

Trading Values in Early Modern Antwerp

Waarde en waarden in vroegmodern Antwerpen

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2014

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The right hand of Pictura's perfection

Cornelis de Bie's *Het gulden cabinet* and Antwerp art in the 1660s

Sarah Joan Moran

Introduction

Despite undergoing numerous economic shifts from the early sixteenth century through the middle of the seventeenth, during that period the city of Antwerp remained the most important center for artistic production north of the Alps. By the 1660s, however, its primacy was being called into question, and the long-standing desire among Antwerp artists and art lovers to promote local painters – and, to a lesser (but growing) extent, engravers, sculptors, and architects – had begun to develop into a need to reassert the metropolis's artistic standing on a global scale. It is in this context that Cornelis de Bie (1627-c. 1715), a rhetorician from the nearby town of Lier, wrote *Het gulden cabinet van de edel vry schilder-const* (The golden cabinet of the noble liberal art of painting), published in Antwerp by Jan Meyssens (1612-1670) in 1662.¹ *Het gulden cabinet* is well known to art historians and often cited in studies of seventeenth-century Netherlandish artists, yet it remains an underutilized resource and has rarely been considered as a subject of study in and of itself.² The present chapter examines one aspect of this rich and complicated book: its formulating of an artistic universe of which Antwerp was the center and fulcrum, a sort of laboratory in which both foreign and antique art was processed and surpassed, and from which the most highly developed, cutting-edge artistic knowledge was disseminated throughout Western Europe. De Bie achieves this literary elevation of Antwerp art in part by positioning the book as a textual analog of the contemporary practices and ideologies of art collecting common to his stated intended audience, the *liefhebbers*, or lovers of art. Furthermore, I argue that the impulses at work in the writing of *Het gulden cabinet* were closely related to the contemporary atmosphere of the Antwerp St. Luke's guild, and that the text should be read in relation to the guild's efforts to found the city's first art academy in 1662-1665.

Composing *Het gulden cabinet*

Het gulden cabinet's relative neglect by scholars can be at least partly explained by its status as a sort of hybrid of two art-historical traditions. The first was a more straightforward, clearly structured, explicitly theoretical approach grounded in biographies of individual artists, a heritage that could be traced from the Italian Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) (*Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, ed architettori*, 1550 and 1568) to the

Detail fig. 10

Flemish Karel van Mander (1548-1606) (*Het schilder-boeck*, 1604 and 1618). The second tradition was that of poetry about painting and about painters. Although Van Mander, who like De Bie had been a rhetorician, included some verse in his *Het schilder-boeck*, for other writers poetic eulogization was the sole or dominant literary device. The most important local example was Lucas de Heere (1534-1584), who had published *Den hof en boomgaard der poë sien* in 1565.³ Soon thereafter such verse had begun to appear in conjunction with portraits of artists, first in the 1572 *Effigies* by Domenicus Lampsonius (1532-1599), and then in a similar work of 1610 with the same title, by Hendrick Hondius I (1573-1650).⁴ A more recent exemplar was the *Iconographia*, by Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641), which had been published shortly after the painter's death. The latter portrait series differed from its predecessors in that it was a series of Europe's most noteworthy men and women, in which artists were included and thus implicitly elevated to the most elite circles; the *Iconographia's* inscriptions praised its subjects' humanistic learning and emphasized artistic patronage.⁵

That De Bie conceived of his project as a continuation of Van Mander's work, one which would chronologically take up where his forerunner had left off, is apparent from a short manuscript in the collection of the Plantin-Moretus Museum.⁶ Dated 12 June 1657, and entitled *Const-Rycken schilderboeck van Carel van Mander verciert met schoon figuren ende poëtelijke rijmen* (The artful book of painters by Karel van Mander, embellished with beautiful figures and poetic rhymes; fig. 1), the work is in fact by De Bie and is clearly an early, very incomplete draft for what would become *Het gulden cabinet*. Beginning with a refrain titled *Tot lof vande schilderconst* (In praise of painting), made up of 4 stanzas of 14 lines of verse followed by 7 lines of song, the text proceeds with poems dedicated to seventeenth-century artists. Some of these, like Adam Elsheimer (1578-1610) and Otto van Veen (1556-1629), had appeared in Van Mander but had died after the publication of *Het schilder-boeck*, while others, like Rubens (1577-1640), Frans Snijders (1579-1657) and Gerard Seghers (1591-1651), were too young to have been covered in the earlier text. The individual poems variously concern a single artist or two or three artists together who are linked through personal connections or by certain shared qualities.⁷ No prose appears in the manuscript. Thus despite its explicit connection to Van Mander, De Bie is already situating his work more in line with the tradition of poetry and portrait series; the latter would have presumably made up the 'figures' mentioned in the title, though they had not been added yet.

With the publication of *Het gulden cabinet* five years later (the date of 1661 given on the frontispiece is erroneous; that the book was in fact still being completed in 1662 is apparent from its content),⁸ we find that De Bie has indeed incorporated a series of portrait prints of artists and has retained his emphasis on verse. He makes full use of poetic flourish to transmit a sense of the artists' individual personalities, their *cloecke gheesten* (beautiful spirits), their *verstant* (understanding) of art, their fame and the wondrous manners in which they depicted various subjects, but he now incorporates prose sections as well, some quite lengthy, which serve a variety of functions. The framing of the book as a supplement to

Van Mander is also still evident, but the relationship between *Het gulden cabinet* and *Het schilder-boeck* is anything but straightforward. A proper comparative analysis would demand much more space than we have here, but in broad strokes we can say the following: the texts have many similarities, with both authors employing multiple literary forms and both repeating standard arguments about the foundations of painting and its status as a liberal art.⁹ But whereas Van Mander's text is clearly structured, includes technical instructions on how to paint successfully, builds a theoretical model for what constitutes good art and offers a wealth of detail on individual painters' lives and work, De Bie organizes his material more loosely, presents his theoretical ideas far more obliquely, praises artists' skills without explaining their processes and is largely uninterested in providing a cohesive narrative.¹⁰ The latter's attention to historical detail is also uneven, though he does reproduce some elements from his predecessor as well as offering new, concrete information.

Het gulden cabinet was largely rejected as a model by subsequent writers on Netherlandish art. Although they each adopted their own



1

Unknown artist & Cornelis de Bie, Frontispiece, engraving with text in pen & ink, 116 x 148 mm, *Const-Rycken Schilderboeck van Carel van Mander verciert met schoone figuren ende poëtische rijmen*, Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus Prentenkabinet (photo: author).

methods, Joachim von Sandrart (1606-1688) (*Teutsche academie*, 1675-1679), Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678) (*Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst*, 1678), Arnold Houbraken (1660-1719) (*Groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 1718-1721), Jacob Campo Weyerman (1677-1747) (*Levens-bescryvingen der Nederlandsche konst-schilders en konst-schilderessen*, 1729-1739) and others all eschewed De Bie's emphasis on laudatory poetry and turned back to a more overtly theoretical, didactic approach to their subject. They cited Van Mander's *Het schilder-boeck* as their foundational text and some of them, in particular Houbraken, criticized De Bie explicitly. *Het gulden cabinet* thus became an outlier as a full-length 'history' of painting. Moreover, despite the fact that De Bie's text sometimes offers data unavailable elsewhere, for example in his biography of the Dutch painter Pieter Saenredam, it does often fail to yield the kinds of information that modern researchers have usually sought. For these reasons, and perhaps also because his poetic forms seem inherently unempirical, *Het gulden cabinet* has been largely dismissed as a historical source. When taken on its own terms, however, De Bie's text and its peculiarities offer important insights into how the visual arts were conceived and contested in Antwerp in the late 1650s and the 1660s.

Art and peace. Introducing *Het gulden cabinet*

Readers of *Het gulden cabinet* in the 1660s would have taken their first cues in how to approach the book from its frontispiece, so it is perhaps best that we, too, begin there. The image, designed by the Antwerp painter Abraham van Diepenbeeck (1596-1675), who is among the artists eulogized in the text, presents the viewer with an architectural pedestal on which stand two female allegories in classical dress (fig. 2). Identified by inscriptions at their feet, *Pictura*, or Painting, stands to the viewer's left, holding a mahlstick in her right hand and a palette with brushes in her left, while *Poësis*, Poetry, appears on the other side with a sheet of paper, presumably on which verses are written, and Apollo's lyre, referring to the role of poetry in making song. Equal in position and prominence in the composition, painting and poetry are depicted as sister arts; this follows the Renaissance humanist tradition that drew on classical references (Horace's *ut pictura poesis* from the *Ars poetica*, for example) to argue for the two as complementary in their representational powers, and thus for the elevation of painting to the status of the verbal liberal arts (rhetoric, grammar, logic) in which poetry was based.¹¹ Between these two allegorical figures is a cartouche based on antique models, on which is written the title of the book with a short descriptive passage reading 'containing the praise of the most famous painters, architects, sculptors and engravers of this century'. On the top level of the pedestal is an eagle with outstretched wings, holding in its right claw the coat of arms of the guild of St. Luke. The banner above the eagle's head reads: 'EVER DES GHEESTS' (Fervor of spirit), a reference to Boccaccio's *fervor ingenii*, the creative spirit common to all men.¹² In its left claw it clutches an olive branch, which contemporary readers familiar with the goings-on in the Antwerp artistic community



Abraham van Diepenbeeck, Frontispiece, engraving, 112 x 161 mm, Cornelis de Bie, *Het gulden cabinet* (Antwerp, Jan Meyssens, 1662) (photo: author).

would have recognized as a reference to the guild's joining, in 1660, with the chamber of rhetoric *De Olyftack* (The Olive Branch).¹³ This was the second chamber to merge with the guild; the Antwerp painters had since 1480 been associated with *De Violieren* (The Gillyflowers), which had traditionally counted many artists among its members.¹⁴

But at the time of the book's publication the more obvious association for the olive branch would have been the signing of the Peace of the Pyrenees on 5 November 1659, which ended the Franco-Spanish War. It was hoped that this treaty would finally bring lasting respite to the southern Low Countries, which had since 1568 served as battlefields in near-continuous warfare waged between their Spanish rulers and the Dutch and French.¹⁵ Integral to the peace treaty was the marriage of the Spanish infanta Marie Theresa (1638-1683), daughter of Philip IV (1605-1665), with the 21-year-old French king Louis XIV (1638-1715), which took place on 9 June 1660. Two months earlier the marriage and concomitant



4

Richard Collin (attr.) after Erasmus Quellinus II, *Peace and Hymen banishing Mars and Bellona*, engraving, 188 x 153 mm, Gasper Gevaerts, *Hymenaeus pacifier, sive Theatrum pacis Hispano-Gallicae* (Antwerp, Plantin, 1661) (photo: author).

in the lower level: Philip IV and his second wife Mariana of Austria (1634-1696) in the center, Louis XIV on the left and Marie Theresa on the right. Above them stood (left to right) allegorical figures of Concordia, St. James, St. Louis and paired figures of Justice and Peace. Between them was a painting that was reproduced in a separate print in the pamphlet (fig. 4). It depicted Mars and Bellona, god and goddess of war, being vanquished by Hymen and by Peace, the latter shown as a female figure wielding Hermes's caduceus. The top level appears to have been a multimedia installation. It was flanked by figures representing, as explained in an inscription, India offering up her jewels – a reference to the prosperity expected now that peaceful trade could resume. Again, a close-up view of the main scene is provided in a separate print, where we again see Hymen, now standing before a canopied marriage bed symbolizing the union of Louis XIV and Marie Theresa, and exposed for the viewer by frolicking putti who draw back the bed's curtains (fig. 5).¹⁷

The same theme of love conquering war is presented in the lower half of the frontispiece of *Het gulden cabinet*, where Cupid, representing the

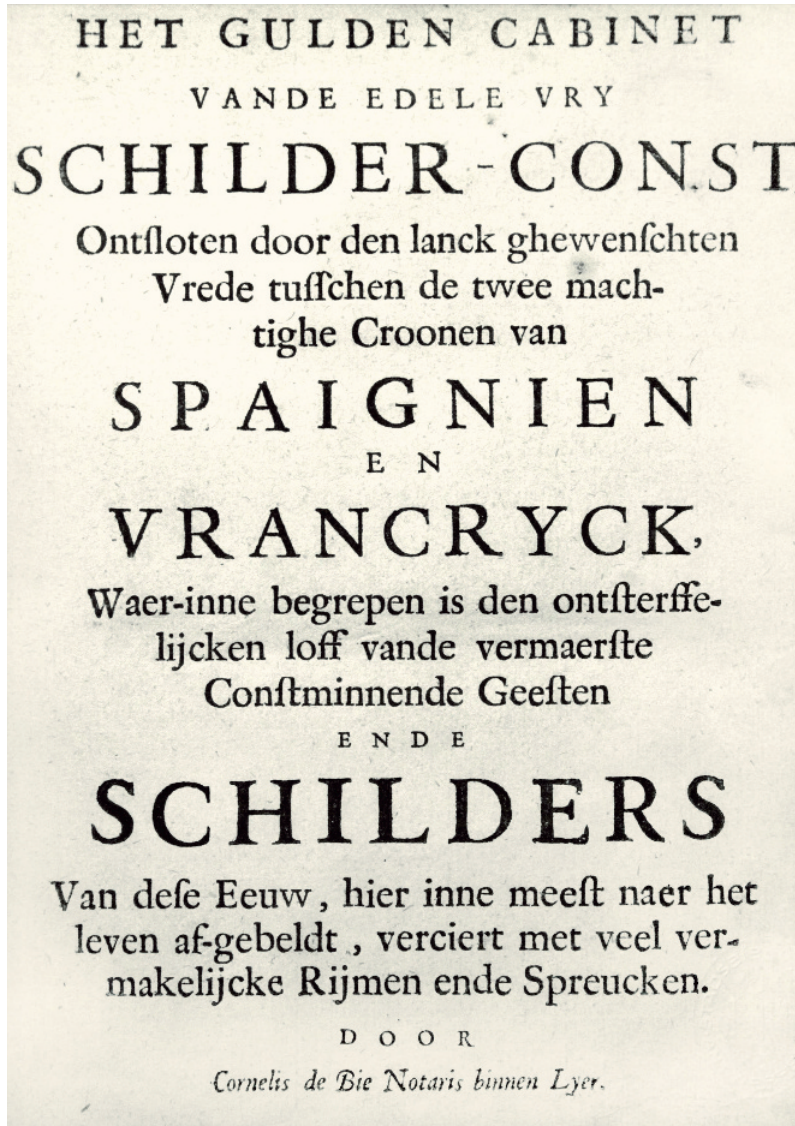
5

Richard Collin (attr.) after Erasmus
 Quellinus II, *Hymen before the marriage
 bed of France and Spain*, engraving,
 167 x 124 mm, Gasper Gevaerts, *Hymenaeus
 pacifier, sive Theatrum pacis Hispano-Gallicae*
 (Antwerp, Plantin, 1661) (photo: author).



Franco-Spanish matrimonial bond, holds the chains of the crouched, bound Mars and Bellona. For those readers to whom the allegory was unclear, it was made explicit on the following title page's reference to the declaration of peace (fig. 6), and in the book's opening poem, narrated in the voice of the defeated Mars, who laments that 'Love' (in the form of the 'noble French marriage') has caused his own death. In so doing,

All the Arts [can] again show their virtues /
 And live happily in total peace and joy /
 First of all the lovely Pictura, which by her noble brush /
 Will receive, through Art, many gifts and jewels /
 Accompanied by Rhetorica, with her Sweetly Rhyming verse
 That lightens many a sad and heavy spirit.¹⁸



6

Unknown designer, Title page, cast type
 printed on paper, 172 x 232 mm, Cornelis de
 Bie, *Het gulden cabinet* (Antwerp, Jan
 Meysens, 1662) (photo: author).

References to the marriage as the vehicle for a new peace appear repeatedly throughout the text, as does the notion that peace is necessary for the flourishing of the arts. In this De Bie was following a long-standing tradition among the Low Countries' rhetoricians that was rooted in the roles they played in public civic ritual, such as the joyous entries of rulers – roles which had been perhaps most vigorously developed during the Antwerp *Landjuweel* and *Haagspel* of 1561. During this competition between the Brabantine chambers of rhetoric, numerous poetic performances argued for peace as fundamental for the practice of the rhetorical arts, and rhetoric in turn as foundational to civilized society.¹⁹ De Bie continued this tradition but emphasized not the literary but the visual arts, and especially painting, as the beneficiaries of peace, here brought about by the Treaty of the Pyrenees and the joining of the houses of Hapsburg and Bourbon.

The first 35 pages of *Het gulden cabinet* consist of introductory material, including several poems praising De Bie's accomplishments as its author, among them one by Erasmus Quellinus II; an apologia addressed to the book's imagined critics; a dedication to the Antwerp art collector and connoisseur Anthony Van Leyen; and several poems in praise of painting and one in praise of *Teeckenconst*, or drawing. Both De Bie and Van Leyen are represented in full-page portraits, engraved after designs by Quellinus (figs. 7-8), in which the sitters, depicted half-length in front of classicized architectural backdrops, gaze directly out at and seem to engage with the reader. The main body of *Het gulden cabinet* consists of three sections: the first on painters who had died in the seventeenth century up until the time of the text's completion (145 pages inclusive), the second on still-living painters (237 pages) and the third on 'the famous Architects, Sculptors and Engravers of this century, both dead and living' (152 pages). Some of these artists and architects are represented in only verse, some in only prose and some in both. The 'biographies' are anecdotal and often meandering, with many slipping into and out of discourses on the virtues of painting, episodes from antiquity or homilies on contemporary moral problems. More general poems and short discourses praising the arts are interspersed throughout. The book closes with another series of passages praising the art of painting, followed by a prayer, an anagram praising *Het gulden cabinet* itself, two more poems in

7

Unknown engraver after Erasmus Quellinus II, *Portrait of Cornelis de Bie*, engraving, 139 x 196 mm, Cornelis de Bie, *Het gulden cabinet* (Antwerp, Jan Meyssens, 1662) (photo: author).

8

Richard Collins after Erasmus Quellinus II, *Portrait of Anthony van Leyen*, engraving, 142 x 205 mm, Cornelis de Bie, *Het gulden cabinet* (Antwerp, Jan Meyssens, 1662) (photo: author).



praise of De Bie, and of course the necessary approbation attesting that *Het gulden cabinet* does not fall astray of local Catholic censorship guidelines.

In terms of simple numeric representation, the collection of artists that De Bie presents to the reader is heavily weighted towards the Low Countries, more towards the South than the North, and particularly towards the city of Antwerp. Among the painters – whose prominence over engravers, sculptors and architects in *Het gulden cabinet* reflected their (gradually waning) dominance in the Antwerp guild of St. Luke and the contemporary foregrounding of painting within discourses on the arts²⁰ – 24 are Italian, 17 are French and 6 are German, while London and Prague have two representatives each. The remaining 161 are all from ‘Nederlandt’ (De Bie glosses over the political division between the United Provinces and the Spanish Netherlands and treats the region as a single, artistically congruous place).²¹ Of the Netherlanders, 51 are Northerners, with Utrecht providing the greatest number from a single city at 15, while 111 are from the South, with 81 working primarily in Antwerp. The architects, sculptors and engravers of the third part of the book comprise 1 Englishman, 1 Bohemian, 1 Pole, 3 Italians, 3 Germans, 12 Frenchmen, and 1 of indeterminate nationality, as well as 9 from the United Provinces and 42 from the Spanish Netherlands. Of the latter, 33 are from Antwerp. Thus, in De Bie’s artistic universe, a total of 285 recent and current artists are worthy of eulogization; 212 (74.4 percent) are from the Netherlands, and among those 114 (40.0 percent) of the overall total are from Antwerp. Moreover, De Bie’s desire to anchor recent artistic achievement firmly in the Low Countries is also reflected in the amount of attention and space devoted to individual artists, which varies widely and can be, for a modern reader unfamiliar with the author’s motives, rather puzzling. For example, the now little-known Antwerp painter Deodaat del Monte (d. 1644) is afforded four pages of text, while Rembrandt van Rijn’s (1606-1669) entry is limited to about two-thirds of a page. The French Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665), one of the most sought-after and influential painters in Europe at the time, gets just a six-line poem.²²

In total, 95 of the artists in *Het gulden cabinet* are represented in printed portraits, which follow the format and basic composition of those of Van Leyen and De Bie shown above. In this the book draws, again, on the tradition established by Lampsonius, Hondius and Van Dyck mentioned above.²³ In 1649 Jan Meyssens, publisher of *Het gulden cabinet*, had issued the *Images de divers hommes d’esprit sublime*, a similar series of portraits to which were added written biographical texts. Then, 13 years later, about 70 of the plates for the *Images* were recycled for *Het gulden cabinet*, with additional plates being commissioned that matched the others in size, style and the use of French for their inscriptions, despite the main text being written in Dutch.²⁴ In the resulting group of portraits the preference for northern artists is even more pronounced than in the text as a whole, with Netherlanders accounting for 86 (90.5 percent) of the images. Of these, 28 are from the United Provinces and 58 from the Spanish Netherlands, and 42 of those (44.2 percent) are from Antwerp. At the end of the first part of the book, De Bie quotes lines from Carolus



9

Unknown artist, *Antwerpen*, cast type printed on paper, 173 x 239 mm, Cornelis de Bie, *Het gulden cabinet* (Antwerp, Jan Meyskens, 1662) (photo: author).

Scribanus's 1610 *Antverpia* that he reproduces in large typeface taking up an entire page (fig. 9):

The Netherlands, the ring of the world, and the Diamond in this ring is Antwerp.

The Netherlands, the eye of the world, and the apple of this eye is Antwerp.

The Netherlands, the forest of the world, and the Laurel of this forest is Antwerp.

The Netherlands, the Paradise of the world, and the sweetest part of this Paradise is Antwerp.

The Netherlands, a sky of the world, and the Sun in this sky is Antwerp.²⁵

The implicit message of *Het gulden cabinet* might well have been summed up as 'The Netherlands produce the artists of the world, and the best among them are from Antwerp'.

Precious containers for precious things

The word 'cabinet', imported from French into Dutch (and into English as well) in the sixteenth century, had several related meanings in the early modern period. One meaning was that of a room, with connotations of privacy, secrecy and/or limited access, that contained items that were precious – either in terms of monetary value or in terms of the types of knowledge or power that they represented and imparted. Such a space was inherently the domain of the elite, and it could be specifically associated with governmental functions, as in *cabinet du roy*, a phrase in use by at least the end of the sixteenth century. Alternatively, 'cabinet' could be connected with the practices of collecting and display.²⁶ Whereas in the sixteenth century artworks had typically been just one type of 'artificialia', or things created by human hands – a term that included artworks in encyclopedic collections alongside other wonders like scientific instruments, and 'naturalia' such as fossils, plants, shells and animals – in the seventeenth century the practice of collecting artworks specifically had become increasingly popular. By De Bie's time, men like Cardinal Scipione Borghese (1577-1633), Vincenzo Giustiniani (1564-1637), Thomas Howard, the Earl of Arundel (1585-1646) and Charles I of England (1600-1649) had established art collecting as a princely pastime and in turn stimulated the development of the new field of connoisseurship.²⁷ One of the most important contemporary figures in the art world, the Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria (1614-1662), had recently governed the Spanish Netherlands region from Brussels, where he had quickly built up a massive painting collection. Leopold Wilhelm employed David Teniers II (1610-1690) to create paintings of his collection, showcasing mainly his Italian works but also including some Flemish pieces, and he sent them as gifts to other European leaders. His cousin Philip IV received one example, still in the Prado, before 1653 (fig. 10). Teniers was also commissioned to publicize the Italian masterpieces in the archduke's collection in his 1660



10

David II Teniers, *Leopold Wilhelm in his gallery*, c. 1647, oil on copper, 104.8 x 103.4 cm, Madrid, Museo del Prado (photo: Art Resource).

Theatrum pictorum, which was the first comprehensive, catalog-style publication to reproduce a painting collection through printed copies.²⁸

Real-life cabinets, in the sense of architectural spaces containing artworks, are a major presence in De Bie's text; however they are not subjects of interest in themselves, but rather serve as evidence of the fame of a specific – usually Antwerpian – painter and, more broadly, the rightfully noble status of the art of painting. Though the cabinets of gentlemen are mentioned a few times, in the majority of the cases the cabinet referred to belongs to a prince, king, cardinal or figure in a similar position of power. Rubens, for example, is glorified by the presence of his works in 'the Imperial cabinet [i.e., Leopold I's], the great halls of kings, and the court of the Prince [of Orange]'.²⁹ The fame of both Daniel Seghers (1590-1661) and Peter Snayers (1592-1666/1667) is demonstrated through their paintings inside the same prince's 'cabinet', where Frederik Hendrick (1584-1647), as De Bie tells us, had wished to show his *jonst* (favor) for Seghers in particular.³⁰ The Holy Roman Emperor, the king of Spain and the duke of Aarschot have decorated *heel Cabinetten* (whole Cabinets)

with hunting scenes by Paul de Vos (c. 1591-1678), while Jan Boeckhorst's (1604-1668) compositions appear in *menich Princelijck Cabinet ende loffelijcke kercken* (many Princely Cabinets and praiseworthy churches).³¹ In all of these instances, the sense of 'cabinet' as a room for art is certainly at work, but the text also speaks to collections more generally, and architecturally speaking the boundaries are fluid. Thus the Antwerp cathedral is also called a *recht Const Cabinet* (true Art Cabinet), and the entire Escorial is *het kostelijck Cabinet oft Eschoriael van sijne Majesteit van Spaignien* (the costly Cabinet of his Majesty of Spain).³²

Another meaning for 'cabinet', and the one probably most common in daily life in the seventeenth century, was that of a piece of furniture used for storing things, and such cabinets had a particular salience in the context of Antwerp art production and consumption. Probate inventories in the Antwerp notarial archives published by Erik Duverger suggest that, in local usage, the word 'cabinet' was not used for ordinary furnishings (termed instead *kast or schappraey*) but rather for those of particular value, made of or decorated with expensive materials.³³ One especially interesting entry describes a cabinet belonging to one Pierre Robert and used to hold barbers' and surgeons' instruments. It was adorned with silver, featured 25 sculpted figures of men, women, angels and a lion, and was made in the form of a castle, calling to mind De Bie's characterization of the Escorial as cabinet and suggesting that the concept of the cabinet was elastic, inviting semantic play and spatial-metaphorical inversions.³⁴ Antwerp woodworkers also specialized in 'art-cabinets' that included small panel paintings of either religious or secular scenes. Several surviving examples are adorned with images from Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, such as a piece attributed to Michiel II Coignet (1618-1663) in the collection of the Rockoxhuis (fig. 11).³⁵ Other cabinets took engagement with optics and visibility several steps further by placing tiny mirrors in recessed spaces, creating 'marvelous experiments in perspective'.³⁶ 'Art-cabinets' like these, with their potential to destabilize notions of space and containment, gather together artistic styles, visual forms and cultural referents, and stimulate conversation on the optical and other sciences, would have been intimately familiar to *Het gulden cabinet's* intended *liefhebber* audience. Whether in thinking of princely art collections, engaging with personal collecting on a more modest scale, or opening the delicately carved doors and drawers of a painted 'art-cabinet', these readers would have already associated the word 'cabinet' not just with the visual arts, but with the simultaneous evocation of multiple ideas that might be compared and contrasted at will – where new layers of knowledge could be revealed and known narratives might intersect in surprising ways.

It was fairly common for early modern authors to play on the term 'cabinet' in their book titles, metaphorically setting their texts up as either stand-ins for real architectural spaces whose contents they described or as purely intellectual spaces where natural or spiritual knowledge might be discovered.³⁷ De Bie follows in this tradition, but he draws on the especially complex associations of the word with the visual arts in Antwerp to make the metaphor work in several ways at once. Unpacking



11

Forchondt workshop & Michiel II Coignet (attr.), *Cabinet with scenes from Ovid's Metamorphosis*, c. 1640s, wood, silver, iron, glass & oil paint, Antwerp, Rockoxhuis (photo: Rockoxhuis).

the layers of his 'cabinet' allows us a deeper understanding of how books, art and material culture intersected in the minds of De Bie's readers.

On the one hand, the book presents itself to the reader as though it were itself an art gallery which the reader may enter, an idea evoked in the title page's 'Gulden cabinet of the noble liberal Art of Painting, *unlocked* by the long-desired Peace between the two powerful Crowns of Spain and France' (emphasis added), and repeated for example in one of the poem's titles: 'Praise for all the engravers who have decorated this Cabinet with their art', as though the 'walls' of the book were hung with prints.³⁸ Yet unlike Teniers's *Theatrum*, it is not really individual artworks that are being gathered into the cabinet's imaginary, idealized collection, as these are very rarely mentioned. Instead it is a variety of pictorial subject matter, the representational capacities of the visual arts, and individual artistic personalities, or *gheesten*, that are brought together here – reflecting the underlying criteria that structured elite art collecting, but transmitting them in textual form rather than through prints representing the objects themselves. De Bie presents these various qualities as dazzling in abundance and variety through the rhetorical device of listing, which can

show, for example, the different subjects within Pictura's power to depict (one of the introductory poems lists animals, milkmaids, fountains, houses, castles, flowers, plants, fruit, fish, meat and glasses of wine among the things with which painting might deceive the eye), while De Bie makes full use of poetic flourish to communicate the special facilities of individual painters. Thus Rubens, for example, is praised for his *rijckelijck verciert* (richly ornamented) and *wel ghecoloriert* (well colored) compositions, and De Bie states that his understanding of art was so complete that he could paint large and small figures, landscapes, fruit, nudes and drapery perfectly.³⁹ The value of the artists' final products is measured primarily in terms of being *cloec* or *fraey* (beautiful) and *levendich* (lively) or *naer het leven* (after life), establishing the ability to both provide visual pleasure and to imitate or deceive as the utmost proof of a truly good picture.

On the other hand, De Bie's text introduces the reader to 'Pictura's Cabinet' – that is, the special forms of knowledge embedded within the art of painting. 'Pictura's Cabinet' is far more esoteric, an intellectual space where all the secrets or areas of knowledge (*wetenschappen*) of painting are contained, and to which the book offers only glimpses, not full access.⁴⁰ Readers are repeatedly told that Pictura's secrets can only be fully grasped by the most sensitive and intelligent artists and art lovers, and then only through extensive study, grounded in the practice of drawing after prints, paintings or from life, as drawing is the *geest* (spirit) of Pictura.⁴¹ Those who criticize painting are cast as ignorant, often with the imagery of asses' ears, and this idea is reiterated throughout the text in various anecdotes (including the well-known account of Apelles and the shoemaker); critics are also said to be merely envious of those who know painting's secrets, and inspired by the Roman god of mockery, Momus.⁴² In all of these instances, De Bie used the ideas associated with a 'cabinet' to convince his intended readers, the art lovers, the connoisseurs and the merely curious, that painting deserved to be seen as the highest, most noble and most virtuous of art forms, and that Antwerp painters represented the apex of painting's achievements.

Antwerp, antiquity and Italy

In *Het gulden cabinet*, De Bie espouses the common view that the roots of artistic knowledge were to be found in Italy, in the form of both antiquities and more 'modern' (sixteenth-century) artworks. Rome, of course, is singled out as the most important center for the antique, as there one finds the 'architectural remains [of the ancient city] still stand in Rome, now all crumbled with age, [remains] of pyramids, of obelisks, churches, and halls, of buildings and ruins, of triumphal arches, columns, bridges, labyrinths, of cliffs, fountains, pillars, of graves and palaces, and many more things'.⁴³ On these counts, De Bie acknowledges, Italy does deserve 'den hoochsten roem van alle Landen' (the greatest fame of all lands), a point underlined by the odd inclusion of five separate copies of the same print inserted at various points in the second half of the book, depicting an allegory of *Roma* (fig. 12).⁴⁴ She appears in antique military dress, the



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Unknown artist, *Roma*, engraving,
173 x 234 mm, Cornelis de Bie, *Het gulden
cabinet* (Antwerp, Jan Meyssens, 1662)
(photo: author).

landmarks of the city spreading into the distance behind her, and at her feet are the figures of Romulus and Remus with the she-wolf and a nude river god that referenced antique Roman sculpture, in particular the well-known Capitoline and Belvedere river god (or Tiber) statues.⁴⁵ But when it comes to sixteenth-century Italian masters, whose works were unquestionably the most valued by international collectors and fetched the highest prices on the market, De Bie has markedly little to say. When he does mention the Italians, it is not to celebrate their contributions to the history of painting but rather to show that his own local Antwerp painters have fully assimilated, and now exceeded, the artistic knowledge found on the peninsula:

It is true that art was first established in Italy, and brought mostly to its rightful state by *Michelangelo*, *Titian*, and *Raphael of Urbino*, who went looking for the perfection of nature in the old antique works, bringing

together many broken bodies, carved in wood as well as marble and stone, and cast in bronze, taking ten arms, twenty-five legs, many shoulders, and other body parts to create one complete body (as they did with deft understanding) which we call antiquity. Yet our Netherlandish painters, like *Rubens*, *Van Dyck*, *Michael Coxie*, *Floris*, and many others, have through their marvelous manners and ingenious inventions brought the liberal art of painting to greater perfection and more fully to life than the old painters of antiquity did, which judgment I submit to the best connoisseurs to be found in the imperial city of Antwerp. [And] I say Antwerp because she is the fertile mother who brings forth the liveliest understanding of the liberal arts, and suckles them at her natural breasts, as the number of Antwerp painters attests. Antwerp, which is the heart of Brabant, is (...) the right hand of Pictura's perfection.⁴⁶

In reiteration of this point, De Bie offers numerous examples of Netherlandish artists who had absorbed the foundations of art by traveling in Italy. Prominent among them is Rubens, who according to De Bie acquired the 'diepste wetenscahp van d'edel Schilder-const' ('deepest knowledge of the noble art of painting') by traveling to Rome, Florence, Venice and Milan, with the *modernich werck* (modern works) in Rome singled out as especially important to his education.⁴⁷ The Italian journeys of his own father, Adriaen de Bie (1593-1668), as well as those of Hendrik van der Borch (1583-1651), Johannes van den Hecke (1620-1684), Theodoor van Loon (1581/1582-1649) and numerous others are also mentioned or alluded to. These events all constitute a transfer of knowledge from south to north that has, in *Het gulden cabinet*, ultimately resulted in a re-centering of the artistic universe.

The founding of the Antwerp Academy

The arguments put forth about the status of painting and about Antwerp painters in particular in *Het gulden cabinet* find parallels in the actions taken by the city's guild of St. Luke surrounding the foundation of their academy in 1665, and both might be grounded in a sense of uncertainty about the future of Antwerp art in these years. In the first half of the seventeenth century Antwerp painters had enjoyed unprecedented success, but the 1640s deaths of Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony van Dyck, though certainly not marking the 'end' of Flemish painting, did mean the loss of Antwerp's most prolific and internationally renowned artists. More immediately, the Antwerp painters had lost their most prominent patron when Leopold Wilhelm gave up the governorship of the Spanish Netherlands in 1656, returning to Vienna and taking his collection with him. His successors, John II of Austria (1656-1659) and Luis de Benavides Carrillo (1659-1664), were relatively disinterested in the arts. At the same time Paris, where patronage of the visual arts was becoming increasingly fashionable, seemed poised to usurp Antwerp as northern Europe's art center. Artists were increasingly drawn to the French capital to train and work, and in 1648 a faction of the Paris painters had secured Louis XIV's

support to establish the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, the first such academy to be founded since the examples in Rome and Florence half a century earlier.⁴⁸

In early 1662, at the same time that De Bie was preparing *Het gulden cabinet* for publication, the dean of the Antwerp painter's guild, David Teniers II, sent a letter to Philip IV about founding an art academy. In his request for permission as well as funding, Teniers stated specifically that while art was flourishing in Paris, education was lacking for young artists in Antwerp.⁴⁹ The following year, Teniers laid out the specific goals of the proposed academy, stating that 'because of the troubled times and the previous war, the arts have been completely dragged down, thus the planned Academy is the only means through which the arts might be restored and brought back to their former luster'.⁵⁰ He further indicated that the students would be taught geometry and perspective, as well as basic tools for architecture, painting, engraving and sculpture, and a course in life-drawing using a *wel-gebouwd* (well-built) male model. It took a few years to obtain the king's permission as well as to raise funds (a rather convoluted process involving petitioning for exemptions from city guard duty, justified by the guild's absorption of *De Olyftack* chamber of rhetoric, and then selling those exemptions – actions loudly protested by the militia guilds). The guild, which had up to this point been housed on the Grote Markt, also had to find new quarters large enough to accommodate the drawing classes for the expected students. Space was eventually secured in the Antwerp bourse, and the St. Luke's guild celebrated the opening of their academy there on 26 October 1665.⁵¹

No documentary evidence currently indicates that De Bie was directly involved in founding the Antwerp academy; however, the author certainly had personal ties to the painters' guild and must have been acquainted with the debates among its members during the time he was writing *Het gulden cabinet*. His acquaintance with Erasmus Quellinus II is clear from details within the text itself, including his own extensive praise of the painter and the apparent importance that Quellinus's work on the *Theatrum pacifier* had for De Bie's framing of the themes of war, peace and matrimony. Quellinus also contributed an elegiac poem on De Bie and executed nine of the designs for the book's portrait prints. Through Quellinus, De Bie would have also known Teniers, at least secondhand; the two painters married two sisters, Francisca and Isabella de Fren, and in October of 1662 Quellinus's son Jan-Erasmus married Teniers's daughter Cornelia.⁵² Moreover, De Bie's knowledge of the guild's plans, by 1662 at the latest, is indicated in *Het gulden cabinet* itself when he writes that 'many *gheesten* are currently being trained [*opghevoedt*, literally 'raised' in the sense of raising children] in the Academy and school of Pictura' in Antwerp. Either De Bie was writing for an aspirational future present or the guild was in fact already holding classes, despite not yet having the official support of the king of Spain, and the author was privileged with that information.⁵³ Finally, the efforts of Teniers and the other guild members to restore glory to Antwerp art through a drawing-based academy might explain De Bie's special attention to the practice of drawing as the 'soul' of painting. While



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Gonzales Coques, Wilhelm Schubert von Ehrenberg, Erasmus Quellinus II et al., *An art gallery*, c. 1672, oil on canvas, 176 x 210.5 cm, The Hague, Mauritshuis (photo: Mauritshuis).

emphasis on *disegno* (the mental and mechanical processes of design or drawing) was of course a long-standing element of art theory, De Bie returns to the theme several times, and he includes the unusual claim that drawing is foundational not just to the visual arts but also to music, metalsmithing, astrology, engineering and diamond-cutting, fields in which Antwerp had historically reached various degrees of international renown. Bringing these crafts into the discussion might have been meant to tap into the Antwerp reader's sense of civic pride, and thus drum up local support for the guild's establishment of a formal training program in drawing.⁵⁴

Intriguingly, some of the ideas expressed in *Het gulden cabinet* were given concrete spatial and visual form through the actions taken by the guild and individual Antwerp artists immediately following the official establishment of their academy. One area in which parallels appear is in the guild's project for a new *konstkamer*, a display space in the bourse for which each guild member was required to provide one of his own works.⁵⁵ First proposed in 1663 and installed in 1666, this room was located next to

the space used for classes, and it would have both provided students with ideal models from which to learn and constituted a sort of showcase of the fruits of Antwerp artistic education. Just as De Bie's text attempted to push the value system of art collection away from High Renaissance Italy and towards the contemporary Netherlands and Antwerp, the guild's *konstkamer* offered a real-life cabinet in which the merits of their own works could be compared, discussed and admired. Adding a new layer to this type of viewing process, around the same time some Antwerp artists began producing collaborative, fictive gallery pictures in which different painters contributed the architectural settings and the miniature compositions that hung on the painted walls. One remarkable example, the *Gallery with Gyges and Candaulus* of 1666 by Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678), Willem Schubert von Ehrenberg (1637-c.1676), Pieter Thijs (1624-1677), Peeter Boel (1626-1674) and others, shows a dazzling gallery scene in which the space of human connoisseurs seems to have been invaded by a group of allegorical figures and classical deities who avidly discuss one of the pictures. Filipczak has stipulated that the architectural space depicted in the image is actually that of the guild's new quarters in the bourse.⁵⁶ Another collaborative picture of c. 1672, now in the Mauritshuis in The Hague, was executed by Gonzales Coques (1614/1618-1684), Wilhelm Schubert von Ehrenberg and Erasmus Quellinus II, among others, and presents a family group surrounded by paintings with strong Antwerpian themes (fig. 13).⁵⁷ Quellinus contributed a reclining allegory of the city of Antwerp, located in the cartouche to the left of the doorway, which finds a visual pendant in the figure of the River Scheldt on the right. Together these images recall the famous *Allegory of the Scheldt* (or *Scaldis and Antwerpia*), completed by Abraham Janssens (1573/1574-1632) in 1609 for the State Room of the Antwerp City Hall, to mark the Twelve Years' Truce and visually proclaim a prosperous future.

A similar allegory of the River Scheldt was included in a painting titled *Antwerp, Nurse of Painters*, executed by Theodoor Boeyermans (1620-1678) for the ceiling of the Antwerp academy's new quarters in about 1665 (fig. 14).⁵⁸ This painting shows a central allegorical figure of Antwerp flanked by Time on the right and a young painter on the left, on whose shoulder she places a protective hand. In the foreground are Scheldt with his cornucopia, and three young students of various ages bent over their drawing work. On a table on the left stands a bust of Homer, patron of the poets, echoing the relationship between the art of rhetoric and that of painting that De Bie establishes in his frontispiece for *Het gulden cabinet* and reiterates throughout his book. Behind the bust the figures of Rubens and Van Dyck, the most recent heroes of Antwerp's artistic glory, and certainly embodiments of what Die Bie calls 'Pictura's perfection', gaze out at the viewer. In the shadows on the other side of the column stands *Invidia* or Envy, recognizable by her snake-like hair and the heart in her hands on which she gnaws (the early modern version of 'eat your heart out'). Her appearance here implies that criticism of Antwerp painting arises not from right judgment but from envy – echoing, in visual form, the repeated evocation of Momus in *Het gulden cabinet*.



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Theodoor Boeyermans, *Antwerp, nurse of painters*, 1665, oil on canvas, 188 x 454 cm, Antwerp, Royal Museum for Fine Arts (photo: Lukas – Art in Flanders).

Boeyermans's work was accompanied by three ceiling paintings by Jordaens depicting *Justice*, or *Human law founded on spiritual law*; *Commerce and Industry protecting art*; and *Pegasus on Parnassus*, in which the mythical horse's hooves bring forth sacred waters of poetic inspiration. Also hung in the same chamber was a large canvas titled *Allegory of the arts* (fig. 15), a collaborative work by Boeyermans (for the figures) and the Dutch artist Dirck van Delen (1605-1671) (for the architectural setting). In the foreground we see the figures of Painting and Poetry seated together on a wide golden throne; they have set their instruments on the floor and are lightly caressing each other, engaged in sweet conversation. Behind them a third female figure holds two hearts in her hand, symbolizing their loving bond. Two putti on the left share a kiss, while two more on the right drive away Envy, who flees the scene in distress. Above the heavens open up; light streams down towards Poetry and Painting, and more putti hold laurel branches above their heads. This work provides another potential link between De Bie and the founding of the academy, as *Het gulden cabinet* is one of the only surviving sources on Van Delen – and De Bie clearly knew the artist, or at least his work and life story, well. The pairing of Boeyermans and Van Delen, a Catholic painter from the South and a Calvinist one from the North, perhaps also underlined contemporaries' hopes for a lasting reconciliation between the two sides. Certainly, all of these images installed together in the guild quarters in the mid-1660s created a forceful, triumphant narrative in which the liberal art of painting, bound together with its sister art of poetry, would flourish in the city of Antwerp under the reign of peace.

Conclusion

Cornelis de Bie's *Het gulden cabinet* has long been relegated to the sidelines of early modern art historiography because the text does not 'behave' as art historians expect it to. Those looking for information about specific paintings or particular artists' lives, or for clearly articulated theories about perspective, imitation, composition or artistic invention,



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Theodoor Boeyermans & Dirck van Delen,
Allegory of the arts, 1664-1666, oil on canvas,
256 x 241 cm, Antwerp, Royal Museum for
Fine Arts (photo: Lukas – Art in Flanders).

will often be frustrated. But if we consider *Het gulden cabinet* as a product of the historical moment in which it was created, and take seriously its lyrical format and its own self-presentation as a ‘cabinet’ in which the treasures of the visual arts and especially the art of painting are collected, it can tell us much about how artists and *liefhebbers* in Antwerp thought about their city’s artistic heritage and future in the 1660s. De Bie’s insistence on Antwerp’s primacy, and his situating of it at the center of numerous metaphorical spaces – pieces of furniture, galleries of art, worlds of knowledge – both speaks to the cultural mindset of contemporary collectors and hints at concerns that the city was in danger of losing its status as a center of artistic excellence. According to Teniers’s letter to Philip IV, such sentiments were also behind the actions taken by the Antwerp guild to found their own art academy in the years just following *Het gulden cabinet*’s publication. I would further suggest that De Bie’s emphasis on patronage, highlighting the princely collections in which seventeenth-century Antwerp artists’ works were hung, was calculated to appeal to local art lovers’ desire to emulate such elite consumers. De Bie hoped, I think, that if more local men and women of means became like Anthony van Leyen, his book’s dedicatee, not only would they stimulate the market for Antwerp artists’ products but those artists would themselves be increasingly accepted as members of the intellectual and social elite. In discussing these various issues at work in *Het gulden cabinet* I hope to have demonstrated its importance for our understanding of a particular moment in Antwerp art history, as well as to have shown that this rich and complex work holds many possibilities for future research.

Notes

- 1 The writing of this piece has fortuitously corresponded with two related exhibitions in Antwerp: *The golden cabinet* at the Rockoxhuis, which creatively reimagines the display of art in domestic space in seventeenth-century Antwerp, and *Happy birthday dear academy* at the Museum aan de Stroom, celebrating 350 years of art education in the city. Both shows offered opportunities to view important artworks from the Royal Museum of Fine Arts of Antwerp (currently under renovation) and were a great source of inspiration. I hope that this chapter helps bring together some of the two exhibition’s themes in new ways.
- 2 Pascal Calu is currently working on the text from the perspective of literary history; his 2011 article calls for a historiographical reevaluation of *Het gulden cabinet* in the context of rhetorician culture. Less recent works on *Het gulden cabinet* and on De Bie include De Villiers 1987, Lemmens’s introduction in De Bie 1971, and Van Boeckel 1911. For

Van Mander’s *Het schilder-boeck*, see the translation and commentary by Miedema (Van Mander 1994-1998); and for that work’s influence on later artistic production and historiography, see Melion 1991. On Von Sandrart, see Möseneder 2000; on Houbraken, see Cornelis 1998 and Horn 2000; on Van Hoogstraten, see Weststeijn 2008.

- 3 De Heere 1969.
- 4 See Orenstein 1996 and Puraye 1956. The Lampsonius and Hondius texts have been made available online by the Courtauld Institute of Art on the project website ‘Picturing the Netherlandish Canon’; also published there is an essay on the two books by Joanna Woodall, ‘Dem dry Bones. Portrayal in print after the death of the original model’ (2013), accessed 1 January 2014 from <http://www.courtauld.org.uk/netherlandishcanon/groups/essay-woodallo1.html>.
- 5 See Mauquoy-Hendrickx 1956 and Luijten 1999.
- 6 Inventory no. M362.
- 7 In order, the poems are on Adam

Elsheimer, Otto van Veen and Peter Paul Rubens, Adam van Noort and Gerard Seghers, Abraham van Diepenbeeck and Erasmus Quellinus, Thomas Willeboirts Bosschaert, Frans Snijders, Adriaen van Utrecht, Pieter van Lint, Daniel van Heil, Balthasar Gerbier, Francesco Padovanino, Guido Reni, Johan Wilhelm Bauer, Abraham Bloemaert, Cornelis van Poelenburch, Herman Saftleven, Jacob de Backer, Cornelis Janssens and Jan van Bijlert, and Tobias Verhaecht with both Jan Cossiers and Gaspar de Crayer. The last page is titled with the names of Jacob Jordaens and David Rijckaert but the poem is unexecuted.

- 8 De Bie also began a second, expanded edition of *Het gulden cabinet* that was never published; the manuscript is dated 1674 and is in the collection of the Royal Library of Brussels (inventory no. 14648). This document certainly deserves discussion but is beyond the purview of the present study.
- 9 On debates about the status of painting in the seventeenth-century southern Low

- Countries, see Van Houdt 1999.
- 10 E.S. de Villiers and, more recently, Calu have rightly located this emphasis on verse in De Bie's rhetorician training, particularly in the genre of *lofdichten* or laudatory poems, though it is important to remember that Van Mander was also trained as a rhetorician and made similar (if more sparing) use of verse. See De Villiers 1987; Calu 2011, esp. 33-34.
 - 11 For examples, see Lee 1967 and Unglaub 2006.
 - 12 See Steppich 2002, 111-126.
 - 13 Filipczak 1987, 41.
 - 14 For the history of both chambers see Van der Straelen 1863, 5-34, and Waite 2000, 36-37 and ch. 3. Also see the chapter by Bart Ramakers in this volume.
 - 15 On the Thirty Years' War's effects in the Low Countries, see Parker 2004.
 - 16 De Bruyn 1988, 34; Gevaerts 1661.
 - 17 Although few of the observers would have been old enough to remember it, the iconographical linking of dynastic marriage and peace had also been visualized in the 1599 joyous entry of Albert and Isabella into Antwerp; their union and installation as governors was hoped to be the key to reuniting the 17 provinces. See Thøfner 2007, 220-221.
 - 18 'Dat al de Consten weer bethoonen henne deught/ En weeldigh leven in haer volle rust en vreught./ Voor eerst de schoon Pictur, die met haer eel Pinceelen/ Door Konst vercrygen sal veel gaven en juweelen./ Daer by Rethorica met haer Soet-Rijm ghedicht/ Die menich droef ghemoet en swaeren geest verlicht'. De Bie 1662, 5. This and all subsequent translations are my own.
 - 19 See Vandommele 2011; for the rhetoricians' continued emphasis on promoting peace, see the many examples in Waite 2000; Ramakers 2003; Van Bruaene 2008.
 - 20 On the shifting representation of painters, engravers and sculptors in the guild in the seventeenth century, see Filipczak 1987, 157.
 - 21 While national identities for a number of artists are debatable, I have followed the categorizations given by De Bie, who usually subtitles each artist's section with a geographical affiliation. In the few instances where this is lacking I have assigned such affiliations based on where the artist joined a guild or was known to have been based. Seven artists, Nicolas Pierre Loir of Paris (De Bie 1662, 491); Bertholet Flemal of Liège (507-508); Guillaume Gabron of Antwerp (517); Karel Emmanuel Biset of Mechelen (518); Charles Errard I, active in Paris (521); a certain Lenaert van Orley, probably of the Brussels family (528); and Peeter vander Willighe of Bergen op Zoom (529) are included among the architects, sculptors and engravers in the third section, but named by De Bie only as painters. I thus count them in the totals for painters here. De Bie's lack of political divisions in categorizing Netherlandish painters confirms Hans Vlieghe's argument that despite some differences in genre development, North and South had a shared sense of artistic identity. See Vlieghe 1998, introduction.
 - 22 See Cropper & Dempsey 1996; Schnapper 1986, 192; Posner 1993.
 - 23 See Orenstein 1996; Puraye 1956.
 - 24 About 80 of these etched and engraved portraits were completed by Van Dyck's death in 1641, and in 1645 the plates passed to Gillis Hendricx, who added and published at least 28 new images in the series. Around the same time Jan Meyssens, the publisher of *Het gulden cabinet*, also issued several additional prints after Van Dyck. See Hind 1915, 24; Calu 2011, 35.
 - 25 Raingard Esser's chapter in the present volume also deals with the idea of Antwerp as the center of the world.
 - 26 See Impey & MacGregor 2001; DaCosta Kaufmann 1993.
 - 27 Brown 1997; Tummers 2009; Muller 1996.
 - 28 See cat. London 2007, 15; Schreiber 2006.
 - 29 De Bie 1662, 58: 'Het Keyzers Cabinet, des Coninckx groote Saelen/ En't Princen Hoff'.
 - 30 De Bie 1662, 214, 221.
 - 31 De Bie 1662, 236-237, 254.
 - 32 De Bie 1662, 58, 14.
 - 33 Duverger 1984-2009. For example, the 1602 probate inventory for Catharina Lessueur lists 'een hert cabinet met syden bloemen ende frayicheyt' ('a hard[wood] cabinet with silk flowers and adornments') (vol. 1, 67); the 1627 probate inventory of Hendrik Smits includes 'een vergult leere cabinet met vier schuyfflaykens daerinne met antiquiteyt van cleyn importance' ('a gilded leather cabinet with four drawers, in which are some antiquities of little importance') (vol. 3, 75), and in 1660 a 'groot schoon cabinet van schilpat met lack ingeleght' ('large beautiful cabinet of tortoise[shell], inlaid with lacquer') was listed among items stolen from the canon of Van Halmale (vol. 8, 110).
 - 34 Duverger 1984-2009, vol. 6, 78.
 - 35 For an overview, see Fabri 1991; Fabri 1993.
 - 36 Fabri 1999; see also Dupré 2011.
 - 37 For example, Georges de Scudery's *Le cabinet de M. de Scudery* of 1646; Thomas Fairfax's *The kings cabinet opened, or, certain packets of secret letters & papers* of 1645; François Béroalde de Verville's *Cabinet de minerve* of 1596; Thomas Nichols's *Arcula gemmea, or, a cabinet of jewels* of 1653; and A. van Becelare's *Cabinet der devotiën vol godtvruchtige oeffeningen, schoone gebeden en litanieën* of 1658.
 - 38 De Bie 1662, 563: 'Lof van alle de Plaetsnyders de welcke met hun Const dit tegenwoordich cabinet verciert hebben'.
 - 39 De Bie 1662, 58-59.
 - 40 This can be contextualized within the broader early modern interest in secrets and arcane knowledge. See, for example, McCall *et al.* 2013.
 - 41 De Bie 1662, 23, 26.
 - 42 As the story is told by Pliny, a shoemaker criticized the way in which Apelles had painted a shoe in one of his pictures as inaccurate. Apelles took the man's advice and corrected the painting, but when the shoemaker started to criticize the figure, the painter dismissed him, saying that he should not pass judgment on areas outside his purview. Momus was a fairly popular allegorical figure in this period, but in the context of art criticism De Bie might have deliberately recalled Alberti's satire *Momus* of about 1450, in which he criticizes architecture in particular. References to Momus and the 'Momisten' (his followers) are found in numerous places in *Het gulden cabinet*: De Bie 1662, 10, 19, 42, 53, 181 and 426.
 - 43 De Bie 1662, 64: 'Wat Costelijck ghebouw van schoon al oude wercken/ Werdt eertijds al ghemaect, seer wonder aen te merken/ Daer d'overblijfsels noch aff binnen Roomen staen/ Die nu by naer al zijn versleten en vergaen./ Van Piramiden, en van/ Naelden, kercken, saelen/ Van Welfsels en Ruien, van Arcken triumphaelen./ Colum'n, Brugh, Laborinth', van Rots, Fonteyn, Pileer/ Van Graven en Paleys, en noch veel wercken meer'.
 - 44 De Bie 1662, 178. The multiple prints of *Roma* are not anomalous or due to binding decisions made by the purchasers of the text; they are integrated into the book's pagination and appear in the same place in each of the several copies of *Het gulden cabinet* consulted for this study. It appears that they were all pulled from the same plate, so the page numbers (321, 329,

- 371, 391 and 519) must have been impressed on the paper in a separate step.
- 45 On the sculptures, see Haskell & Penny 1982, 272, 311.
- 46 'Ende al ist dat Pictura eerst oprecht in Italien werde opghetrocken/ ende door Michiel Angelo, Titiaen, ende Raphael Vrbijn, meest is in state ghesedt/ de welke uyt de oude antique wercken gingen soecken de volmaecktheydt vande nature/ brengende by een menichvuldighe ghebrocken lichaemen/ soo van hout ghesneden/ als uyt marmer en steen gehouwen ook van koper ghegoeten/ om uyt thien armen/ vyf-entwintich beenen/ veel schouwers/ ende andere deelen des lichaems een volmaeckt lichaam te macken (ghelijck sy oock met cloeck verstaent hebben ghedaen) het welck wy heeten de antiquiteyt. Soo ist nochtans dat onse Nederlantsche Schilders/ als Rubbens, Van Dijck, Michiel Coxi, Floris, en meer andere door hun wonder maenieren/ ende ghestighe inventien: de vrije Schilder-const tot meerder perfectie/ ende volcomender leven hebben ghebroght/ als de oude antique Schilders hebben ghedaen/ het gene ick de beste kenders der Consten laet oordeelen/ daer de keyserlijcke Stadt van Antwerpen het principaelste bescheedt af soude connen geven. Ick segghe Antwerpen om dat sy de vruchtbaerste Moeder is vande kloekste verstanden der vry Consten voorts te brengen: ende met haer natuerelijcke borsten van wetenschap op te voesteren/ daer het ghetal der Antwerpsche Schilders ghetuyghenis af gheeft. Antwerpen (die het hert is van Brabant) is oock de rechte handt van Picturas volmaecktheyt'. De *Bie* 1662, 178.
- 47 De *Bie* 1662, 230, 58.
- 48 On the discourses about art centered in Paris, see Tilghman 2006, chapter 8; Bontea 2008; Schnapper 1986; Schmitter 2002; Posner 1993. On the Paris academy, see Vitet 1861; Duro 1997.
- 49 Van den Branden 1867, 17-18; Filipczak 1987, 166; Van Looij 1989.
- 50 The document is reproduced in Van den Branden 1867, 19: 'Alzoo door den slechten tijd en den voormaligen oorlog de kunsten geheel ten ondere zijn gebracht, zoo is de ontworpen Academie het eenige middle om die kunsten weder te herstellen en tot hunnen ouden luister te brengen'.
- 51 Van den Branden 1867, 18.
- 52 On Teniers's life, see the recent biography by Vlieghe 2011.
- 53 De *Bie* 1662, 184.
- 54 De *Bie* 1662, 30.
- 55 Filipczak 1987, 170; Van den Branden 1867, 20.
- 56 The painting is in the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen in Munich, inv. no. 896. See Filipczak 1987, 155.
- 57 Filipczak 1987, 156; De Bruyn 1988, 279, cat. 248.
- 58 See Filipczak 1987, 173-175; Balis 1993, 117-118. On the Jordaens paintings, see also D'Hulst 1967.

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Detail fig. 14