

AMBROSIUS BOSSCHAERT the Younger

Flemish school, 1609 - 1645

SP:
ch. 1645
(Pavane)

This artist, the eldest son of the flower-painter Ambrosius Bosschaert the Elder (1573-1621), was baptized at Arnenmuiden, near Middleburg, on March 1, 1609. He married Maria Steus (or Stays) in 1634. He lived and worked in Utrecht and was buried there in May 1645. Paintings by him and his brothers Johannes and Abraham are dated from 1626 to 1633, while those of his father are signed and dated from 1607 to 1620. No known work by either Ambrosius the Younger or Abraham is signed with the Christian name in full. They either used the monogram AB. in imitation of their father's monogram, or the signature "A. Bosschaert", which occurs in two different forms. It is therefore inherently difficult to make distinctions, but a still-life in the Centraal Museum, Utrecht which carries the first form of the signature and is dated 1635, after the father's death, can reasonably be given to Ambrosius the Younger. (1)

Flowers in a Glass Vase

oil on panel, 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ ins. Signed lower right A. Bosschaert.

Colln. Edith Clowes.

Provenance

x John Kenneth Danby, England ; Victor D. Spark, New York (1958). Acquired by Mrs Clowes in 19 .

Exhibited

The Young Rembrandt and his Times, John Herron Art Museum, Indianapolis and Fine Arts Gallery, San Diego, Feb.-May 1958, no.78, ill. ; Ind., 1959, no.8

The signature here appears dubious, and therefore, while the work does bear some resemblance to still-lives attributable to Ambrosius the Younger⁽²⁾, it is difficult to make a firm attribution.

The fly and the lizard in still-lives of this kind represent symbols of decomposition, and the bouquets themselves are symbolic of transience. At the same time the individual blooms included in the bouquet reflect contemporary interest in rare flowers, particularly tulips.⁽³⁾ Flower pieces of this kind were evidently done with the aid of pattern-books, like the one that survives by Jacques de Gheyn.⁽⁴⁾

Notes.

1. See I. Bergstrom, Dutch Still-Life Painting in the Seventeenth Century, London, 1956, pp.72ff. and pl.70. It is suggested there that a group of looser and more amateurish flower pieces, carrying the second form of the signature, are by Abraham.
2. See Bergstrom, op.cit., pls.69-70 ; S.H.Pavière, A Dictionary of Flower, Fruit and Still-Life Painters, 3 vols., Leigh-on-Sea, 19 , I, pl.15.
3. See I. Bergstrom, "Disguised symbolism in "Madonna" Pictures and Still Life", Burl.Mag., 97, 1955, pp.34-36 and op.cit., p.65.
4. Colln. Frits Lugt, Paris.