lisa is a good example. For Stockholm The Kitchen Maid by Rembrandt is a reliably cover-girl.

The question is however, if she is not outstriped by The Lady with the veil, or as she is described in an old inventory- a one-eyed female. This painting is executed by Alexander Roslin, a Swedish portrait painter spending most of his life in Paris, member of the French Academy of art and married to a charming young French woman, a painter herself. In Paris Roslin acted as a characteristic official portrait painter who knew how to flatter his models and who excelled in painting all expensive fabrics. His favourite model was his wife and this portrait The Lady with the veil from 1768 is by far his most successful painting. The painting belonged since the 18th century to a private collection, the Österby collection and it was discovered when it was lent to the museum for a large 18th century exhibition in 1942. Three years later it was given to the museum. It was on the cover of the Rococo catalogue in Munich some years ago and is now poster for the exhibition Le Soleil et l'Etoile du Nord to be shown at Grand Palais in Paris.

If I now make Roslin's lady my choice it is not, however, only because of its appeal to the public. Returning to my first criterion, the quality, it cannot of course compare with works by great international artists as Rembrandt, Rubens, Poussin or Watteau. On the other hand I feel that it would be relevant to choose a work by an exceptional Swedish artist and preferably one with an international appeal.

Roslin obviously takes pleasure in showing off his ability to give an illusion of rustling silk that contrasts against the soft sensual, half hidden face of the woman. The face liberates itself from a dark surrounding and our interest is concentrated to her visible eye, placed exactly on the counter-line of the picture. Her smile has a melancholic touch which intrigues the beholder and grants it an almost literary quality.

Characteristic of the painting, despite its sensuality, was the Nordic cool of which Diderot often accused Roslin. The Lady with the veil is unique in its kind; There are French and Italian influences but they are disciplined by the Swedish temperament.

Scrutinizing the national and historical significance of the picture may result in the same. The portrait has definitely a significance for my museum as a symbol of the close ties between France and Sweden in one of the most flowering periods of Swedish culture.