

Gerard van Honthorst

1592 – Utrecht – 1656

A Boy Blowing on a Firebrand

Remains of a signature upper right G . v ... : f

Oil on canvas

75.5 x 64.5 cm.

Provenance:

Warwickshire, Coombe Abbey, collection Earls of Craven, by 1866¹

Sale London, Christie's (collection Rt. Hon. Cornelia, Countess of Craven), 13 April 1923, lot 99, to Harris Bath, collection Charles A. Cooke, Esq.

His sale, London, Sotheby's, 1 July 1953, lot 28, sold to Mayhem

Brussels, Gallery Leger and Sons

Brussels, private collection, since 1959

Literature:

Catalogue of the Pictures at Combe Abbey, Warwickshire, The Seat of William Earl of Craven, 1866, cat. no. 246 ('Boy Blowing a Fire Brand, G. Honthorst')

T. Cox, *Inventory and Valuation for Fire Insurances, Pictures, Drawings and Engravings in Combe Abbey*, Oxford, Bodleian Library under Craven Papers, 1916, no. 246 (as being in 'The Breakfast Staircase and Lobby at Foot. A Boy, blowing a firebrand in scarlet and brown coat and large brimmed hat: 32 x 26' (approx. 80 x 66 cm.))

J.R. Judson, *Gerrit van Honthorst : a discussion of his position in Dutch art*, The Hague 1956, p. 63, note 3

B. Nicolson, *Hendrick Terbrugghen*, The Hague 1958, p. 66, fig. 33b

J.R. Judson, *Gerrit van Honthorst : a discussion of his position in Dutch art*, The Hague 1959, p. 63, note 3, p. 227, cat. no. 161, fig. 16

B. Nicolson, 'The 'Candlelight Master': a follower of Honthorst in Rome', in: *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 9 (1960), pp. 121-164, p. 149, note 62 (1)

B. Nicolson, 'Second Thoughts about Terbrugghen', in: *The Burlington Magazine* 102 (1960), pp. 465-473, p. 466 (2)

J. Białostocki, 'Puer Sufflans Ignes', in: *Arte in Europa : scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Edoardo Arslan*, 2 vols., Milan 1966, I, pp. 591-595, pp. 592, 594, note 12 (republished in: J. Białostocki., *The Message of Images : Studies in the History of Art*, Vienna 1988, pp. 139-144, pp. 143, 264, note 13)

H. Braun, *Gerard und Willem van Honthorst*, dissertation Göttingen 1966, pp. 157-158, no. 31

R. Klessmann et al., *Jan Lievens : Ein maler im Schatten Rembrandts*, exh. cat. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum 1979, p. 50, under cat. no. 7

B. Nicolson, *The International Caravaggesque Movement*, Oxford/New York 1979, pp. 61, 225

L.J. Slatkes, review of: B. Nicolson, *The International Caravaggesque Movement*, in: *Simiolus* 12 (1981-19 82), pp. 167-183, p. 176

W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandtschüler*, 6 vols., Landau/Pfalz 1983-1994, 3 (1983), p. 1791, under no. 1225, citing Klessmann 1979

A. Blankert, L.J. Slatkes, *Nieuw licht op de Gouden Eeuw : Hendrick ter Brugghen en tijdgenoten*, exh. cat. Utrecht, Centraal Museum, Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum 1986-1987, pp. 59, 308, fig. 134

B. Nicolson, L. Vertova, *Caravaggism in Europe*, 3 vols., Florence 1990, I, pp. 51, 127, III, pl. 1250

L. Federly Orr, in: J.A. Spicer et al., *Masters of light : Dutch painters in Utrecht during the Golden Age*, exh. cat. San



Francisco, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, London, National Gallery 1997-1998, pp. 239-240, under cat. no. 36, fig. 1
 L. Slatkes, in: J. Turner (ed.), *The Dictionary of Art*, 34 vols., New York 1996, 14, pp. 727-732, p. 729
 R.J. Judson, R.E.O. Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst 1592-1656*, Doornspijk 1999, pp. 15, 183-184, cat. no. 231, pl. 132
 M. Neumeister, *Das Nachtstück mit Kunstlicht in der niederländischen Malerei und Graphik des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts : Iconographische und Koloristische Aspekte*, Petersberg 2003, pp. 237, 274, note 666
 L. Slatkes, W. Frants, *The Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen 1588-1629 : Catalogue Raisonné*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia 2007, pp. 155, 166, 423, fig. 20
 G. Papi, *Gherardo delle Notti : quadri bizzarrissimi e cene allegre*, exh. cat. Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi 2015, p. 150, under cat. no. 12

The son of the textile and tapestry designer Herman Gerritsz van Honthorst and his wife Maria Wilhelmsdr van der Halm, Gerard van Honthorst grew up in an artistic milieu. While his brother Herman was trained as a sculptor, Gerard himself was apprenticed to Utrecht's foremost painter Abraham Bloemaert (1566-1651). In turn, Gerard taught his younger brother Willem. In around 1610-1615 Honthorst decided to travel to Rome, where he soon received numerous commissions from prominent art collectors such as the banker Vincenzo Giustiniani and Cardinal Scipione Borghese – both former patrons of Caravaggio (1571-1610). Although Honthorst's early production leans heavily on the latter's work and on that of Caravaggio's most successful interpreter, Bartolomeo Manfredi (1582-1622), he quickly developed his own trademark adaptation of it, the Caravaggesque night scene. Honthorst's masterful *chiaroscuro*, his application and rendering of artificial light and its effects soon brought him huge success, and with it the nickname 'Gherardo delle Notti', Gerard of the Nights.

Having left Rome in the spring of 1620 with a solid reputation, Honthorst arrived in his native Utrecht in July, where his return was welcomed with a feast in his honour, attended by – among others – the scholar Arnhout van Buchell (1565-1641), his former teacher Abraham Bloemaert (1566-1651), Paulus Moreelse (1571-1638), Crispijn de Passe I (1564-1637) and many more. Honthorst married Sophia Coopmans in October of that same year. The *primus inter pares* among the Utrecht Caravaggists – the other two most important being Hendrick ter Brugghen (1588-629) and Dirck van Baburen (1594/95-1624) –

Honthorst became a member of the Guild of St Luke in 1622, serving several times as its dean in the latter half of the 1620s. During these early Utrecht years, he further perfected his artificially lit night scenes, resulting in a number of critically acclaimed masterpieces, both history and genre works. The mid 1620s saw Honthorst expanding his range, as he started to adopt bright colours and cool daylight. This period also brought him the first of a long series of commissions from the House of Orange. From April to December 1628/29 Honthorst was in England, where he painted several well received – and well paid – portraits of Charles I and his family. As his international reputation grew, Honthorst's style took new directions as well. While gradually abandoning the Caravaggist style in favour of what Slatkes has called the 'insipid but financially rewarding style of courtly portraiture', Honthorst also started to produce large-scale allegorical works for huge decorative schemes. In 1637 the artist – due to his enormous success as a painter to the Court – decided to move to The Hague, where he was involved in the decoration of the palaces of Honselaersdijk and Rijswijk, and later the famous Oranjezaal at Huis ten Bosch. In 1652 Honthorst – internationally regarded as one of the most important painters of his time – retired to Utrecht, a very wealthy man.

The present work and the ancient pictorial tradition of the 'puer sufflans ignes'

The present work dates from Honthorst's early Utrecht period, just after his triumphant return from Rome, and has all the characteristics of his *chiaroscuro* Caravaggist style, which earned him his epithet 'delle not-

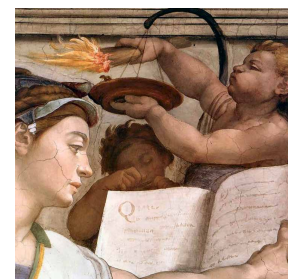


Fig. 1 Michelangelo, *The Erythraean Sibyl*, c. 1508/10, Rome, Sistine Chapel, detail



Fig. 2 Johann Sadeler after Jacopo Bassano, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1599, engraving, 217 x 292 mm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, detail



Fig. 3 El Greco, *Boy Blowing on an Ember*, 60.5 x 50.5 cm., Naples, Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte

ti'. From underneath a blue, wide-brimmed hat decorated with a white and red feather, a half-length figure of a young boy, dressed in a costume matching the hat, with a white ruffed blue jacket crossed with a green sash, and a scarlet cloak lined with ochre, looks waggishly at the beholder. In order to light the large candle in his right hand, the boy blows with puffed out cheeks on a firebrand that he holds in his right hand. The magnificently rendered luminous effect of the glowing firebrand on the boy's face, the sparks flying around, and the candid eye contact between the boy and the viewer create an utterly intimate, private atmosphere. The sword clamped underneath the boy's right arm adds the perfect stalwart touch to this marvellously charming, lively image.

Ever since its first appearance in art historical literature in 1956, the present work has been at the centre of the ongoing 'puer sufflans ignes' ('boy blowing on a fire') discourse, the scholarly debate about a cluster of works by a number of international artists, depicting boys or men blowing on a firebrand. It is commonly accepted that it was with the present work that Honthorst introduced the theme into the Netherlands, precipitating a creative chain reaction of adaptations, variations and emulations by his admiring colleagues.² The theme's origins, though, date back as far as antiquity. In his *Naturalis Historia*, book 34, Pliny the Elder (23-79 AD) informs us about the sculptor Lycius, a pupil (some even say the son) of the admired sculptor Myron (c. 480-440 BC). 'Lycius', he writes, 'made a figure representing a boy blowing a nearly extinguished fire, well worthy of his master' ('puerum sufflantem languidos ignes'), adding that he

'also made a figure of a boy burning perfumes'.³ In the following book 35, dedicated completely to the art of painting, Pliny further mentions the Egyptian painter Antiphilus, who worked during the reign of Alexander the Great (356-323). Antiphilus had decorated among others the Schola Octaviae and the Curia Pompeii in Rome, and was considered to be the foremost rival of the famous Apelles. Descriptions of his work make clear that most of all he excelled in the rendering of light and shade. According to Pliny, 'Antiphilus is highly praised for his picture of a Boy blowing a Fire' ('puero ignem conflante') 'which illuminates an apartment handsomely furnished, and throws a light upon the features of the youth'.⁴ Finally, Pliny states that the painter Philiscus painted 'a Painter's Studio, with a boy blowing the fire'.⁵

These various listings thus indicate that the theme had a certain repute in antiquity. Naturally, the painters in Renaissance Italy took great interest in these classical texts as they offered valuable information on the vanished works of their antique predecessors, and thus formed the potential basis for a kind of reversed *ekphrasis* (the verbal evocation of visual art), a visual response to these ancient written sources, which provided a stimulus for artistic competition. It was Michelangelo (1475-1564) who was the first to pick up on the *puer sufflans ignes* theme, when in the early sixteenth century he depicted a boy blowing on a fire in order to light a torch as an accompanying figure to his *Erythraean Sibyl* in the Sistine Chapel, Rome (fig. 1). Again as a secondary figure, one comes across a boy blowing on a firebrand on the *Adoration of the Shepherds* by

Jacopo Bassano (1510-1592) from Venice, widely known through Johann Sadeler's (1550-1600) 1599 print after the work (figs. 2). Credit for isolating the motif goes to El Greco (1541-1617), who had studied in Venice before leaving for Rome in around 1570. He made it the single subject in his *Boy Blowing on an Ember*, now in the Museo Capodimonte, Naples, datable to his Roman period, in around 1570/75 (fig. 3). In fact, this painting was recorded in an early inventory of the Palazzo Farnese in Rome – where El Greco resided in 1570/72 – and where Honthorst no doubt saw it. A recently discovered early prototype by Honthorst, datable to c. 1614/17, was surely done in his Roman period (fig. 4).⁶ This Roman work



Fig. 4 Gerard van Honthorst, *Boy Blowing on a Firebrand*, c. 1614/17, oil on canvas, 97 x 71 cm., Rome, Galleria Fabio Massimo Megna

confirms Honthorst's early predilection for the *Puer Sufflans*-subject, which offered him great opportunities, not merely because of his interest in chiaroscuro effects in general, but mostly because it was becoming a true showcase among artists for displaying one's skills in rendering chiaroscuro, and to emulate one's praiseworthy predecessors, both those from antiquity and those in more recent times.

Bringing the theme to the North and a hitherto overlooked addition to Honthorst's leading cluster

Upon his return home, Honthorst's specialty, the night scene lit by candle or fire, evidently brought him great success as it became a craze among his colleagues, and no doubt among patrons as well. It thus comes as no surprise that Honthorst decided to further explore the possibilities of the *puer sufflans* theme. One only has to compare the present work with the earlier Roman effort to see the great advance Honthorst had made. Although undoubtedly not without merit, the Roman painting lacks the cheeky excitement of the present work, and neither does it match its level of painterly execution, which by then had become Honthorst's impeccable hallmark. Whereas the present work presents the *puer sufflans* theme in its purest form, Honthorst's widely admired *Soldier and a Girl* now in Braunschweig – depicting a male and a female protagonist – elaborates further on the more explicit erotic connotations of the act of blowing on the (love) fire (fig. 5).⁷ Regardless of this thematic variation the two works share a wholly similar approach in the painterly rendering of the fire and its glowing illumination of the human face, with relatively rough touches of light yellow, pink and white in the most brightly illuminated parts of the face around the mouth and the burning source itself, contrasting with smoothly shadowed cheeks (figs. 6, 7). A strikingly similar application of paint and modelling of the shadows can be seen in Honthorst's monumental *Christ Crowned with Thorns* in the Rijksmuseum, datable to the same early Utrecht period (fig. 8).⁸ The face of the boy on the left, likewise illuminated by a burning torch, again shows Honthorst's fascination at this point of his career for depicting this singular light effect.

As the present *Boy Blowing on a Firebrand* is not dated – as is the case with the *Soldier with a Girl* or the *Mocking of Christ* – art historians since long have suggested dates varying between 1620 to 1624.⁹ However, in this regard, one key source has been systematically overlooked. The only Honthorst scholar to mention this missing piece of the puzzle was Hermann Braun, who in his dissertation of 1966 on the Honthorst brothers remarked that in a French 1906 catalogue of Dutch and Flemish

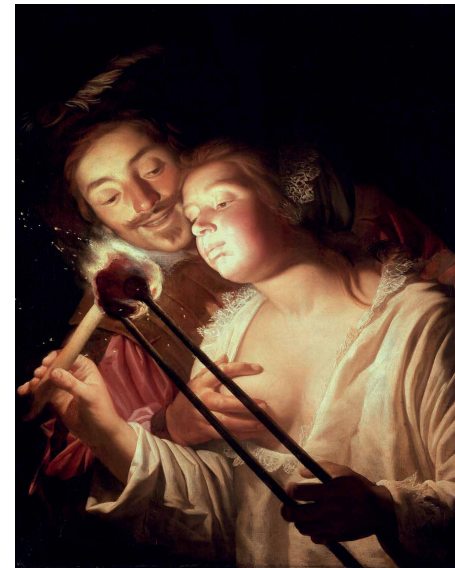


Fig. 5 Gerard van Honthorst, *A Soldier and a Girl*, oil on canvas, 82.6 x 66 cm., Braunschweig, Herzog-Anton-Ulrich-Museum



Fig. 6 Fig. 5, detail

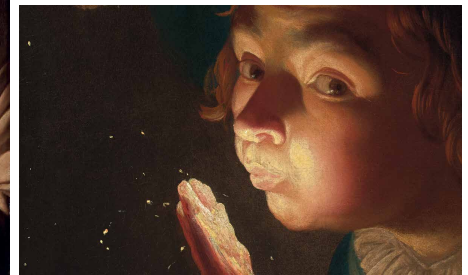


Fig. 7 Cat. no. 5, detail

paintings in St Petersburg collections, a work by Honthorst is mentioned which at that point was part of the famous Delaroff collection, and which apparently depicted a similar boy blowing on a fire: 'Il y a encore un tableau de Honthorst dans la vaste collection Delaroff: c'est un Jeune garçon soufflant le feu, daté de 1622.'¹⁰ Braun, who only knew the reference in the 1906 catalogue, but had never seen the Delaroff work (neither from a photo nor in real life), all too easily assumed that the present *Boy Blowing on a Firebrand* was what he called a 'eigenhändige Wiederholung', a version by Honthorst himself of the 1622 dated Delaroff work. Assuming that the Delaroff work was lost ('das verschollene original'), he let the

case rest. Neither before nor after Braun's dissertation was the 'lost' Delaroff work ever considered again, either within the *puer sufflans ignes* discussion, or in the field of Honthorst scholarship. The work, though, was never lost at all. Overlooked for many years, it currently resides in the collection of the Hermitage museum in St Petersburg, where it is hidden under an erroneous attribution to Matthias Stom (1589/90-after 1649) (fig. 9). Although the work would benefit tremendously from cleaning, it is without any doubt the Delaroff Honthorst. The work entered the Hermitage collection in 1946 through a private person, it has a Delaroff provenance, and it is dated 1622.¹¹ Although clearly not – as



Fig. 8 Gerard van Honthorst, *The Mocking of Christ*, oil on canvas, 192.4 x 221.5 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, detail

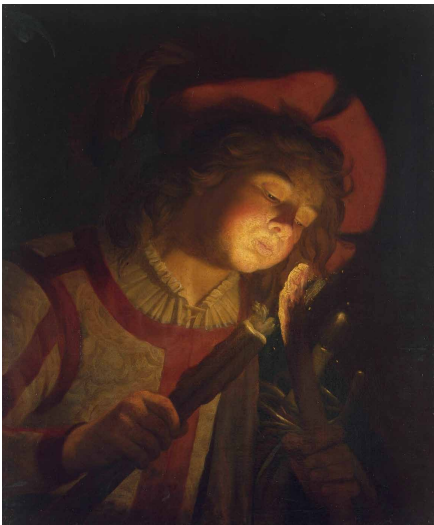


Fig. 9 Gerard van Honthorst, *A Boy Blowing on a Firebrand*, 1622, oil on canvas, 77.5 x 64 cm., St Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum

Braun assumed – a 'version' of the present painting, but an independent composition, the affinity between the two works is remarkable. Again one sees a boy – the same boy? – wearing a fanciful costume, a wide brimmed hat and carrying the same sword under his arm, blowing on a similar firebrand, concentrating on lighting a torch. As for the painting technique, the work shows exactly the same characteristics found in the other paintings (fig. 10). What's more, the two paintings turn out to be of near identical dimensions, suggesting that they might even have been conceived as pendants, possibly explaining the fact that the present work is signed, while the other work seems dated.

The theme picked up in the Netherlands and beyond

Honthorst wasn't the only northern artist who tried his hands on the subject early on. None other than Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) elaborated on the theme in his *Old Woman with a Basket of Coal*, in which a young boy blows on the coals (fig. 11). However, more than Rubens in Antwerp it was Honthorst with his single figure *puer sufflans* works in Utrecht, whose impact was felt deepest. In 1623 Hendrick ter Brugghen painted the clearly Honthorst inspired *Boy Lighting a Pipe from a Candle* in the Dobó István Vármúzeum, Eger (fig. 12).¹² Tellingly, it was the artist's first attempt to paint by an artificial light source, again underlining the sub-

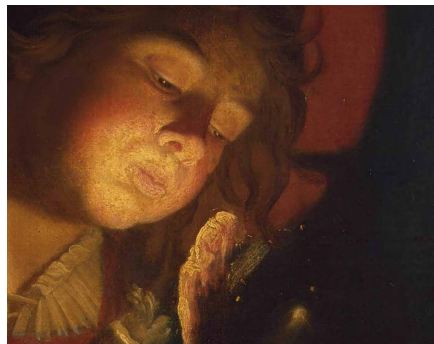


Fig. 10 Fig. 9, detail



Fig. 11 Peter Paul Rubens, *Old Woman with a Basket of Coals*, c. 1618, oil on panel, 116 x 92 cm., Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister

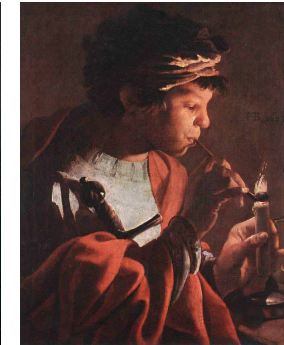


Fig. 12 Hendrick ter Brugghen, *Boy Lighting a Pipe from a Candle*, 1623, oil on canvas, 67.6 x 55 cm., Eger, Dobó István Vármúzeum

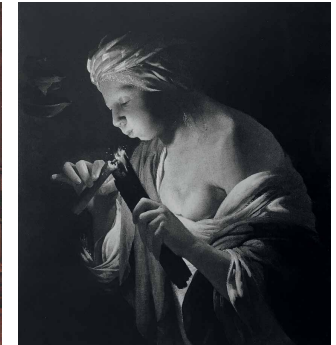


Fig. 13 Hendrick ter Brugghen, *A Girl Blowing on a Firebrand*, oil on canvas, 85 x 77 cm., present whereabouts unknown



Fig. 14 Jan Lievens, *Young Man with a Pipe, Blowing on Glowing Coals*, oil on panel, 82 x 64 cm., Warsaw, Muzeum Pałacu Jana III w Wilanowie

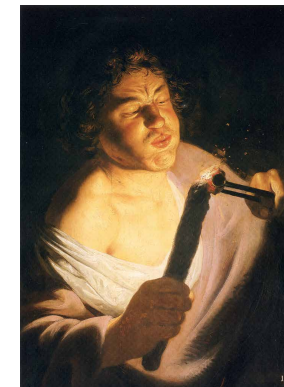


Fig. 15 Jan Lievens, *A Boy Blowing on a Coal*, oil on panel, 82 x 64 cm., Warsaw, Muzeum Pałacu Jana III w Wilanowie



Fig. 16 Jan Lievens, *A Boy Blowing on a Coal (Fire)*, oil on panel, 83.3 x 60 cm., Kassel, Staatliche Museen Kassel, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister

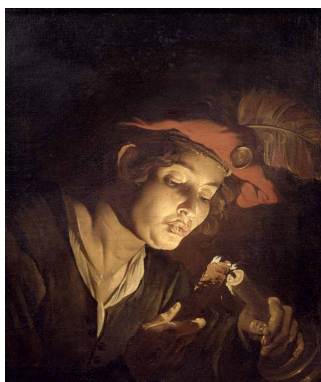


Fig. 17 Matthias Stom, *Boy Blowing on a Firebrand*, oil on canvas, 72 x 58 cm., Bergamo, Accademia Carrara di Belle Arti di Bergamo



Fig. 18 Adam de Coster, *Boy Blowing on a Firebrand*, oil on canvas, 68.5 x 51.5 cm., formerly Rome, Busiri Viki collection

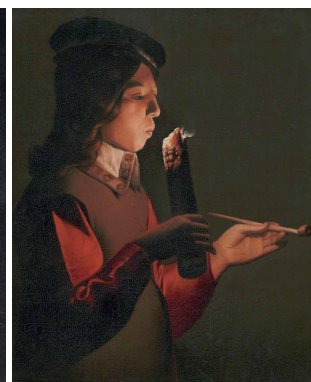


Fig. 19 Georges de la Tour, *A Boy with a Pipe Blowing on a Firebrand*, 1646, oil on canvas, 70.8 x 61.5 cm., Tokyo, Tokyo Fuji Art Museum

ject's exemplary status in showcasing an artist's mastery in the depiction such lighting effects. Ter Brugghen's adaption of Honthorst's example is further indicated by the inclusion of the sword, which the boy, depicted bust length, carries under his arm. Slightly later, Ter Brugghen again responded to Honthorst when he painted his marvellous *Girl Blowing on a Firebrand*, variously dated between 1623 and 1627 (fig. 13).¹³ One painter who was arduously studying the work of the Utrecht *Caravaggisti* was the young Jan Lievens (1607-1674) from Leiden, who eagerly adopted the imagery of his older colleagues. In two pictures generally dated around 1624/25, both in Warsaw, the brazenly ambitious Lievens, only 17 years old, explicitly sought to compete with both Honthorst and Ter Brugghen. His *Young Man with a Pipe, Blowing on Glowing Coals* (fig. 14) directly relates back to Ter Brugghen's *Boy Lighting a Pipe from a Candle*, while the *Boy Blowing on a Coal* (fig. 15) fully relies on Honthorst. The fact that Lievens's two *puer sufflans* are still together, both signed with the same rare signature *J. Liviús* and both of similar size, indicates that they were probably intended as pendants of some sort, despite their relative lack

of compositional cohesion.¹⁴ In this regard, it is interesting that both of the Ter Brugghen works discussed here were once accompanied by pendant pieces as well, which supports the idea of the present work and the Hermitage work having once belonged together, too.¹⁵ Be this as it may, Lievens surely reused Honthorst's composition for a third 'puer sufflans ignes', this time aptly representing 'fire' within the context of a series of the four elements (fig. 16).

A final Netherlandish painter to appropriate the theme directly from Honthorst was Matthias Stom who, as we have seen, was erroneously credited as the author of the Hermitage work. When we look at his *Boy Blowing on a Firebrand* in Warsaw, the faulty Hermitage attribution seems understandable, as compositionally the two works closely resemble each other (fig. 17). Clearly Stom, who specialised in night scenes, was aware of the Hermitage Honthorst, which he probably saw in Utrecht. After his departure for Italy – from where he would never return – he painted several more 'blowers' which can nowadays still be found in Italian collections,

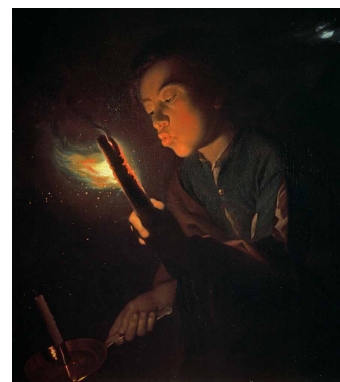


Fig. 20 Godfried Schalcken, *Boy Blowing on a Firebrand*, oil on canvas, 75 x 73.5 cm., Edinburgh, National Galleries of Scotland

thus returning the originally Italian theme (revived by Michelangelo from Antiquity) to its native land.¹⁶ In Flanders we find the theme back with another *tenebrist*, Adam de Coster (1585/86-1643), who was active in Antwerp, but who must have been thoroughly acquainted with Honthorst's work (fig. 18). In France we find the subject in the oeuvre of Georges de la Tour (1593-1652), another painter famous for his *tenebrism*, who was likely familiarised with the theme through the Utrecht *Caravaggisti* (fig. 19). Clearly the theme had become a *must* for painters specialising in night scenes, and it is therefore hardly surprising that the most celebrated painter of night scenes in the Netherlands in the latter half of the Golden Age, Godfried Schalcken (1643-1706) also tried his luck at the subject (fig. 20). The realisation that in this long chain of artistic emulation, from antiquity onwards, the present, recently surfaced work, together with its rediscovered 'brother' painting in the Hermitage, played such an essential role, adds even more lustre to this utterly pleasurable picture.

JH

Notes

- Although its provenance cannot be traced back further than 1866, the present painting may well have entered the collection of the earls of Craven much earlier. William, 1st Earl of Craven (1608-1697) was a British nobleman who was portrayed by Honthorst in 1642 (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, inv. no. PD.117-1992; see: Judson/Ekkart 1999, cat. no. 403). In addition, Craven had a passionate relation with Elisabeth Stuart (1596-1662), a.k.a. Elisabeth of Bohemia, the Winter Queen. She and her husband Frederick V of the Palatinate (1596-1632), the Winter King, lived in The Hague since 1621, where they stood in close contact with Honthorst, who received numerous commissions from them, and taught their daughters. William Craven further supported Elisabeth's brother king Charles I (1600-1649) – who had also commissioned Honthorst – financially, and later confiscated his lands and properties. The 1866 Craven inventory mentions several works by Honthorst.
- The term 'puer sufflans ignes' – which relates to a Latin phrase by Pliny the Elder (see below) – was introduced by Jan Białostocki in his 1966 article (see Literature), in which he first linked the group of 'blowers' to Pliny's description of works from antiquity depicting that subject.
- Pliny the Elder (H.T. Riley, transl.), *The Natural History*, London 1855, book 34, chapter 19.
- Pliny/Riley 1855, book 35, chapter 40.
- Pliny/Riley 1855, book 35, chapter 40.
- G. Papi, in: Florence 2015, cat. no. 12.
- On the erotic overtones in the painting, see: E. de Jongh, *Tot lering en vermaak*, exh. cat. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum 1976, cat. no. 28. See further: Judson/Ekkart 1999, cat. no. 262, as c. 1622.
- Judson/Ekkart 1999, cat. no. 60, as c. 1622.
- Judson 1959, p. 227, cat. no. 161, as c. 1620. Nicolson 1960 (2), p. 466 as c. 1623-1624. Slatkes 1981/82, p. 176 as c. 1620.
- Braun 1966, pp. 157-158, no. 31. For the citation, see: N.N., *Etudes sur les peintres des écoles hollandaise, flamande et néerlandaise qu'on trouve dans la collection Semenov et les autres collections publiques et privées de St-Petersbourg*, St Petersburg 1906, p. XXXVII.
- The work is catalogued in the Hermitage under inv. no. 173-8556 and has been published as by Stom in 1964. See: M. Sherbatheva, 'Kaptuha Matuaca Ciomepa b' 3pmutake', in: *Bulletin du Musée de l'Ermitage* 25 (1964), pp. 23-28, p. 24, ill. See further the Hermitage Museum's website (www.hermitagemuseum.org), where the painting is also listed as by Stom (website visited February 2017).
- See: Slatkes/Franits 2007, cat. no. A47; Utrecht/Braunschweig 1986-1987, cat. no. 13.
- See: Slatkes/Franits 2007, cat. no. A55, where the painting is dated c. 1626-1627.
- Rudiger Klessmann, in: Braunschweig 1979, cat. nos. 6, 7, also notices the relationship with the present work. He further wonders if the two Warsaw paintings were truly meant as pendants, expecting stronger compositional ties. The only other work with the signature Liviús is a *Simon and the Christ Child*, currently with Salomon Lilian Gallery, Amsterdam. See: J. Hillegers, in: *Salomon Lilian Old Masters 2016*, Amsterdam 2016, cat. no. 5.
- Slatkes/Franits 2007, cat. nos. A47 (accompanied by A48, in all probability *Smell and Taste*) and A57 (once accompanied by a now lost *Laughing Wag*).
- See for instance Stom's *Man Blowing on a Firebrand*, oil on canvas, 43 x 32 cm., Palermo, Pinacoteca Regia; or his *Boy Blowing on a Firebrand* in Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie. See: H. Pauwels, 'De schilder Matthias Stomer', in: *Centse bijdragen tot de Kunstgeschiedenis* 14 (1933), pp. 139-192, esp. pp. 172-174, figs. 14, 15, with more examples.