**Media Fact Sheet**

**Gift of Rembrandt van Rijn’s *Head of an Old Man with Curly Hair***

Kate Yüksel, Communications Coordinator (26 April 2019)

**A Gift of Art for Queen’s**

Daniel and, his wife, Linda Bader of Milwaukee have donated Rembrandt’s *Head of an Old Man with Curly Hair* (1659) to Agnes Etherington Art Centre at Queen’s University. The gift is in honour of Daniel’s late father, Dr Alfred Bader. Dr Bader, Queen’s alumnus, renowned entrepreneur and philanthropist, and discerning collector of art, passed away on 23 December 2018; 28 April would have been his 95th birthday. This painting is an exquisite rendering of old age and light that complements the three Rembrandt paintings in The Bader Collection; but its presentation to the Agnes honours Dr Bader’s memory in a wonderfully appropriate manner.

**Who are Daniel and Linda Bader?**

Daniel Bader is the visionary leader and architect of the Bader Philanthropies charitable giving in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and around the world. He serves on several local, national and global boards and committees that broaden his perspective on how the Foundation can transform lives through its grantmaking, program-related investments and convenings.

Linda Bader is a mental health volunteer and philanthropist. With a master’s in social work, Linda volunteers countless hours per year helping organizations and individuals navigate the journey of mental health challenges. Linda serves on the board of Bader Philanthropies and is involved in the foundation’s global philanthropy.

**Who was Alfred Bader?**

Alfred Bader, BSc’45, BA’46, Msc’47, LLD’86, died on 23 December 2018. Dr Bader’s connection to Queen’s spanned more than 70 years. The generosity of Dr Bader and his wife Isabel Bader, LLD’07, transformed Queen’s in countless ways. As Principal Daniel Woolf has noted, Dr Bader’s legacy at Queen’s "will live on in future generations who will be enriched by his profound love for this university." (To learn more about his background, see: <https://www.queensu.ca/gazette/alumnireview/stories/alfred-bader-celebration-extraordinary-life>)

Dr Bader, a successful chemist and entrepreneur and an astute collector of European art, sought to provide Queen’s with the “finest art museum of any university in Canada.” Over the course of fifty years, he donated more than five hundred objects—from paintings to works on paper and sculpture—to build a world-class collection of historical European art at Agnes. Among its treasures are three paintings by the Dutch master Rembrandt van Rijn, an early devotional painting by the Greek artist El Greco and an intimate nocturne by the German painter Adam Elsheimer.

With typical generosity and foresight, Dr Bader created special funds to ensure the long-term physical and intellectual care of this superb body of works. Dr Bader’s profound generosity will have a lasting impact, as [The Bader Collection](https://agnes.queensu.ca/collections/european-historical/) continues to educate and enchant the Queen’s community and visitors from around the globe for decades to come.

**What is important about the donated painting and how does it enhance our representation of Rembrandt's art?**

Rembrandt’s *Head of an Old Man with Curly Hair* is a compelling image that complements the three Rembrandt paintings in The Bader Collection at Agnes Etherington Art Centre. The painting, which represents an old man with long, curly hair and a thick beard, is a beautiful example of the artist’s ability to render the expressiveness of the human face. It is signed and dated 1659, one year after the date of the Agnes’s *Portrait of a Man with Arms Akimbo* by the same artist. That large-scale portrait and this smaller character study exemplify the master’s painterly range in terms of brushstroke, palette and composition in his late career.

**Who is the subject of the painting?**

This painting is a tronie, or character study, that may have served as a preparatory exercise for Rembrandt’s *Denial of St. Peter* (1660, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) or *St. Matthew and the Angel* (1661, Paris, Musée du Louvre). It is also a study of illumination, one that allowed the artist to explore the subtleties of the fall of light from behind as it flows across a figure. Such character studies were not meant to convey the identity of a historical person, but to evoke a specific mood through dramatic lighting, costume and facial expression.