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Between Mind and Body: Painting the Inner Movements according to Samuel van Hoogstraten and Franciscus Junius

Thijs Weststeijn

‘Who among the great Italian or Netherlandish masters has not had [...] something particular as his speciality?’ According to Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678), who asked this question in his Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst (1678), Dürer focused on draperies and Caravaggio on ‘naturalness’ (fig. 1). As concerns the Netherlandish masters, in his opinion ‘Rubens [concentrated on] rich compositions, Anthony van Dyck on grace, [and] Rembrandt on the passions of the soul.’ This article will argue that Van Hoogstraten, although he based his remarks on rhetorical commonplaces, made a careful choice when he praised his former master, Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) for depicting emotions.

Van Hoogstraten’s classification of Rembrandt as focused on the lijdingen des gemoeids first caught the attention of Jan Emmens. His 1964 study Rembrandt en de regels van de kunst largely overlooked contemporary views about the passions. To Emmens, Van Hoogstraten rejected Rembrandt’s concern for ‘merely’ depicting emotions and thus put his master, together with Caravaggio, in the camp of the despicable ‘Naturalists’, to use the term developed at the time by Bellori. But if Emmens paid little attention to Van Hoogstraten, he portrayed Franciscus Junius (1591-1677), another theorist who wrote about the passions, as entirely irrelevant to the Dutch situation (fig. 2). While Van Hoogstraten’s importance is now more fully recognized, the scholarship on Junius has not yet recovered from this criticism. This is in contrast to the fact that Junius’s treatise was read widely the seventeenth century and Van Hoogstraten can be called his most faithful student.

As was already remarked by his contemporaries, Van Hoogstraten depended on Junius’s ideas to structure his treatise; following his predecessor’s lead, Van Hoogstraten’s theory gives pride of place to the depiction of the passions as the central element connecting illusionism, visual story-telling and the ultimate ethical aims of painting.

Van Hoogstraten may have first been confronted with Junius’s ideas in Rembrandt’s studio. The inventory of Rembrandt’s library does not mention Junius’s book, The painting of the ancients, published in Dutch in 1641, but the quarto-sized volume may have been among the ‘fifteen books of various sizes’ that were not identified by name. Both Joachim von Sandrart (1606-1668) and Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687), who had
Junius speaks about ‘ziel-wroeghende beweeghingen’ or ‘movement’, to describe various aspects relative to internal affective movements and the external bodily actions that are seen as their counterparts. Thus Junius speaks about ‘ziel-wroeghende beweeghingen’ or ‘movements that perturb the soul’, the ‘inwendighe beweghingen onxes ghemoedts’ or ‘internal motions of our mind’. A specific term used both by Van Hoogstraten and Junius is beweeglijkheyt or ‘moving quality’, discussed below. Both authors use different words to adapt the passion theory of international humanism to the Dutch situation. It was Junius’s special concern to find adequate translations for Latin-root terms that had not earlier been used in Dutch. Van Hoogstraten may have borrowed his term hartstocht from the medical treatise by Johan van Beverwijck for which he made some illustrations.

The central position that early modern rhetorical theory allotted to the passions stems from its adherence to Roman authors in particular (in contrast to the Greek rhetoricians), who had stated that the most important function of rhetoric was not to teach or to delight, but to move an audience. According to their view, not arguments or facts, but passion moves the audience. The term ‘passion’ is of course a modern word, but in early modern Dutch and French ‘passion’ is a term used for the emotions that are the subject of classical rhetorical theory. It was in the context of these emotions that the term ‘Internal motions of our mind’ was most frequently used in early modern Dutch. Dutch authors of art literature needed Junius’s book first of all because it developed a consistent theoretical system, based on classical rhetorical theory. Van Hoogstraten derived formulations by rhetoricians like Quintilian and Cicero, who had stated that the perfect orator should be as lifelike and captivating as a painter, from Junius’s Painting of the ancients. Junius unscrupulously adapted rhetorical theory to his pictorial aims, often simply by changing the word ‘orator’ to ‘painter’. He defended this method by asking, ‘Who [...] will take it upon himself to disparage [my book], because by means of slight verbal change, I have applied passages of Cicero, Horace, and Quintilian from oratory and the art of poetry to the visual arts? Surely such a person has little comprehension of the close affinity which joins these arts one to another’.

Van Hoogstraten, like his master Rembrandt, may have had some formal training in rhetoric, which was considered an indispensable skill for all social activities in the Dutch Republic. It was widely taught, and both painters probably attended ‘Latin school’ in preparation for a further education at a university. The title page of the second chapter of Van Hoogstraten’s treatise depicts Polynéria, the Rederijkster or the Muse of rhetoric, instructing two young men, probably aspiring painters, on how to speak about the artwork at their knees (fig. 3). The boy on the right holds a small book, possibly a treatise on rhetoric or a work of art theory, which may suggest that the vocabulary and structure provided by rhetoric are necessary to speak sensibly about art.

Dutch art theory closely follows rhetorical theory when it states that the passions are, in Van Mander’s words, the ‘kernel and soul of art’ (‘kern en ziel van de kunst’). Van Hoogstraten calls them ‘the most noble part of art’ (‘allerdeelste deel der kunst’), and Junius states that the successful depiction of emotion is the best imitation of ancient art. However, Van Hoogstraten and Junius use neither the same terminology nor the international term affect preferred by Van Mander. Whereas Van Hoogstraten speaks about hartstocht and blijegehen, quite literal translations of the term ‘passions’, Junius speaks about neroel, or ‘movement’, and uses the related verbs onterroen and beroeren (‘to stir the mind’) that are still in use in modern Dutch. Both Van Hoogstraten and Junius use derivations of the verb bewegen, a more common term for ‘to move’, to describe various aspects relative to internal affective movements and the external bodily actions that are seen as their counterparts. Thus Junius speaks about ‘ziel-wroeghende beweeghingen’ or ‘movements that
emotions are the strongest form of persuasion. This view appears to be corroborated by modern aesthetics, which states that, in contrast to the fiction of art, emotions are real experience and therefore make a longer-lasting impression. But early modern art theory does not claim that emotions appeal to a different level of consciousness than art does. As will be argued here, Junius and Van Hoogstraten suppose that the spectator who is affectively stirred by the image is completely, that is, mentally and physically, transported into the painting's virtual reality.

A central idea is that *hartstichten* are nothing more nor less than 'movements of the heart', and they should first of all be understood in this physical sense. Junius's vocabulary, in particular, closely follows the physiological notion that, when the heart is stirred, the blood warms and rises to the head, changing the colour of one's face and ultimately leading to gestures and other physical movements. When another person beholds these movements and colour changes, the reaction occurs in reverse: the sense impression acts as a stimulus warming the blood, which translates into a movement of the heart echoing the original passion. This is why actions are more eloquent than words, and why painting may be more rhetorical than rhetoric itself. The overarching importance of the passions as the domain where one can directly study and influence human behaviour may have been most comprehensively expressed by the philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679): '[n]either in us are there anything else but diverse motions; for motion produces nothing but emotions.'

Art literature obeying contemporary ideas about emotion regards the passions as the medium connecting mind and body as well as 'internal' and 'external' aspects of reality. The depiction of the passions hence determines the painter's purported role in society. Ancient theories about the importance of the imagination are in this case only strengthened by the views developed by René Descartes (1596-1650), an author well known to Van Hoogstraten. This philosopher saw the passions as the mediating instance between on the one hand *res extensa*, or the visible world, and on the other *res cogitans*, or thought. Of central importance to the painter appears Descartes's contrast between reason and imagination: while the former may venture freely in the realm of pure thought, the latter is necessarily linked to the passions and therefore to the body, and apprehends its surroundings by analogy to the individual body in which it is confined.

As the passions are construed as the domain linking inside and outside, or ethics and natural philosophy, they relate both to specific prescriptions for pictorial representation and to general guidelines for the painter's moral standards. They often do so in the context of Stoic attitudes that place great stress on knowing how human behaviour is determined by the affects. In the following, the ways in which the painter uses his knowledge of the passions to bridge the inside and outside will be discussed, as will the way in which he may use them to transform the artwork into an alternative reality that becomes the meeting place for the artist, the spectator and the depicted figures. From the perspective of the artist, the epitome of painterly skill, namely the depiction of the passions as part of a narrative, of *changing emotions*, will be explored.

Secondly, as the beholder's internal passions are supposed to be stirred by the movements and colours shown on the painting, the artistic experience of beholding art will be studied as a distinct category of emotional response. Finally, we will address the way the passions are related to the imagination and to the affective state associated specifically with the making of art.

**Affective Narrative in Painting**

The passion theories of Van Hoogstraten and Junius share a central tenet: as the passions are to a large extent physical reactions to sensory perceptions, the painter can move his public by simply depicting figures in various emotional states. To quote from Van Hoogstraten's book: 'It is not enough for a picture to be beautiful, it must have in it a certain moving quality (*beweglijkheid*) that has power over those who see it; as Horace sings about poetry: A beautiful poem will not easily move me But kindness can transport heart and soul. One smiles, or weeps, the viewer follows the trail: So if you want me to cry, you must cry first.'

Van Hoogstraten concludes: 'and so it is with Artists, they do not stir the mind if they omit this moving quality'.

A high theoretical aim in classical poetics consists in a conjunction of the concepts *affectus* and *varietas*. Authors are praised who are able to conjure up a vision of a multitude of persons showing their individual emotions. Indeed, Van Hoogstraten cites Rembrandt in this respect: 'I recall having seen in a certain characteristically composed piece by Rembrandt, representing John the Baptist preaching, an admirable attentiveness in the listeners of different moods; this deserves the highest praise.' This description probably refers to the grisaille *John the Baptist Preaching, now in Berlin* (fig. 4). In a similar vein, Constantijn Huygens praises Rembrandt for his talents in depicting the passions and in moving the beholder. He repeats what was seen as the epitome of painterly skill in antiquity: the complex display of multiple emotions within one figure. Huygens mentions Rembrandt's painting, *Judas repentans*, in this context (fig. 5). He writes that Rembrandt, by focusing on the 'liveliness of the passions' (*affectuum vivacitatem*) in his depiction of Judas as torn apart by the conflicting emotions of hatred, anger and sorrow, has surpassed the ancients and the Italians.

The classical orators attach great importance to the representation of one moment in a narrative with such force that the audience sees it as if it were happening before its eyes. If the orator manages to conjure up a scene that will involve the spectator, he will have the audience on his side and ready to believe his arguments. The concept that captures a complex of stylistic virtues related to the representation of this moment is the Greek term *energeia*. Cicero translates this to *evidentia* or *perspicuitas*.10
Artists in Rembrandt’s studio experimented with the selection of adequate moments from a narrative. This practice is exemplified by the many images that were made of Abraham’s sacrifice: in the painting now in St Petersburg, the master seems to have used such a fast shutter speed for his ‘snapshot’ that the knife falling from Abraham’s hand has been captured in mid-air (fig. 6).

The story of Abraham and Isaac is described by Junius as especially fit for emotionally moving (bewegen) the beholder:

Saint Gregory Nyssen, after an ample and most patheticall (bewegehillick) relation of Isaac his sacrifice, hath added these words; ‘I saw often in a picture, sayth he, the image of this fact, neither could I looke upon it without teares, so lively did Art put the historie before my eyes.’

Again, Junius and Van Hoogstraten suggest different translations: Junius uses wydruckelickheyd and Van Hoogstraten speaks about oogenblikkige beweging. Junius explains in English as follows: ‘Energia [...] Tully [Cicero] calleth it Evidence and Perspicuitie [...] This vertue seemeth to shew the whole matter; and it bringeth to passe, that the affections follow us with such a lively representation, as if we were by at the doing of the things imagined.’

Van Hoogstraten transposes the concept of energia to his own art theory, in stating, with a quotation from Horace, that the painter should focus all his attention on a critical moment in a story:

Whether one wants to paint just one event in an image, or a couple of events, one must take care only to show an instantaneous movement (oogenblikkige beweging) which in particular expresses the action of the History [...] So that the work will delight the viewer, as if he were one of the bystanders, with one voice, terrify him with a violent act [...] or else he is moved to compassion by an injustice done.”

As quoted above, Junius writes that the ‘affections’ should ‘follow us with such a lively representation, as if we were by at the doing of the things imagined’: this may have prompted Van Hoogstraten to state that the viewer should become ‘one of the bystanders’ in the narrative in order to experience the strong emotions of horror or pity. This notion that the
Here, the close grouping of figures around a table seemingly leaves a space open for the beholder to join in as a personal guest at Belshazzar’s supper. On the right, Rembrandt applies the virtue of oogenblikkige beweging to the woman who spills her drink: he paints the moment that the wine splashes over the woman’s velvet sleeve, creating a dark stain.

Junius stresses that the confrontation with one powerful image transports the beholder into a complete narrative context, with more conviction than a long-winded speech. He concludes: ‘Our outer senses need present only the beginning of any historical narrative to our mind, and our active wit will soon readily comprehend the entire story, as a sequence of events’. This is based on the early modern idea that the imagination is an essentially visually oriented faculty. Again Hobbes’s words may be enlightening: ‘the imagination is able to fly from one Indies to another […] and to penetrate the hardest matter and obscurest places, into the future and herselfe, and all this in a point of time’. Apparently, one strong visual perception may give rise to a string of imaginative associations.

In the context of the aim of evoking ‘the real performance’ of the narrative, we should also take account of the practice, common in the seventeenth century, to hang paintings behind curtains that were opened when the scene was presented to a spectator. This practice, described by Poussin, would add to the virtue of instantaneousness or oogenblikkige beweging. Junius describes how the opening of curtains in front of a narrative moment captured in paint may, for further drama, be accompanied by a sound effect, such as the sound of a clarion when the image concerns a scene of military action. Huygens describes how the ‘sudden terror’ produced by revealing an image in this way contributes to the effect of lifelikeness.
Both Abraham’s Sacrifice and Belshazzar’s Feast depict moments when a protagonist is confronted with a sudden turn of events. Abraham realizes that he does not really have to sacrifice his son; Belshazzar sees the writing on the wall predicting the downfall of Babylonian rule and knows that he will be punished for using the silverware that his father stole from the Temple. This state of affairs makes it all the more plausible that the pictorial notion of oogenblikkige beweging was developed on the basis of ancient poetical theory. The theory of tragedy had already stated that the notion of ‘putting things before the eyes’ of the public was especially relevant to the moment when the true outcome of a story is recognized. In a moment of ‘tragic recognition’, the protagonist on the stage becomes aware of the fatal flaw that, in effect, makes him or her a tragic character.46

The rhetorical scope of the depiction of this moment of recognition is in accordance with the notion that the passions form a bridge between inside and outside: the beholder is expected to be so personally affected by the image that his close involvement in the narrative changes and purifies his character. This notion also appears in Van Hoogstraten’s treatise that states that the beholder can be moved to the two emotions of terror or pity, as quoted above.

These two reactions were developed by Aristotle in his poetics, which was actualized in the seventeenth century in the works of Daniel Heinisius.47 Van Hoogstraten describes how viewing images of people who change their minds may lead to a sudden emotional change in the spectator; he speaks about schrik en verandering, a moment of ‘shock and change’.48 A painter Van Hoogstraten praises for his choice of subject matter is Dirk van Baburen (c. 1595-1624).49 He may have been thinking about Baburen’s representation of Pero who visits Cimon, her imprisoned father. Because Cimon is starving he is breast-fed by his daughter (fig. 8). This scene is described by Junius as such a cathartic picture that it can inspire young girls to change their reckless behaviour and become pious daughters.50 Besides inspiring this kind of repentance, painterly ‘shock and change’ may also lead to other emotions: the buyer of a painting that depicted an act of vengeance may end up enacting a similar violent deed, as a play by Thomas Kyd recounts.51

The Beholder’s Share

To elaborate further on the involvement of the viewer in the work of art, Junius borrows from ancient rhetorical theory. He was one of the first authors in the tradition of art theory to systematically elaborate on ‘the beholder’s share’. According to his treatise painters should, just like orators, involve the spectator so forcefully that he forgets he is confronted with a work of fiction or art and thinks it is reality itself that he experiences. The work of art is, in this rhetorical view, no more than a trigger for a train of associations on the beholder’s side: ‘[I]t is [...] required, that all those who mean to enter into a judicious consideration of matters of art, must by the means of these Images accustome their mind to such a lively representation of what they are expressed in the picture, as if they saw the things themselves and not their resemblance aneley’.52

As the passions are seen as internal physical movements, eventually all senses are supposed to be taken over by the art object; the spectator sees the depicted figures moving, wishes to touch them, smells the painted flowers or enters into a conversation with a portrayed individual.53 Junius’s suggestion that paintings go accompanied by sounds was discussed above; the importance of smell and movement is attested in an admonishment by Van Hoogstraten that artists should depict Venus’s ‘most enchanting elegance’ by imagining ‘a divine fragrance like ambrosia wafting from her hair, her robe trailing behind her, and her tread that of a true goddess’.54 The personal involvement of the spectator, who is expected to be immersed in a virtual reality, is the aspect of Junius’s theory that most appealed to the Dutch authors quoting from his treatise. They included not only Van Hoogstraten but also Willem Goeree (1635-1711) and Gérard de Lairesse (1640-1711).55 On the one hand, the theory recovered by Junius from antiquity states that the artist should make himself ‘present’ at the narrative that he wants to evoke. Junius gives several descriptions of the way in which the painter or writer becomes wholly absorbed in the
the painter should include an Assistenzfigur, advice first formulated in the Italian tradition, directly to ideas stemming from Aristotle’s theory of tragedy. He states that pictures aimed at the arousal of terror or pity should contain one figure with his face ‘directed at the spectators’, who thus ‘presents them a perspicuous (druckich) scene’.

Van Hoogstraten states that it is especially in the depiction of Christ’s passion where the painter should try his utmost to work on the spectator’s emotions (de grootste beweeging, die ons mogelijk is). In his Raising of the Cross, Rembrandt appears to deploy his full range of rhetorical tricks (fig. 9): he ‘makes himself present’ in the narrative and establishes a direct relationship with the beholder through the eye contact of the figure in oriental dress in the background. In another image of the series, he repeats the depiction of oogenblikke beweeging, as the sword of one of the guards at Jesus’s grave is again shown falling from his hand (fig. 10).

image he conjures up in his mind’s eye, where the artist ‘has noted from the beginning to the end every particular accident [...] as if he had made himself present (‘sich selven [...] ver-tegenwoordiget hadde’). This was indeed deemed the strongest kind of persuasion: you believe more easily in an eye-witness account, especially if the speaker manages to convince you of his affective sincerity, his good intentions, and his affinity to your own ethical position. It is this rhetorical convention to which Rembrandt seems to allude when he includes images of himself in his Passion series, not only as a spectator, but even as an actor in the narrative, as in the central part of the group raising Jesus’s cross (fig. 9). In a letter to Huygens, Rembrandt claims that he has tried to depict ‘the greatest and most natural movement’ in this series, and here his term beweectgelikhkeij may refer to this direct emotional involvement of the beholder. The moment of recognition, of identification with the actors in a narrative, is supposed to facilitate the resonance of the depicted passion in the beholder’s consciousness. Van Mander relates the idea that
Concluding these remarks on ‘the beholder’s share’, it must be noted that the public’s reaction to painting is explained by Junius and Van Hoogstraten as a specific emotion. Ideally, the artist is not alone in the scenes he depicts: the consummate artistic experience places artist and spectator in the same imagined artistic realm. This idea may be understood in a strongly literal and physical sense. On the one hand, the onlooker is expected to physically ‘incorporate’ the image when he gives it ‘life’ through affective involvement. This is exemplified by seventeenth-century poems on paintings that express how the beholder’s ‘enflamed’ heart relates to the ‘burning’ beauty of a depicted figure. On the other hand, the onlooker’s senses are deemed to be totally captivated by the artist’s original imagination. Then painting becomes ‘action at a distance’ – when objects set things in motion without touching them. This is why artworks are expected to elicit reactions in animals such as dogs that start barking or goats that attack paintings, as Von Hoogstraten describes, or in humans, who stretch out their hands from the desire to touch the painted body, taste the painted fruit, and even speak to the depicted figures.

In this context one can understand a well-known remark from the treatise Cour de peinture par principes (1708) by Roger de Piles (1635-1709). Discussing Rembrandt’s skills in the lifelike depiction of people, De Piles describes how a portrait of the artist’s maidservant placed in a window deceived passers-by. This proved the author’s observation that a painting lacking in design but made with powerful chiaroscuro ‘does not leave […] its viewers in peace, it calls out to them, and makes them stop for some time’. De Piles, who was well-acquainted with Junius’s treatise, concludes, ‘A true painting must draw in the viewer by the force and great truth of its imitation, and […] the surprised viewer must respond, as if entering into a conversation with the figures that it depicts.’

The ‘dialogical’ relationship between artwork and viewer that De Piles supposes is also described in De Lairesse’s Groot schilderboek (Great Book on Painting, 1707). When this author discusses how artworks are able to transport the beholder into a virtual reality, he quotes directly from Junius’s treatise: ‘we notice that Artists […] apply their shadow[s] to the spectator’s eyes outside the picture plane’. De Lairesse’s remark has been connected to Rembrandt’s paintings which suggest that the depicted figure comes out of the frame, such as Portrait of Agatha Bas (Fig. 11): the woman’s fan is shown falling over the picture frame, and she is grasping the frame with her right hand. The painting may demonstrate the notion that the spectator and the depicted figure, appearing on the verge of starting a conversation, ‘seem to meet’ and encounter each other in the alternative reality of the artist’s original experience.

The Artist’s Temperament

According to Junius, artists should, like orators, be of a certain emotional disposition; their working process should likewise involve a specific artistic emotion. Painters should endeavour to experience the emotions they want to represent. As was recorded by Arnold Houbraken, Van Hoogstraten encouraged his pupils to perform plays in his studio in order to provide them with experience in representing emotion. The ideal artist would pair a great imagination and memory with an ability to experience the passions – without, however, letting them disturb his Stoic state of mind – in order to represent them on canvas:

The imitation of actors will also be useful in the expression of the passions of the person you have in mind, in particular in front of a mirror [that allows you] to be actor and spectator at the same time. But here a Poetic spirit is required in order to imagine another man’s role. Anyone who does not feel this spirit […] will never master the thing unless some God or Poet lends him a helping hand.

Van Hoogstraten makes clear that practicing this most noble part of painting heavily encumbers the artist’s imagination, and may result in serious fits of melancholy. The dangers apparently involved in the artist’s mental re-creating of the things he represents explain the topical nature of Poussin’s remark that he does not succeed in painting Christ’s passion, because it makes him physically ill.

Junius describes the specific nature of artistic frenzy by harking back to the vocabulary he uses for the arousal of the passions in general: the heating of the blood, which rises upwards and seeks a way out of the body. He states that artists are ‘impelled by the sudden heat of a thoroughly stirred Phantasie […] their minds being once in agitation cannot contain themselves any longer […] it is not possible for them to rest, until they have eased their free spirit of such a burden’. This is why creativity may sometimes be restrained by too much rhetorical affectation. The vocabulary of the passions is also relevant to the advice, common in texts on art theory, to work in an unaffected way, close to one’s nature. Hence Van Mander closes his chapter on the passions with a reference to the painter Eupompos, who supposedly said that one ought not to follow the example of the ancients but rather study the people around one. Junius describes the perfect painter as someone who derives his knowledge of the passions from diligent observation of nature, not from theory:

To a learned and wise imitator every man is a book: he converseth with all sorts of men, and when he observeth in any of them some notable commotions of the minde, he seemeth then to have watched such an opportunitie for his studie, that he might reade in their eyes and countenance the several faces of anger, love, fear, hope, scorn, joy, confidence, and other perturbations of our minde.

Again, it is the theory of rhetoric that is enlightening here. By a surprising paradox, the orator who uses a minimum of eloquence is praised the most highly, as exemplified by the apostle Paul who persuades through his passionate speech, and not through skill or knowledge. Juan Huarte, the author of a courriers’ manual well-known in the Netherlands and cited by Van Hoogstraten, compares Paul’s speaking style to a ‘rough’ manner in painting.
 Those that knew [...] said that his words and speeches were similar to a cupboard or painting, which looked on the outside very roughly and coarsely done; but when it was opened, one saw many splendid artworks and paintings [...] Paul, whose innate ability was not trained sufficiently to learn foreign languages, and to express them with refined polish [...], did he not say about himself: ‘although I am coarser in speaking than the [other Apostles], I am no less in true knowledge and wisdom?’

When Rembrandt painted himself as the apostle Paul, he may have presented himself as someone with the mental disposition required for the affective arousal of the audience (fig. 12). This painting is done in the well-known ‘rough’ manner for which Rembrandt’s late work is famous. Part of Rembrandt’s artistic persona was, of course, his reputation as someone ‘not suited to learn foreign languages’, as Von Sandrart wrote. The rough brushstroke may hence be associated with the courtier’s virtue of ‘dissimulating’ simple demeanour which enables greater persuasive force. As with Huygens’s opinion of the painter Michiel van Mierevelt, whom he praises for his naturalness in both painting and speech, what is at stake is of course professed artlessness: Van Mierevelt ‘deliberately hides behind a mask of ignorance and in so doing makes it very difficult for experts’. When art theory thus turns against rhetoric in order to give free reign to the painter’s passions, it apparently uses a trope which itself stems from rhetorical tradition.

**Conclusion**

When Gerardus Vossius, a humanist well known to both Junius and Van Hoogstraten, published his painting treatise ‘De graphiche’ in 1650, he gave the painter the epithet pathospoes, maker or designer of the passions, a qualification subordinated to the painter’s abilities as ethopoetes. Clearly this statement, derived from the ancient rhetoricians, was the highest form of praise, the ultimate scope of rhetoric being none other than moving an audience in order to effect a lasting change in character.

The paramount importance of the passions to Van Hoogstraten’s and Junius’s ideas suggests that many aspects of Dutch art theory, which has traditionally been assigned an overarching concern with techniques of illusion and representation, should rather be interpreted as concerned with persuading the public. The ‘motions of the mind’ are essential to this project: the belief that the viewer is not confronted by an artwork, but by a virtual reality, is highly catalyzed by the emotional appeal of the artwork. Thus the vocabulary of beweglijkheid, or movement, appears essential to Van Hoogstraten’s and Junius’s terminology of the suggestion of images that are close to life. While the term beweghen kracht denotes the power to move affectively or bring the image to life, the bewegelijkheid onwier gedachten denotes the mind’s power to infuse life into art. Hence it is not surprising that one of the strongest words of criticism used by these authors is ondeugdelijk, lacking in movement.

Other artists who have the right mental bewegelijkheid are able to invite the spectator to meet them in the alternative reality of the artwork, crossing the bridge between mental and corporeal aspects of reality.

**Notes**


4 Rembrandt en de regels van de bouw ende de schilderkonst, Amsterdam 1739 (ed. princ. 1698).

5 J. B. Emmens, Rembrandt en de regele van de konst, Amsterdam 1797 (ed. princ. 1672).

Golein, op. cit. (n. 6), 53-58.


6

Inventory of Rembrandt’s bankruptcy of 1656, reprinted in A. Gohlany, Rembrandt’s reading: the artist’s bookshelf of art theory and poetry, Amsterdam 2009, 77-78.


6


Van Hoogstraten talks about discussions in Rembrandt’s studio in op. cit. (n. 7), 224.


Golein, op. cit. (n. 6), 53-58.

Thaen, op. cit. (n. 6), 53-58.


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Van Hoogstraten talks about discussions in Rembrandt’s studio in op. cit. (n. 7), 224.


Golein, op. cit. (n. 6), 53-58.


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Golein, op. cit. (n. 6), 53-58.

Thaen, op. cit. (n. 6), 53-58.

Chambré, een zeventiende-eeuwse auteur over dit onderwerp. Vooral Alberti, in zijn De pictura (1435), onderzocht de werking van schilderijen op het publiek en het effect van de 'zichtbare lieden'.

Een en ander liet de kunstenaars zich niet ontdekken. Van Hoghstraten, in zijn Pathopoios (1671), noemt ook al deze soorten van werken 'pathos', waarmee de schilderijen de gevoelens van het publiek moesten wekken. Het publiek moest worden beïnvloed door de schilderijen, of anderszins moest de schilderijen de gevoelens van het publiek weer wekken.

Deze en andere discussies over de werking van schilderijen op het publiek zijn in de eeuwen daarna voortgezet. De kunstenaars en kunsttheoretici hebben zich daarmee bezig gehouden, om te proberen het publiek te beïnvloeden. Het was een onderwerp dat veel tijd en aandacht in de kunstgeschiedenis van de zeventiende eeuw en daarna heeft gekregen.