

KOETSER GALLERY LTD.

SWITZERLAND

ADRIAEN COORTE

ca. 1665 Middelburg 1707

Chestnuts on a Ledge

Oil on Paper, laid down on panel, 13.7 x 16.2 cm.

Signed and dated lower left: A. Coorte / 1705



Having fallen into obscurity in the 18th and 19th centuries, the first catalogue of the artist's work was published in 1952-53 by Laurens Bol (see Literature). That publication and Bol's subsequent exhibition of twenty- one of Coorte's paintings at the Dordrechts Museum in 1958, (see Exhibited) brought the artist back into the connoisseur's consciousness and secured his reputation as one of the most distinctive and original Netherlandish still life painters. The exhibition '*Ode to Coorte*', in the Mauritshuis the Hague, in 2008 (co-curated by David H. Koetser) has brought to light the work of this enigma of an artist to an even wider audience.

Coorte painted a chestnut on a table as early as 1685 (fig. 1), however not as the sole subject. As Coorte's work evolved, he began to prefer depicting individual fruit, vegetable or shells as the primary motif of a composition. Only on four known occasions did Coorte paint nuts: in 1696 *Still Life with Hazelnuts* (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford) Fig. 2.; in 1702 *Still-life with 2 Walnuts* (Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest) Fig. 3.; the third example is the present painting, our *Still-life with Chestnuts*, beautifully signed and dated A. Coorte 1705, it is the artists' only known composition where the chestnuts take centerstage; a fourth composition of 5 chestnuts has not been accounted for since 1890. All of Coorte's 'nut' paintings seem to have been executed on very small sized surfaces.

While the composition is characteristically small scale, its mysterious play of light and immaculate attention to detail gives it a tremendous wall-power as well as a timeless quality. Coorte's known *oeuvre* consists of some sixty-four paintings only. Over the past fifteen years prices for paintings by Coorte have sky rocketed. His deceptively simple compositions are enormously appealing to both the traditional and the modern eye.



Fig.1. Still-life with apricots, cherries and a chestnut.

Oil on canvas, 42 x 44 cm.

Signed lower left and dated 1685.

Private Collection.

KOETSER GALLERY, TALSTRASSE 37, 8001 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

MEMBER OF THE SWISS ART DEALERS' ASSOCIATION



Fig. 2. Adriaen Coorte
Still-Life with Hazel-nuts
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford



Fig. 3. Adriaen Coorte
Still-life with Wall-nuts
Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest.

Provenance: Collection Helmuth Meissner- (All claims relating to the GDR persecution of Helmuth Meissner with regards to the present work have been settled);
Sale Christie's Amsterdam, 29 November 1988, lot 109, illustrated;
Koetser Gallery, Zürich;
Mr and Mrs Henry Weldon in 1989;
Private Collection, by descent.

Exhibited: Zürich, David Koetser Gallery, *Fine Old Master Paintings principally of the Dutch and Flemish Schools*, 1989-1990, no. 8;
Birmingham, City Museums and Art Gallery, *Dutch Painting in the Seventeenth Century: Images of a Golden Age in British Collections*, 1995, no. 4;
New Orleans, New Orleans Museum of Art, *In the Eye of the Beholder: Northern Baroque Paintings from the Collection of Henry H. Weldon*, 1997-1998, no. 15, pp.37-38, reproduced;
Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, *An Eye for Detail: 17th Century Dutch and Flemish Paintings from the Collection of Henry H. Weldon*, 1999, no. 14, pp. 36-37, reproduced;
Washington, National Gallery of Art, *Small Wonders: Dutch Still Lifes by Adriaen Coorte*, 2003, no. 13, p. 11, reproduced.

Literature: F.A. van Braam et al., *World Collector's Annuary: Alphabetical Classification of Paintings, Watercolours, Pastels and Drawings Sold at Auction*, Harderwijk, 1946-1997, vol. 39 (1988-1989), p. 80;
F. Meijer, *The Ashmolean Museum Oxford. Catalogue of the Collection of Paintings. The Collection of Dutch and Flemish Still-life Paintings Bequeathed by Daisy Linda Ward* (Collection Catalogue with two introductory essays), Zwolle/Oxford 2003, p.197, note 2);
T. Dibbits, "Aardbeien, abrikozen, kruisbessen en perziken: Vier stillevens van Adriaen Coorte", *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 52 (2004), p.164 (note19);
Bénézit, *Dictionnaire of Artists*, Paris 2006, vol. 3, p. 1357;
Q. Buvelot, *The still lifes of Adriaen Coorte -- oeuvre catalogue*, accompanying the exhibition *Ode to Coorte*, The Hague, 2008, no. 64, pp. 56-57 fig. 45, 118, 131, reproduced.

Exhibited: Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum, *Adriaen Coorte. Stillevenschilder*, 2 August-28 September 1958, no. 20.
Amsterdam, Kunsthandel K. & V. Waterman, *Masters of Middelburg*, 3-31 March 1984, no. 50.
Utrecht, Centraal Museum der Gemeente Utrecht; and Washington, National Gallery of Art, *Small Wonders, Dutch Still Lifes by Adriaen Coorte*, 7 March-28 September 2003, no. 18.
Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum; Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum; and Kassel, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Schloss Wilhelmhöhe, *Vom Adel der Malerei. Holland um 1700*, 14 October 2006-30 September 2007, no. 11.
The Hague, Mauritshuis, *Ode to Coorte*, 23 February-9 June 2008, no. 27.

**Note:* Artloss Register Certificate available.