

Caspar Geraerds (Jaspar/Jesper Gerardi)

active mid seventeenth century in Antwerp

A Still Life with a Nautilus Shell

Oil on panel

75,5 x 58,5 cm (29 3/4 by 23 in.)

signed with a monogram

Provenance:

Private Collection, Bergamo

Exhibitions:

orbis pictus, Galleria Lorenzelli, Bergamo 1986

Literature:

Veca (1986) pp.164/166 pl.24

It is not known when Jaspar Geraerds was born. It is also unknown to whom he was apprenticed. Probably he was born in Antwerp and received his first training ca. 1634/35.¹ In 1644 he was admitted to the Guild of St. Luke in Antwerp as a still life painter and in 1645, became master of the guild. He seems to be identical with Jesper Gerardi.² Why he used an italianized name is not known, especially with most of his still lives

recalling those of his fellow painters from Haarlem and Amsterdam. A sejour in Italy is not recorded. Vroom suspects that Geraerds might have spent some time in Portugal.³ A still life in a private collection in Düsseldorf is signed: Jasper Geerardi. Consistent and standardized spelling was not yet established and the artist wrote his name in all colors.

Vroom thinks that Geraerds possibly was also active in Amsterdam, from which the influence of Pieter Claesz., Willem Claesz. Heda and Jan Davidsz. de Heem might be explained, which he harmoniously moulded together.⁴ Possibly Geraerds settled in 1649 in Amsterdam, where he might have died before October 19th, 1654.⁵ Yet, Geraerds never betrayed his Antwerp roots and never abandoned the Flemish spirit. His sumptuous compositions are rich in color and always alluding to the pleasures of life. *After an initial period with a preference for a more limited range of colors, Geraerds left monochrome painting behind without any difficulties at all, the larger and more expansive opulence of color and form gradually gaining a place for itself with the full glories of the Baroque.*⁶ In this context Veca talks of an international still life style manifesting itself in Antwerp in mid seventeenth century.⁷

1) Bredius (1915/1922)
2) Thieme/Becker (1938)
3) Vroom (1980) p.166
4) Vroom (1980) p.164

5) Thieme/Becker (1938)
6) Vroom (1980) p.166
7) Veca (1986)p.166



cat. no. XXXVI