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CLAUDE DE JONGH

1605/6 – Utrecht – 1663

View of the Tiber, Rome, with the Isola Tiberina and the Ponte Fabricio, 1634.

Oil on panel, 25 x 34.4 cm

Signed and dated, lower left: *C.D. Jongh 1634*



Provenance: Rupert 4th Lord Leigh, Stoneleigh Abbey (Warwickshire);
Edward Speelman Ltd., London, 1950 (together with a companion, see J. Hayes, *Op.cit.*, fig. 13, p. 11);
Acquired by the Seattle Art Museum in 1959, Seattle (Washington), Inv./Cat. no. 59.65;
Sale Sotheby's New York, 11 January 1996, lot 1, reproduced;
Private collection;
Sale Christie's London, 7 December 2007, lot 157, reproduced;
Private Collection, USA.

Exhibited: Atlanta, Georgia, Atlanta Art Association, *Landscape into Art*, 1962, cat. no. 14.

Literature: John Hayes, "Claude de Jongh" in *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. XCVIII, January, 1956, p. 8;
Peter C. Sutton, *A Guide to Dutch Art in America*, 1986, p. 339.

Claude de Jongh was a landscape painter and draftsman who specialized in views with distinctive architectural features in a pictorially topographical mode. Although he was active chiefly in Utrecht, where he entered the guild in 1630, dated drawings from 1615, 1625, 1627, and 1628 of sites including St. Augustine's in Canterbury, Westminster, and London Bridge place him in Great Britain for what were likely short trips. These drawings often served as inspiration for later paintings. He may also have worked in Haarlem for a short but crucial period in the years around 1630/31, when a new, naturalistic style of landscape painting was being forged by such artists as Jan van Goyen (1596-1656), Pieter de Molijn (1595-1661) and Salomon van Ruysdael (1602-1670). Sadly, De Jongh suffered from an undetermined

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incapacity in his arms starting around 1640, and his artistic output declined sharply at this time.

The present painting is his only known Italian view of a specific topographical scene. It depicts the Ponte Fabricio in Rome (later called the Ponte dei Quattro Capi), which spans half of the Tiber River between the Isola Tiberina at left and the Getto Quarter, near the Theater of Marcellus, on the right. Commissioned in 62 BC by Lucius Fabricius, curator of roads, it is the oldest bridge in Rome still existing in his original state and has been in continuous use ever since. The modern name, Ponte dei Quattro Capi, refers to the two marble pillars of the two-faced Janus herms on the parapet, which were moved to the bridge from the nearby Church of Saint Gregory in the 14th century. De Jongh has dwelt upon the picturesque qualities of the scene here, adding such incidental details as the inn on the right-hand side, and the two rowing boats filled with tourists doing a bit of sightseeing. The strongly monochrome palette reflects de Jongh's contact with the tonal landscapes painted in Haarlem in the late 1620s and early 1630s.

It is not known when De Jongh may have visited Italy; no archival documents or drawings survive indicating a sojourn to the South. However, it would have been easy for him to absorb Italianate influences from such artists as Cornelis van Poelenburgh (1594-1667) and Jan Both (1618-1652), who returned to Utrecht after a sojourn in Rome. Nonetheless, the artistic practices he employed in his British views suggest that he was working from a detailed drawing here. Other of De Jongh's paintings from the later 1630s are often Italianate in their unspecific features, such as classical ruins, distant mountains, and golden light.