

· AGNEWS ·

EST. 1817

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Jan van der Heyden

(Gorinchem 1637-1712 Amsterdam)

A rural landscape, with figures conversing

Oil on panel

7 1/8 x 9 3/8 in. (18 x 23.7 cm.)

Executed in the 1660s



Provenance

with Thomas Agnews & Sons, Liverpool;

Anonymous sale [The Property of a Gentleman]; Christie's, London, 18 June 1892, lot 100 (53 gns. to Martin Colnaghi on behalf of the following),

Stephenson Robert Clarke (1862-1948), Marylebone, London, and by descent to the previous owner.

Preserved in the same family collection for over 140 years, this charming unpublished panel by Jan van der Heyden exemplifies the artist's lesser-known talent for producing charming, rural scenes on an intimate scale. Typically celebrated for his grand townscapes notable for their exceptionally detailed handling, this work is a rare addition to his *oeuvre*. Using a tonal, expertly-handled colour palette, van der Heyden pays the same attention to the depiction of natural, rustic textures in the paths, grass and trees as he does to the intricate architectural details in his larger compositions.

A comparable arrangement of paths and country roads, painted from a similar viewpoint, appears in a work of *circa* 1666-8 at the Städel Museum in Frankfurt (fig. 1).

Van der Heyden was a native of Gorinchem, though his family had moved to Amsterdam by 1650. He was trained, according to his biographer [Houbraken](#), as a glass painter. Before 1661 he travelled extensively in the southern Netherlands and in Germany, making drawings later used in his paintings. From the late 1660s van der Heyden was also engaged in projects to improve street lighting and fire-fighting in Amsterdam. Imaginary views, anticipating the capricci of 18th-century Venetian painters, are common among his works - the figures are often by other artists.

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Fig. 1: Jan van der Heyden, *On a Country Road*, c.1666-1668, oil on panel, Städels Museum, Frankfurt