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**SIR ANTHONY VAN DYCK, attr.**

Antwerp 1599-1641 Blackfriars, near London

*Portrait of Martin Ryckaert.*

Oil on Panel, 24.8 x 19 cm.



*Provenance:* Tesse Collection, Berlin, before 1876;  
Albert Baron von Oppenheim, Cologne, by 1876;  
His sale Berlin Lepke, originally scheduled for 27 October 1914 but postponed  
until 19 March 1918, lot 11, reproduced;  
E. Sittenfeld, Berlin;  
Consul Becker, Darmstadt;  
With the Schoenemann Galleries, Inc., New York, 1943;  
James N. Barney, New York, Parke-Bernet Galleries, 18 May 1948, lot 65;  
Louis and Mildred Kaplan, New York, by 1950;  
With Leonard Koetser Ltd., London, by 1962;  
Private collection, England until 1994;  
David Koetser, 1994;  
Collection of Mr and Mrs Henry Weldon, New York, USA;  
By descent to the present owner.

*Exhibited:* Cologne, *Kunsthistorische Ausstellung zu Köln*, 1876, part II, no. 50, (as lent  
by Albert von Oppenheim);  
London, Leonard Koetser Ltd., *Tenth Annual Autumn Exhibition: Flemish,  
Dutch and Italian Old Masters*, 23 October – 1 December 1962, no. 27;  
New Orleans, New Orleans Museum of Art, *In the Eye of the Beholder.  
Northern Baroque Paintings from the Collection of Henry H. Weldon*, 1997,  
no. 18;  
Baltimore, The Walters Art Gallery, *An Eye for Detail, 17<sup>th</sup> Century Dutch and  
Flemish Paintings from the Collection of Henry H. Weldon*, 20 June-5  
September 1999, no. 17 (all of the above as by Van Dyck).

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*Literature:* E. Molinier, *Collection du baron Albert Oppenheim: tableaux et objets d'art*, Paris 1904, pp. 4-5, cat. no. 10, reproduced plate IX;  
A. Marguillier, "Bibliographie" in *La Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité, supplément à la Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1905, p. 126;  
G. Glück, *Van Dyck des Meisters Gemälde*, Stuttgart/Berlin 1931, p. 555, under cat. no. 332;  
W. Bode, *Catalogue of the Collection of Baron Albert von Oppenheim*, Berlin 1914, cat. no. 11;  
W.R. Valentiner and P. Wescher, *A Catalogue of Paintings in the Collection of Louis and Mildred Kaplan*, New York 1950, cat. no. 9, reproduced;  
J. Spicer, "Anthony van Dyck's Iconography: An Overview of its Preparation," in *Van Dyck 350, Studies in the History of Art*, 46, Washington 1994, p. 362; New Orleans 1997, pp. 45-48, cat. no. 18, reproduced; Baltimore 1999, pp. 45-47, cat. no. 17, reproduced (all of the above as by Van Dyck).

The *Portrait of Martin Ryckaert* has long been considered to be one of the finest oil sketches that Van Dyck made for the *Iconography*, the ambitious series of portrait prints designed by him in the early 1630s. Although individual portraits were in circulation by 1632, the complete edition of 80 engravings by various printmakers was only published in 1645, four years after Van Dyck's death. Over the course of the years, Van Dyck's conception of the series seems to have evolved, and so, too, have scholars' understanding of his intention and working methods. As a result the preliminary studies for the prints are in the process of being re-examined and some have been reattributed.

The ultimate source for the *Portrait of Martin Ryckaert* would be the painting (fig. 1) in the Prado, Madrid (inv. no. 1497). Assuming that his working method followed the general pattern for the *Iconography*, Van Dyck would then have made a black chalk drawing after the painting in order to establish the preliminary design for the print. The next step would be a more tonal model, in this case a *brunaille*, that the printmakers could follow as they worked on the copper plate (for other sitters the models were *grisailles*, or, less commonly, wash drawings). The composition was then engraved in reverse by Jacques Neefs (fig. 2).

The attribution of the tonal models, whether to Van Dyck or his studio, has long been debated. In some cases there is more than one version, and it has been difficult to distinguish which is the prototype. The largest single group of works is the 39 *grisailles* in the collection of the Duke of Buccleuch, at Boughton House, and even some of these are now in question. The Weldon panel was published as Van Dyck by Glück, Bode, Valentiner and the other art historians cited under Literature. In addition, Julius Held, Michael Jaffé, Francisco

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Calvo Serraller, the former director of the Prado, Horst Vey and Walter Liedtke confirmed the attribution to Van Dyck on the basis of first-hand inspection.<sup>1</sup> However, the entire project related to the designing of the *Iconography* is in the process of being re-examined, particularly the oil sketches. While the *Portrait of Martin Ryckaert* is of undoubtedly high quality, and, as such, *could* be by Van Dyck, given the current state of research, it is not possible at the present time to say unreservedly that it is an autograph work. We therefore believe that the designation "attributed to Van Dyck" best describes it.

The subject of this painting, Martin Ryckaert (1587-1633), was an Antwerp artist who specialized in landscape. In his acceptance into the Guild of St. Luke in 1611 he is described as "the painter with one arm" and, indeed, in this portrait, Van Dyck has been careful to cover the left side of his body with a fur-lined cloak, so that only his right arm is visible. The portrayal is unusual within the context of the *Iconography* because of the sitter's fanciful costume, which Emilie Gordenker has identified it as 17<sup>th</sup> century Polish dress.<sup>2</sup>

1. Letter to Mr. and Mrs. Weldon from David Koetser, 23 March 1994, summarizing the opinions of the various scholars and a separate letter from Julius Held to Mr. Weldon, 21 March 1994.

2. E.E.S. Gordenker, *Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641) and the Representation of Dress in Seventeenth-Century Portraiture*, Turnhout 2001, p. 41.