



The Chairman's Office

10 Cornwall Terrace
Regent's Park
London NW1 4QP
Tel 01-486 4466
Telex 28411

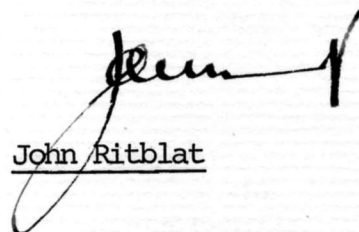
29th October 1979

Steven J H Hengel Esq
30 Saxenrodeweg
2116 VA
Bentveld
Holland

Dear Mr Hengel

I cannot help you with your particular 16th Century
Painting but thought you might be interested to see a
picture with details of a very attractive similar item
I have in my possession.

Yours sincerely



John Ritblat

Encl

Very fine early golfing painting - 1613
Wybrand-Simonsz De Geest

The above oil painting is fully authenticated, with a good provenance and dated 1613. It represents a 4½ year old Dutch boy wearing a charming russet smock with a beautifully embroidered, white lace trimmed pinafore and ruff. He is depicted standing on a pink tiled floor and is holding what looks to be a No. 5 iron ready to deal appropriately with his hand-stitched golf ball.

A photograph is enclosed, but of course ideally the picture should be seen as the colours are delightful. The measurements are height 110 cm. and width 80 cm. and a purchase could be made at \$42,000, subject to availability.

The painting is very similar to the Elizabethan portraits you see of Sir Francis Drake and Sir Walter Raleigh etc. of exactly this period.

Wybrand-Simonsz De Geest
Leuwarden 1590 - 1659

A Dutch portrait painter who later lived in Antwerp. He was the son and pupil of a painter from Lorraine, Syrian de Geest. In 1613 van Geest worked in Utrecht with the painter Abraham Bloemaert; he then travelled to Belgium, France and finally visited Rome, where he stayed for some years. On his return to Holland he settled in Amsterdam, painting in the manner of Jan van Ravestyn and Paulus Moreelse. Examples of his paintings are in the museums of Haarlem, Amsterdam, Stuttgart and Lille.

S. J. H. van Hengel
30, Saxonrodeweg
2116 VA Bentveld
Holland

6th November 1979

J. Ritblat, Esq., Chairman
The British Land Company Limited
10, Cornwall Terrace
London NW1 4QP

Regent's Park
01-4864466

Dear Mr. Ritblat,

This is to thank you very much indeed for your kind letter of the 29th October and the enclosed picture of Wybrand Simonsz de Geest's painting which is in your possession. Indeed as the description says, one ought to see the painting in colours to appreciate it to the full.

I would very much like to do so. It so happens that I will be in London on the 29th November and I wonder if you would let me have a look at the picture in the afternoon of that day?

If, as I gather from the notes to your letter, you would consider selling it I would certainly like to be considered a serious buyer.

Looking forward to your news I am,
very sincerely yours

Steven van Hengel

Steven J. H. van Hengel



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19th November 1979

S J H van-Hengel Esq
30 Saxenrodeweg
2116 VA Bentveld
Holland

Dear Mr van-Hengel

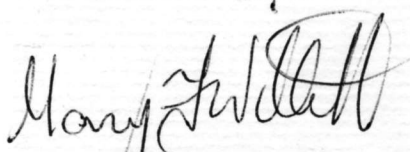
Golfer Painting

Thank you for your letter of the 6th November letting Mr Ritblat know that you are planning to visit London on the 29th November.

If you are still able to come to our offices Mr Ritblat would be pleased to see you at about 2.30pm, if you are unable to make that time perhaps you could call me once you are in London.

It is true that Mr Ritblat was previously quite interested in selling the painting but has made no definite plans since that time although if you are interested he would be willing to discuss the matter.

Yours sincerely



Mary F Willett
Secretary to John Ritblat

1st December 1979

30, Saxenrodeweg
2116 VA Bentveld
Holland

J. Ritblat Esq.
The British Land Co. Ltd.
10, Cornwall Terrace
London NW1 4QP

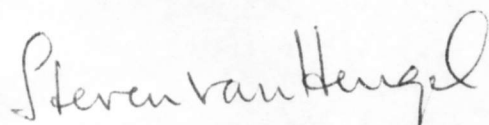
Dear Mr. Ritblat,

Let me first thank you for your kind reception on the 29th November. It was a pleasure to meet you and Mrs. Ritblat. Your Wybrand de Geest painting is a very fine one. Not only do I find it interesting from a point of view of early golf but on top of that it is a very good work in an excellent condition. The various shades of red in which the painting is executed give it a very particular charm.

I am enclosing the promised transcript from the Wurzbach Lexikon in English. For comparison I am also enclosing a photograph of an anonymous painting in the same fashion which is only one year older. This one reads: 'Aetatis suae 7 Anno 1612'. The painting is far less in quality and condition. (You can see from the photograph what happens to panels in the long run if they are not as well reinforced at the back as yours is!)

I am looking forward to the colour photographs and shall then make an effort for you at having the painting identified.

With kind regards, also to Mrs. Ritblad, I am sincerely yours



Steven J. H. van Hengel

2 Enclosures

Transcript from:
Dr. Alfred von Wurzbach's Niederländisches Künstlerlexikon
(1909)

Vol. I., page 572

Wybrand Simonsz. de Geest I. Painter of portraits, born at Leeuwarden in 1590 or 1592, died there 1659, son and pupil of Symon de Geest, a painter from Antwerp who settled in Leeuwarden. In 1613 Wybrand was a pupil of Abraham Bloemaert in Utrecht. He visited Belgium and France and worked for 4 years in Rome. In the group there he acquired the nickname 'The Frisian Eagle'. After his return to Leeuwarden he married Hendrikje Ulenburgh, sister of Saskia Ulenburgh (born 1612) who became Rembrandt's wife and who was educated by Wybrand after 1624, she being a full orphan. It appears that Wybrand lived in Amsterdam for a time. As a rule however he lived in Leeuwarden where he became the court painter to the 'Lord Lieutenant' (a Nassau prince). His son Julian and his grandson Wybrand II also became painters. He is an excellent painter of portraits of the old school. He shepherdesses remind one of Paulus Moreelse. Houbraken (I., 149) mentions Jacobus Potma as a pupil of him.



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16th January 1980

S J H Van-Hengel Esq
30 Saxonrodeweg
2116 VA Bentveld
Holland

Dear Mr van-Hengel

"Boy Golfer" Painting

May I first of all apologise for the long delay in replying to your kind letter of the 1st December 1979.

Mr Ritblat was very pleased with your enclosure on the history of Wybrand and at last I am able to enclose the promised prints of his "Boy Golfer" painting. I hope they are of sufficient quality to enable you to perhaps identify the painting.

Looking forward to hearing from you again.

Yours sincerely

Mary F Willett
Secretary to John Ritblat

Encl



30, Saxonrodeweg
2116VA Bentveld
Holland

27th January 1980

Tel. 023 - 24 01 69

Miss Mary F. Willett
The British Land Company Ltd.
10, Cornwall Terrace
Regent's Park
London NW1 4QP

Dear Miss Willett,

This is to thank you for your letter of the 16th and the enclosed photographs.

I have referred in the matter of identification of the 'Boy Golfer' picture to the National Institute of Art Documentation at The Hague. Unfortunately they too cannot identify the boy on the picture. Since it is known that this was the year when Wybrand Simonsz de Geest worked in Utrecht the supposition that it is a boy from that city is possible but it is impossible to prove it. I am sorry that I can't come any further at this point. If I do so in the future I shall let Mr. Ritblat know about it.

With kind regards I am,
yours faithfully,

van Hengel

Steven J.H. van Hengel



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Steven J H van Hengel Esq
30 Saxonrodeweg
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Dear Mr van Hengel

' Boy Golfer '

Thank you for your kind letter of the 27th January and for all the effort you have been making on Mr Rotblat's behalf, which I know he appreciates, and of course, would like to hear further from you should any fresh information come to light.

Yours sincerely

Mary F Willett

Mary F Willett
Secretary to John Ritblat