

Belgian dealership takes pride in sales to Dutch and American institutions

Antwerp dealership Galerie Lowet de Wotrenge has made two sales to international institutions, writes *Frances Allitt*.

One is an Old Master painting recently unveiled at the Mauritshuis in The Hague.

The 9 x 6in (23 x 16cm) oil on panel is by Adriaen Brouwer (c.1605-38), a Flemish artist. It depicts a man gazing into a mirror as he carefully trims his moustache and is thought to exemplify pride.

Brouwer's series of deadly sins pictures, produced near the end of his life, has long been dispersed. For years the only known original was 'Fat Man' (probably representing lust) which is part of the collection of the Mauritshuis. When 'Pride' appeared as only the second original picture in the series, the museum jumped at the chance to add it to the collection.

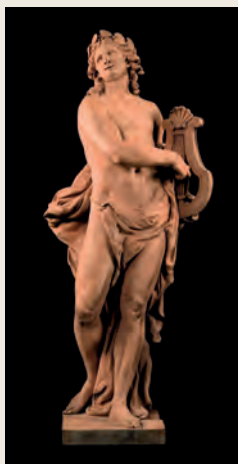
The rest of the series is known through later copies, particularly a complete series by Joos van Craesbeeck, Brouwer's student and collaborator, which went under the hammer in Paris in 1902. The example in question was, until recently, believed to have also been a reproduction. In a 2018 exhibition at the Museum of



Oudenaarde it was catalogued as the work of van Craesbeeck.

Brouwer did not make it easy for future art historians. He signed only around a quarter of his portraits and dated none of them. In the early years after his death his reputation suffered in part from the disastrous state of his finances in later life – he died destitute – as well as his love of drinking, smoking, fighting and frequenting the dingiest possible taverns.

On the other hand, he was beloved by artists. Seventeen of Brouwer's works



Left: 'Pride' by Adriaen Brouwer and a terracotta figure by Jean-Joseph Vinache, both sold by Galerie Lowet to institutions.

is an original work, not a later copy. At Sotheby's 'Pride' soared past its \$20,000 high estimate, selling for \$81,900 including fees (£66,340).

When it entered the collection of Galerie Lowet de Wotrenge, dealer Tyr Baudouin discovered that both 'Pride' and 'Lust' had belonged to Don Juan José de Austria, governor of the Southern Netherlands in the late 1650s, establishing that both works were from the same series and solidifying the Brouwer attribution.

It was acquired by the Mauritshuis for an undisclosed six-figure sum.

The gallery has also sold a terracotta by French sculptor Jean-Joseph Vinache (1696-1754) to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. The figure of Apollo was bought by a private collector for a high five-figure sum and gifted.

Separately, Italian gallery Antonacci Lapicciarella Fine Art has concluded negotiations begun at *TEFAF* this year over a portrait of the painter Karl Friedrich Lessing (1808-80) by RJB. Hübner. It has gone to the Cincinnati Art Museum which holds more than 800 drawings by the artist, a collection that was one of the founding gifts to the institution in 1882.

Nurse's Boer War belt bought by private museum

by *Tom Derbyshire*

A silver and gold presentation belt given to a civilian volunteer nurse who looked after the sick and wounded during the Siege of Ladysmith during the second Boer War has soared over estimate in a London auction.

Guided at £1000-1400, it made £17,000 at Mayfair saleroom **Noonans (24% buyer's premium)** on July 26.

The belt was awarded by the Natal Carbineers to Chrissie Emma Thompson of the Natal Volunteer Medical Corps in recognition of her great service.

Medical focus

Christopher Mellor-Hill of Noonans said the belt was sold "by an elderly collector of Boer War medals as part of the most rarefied and comprehensive section of medical awards for the Boer War to come onto the market.

"It was the highlight of this medical collection and was bought by a private museum

dedicated to the Anglo-Boer War."

It is hallmarked for Birmingham 1901 and features a maker's mark *T&JB*. With a silver waist belt clasp applied with gold badge of the carbineers hallmarked 9ct, the belt includes 11 silver roundels linked by silver chains.

Two are inscribed *Presented by the Natal Carbineers to Nurse C. E. Thompson, in recognition of her great services to the men of the Regiment and During the Siege of Ladysmith Nov. 2. 1899. to Feb. 28. 1900.*

The remaining roundels depict scenes such as Maritzburg Town Hall and a covered ambulance wagon.

Thompson was mentioned in dispatches by Sir George White for services during the Defence of Ladysmith (*London Gazette*, February 8, 1901) and was appointed a Member of the Royal Red Cross for services in South Africa on March 13, 1903, the recommendation stating: 'In recognition of the services rendered by them in tending the sick and wounded



Presentation belt given to civilian nurse Chrissie Thompson for service during the Siege of Ladysmith, **£17,000** at Noonans.

at the Volunteer Hospital, at Intombi...'

It is thought 18 of these belts were awarded. Six were for service in Ladysmith itself and others – including Thompson's – for Intombi Camp Hospital (after an agreement between Sir George White and Boer

commander Piet Joubert, the British in Ladysmith decided to establish a neutral camp about 5km away).

Another of these belts, given to nursing sister EM Early, was sold at Noonans (formerly Dix Noonan Webb) for £1100 in December 2002, while that of

H Galloway made £2600 at the same saleroom in September 2013.

Collectors' website angloboerwar.com includes a long discussion on the whereabouts of the belts and the medals also awarded to the nurses.

Thompson's belt is given a provenance to 'City Coins, Cape Town, December 2004, for R43,000 (£3670)'.

Royal honour

The same collection offered at Noonans featured a medal group of six awarded to another Intombi nursing sister: Jessie P Stow, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve, late Natal Volunteer Medical Corps, later Rhodesian Railways Nursing Service.

The group, sold within estimate at £3800, included an RRC (Royal Red Cross) given for service at Intombi and Great War 'Mesopotamia' second award bar.

See p12-14 for more medal news.