

JAN VAN GOYEN

Leiden 1596 – 1656 The Hague

Figure Studies, c. 1650 – '51

Black chalk, gray wash

Inscription: *recto*, number 191 (upper right corner, faded)

9.8 x 15.7 cm

Provenance: With Johnson Neale, the album was bought on the Continent in the 19th Century; T. Mark Hovell, F.R.I.C.S., London; sale, London, Sotheby's, 3 July 1918, lot 124 (the entire album); with P. and D. Colnaghi & Co., London; sale, Amsterdam, A.W.M. Mensing, 27 April 1937, lot 218 (the entire album); A. Mayer, the Hague and New York; Dr. Karl Lilienfeld, New York, 1957 (by whom the album was dismembered); C.F. Louis de Wild, New York, by 1964; Carel Goldschmidt, New York; sale, New York, Christie's, 12 January 1995, lot 243, where acquired by Prof. Dr. Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann.

Literature: H.U. Beck, *Jan van Goyen 1596-1656*, Amsterdam 1972, vol. I, p. 311, no. 847/191; *idem*, *Jan van Goyen 1596-1656*, Doornspijk 1987, vol. III (supplement), pp. 127 ff., no. 847/191.

Although not really a frequent traveler, Jan van Goyen did travel within the Low Countries. On one of these journeys, made at the end of his life in, he traveled to Nijmegen and the Rhine Region, where he visited, among other places, Arnhem, Kleve, and Elten, and, on his return to his native town Leiden, Amsterdam and its surroundings. The present drawing was part of the sketchbook that he took with him on that trip.

While the subject matter of the drawing is typical van Goyen, figure sketches are exceptional within the sketchbook of 1650–'51 in which he primarily recorded landscape views, villages, windmills, churches and strongholds. Using black chalk and a gray wash to add shade and detail, all sketches were executed using the same technique. However, the style of figure sketches appears more firm and precise compared to the other subjects which are often loosely drawn and less defined. Van Goyen appears to have been particularly interested in depicting the figures as a group rather than as individuals. Back in the workshop he would turn to these drawings as a source of inspiration or use them as basic elements for his paintings and elaborate finished drawings.

How many sheets the sketchbook originally contained can no longer be established. At sale in 1918 the album was still intact and approximately 200 sheets and 210 sketches were known. It was A.W.M. Mensing who dismembered the album and mounted the drawings, and Dr. Liliefeld who sold them separately after he acquired them in 1957.