

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



Nicolaes Ruts

Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn (Dutch, 1606–1669)

Date 1631

Medium Oil on panel

Dimensions 46 x 34 3/8 in. (116.8 x 87.3 cm)

Credit Line Purchased by The Frick Collection, 1943

Accession Number 1943.1.150

Currently On View

First Floor, Room 13, West Gallery

Commentary Born in Cologne, Nicolaes Ruts (1573–1638) was a merchant who traded with Russia, the source, no doubt, of the rich furs in which he posed for this portrait. Rembrandt's likeness of him, perhaps the first portrait commission the artist received from someone outside of his own family, was painted presumably for Ruts' daughter Susanna. A 1636 inventory of her property listed the picture of her father as "the portrait of Nicolaes Ruts made by Rembrandt." The dramatic contrasts in lighting and the detailed rendering of the varied textures are characteristic of Rembrandt's early work, differing markedly from the warm, diffused light and broad brushwork that distinguish the Frick Self-Portrait executed over a quarter of a century later. Source: *Art in The Frick Collection: Paintings, Sculpture, Decorative Arts*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996.

Collection History Susanna Ruts. Ruts family. Owned in 1799 by Joost Romswinkel, Leyden, and still in his collection, in The Hague, in 1817. Anthony Meynts sale, July 15, 1823, Amsterdam, Lot 107, as Portrait of a Man, sold for 4,010 florins to Brondgeest (one of the agents—"makelaars"—for the sale), possibly for the Queen of the Netherlands. Willem II, King of the Netherlands, sale, August 12, 1850, The Hague, Lot 86, as Portrait d'un Rabbin, sold for 3,400 florins to Weimer, The Hague. Adrian Hope sale, June 30, 1894, Christie's, Lot 57 (now identified as Nicolaes Ruts), sold for 4,700 guineas to Agnew. Joseph Ruston, Monk's Manor, Lincoln. His sale, May 21 and 23, 1898, Christie's, Lot 95, sold for 5,000 guineas to Colnaghi. Bought (through E. Fischhof, Paris) by Comte Boni de Castellane, Paris. Bought (before 1903) by J. Pierpont Morgan, and brought by him to New York in 1912. Knoedler, 1943. Frick 1943 Source: *Paintings in The Frick Collection: American, British, Dutch, Flemish and German. Volume I*. New York: The Frick Collection, 1968.