



## PIETER VAN LAER

(HAARLEM, 1589 - HAARLEM, 1642)

*Standing young man in a wide-brimmed hat*  
numbered on the backing sheet, upper right: 20  
pen and brown ink and wash over black chalk

140 x 90 mm

### **Provenance:**

Taken from an album of drawings

This is a hitherto unpublished addition to the graphic oeuvre of Pieter Bodding van Laer, among the rarest of draughtsmen, to whom only five or six sheets can be securely attributed. Van Laer was the central figure in a significant school of Netherlandish artists working in Rome at the start of the 17th century. This group transformed the Italian taste in art, introducing the novel idea of using quotidian, often working-class figures as the principal subjects for paintings. The settings were often rustic halts or picturesque urban ruins and backwaters. Van Laer, the leading light in this revolutionary movement, had an ungainly physical appearance, thus he gained the nickname Bamboccio, or Rag Doll. His followers were subsequently referred to as the Bamboccianti.

Our drawing is a study for the central figure of a young boy holding the reins of a horse in the painting *The Halt of the Hunters* (c. 1630), now in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Although the painting is undated, it was sent by Cosimo III de' Medici to the Uffizi in 1681, suggesting that it was made in Italy during van Laer's Roman sojourn, c. 1625–1639. The painting is relatively small, measuring 36 x 46.5 cm, and the dimensions of the drawn figure correspond almost exactly with that in the painting. It was most probably

taken from the life, rapidly executed in pen over a light armature of black chalk and enriched with washes of dark brown ink. Staccato marks were applied to indicate texture and stitching on the boy's clothing and to pick out the features of his face. Then the ink was diluted to provide a liquid wash to the background. Since the figure is isolated and lacking the props found in the painting, it must be that van Laer brought the composition together in his studio.

Please contact us for a full catalogue entry.