

drawings, which comprise one-third of his surviving production. This chapter on De Beer's drawings, which served as window designs or shop models, show Ewing's connoisseurship at its best.

Chapter 5, the heart of the book, explores De Beer's paintings. At times I questioned Ewing's embrace of symbolism, such as the cat as a "symbol of the Virgin" (144) or the dog as a reference to marital fidelity (144), but Ewing is a brilliant connoisseur who describes De Beer's virtuosic style, with its "distinctive system of light spotting" (147), "energy and verve" (154), inventive iconography, "obsessive attention to minute details" (176), and "exacting alignment" of forms with intersecting floor tiles (189). While scrupulously acknowledging the contributions of earlier scholars, Ewing produces a page turner, building layer upon layer, as he pushes his evidence to the limit and carefully, logically, builds his arguments. His book is certain to become the standard monograph on Jan de Beer.

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Cornelis van Poelenburch, 1594/5–1667: The Paintings.

Nicolette Sluijter-Seijffert.

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Cornelis van Poelenburch (1594–1667) played a leading role in the evolution of seventeenth-century Dutch Italianizing landscape painting. Until the middle of the nineteenth century this particular genre—and thus also Poelenburch's work—always remained in high esteem. But afterward, and strongly under the influence of Théophile Thoré-Burger's new realistic-impressionistic interpretation of Dutch painting of the Golden Age, the renown of the Italianizing painters began to wane, since their work was compared unfavorably with the artistic output of the so-called *peintres de la réalité*, now considered the true canon of Dutch seventeenth-century art. This monograph by Nicolette Sluijter-Seijffert finally restores Poelenburch's deserved but long-lost fame. The book's point of departure is the PhD thesis defended by the author at the university of Leiden in 1984. During the following years of a museum career in several Dutch museums, including the Mauritshuis at The Hague, she was able to refine and substantially add to the material initially gathered for her thesis.

From his beginnings in Italy, Poelenburch always largely profited from aristocratic and princely interest in his work. To an important extent, his fame was based on his virtuosity as a painter of small but lively and corporeal nude human figures, acting in a sunny Mediterranean landscape often filled in with Roman ruins. After his return to his native town of Utrecht, in early 1627 at the latest, he continued to receive impor-

tant commissions, including those by the courts of the Dutch stadholders and of the English king Charles I. As a painter in the latter's service, he also stayed in London from 1637 through 1641. In a very successful way, he worked in keeping with the contemporary art market. That Poelenburch's oeuvre remained much in demand is clearly shown by the elevated prices his work elicited early in the painter's career.

Although first trained in Utrecht in the workshop of the mannerist painter Abraham Bloemaert, immediately after his arrival in Rome Poelenburch oriented himself in a style and technique of painting more focused on reality. Thus he set a different tone than Paul Brill, his inspiring forerunner as a Northern landscape painter in Rome, who remained more strongly tied to mannerism. The biblical and mythological characters filling his compositions were modeled after examples in Bloemaert's work, but especially took after the Italian classicizing *maniera grande* from Raphael through Annibale Carracci and the so-called Bolognese painters. Thus he would lay the foundations of the further evolution of Dutch Italianizing landscape painting, a genre that until the very end of the seventeenth century would remain popular in the works of painters such as Pynacker, Both, or Berchem.

The most important stylistic differences between Poelenburch's later work and his earlier production are the somewhat weaker outlines and more diversified landscape also showing ruins that are not from ancient Roman origin. It is also striking that the human figures filling in the landscape compositions, especially naked mythological characters, are represented more fleshily and have a more plastic look, thereby filling the composition on a larger scale. It is further characteristic that in comparison to Poelenburch's earlier works the number of these mostly naked figures is greater and their movements are livelier and more diversified. It may be wondered how far the painter may therefore not have tried to remain in keeping with the later and more dramatically staged development of Dutch and Flemish Baroque painting in general. Strikingly, in the Netherlands he was regarded as a history painter rather than a landscape artist. This becomes obvious in the text printed beneath his portrait in Anthony van Dyck's *Iconography* from between 1636 and 1641, where in a very explicit way he is called "Hollandus pictor in minoribus figuris humanis."

In a lengthy essay, Nicolette Sluijter-Seijffert convincingly demonstrates the high quality and exceptional importance of Poelenburch's paintings. This text is followed by a fully illustrated and detailed catalogue of no less than 290 authentic paintings. The book is further completed by four appendixes containing complete transcriptions of all relevant written sources up to 1745 and any entries from collections and sales catalogues up to 1750.

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