

This inscription appears on the portrait of the man of the same name (Br. 166) which hangs today in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. It is written in a legible script at the top of an otherwise illegible letter which, however, is signed with the most calligraphic "RHL" monogram ever brushed by Rembrandt: in fact it is a painted signature imitating a penned signature. This is the only known instance of Rembrandt dating a painting to the month and day, and I know of no other portrait painting in which the sitter is identified by name. Yet the placing of the name is odd for a letter; the handwriting is different from the rest of the text (illegible), which is more self-consciously calligraphic. The name might have been an afterthought or a later addition. In any case we see Rembrandt documenting his presence in Amsterdam and the monogram starting to loosen up.

The only portrait *drawing* with both name of the sitter and a precise date (but no signature) is the silverpoint drawing of Saskia from June 8, 1633. The London and Paris Self-portrait drawings discussed above (see entry 3), although inscribed "1631," were both signed in 1633, as the corrections of Rembrandt's age indicate. All this documentary evidence suggests that something of importance was taking place in Rembrandt's life, presumably his move to Amsterdam, where he began working for the art-dealer Henrik Uylenburgh. Faced with so many well-dressed and self-assured egos in his portrait commissions, he may have felt the need to reinforce or reformulate his own identity. Because of this, and presumably not a little nostalgia, he soon began adding the patronymic "van Ryn" to his monogram (his father died in April 1630, see a reproduction of his portrait drawing in entry 11).

