

Nicolaes Maes

Taste, Painting and the Five Senses

León Krempel

Abstract *The paper examines five paintings by Nicolaes Maes which today are distributed among various museums all over the world and which, according to an auction catalog from 1816, form a series allegorizing the five senses. Probably many sense allegories, as was the case here, are no longer recognizable as such today, also because the subject seems to have inspired painters to come up with variations and individual solutions. Within art history, there are only a few recurring iconographic motifs, such as eyeglasses for the sense of sight. Also, the order in which the senses are presented changes frequently. In the example discussed here, Maes surprisingly has combined allegory with the family portrait. This raises the question of what it means when identifiable people embody senses in an image. This paper shows how the five senses are interpreted by the painter and what role is assigned to the sense of taste, symbolized by food.*

Fig. 1: Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem, Kitchen Interior with Amorous Couple, 1596.



Source: Formerly Galerie Stuker, Bern, Switzerland.

1. Provenance after 1816

It was not until late that the connection between five early works by the well-known Dutch painter Nicolaes Maes (1634–1693), which are now distributed among four museums in Europe and North America, was recognized by the author.¹ For the last time in its entirety, the series was on display on September 2, 1816 in the death house of the former mayor of the city of Leuven, Joannes Franciscus Xaverius Baelmans de Steenwegen,² at Rue de Namur No. 97 in Leuven. The auction catalog describes the works in great detail under lot numbers 70–74 as “les cinq sens naturel” (“the five natural senses”) in the following order: *Taste*, *Hearing*, *Smell*, *Sight*, and *Touch* (figs. 2–6).³ According to information in the Getty Provenance Index, based on annotated copies of this auction catalog, the series was bought for 560 frcs. Lots 70 and 71, *Taste* and *Hearing*, were then sold separately to a Van Mechelen, lots 72 to 74 to a Comte de Robiano. *Taste* appeared again in 1852 at the auction of Count de Turenne in Paris. Through various French, English, Dutch and North American collections, the piece eventually made its way to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. *Hearing* and *Sight* immediately found each other again. On April 17, 1818, they were acquired for the Duke of Wellington at the auction of the collection of the late dealer Nicolas Lerouge in Paris. *Touch* was described as the work of Pieter de Hooch by Sir John Murray in 1819 at Lange Voorhout Palace in The Hague in the private rooms of the Princess of Orange.⁴ Passed down through several generations in the princely family, it entered the Berlin art trade after 1918, from which it was acquired by Baron Heinrich

1 Krempel 2000: pp. 358–360, cat. No. D 21, 22, 27, 31, 32. All works are painted in oil on canvas. Painted surface dimensions taken by the author from museum catalogs vary slightly. *Taste*: 58 x 66 cm. *Hearing*: 57.5 x 66 cm. *Smell*: 59 x 62 cm. *Sight*: 57.5 x 62.5 cm. *Touch*: 62 x 66.4 cm. Similar dimensions do not occur in Maes's known œuvre. It has not been investigated from which period the frames originate.

2 J. F. X. Baelmans, son of Petrus Leonardus Baelmans and Clara Helena Vandervorst, was elected mayor (“uit de geslachten”) on June 23, 1790. He was married twice. His first wife, Barbara Isabella Roberta Detru de Fontenay, died on February 21, 1783, and no children were born of this marriage in Louvain. His second wife, Isabella Henrica Michaël S. Carton, died on December 13, 1819 and had three children, all of whom died shortly after birth. He himself died on June 18, 1792 and was buried in Lubbeek, where he had acquired the Gellenberg castle in 1757. With thanks to B. Grymonprez, City Archives of Leuven, for his letter of October 3, 1996 to the author.

3 De Strycker 1964: 17, 24; Getty Provenance Index Sale Catalog B-259. When Baelmans started collecting, whether perhaps his father passed the passion on to him is just as unknown as the sources of supply of the paintings. According to the Getty Provenance Index, the 141 lot numbers in the catalog are distributed among the following schools: Flemish (79), Dutch (23), Flemish or Dutch (4), Flemish or Belgian (1), Dutch (1), Italian (9), French (2), German (1), Spanish (1), unknown (9).

4 Vandeputte (2017: 24–26) points to unresolved inconsistencies in the provenance of the *Naughty Drummer* in Madrid. According to her, the painting *La correction maternelle*, formerly

Thyssen-Bornemisza in 1930. The painting, known as *The Naughty Drummer*, is now in the Thyssen Bornemisza Museum in Madrid. *Smell* is recorded in the collection of Peter Norton in London in 1833. The painting remained lost for a long time until 1917, when it was auctioned with the collection of Mrs. Anna Mitchell and acquired by the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. The title *The Sense of Smell* still preserves a memory of the painting's origin from the series.

2. Taste

Without knowing the original context, various interpretations have been proposed for the painting in Philadelphia (fig. 2). The rifle and the hunting bag, the dead fowl, the wine jug and the wine glass suggest a hunter who has just been with the young maid. In comparable compositions by 17th-century Dutch painters, such as *The Hunter's Gift* by Gabriel Metsu from c. 1658–c. 1661 (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam), with a statuette of Cupid to emphasize the amorous content, the hunter offers his prey to the maid. Maes shows his protagonist alone, seemingly concentrating on plucking a duck, disregarding how a cat is sneaking up. The apple is reminiscent of the Fall, but here nine apples roll out of the overturned wooden bucket, alluding to an unwanted pregnancy. The kitchen disaster is worse than in reality, which is in accordance with a definition of comedy in Aristotle's *Poetics* (cap. 2, 18). Maes seems to follow a moralizing pictorial tradition that associates taste with pleasure, which were identified with two of the Seven Deadly Sins: Gluttony and Lust. At the same time, he wants his work to be appreciated as a good piece of painting itself. Look how aptly the materiality of glass, earthenware, majolica, metal, skin, feathers, blood, etc. is rendered. The coloration, the chiaroscuro, the perspective as well as the salty humor of the narrative leave little to be desired. The didactic message is sweetened, as so often by Dutch allegorical artists, who followed the recommendation "to please and educate" in Horace's *Ars poetica* (verse 333). Taste, counted among the lower senses, is upgraded. The artist participated here in a trend that began in the Renaissance and, according to Kanz (2010: 42), progressed through the notion of good taste to the concept of stylistic epochs in the young discipline of art history in the nineteenth century. The positive attitude toward taste manifests itself in painted still lifes that celebrate this and others of the five senses, especially sight, but also smell and even touch (see Ebert-Schifferer 2018: 187–188; Leonhard 2020). Karel van Mander (1548–1606), the father of Dutch art history, can be cited as a key witness to this. In his *Schilder-Boeck* from 1604 he often used witty metaphors

in the collection of Théophile Thoré (alias William Bürger) and thought to be a Jan Vermeer, could be a copy after or a variant of Maes.

of eating and digesting for a variety of subjects (Kauffmann 1943: 138), as if painting were closer to the art of cooking than, say, sculpture.

Fig. 2: Nicolaes Maes, Taste (also known as Woman Plucking a Duck), c. 1655–1656.



Source: Philadelphia Museum of Art: Gift of Mrs. Gordon A. Hardwick and Mrs. W. Newbold Ely in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Roland L. Taylor, 1944-9-4.

The progressive place Maes occupies in the history of taste-evaluation with the Philadelphia painting becomes clearer when we take a look at a *Kitchen Interior with Amorous Couple* by Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem from 1596 (fig. 1; see Van Thiel 1999: 385, 386, no. 240). Gluttony, drunkenness, and the initiation of a love act appear here much more explicitly staged. Cornelisz. uses fish as a general sexual symbol, while Maes depicts an empty fish colander (*visvergiet*, Willebrands 2022: 196). Only by knowing the purpose of the cookware can one imagine the food that goes with it and its meaning in the context of the pictorial tradition. However, the variety and opulence of still lifes – fish, fruit, flowers, metal tableware, poultry, and meat – in the painting by Cornelisz. add up to a feast of painting.

Judging by the style and form of the signature, *Taste* can be placed around 1655 and thus somewhat earlier than the other paintings in the series. The high viewer standpoint that makes it possible to spread out the still life upon the floor

can be compared to the *A Woman Scraping Parsnips* and *The Idle Servant*, both dated 1655 and located at the National Gallery in London. The ligatured signature type, which dominates in Maes's work from 1653 to 1655 but which after 1655 occurs only extremely sporadically, also speaks for a creation of this painting in 1655 (Krempel 2000: 27–29). The other three signed paintings (figs. 3–5) show the unligatured signature type, which Maes used rarely before 1656 and almost exclusively from 1656 to 1669. If the relative chronology corresponds to the actual order in which the paintings were created, Maes may have considered the 16th-century tradition of the kitchen still life as an appropriate starting point, since it offers the possibility of thinking about sensuality, taste in a broader sense, and painting. However, he may also have seen no other option than to follow this tradition because he did not have access to painted five-senses series that met his expectations. He may have seen prints of that theme, but only what is probably the most recent work in his series, *Smell*, clearly points to this source of inspiration.

3. Hearing

The motif of mostly female servants neglecting their domestic duties for the sake of their base desires became widespread through the didactic poetry of the Dordrecht statesman Jacob Cats (1577–1660) into the 18th century. However, Cats counsels forbearance in the face of others' faults, recognizing therein a national virtue. His pre-Enlightenment words remind us that ultimately all people are equal (Cats 1726, vol. 1: 362–363). So, too, does Maes in another interior at Apsley House (fig. 3). In a kitchen through which one looks through an open door, a nanny imagines herself unobserved while her lover leans in through the window and grabs her breast. In front, the woman of the house descends from a study, looks at the viewer with a knowing smile, and holds her index finger in front of her mouth. With this ambiguous gesture, she asks the viewer to observe the tryst and remain silent, as the mockery could damage the good reputation of the house, indicated by the books, the writing utensils and the wax seal in the study. Eavesdroppers paintings were a popular specialty of Maes, who created six different versions of them between 1655 and 1657. The name-giving figure is similar in function to the jester on a stage; its pointing gesture goes back to Italian Renaissance history painting (Robinson 1987; Baxandall 1988: 72). The combination with an allegory of hearing is attested only for the painting discussed here. Maes, for once, does not show the sense of hearing, which is ennobled by music and language and ranks right after the sense of sight, from its undisputed side.

Fig. 3: Nicolaes Maes, Hearing (also known as The Eavesdropper), c. 1656.



Source: English Heritage, The Wellington Collection, Apsley House.

4. Smell

Kauffmann (1943: 134–135) illustrates his thesis, then new among experts, of the dressing of allegorical themes in everyday scenes, which had become common in seventeenth-century Dutch painting, by linking Maes's Oxford composition (fig. 4) to a sheet titled *Odoratus* from an engraved series of the five senses by Abraham Bosse, from which individual motifs such as the garden parterre, terrace, balustrade, flowerpot and drapery appear to have been taken with a few changes. This appropriation of motifs briefly brings us back to Karel van Mander, who explains to the painter's youth (1646: fol. 5r) that, loosely translated, stolen turnips make a good soup if you only cook them well. Robinson (1996: 195–203) devoted a separate section to the Oxford painting in his dissertation on Maes's early work. As he noticed, the differences in age and dress of the figures already led to a classification in the Decimal Index of the Art of the Low Countries as “the ill-matched couple combined with smell” (Robinson 1996: 196). The interpretation of it as allegory of the sense of smell “fails to do justice to the complexity and originality of Maes's

invention.” Robinson demonstrates an overlooked connection to the iconography of the seasons. The motif of an old man in fur next to a younger woman in an off-the-shoulder dress, for example, is found in an allegory of winter by Jan Brueghel the Elder and Hendrick van Balen (Bavarian State Painting Collections, dated 1616).

Fig. 4: Nicolaes Maes, Smell (also known as A Man holding a Carnation to a Woman's Nose), c. 1656–1657.



Source: © Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

The Oxford painting can easily be dated earlier than has previously been assumed by some. The quality of delicate and shimmering textiles shows parallels to paintings dated 1656 to 1657 (Krempel 2000: figs. 31, 42, 46, 73). Judging by its style, however, it remains the most recent painting in the series. And it is the only one in the series that clearly places itself in the tradition of the five-senses allegory through its reference to Abraham Bosse.

5. Sight

The contrast old-young returns in the *Milkmaid* at Apsley House (fig. 5). An old woman is counting money into her hand. No one wants to be cheated. The connection with the sense of sight is symbolically clarified by the old woman's eyeglasses. Maes varied the theme of the milkmaid in three other paintings of his early period. Here he is following in the tradition of depictions of market bustle and street life that were already common in 16th-century prints and found their way into Dutch painting after the mid-17th century (Dumas 1991: 419, note 11; Robinson 1996: 221–236). Maes did not leave things at representing the dominant sense only by an example of its everyday use. The attribute of eyeglasses would have been sufficient to make the allegory clear. For it can hardly be a coincidence that he lets the money transaction in the foreground take place in front of a city backdrop with an aligned house front, as if he wanted to give an example of the art of perspective. If the viewer was just reminded of the importance of seeing in trade, here he is reminded of another kind of deception: namely the deceptive character of painting, which is a selling point. Indeed, the Dutch term *gezicht* for the sense of sight also refers to the view of a landscape or a city, be it real or depicted. The painter and businessman Maes is obviously bringing himself into play here. He is not portraying himself, but instead his address in the Steegoversloot in Dordrecht (Staring 1965: 171, note 6). One recognizes the St. Jorispoort and, halfway across the bridge over the Lindergracht, today Museumsstraat.⁵ With the image of the city gate, Maes perhaps wanted to suggest that he himself could contribute to the glory of Dordrecht. In any case, it shows his civic pride. The medieval doctrine, according to which the five senses can be compared with the five gates of a city, also echoes here (Nicholas of Cusa 1982: chapter 8; Kanz 2010: 35; Palazzo 2020: 69). But what is the function of the boy *tasting* the cream while looking at the viewer? The unusual connection between sight and taste could once again refer to 'good taste' in art (see Kanz 2010), now connected with a reference to its commercial value.

⁵ The point of view here and in two other early genre paintings by Maes (Brooklyn; The Anthony de Rothschild Collection, Ascott) corresponds approximately to a black-and-white photograph taken shortly before the demolition of the building in 1865 (Regionaal Archief Dordrecht, Collectie W. Meijers, inv. no. 555.12356). A *Vegetable Seller with Two Boys* by Jan Vollevenhoven I, a pupil of Maes, shows the St. Jorispoort with the adjacent buildings from the opposite side. The painting, dated 1668, was auctioned at Christie's in Amsterdam on May 14, 2003 under lot number 193.

Fig. 5: Nicolaes Maes, *Sight* (also known as *The Milk Woman*), c. 1656.



Source: English Heritage, The Wellington Collection, Apsley House.

6. Touch

Since Valentiner (1924: 42), *The Naughty Drummer* (fig. 6) has been described as an informal family portrait. The crying boy shows Maes's stepson Justus de Gelder (1650–after 1709). The woman with the raised rod is Adriana Brouwers (1624–1690). Maes had married the widow of the preacher Arnoldus de Gelder in Dordrecht on January 13, 1654. The child in the cradle is likely Maes's firstborn daughter Johanna, who was baptized in Dordrecht on April 24, 1656. A son Conraedus was baptized in Dordrecht on September 9, 1654 but died young. He can hardly be depicted, since Johanna would then be missing. Maes depicted himself in a mirror on the wall, in front of the easel with his head turned toward the viewer in three-quarter profile.

The painting in Madrid is the only one in the series that Maes did not have to add his name to, as the integrated self-portrait made the usual signature superfluous. However, it is more than a family portrait of the artist, as it shares allegorical qualities with the other works in the series. And it is likewise rooted in painterly traditions. The conflict between young siblings, under the eyes of more or less strict parents, is a recurring motif in 17th-century Dutch painting (Franits 1993: 138–141).

Based on the map of the Seventeen Provinces by Claes Jansz. Visscher, which can be seen on the wall next to the mirror, Hedinger (1986: 63–70) interprets the painting as a political allegory of the Peace of Westminster enforced by the grand pensionary Johan de Witt against the opposition of the supporters of the House of Orange. The troublemaker in the picture, represented by Justus de Gelder, who was born in the same year 1650 as Willem III (he died as William III of England in 1702), would thus represent the war party.

Fig. 6: Nicolaes Maes, *Touch* (also known as *The Naughty Drummer*), c. 1656.



Source: © Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.

Having summoned two senses to the stage in *Sight*, Maes now unites three. They are all defined negatively and indirectly. Thus, touch is expressed only in the face of the boy, who obviously does *not* understand why he should stop drumming. The mere threat of punishment is enough. The drum, which in the context could also allude to the sense of hearing, *lacks* one of the two requisite drumsticks – Justus has dropped it to wipe the tears from his eye. He does *not* hear; that is, he does not obey. Seeing,

too, appears *imperfect*. The painter needs a mirror, a common attribute of sight,⁶ in order to complete the allegorical self-portrait with family, and he needs his wife to supervise the children. Discipline, one could read the message, characterizes the family man as much as the artist. One wonders here if Maes already saw his stepson as his future successor, whether he addressed the series to him.

Just as the senses of taste and smell have been increasingly valorized in philosophy, literature, and the visual arts since the Renaissance, the same has happened with the sense of touch (Putscher 1978; Nordenfalk 1990; Zeuch 2000). If the sequence of images that has survived in the auction catalog is the original, which cannot be proven with certainty, the position five for *Touch* would strengthen the punch line. This artistic decision would not have remained unique. The Delft painter Barent Fabritius combined the theme of the five senses with the stages of life. His series from 1666 (Aachen, Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum) shows a boy with a cat in front of a mirror: *Sight*, a young grape eater: *Taste*, a self-portrait with a pipe: *Smell*, a violinist: *Hearing*, and an old man with a chicken: *Touch*.

7. Hidden Portraits

Given the obvious self-referentiality of the entire series – including the reflection on the potential of painting, Maes's ambitions as an artist, his livelihood, and his family – it is not too speculative to assume the presence of other portraits from the painter's family circle. For this, let us look at the *Smell* in Oxford. The slender face of the elderly man seems to recur with different beard shapes in the *Eavesdropper* (Museum of Fine Arts Boston) and in two other genre paintings from the second half of the 1650s (Krempel 2000: cat. no. D 13, D 39, A 17). Do we see here perhaps Gerrit Maes, the father of the painter? And is the elegant lady next to him Henrica Maes? That would make sense, because this older sister of Nicolaes, born in 1624, remained unmarried and could therefore have been painted together with her father.⁷ If the blond boy in *Sight* (fig. 5) really stands for good taste in painting, it is obvious to

6 The painter Gonzales Coques connected the sense of sight in a series of the five senses with a portrait of his colleague Robert van den Hoecke (National Gallery, London). He has him holding a small painted panel in his right hand. It shows a military encampment, indicating Van den Hoecke's specialization as a battle painter. However, similarly to the view of St. Jorispoort at Maes, the view also refers to the sense of sight.

7 Henrica was baptized in November 1624 in Dordrecht. A Henrica Maas, elderly and unmarried, made her will before the notary Cornelis van Aensurgh in Dordrecht on February 25, 1703 (Regionaal Archief Dordrecht 10, no. 29: fol. 247). The building with a tower in the background evinces similarity with the Dordwijk estate in the south of Dordrecht.

recognize in him another portrait of Maes's stepson and future successor Justus de Gelder.⁸

When allegories serve to illustrate abstract concepts, the implementation of contemporary portraits in place of personifications enhances their credibility by bringing them closer to life. In the allegorical portraits assumed here, it does not seem arbitrary who plays which role. Unlike in theater, for example, the persons portrayed do not disappear behind their costumes.

8. A Portrait of Arnoldus de Gelder?

Among the Dutch masters in the collection J. F. X. Baelmans there is still the portrait of a *Scholar* (lot. no. 30) known in the literature on Nicolaes Maes, which is said to bear his signature and the date 1656 (fig. 7; Krempel 2000: cat. no. B 19).⁹ It was acquired by Auguste-Marie-Raymond, 6th Duke of Arenberg, and can be traced in the Arenberg Gallery in Brussels until 1897. Research by the author (c. 1997) into the whereabouts of the painting was inconclusive. The occurrence of Maes's series datable around 1656 and his portrait of an unknown man dated 1656 in the same collection very much later does not rule out a hitherto unrecognized connection. Earlier identifications of the unknown man with famous scholars of the 17th century – Nicolaes Heinsius, Joan Blaeu, Caspar Fagel – did not hold. They were quite unfounded, and it must be added that in 1656 Maes was far from enjoying the fame that such commissions would have required. However, if one looks into the artist's family circle, it is not possible to get past Arnoldus de Gelder, father of Justus de Gelder, preacher in Wijngaarden near Dordrecht from 1638 until his death 1652. One can assume that Maes and his wife Adriana Brouwers were concerned that Justus would grow up without his biological father. Adriana had more family experience than her ten-years-younger husband (Ghandour 1999: 218). Indeed, there is some evidence that the unknown sitter may be his likeness. A desk and books, sometimes even a globe, appear more frequently in uncontested portraits of Dutch preachers.

8 The blending of portraiture, allegory and other genres in 17th-century Dutch painting is a phenomenon that can be easily overlooked. A good example of this is provided by the small panel of a *Young Seamstress* signed and dated 1657 (private collection), which was one of the highlights of the Nicolaes-Maes exhibition in The Hague and London during 2019–2020. In his catalog entry for the painting (Van Suchtelen 2019: 108–111), Bart Cornelis draws attention to the discovery of an age reference on the dress of the figure. It is an unmistakable indication that a limited circle of people, probably family members of the 15-year-old girl, recognized her individual traits in this portrait with genre-like features.

9 On canvas, 99 x 90 cm.

The cute little dog at the bottom right could have been painted for children's eyes. It is missing in a copy of the painting.¹⁰

Fig. 7: E. de Loose after Nicolaes Maes, Possible Posthumous Portrait of the Preacher Arnoldus de Gelder, 1656.



Source: Formerly Collection Arenberg, Brussels.
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

Despite the different formats of the five + one paintings they can be understood as a unity because of the family trees they represent, and the juxtaposition of the two professions of painter and preacher. A possible source of inspiration for Maes could have been the popular English comedy *Lingua*, first published by Thomas Tompkins in 1607 and translated into Dutch in 1648 by Lambert van den Bosch (1620–1698), who settled in Dordrecht in 1655 to become co-rector of the Latin school. In the play,

¹⁰ The painting, known since 1904, was acquired in 1921 by the Scheepvaartmuseum in Amsterdam as a portrait of the cartographer Joan Blaeu, and sold again in 1974 with an attribution to Cornelis Bisschop (Krempel 2000: under cat. no. B 19). The work changed hands on July 6, 2004 at Sotheby's in London (lot number 457) for a relatively low price. The possibility, that it could be the painting of the Arenberg collection, cannot be ruled out. In this case, however, in addition to the dog, the signature of Maes, the date 1656 and a Latin motto would have to have been painted over or removed. The inscriptions are described in the 19th century literature on the piece (Krempel 2000) and most recently by Hofstede de Groot (1915: 531–532).

the Five Senses, presented as male, succeed in defending their dominance over Language as the 'feminine' sixth sense. Language, on the other hand, asserts its power in rhetoric, logic and law. Maes would have added theology to this short list, showing humility and confidence in the Dutch Reformed Church. (Van den Bosch 1648; Parker 1989: 454–458)

9. Schilderijen van de familie

According to what has been said so far, it's fair to assume that Maes created the *Five Senses* for himself and his growing family. For what buyer or client would have found pleasure in the many self-referential allusions? The same applies to the supposed portrait of Arnoldus de Gelder, whose unusual composition does not fit at all with the first portrait commissions to Maes in the 1650s. The possibility that the five + one paintings were passed down in the family for a long time can be proven.

When Maes died at the end of 1693, his last will of 1685 provided for an equitable division of the estate among the three daughters and the stepson (Kremppel 2000: doc. 83). Works of art are not mentioned in them. Johanna Maes (1656–1696), whom we have already met as the child in the cradle in *Touch*, married the Frenchman François Baugé. Also Arnoldina Maas (1660–1702), wife of Hendrik Crollius, as well as Ida Margareta Maas (1664–?), wife of Adriaan de Graaf, who emigrated with her or as a widower to Surinam, reached adulthood and had children.

Justus de Gelder was the stepson of Maes from the first marriage of his wife Adriana Brouwers, who died in 1690, to the preacher Arnoldus de Gelder. After the discovery by the author of a painting signed by his hand and dated 1671 (Kremppel 2000: 40, fig. 439), scholars have begun to attribute other works to de Gelder that he may have created partly under the guidance of his stepfather. Six children from his marriage to Maria van der Prep were born in Amsterdam and Vianen, where he was an alderman from 1682 to 1709. The burial books of Vianen have not been preserved, but his widow sold property there and it can be concluded that he was buried there before October 30, 1716.¹¹

Maria van der Prep returned to Amsterdam no later than 1720 and died there in 1724, at which time she lived on Prinsengracht near Prinsenstraat. She decreed a year before her death that her son Nicolaas Maas de Gelder should receive all her paintings and books as well as the best Bible. After his death in 1727, the paintings passed on to his sisters Margareta Ida de Gelder and Maria de Gelder. In the inventory of the later dated January 1, 1742, there are thirty-nine unspecified paintings distributed

¹¹ At the baptism of Justus de Gelder's granddaughter Adriana Sibilla Temminck on October 30, 1716 in Amsterdam, Maria van der Prep is named as Justus's widow (Stadsarchief Amsterdam 5001–109: 511; Eldering-Niemeijer 1960: 56).

over six rooms of her home on Brouwersgracht near Herenmarkt. When the inheritance was distributed on May 1, 1742, Maria de Gelder's second husband Nicolaas Russelman received eight paintings as a gift, including a self-portrait by Justus de Gelder and a pair of portraits of him and his wife.¹²

Adriana de Gelder allowed her son Coenraad Temminck (1724–1758) to take all the paintings of the family (*schilderijen van de familie*) in advance shortly before her death. Her inventory of October 15, 1754 lists a total of thirty paintings distributed among five rooms of her house on the Keizersgracht near the Prinsenstraat.¹³ It is likely that this collection came to her via Margareta Ida and Maria de Gelder as the inheritance of their common father Justus de Gelder. However, some of the paintings might have been inherited by Adriana's husband Jacob from his father Adriaen, who lived there before.¹⁴

After the death of Coenraad Temminck, his widow Angeneta Fogh (1732–1825) was married again to Nicolaas Lublink in 1759. The elder of Coenraad's two sons, Hendrik Temminck (1757–1820), may have inherited some of the paintings described above, but may not have disposed of them until he came of age in 1782. References to an auction or money difficulties, in which Hendrik would have been involved, are missing. He may have sold the heirlooms privately due to lack of interest, understanding or space. Should the paintings discussed in this article have been among them, they would have had to be brought to Leuven directly or via detours before the death of J. F. X. Baelmans on June 18, 1792.¹⁵

12 Nothing is known about the whereabouts of these paintings. They may have been sold soon after the death of Nicolaas Russelman at the auction of his estate on April 12 and 13, 1676 (*Oprechte Haerlemsche Courant*, March 2, 1776).

13 The house Keizersgracht with today's number 84 (Burgerwijk 49, kleinnummer 443 since 1796) was occupied at the death of Hendrick Temminck by the broker Paulus Weslingh Lublink, a stepbrother of the deceased (*Daarnhouwer* 1953/54: 176). With thanks to Bart Schurman, Stadsarchief Amsterdam.

14 For Adriaen's painting collection see Getty Provenance Index, Archival Inventory N-708. Some paintings may also have been come from the estate of Gerardus Baugé (1682–1737). At the death of this last surviving son of François Baugé in 1737, from Nicolaes Maes's own still-living descendants there was only Adriana Cordula de Graaf, who lived in Paramaribo, Suriname. In an estate inventory of Gerardus drawn after his death, presumably in his house in Prinsenstraat near Spiegelstraat, we find forty-five paintings distributed over five rooms and the garden house. If there were paintings among them which Johanna Maes had inherited from her father, they may have been sold on September 25, 1737. A newspaper advertisement (*'s Gravenhaegse Woensdaegse Courant*, September 11, 1737) promoting the auction speaks of "artful paintings by the most important painters" (*konstige schilderyen van de voornaemste meesters*).

15 The account of the ownership of paintings in the families of Nicolaes Maes and of Justus de Gelder is based on the following sources: Stadsarchief Amsterdam 5075, notary D. van der Groe 4255: pp. 423–435; 4256: pp. 240–286; notary J. Backer 4646: pp. 997–1006; notary G. van der Groe 6637, no. 15; notary A. Baars 8757: no. 1953; notary Jan Ardinois 9085: no. 57; 9103: no.

10. Conclusion

The *Five Senses* by Nicolaes Maes testify to a connection of the sense of taste with the art of painting, the rise of the three lower senses, and the significance of the sense of touch; while the presumed posthumous portrait of Arnoldus de Gelder could emphasize the intertwining of sensory perception with language and reason. What makes this complex allegory so special is its semi-private nature, the portrait of a young ‘patchwork family’ (possibly extended by other portraits), the messages to the adolescents, the commemoration of the dead, and the dynastic ambition of the artist. He would become the most sought-after portraitist in Amsterdam two decades later.

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