

ALLAERT VAN EVERDINGEN

(Alkmaar 1621 - Amsterdam 1675)

The Month of August (Virgo): The Harvest

brush and grey and brown wash
11.1 x 12.8 cm (4³/₈ x 5 in)

Provenance: Jacob van Rijk, Amsterdam;

sold by him in 1694 to Sybrand I Feitama (1620-1701), Amsterdam;

Isaac Feitama (1666-1709), Amsterdam; Sybrand II Feitama (1694-1758), Amsterdam,

his sale, Amsterdam, de Bosch, 16 October 1758, lot O.18 (as part of a set of the twelve months, lots O.11-22, later dispersed, f.155, to Yver); possibly Nicolaes Tjark; probably sold by him, Amsterdam, de Leth, 10 November 1762, p. 24, under nos. 15-26 (12 months, f. 200, to Fouquet);

Henry Oppenheimer, London, his sale, London, Christie's, 13 July 1936, in lot 243 (four landscapes, this one 'C');

Ernst Goldschmidt, Brussels, 1936; by descent, until sold Paris, Ader Tajan, 28 October 1994, lot 14 (to Peck);

Sheldon and Leena Peck, Boston.

Literature: Feitama NdT 469 (as part of series of the months, NdT 462-473);

Broos 1985, pp. 118, 128-29, no. 66;

Broos 1987, pp. 191-92, 202, note 153, 206, nos. 462-73;

A. I. Davies, *The Drawings of Allart van Everdingen*, Doornspijk 2007, pp. 102-3, 373, no. 546, reproduced.

THE MONTH OF AUGUST (VIRGO): THE HARVEST has an extended and fascinating provenance. Sold as part of a complete set of the twelve months in 1694 to the famed Amsterdam writer and translator Sybrand I Feitama (1620-1701), it was passed down through the literary Feitama family who were avid collectors of seventeenth-century Dutch works on paper.¹ The present work was separated from the other months after their 1758 sale and most likely stayed in private collections until 1936 when it appeared in Christie's London saleroom as part of the Henry Oppenheimer sale.

Allaert van Everdingen was an exceptional draughtsman who was particularly skilled at making sets of drawings depicting, with appropriate images and activities, the twelve months of the year.² This tradition was rooted in medieval manuscript illumination, but became increasingly popular in the context of paintings, drawings and prints in the sixteenth century.³

In the seventeenth century, the popularity of such themed sets of images began to wane, and van Everdingen's devotion to the concept was strikingly unusual. He seems to have made at least eleven sets of drawings of the months, not as one might have imagined, as designs for prints, but as artistic creations in their own right. Six of these sets remain intact, while Davies (see lit.) has reconstructed the others, on the basis of their stylistic and physical characteristics, and clues from the early provenance of the drawings.

The present drawing originates from a series now dispersed known as the 'Zodiac set', in reference to the astrological sign that the artist placed in the sky of each composition - a device familiar from earlier prints, but by this time much rarer. Ten of the twelve drawings from this set are



Allaert van Everdingen, *The Month of April (Taurus)*,
Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (Figure 1)

known today, or have been recorded in relatively recent times: five are in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, two in the Boijmans van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam, and two are currently untraced. As Davies has noted, the other known drawings from the series are all somewhat broader than this, with the sign of the Zodiac in the centre of the sky, suggesting that the present drawing may at some point have been cut on the left. The distinctive orange-brown wash seen here is not present in the other drawings, but is found in both *The Month of April*, see fig. 1, and *November* (Rotterdam).

¹ Their collection included *View of Delft after the Explosion of the Gunpowder Arsenal on October 12, 1654* by Herman Saftleven, II (now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

² Davies, A. I., *The Drawings of Allart van Everdingen* pp. 97-109.

³ For example, in the 1550s and 1560s, Pieter Brueghel the Elder executed a series of paintings and print designs with seasonal subject matter.

