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Portrait of Francis Beaumont, c. 1610-25

Anglo- Netherlandish Artist

Oil on oak (untested) panel with addition

97.8 x 72 x 1.9 cm (38 9/17 x 28 ¾ x 3/4 inches)

Sackville-West Trust, Knole House

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Portrait of Francis Beaumont, c.1610-25, Anglo-Netherlandish

Research Report for the Courtauld Institute of Art Research Forum's collaborative project *Technical Analysis and Art Historical Research*

By

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INTRODUCTION

Portrait of Francis Beaumont is part of the Sackville-West Trust Collection, and hangs in the Private Wing at Knole House in Sevenoaks, Kent as part of a collection of poets' portraits. It came to the Department of Conservation & Technology (Courtauld Institute of Art) for technical examination and treatment and then was selected to be part of the Institute's Research Forum investigation. The portrait represents a Jacobean poet and playwright posing with his left hand rested on his sword belt and his right hand gesturing to the viewer. Like so many portraits from this period, the painting is unattributed and undated. The aims of our research were to combine art historical research undertaken by Irene Jacobs, with technical examination by Lucia Bay, to contribute to a better understanding of how this previously unstudied portrait fits into a genre of seventeenth-century portraiture.

This portrait represents a rare example of a surviving portrait of Francis Beaumont. Because it is undated and unattributed, and there are no previous studies on this painting to guide us, we felt it necessary to undertake research that allowed us to establish a general cultural and historic context within which this painting can be placed. Working from the assumption that the portrait does indeed depict Francis Beaumont, we will explore how the manner in which the sitter is presented relates to what we know of Beaumont's character. As we will observe, the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century saw an increased concern with self-fashioning. This makes exploring the question of how Beaumont presented himself in this painting more valid. Moreover, we will place the painting in a particular artistic climate, demonstrating that *Portrait of Francis Beaumont* fits into the genre of portraiture by immigrant artist working in Britain in the Jacobean period. The section on materials and techniques will support this claim, as well as outlining interesting physical aspects of the painting. Furthermore, the paper will trace back the provenance of the portrait in relation to the Sackville collection as far as possible, and we will propose that certain changes in the physical shape of the painting can be related to a particular redecoration scheme happening at Knole.

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THE SITTER

Identity of the sitter

At the start of our research we had to ask the question how we know the sitter's identity. The first indicators were provided by inscriptions. Visible in the x-radiograph is an inscription on the top left corner that is now covered by a layer of paint identifying the sitter as "Mr. Francis Beaumont" in script (figure 5). This inscription seems to have been applied at the time when the auxiliary panel was attached (see section on provenance and material history).[1] At some point later in the physical history of the portrait another intervention took place. The title inscription on the top left was painted over in brown paint and a new inscription was added in the centre of the panel in a buff colour, reading: "FRA^{S}. BEAUMONT OB^{T} 1615" (figure 6). This inscription has been repainted at least once, as an older version is visible through cracks in the upper paint and chalk layers. As both inscriptions run at least partially on the outer panel, it becomes clear that neither of the inscriptions is original. This means that we cannot exclude the possibility that the sitter was actually not Francis Beaumont, but that this identity was given to the portrait at a later date.

Additional evidence that can be used to establish the identity is by looking at other likenesses of the same sitter. We found only one other painted likeness of Francis Beaumont, captured in a 1911 photograph (see figure 7 and 8. The latter is a print of the painting, which shows more clearly details of the likeness and dress).[2]

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[1] Other paintings from this set of poets in the Knole House Collection have similar inscriptions. See Douglas Maclennan, "CIA 2273 Report: Portrait of John Dryden" (London: Conservation & Technology Department, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2014).

[2] There are actually two mentions of another portrait of the sitter. One in a copy of an auction catalogue in the Heinz Archive with the purpose of selling 'Original Oil Paintings on Copper. Each portrait measures 7 ½ by 6 ½ inches, in sight, and is in an antique 3 inch gilt frame. On the back of each portrait the respective name, 'Beaumont,' 'Fletcher,' is cut on the copper in a seventeenth century script hand. […] These Oil Paintings are unquestionably the originals from which the portraits prefixed to Vol. I of Beaumont and Fletcher's Works, Tonson, 1711, were engraved by G. Vertue.' A reference to probably the same portraits is found in the print and drawing collection at the British Museum: a note under a drawing of Francis Beaumont says 'Inscribed on mount with name. On separate slip cut from old mount, inscribed in graphite "Vertue" and (?) 'by Rev C M Cracherode' in pen and ink . Drawn by George Vertue after the miniatures in the Queens Closet at Kensington.'
See "Copy of 'Beaumont and Fletcher: The Two Most Authentic Portraits Known' from an

From an account written in 1788 we learn that this painting was owned by 'the earl of Harcourt' and hang together with pictures of other poets in the library of Nuneham House in the county of Oxford.[3] Unfortunately, the actual painting could not be tracked down, and also the date and painter are unknown. Therefore any comparison to the Knole portrait is limited.[4] We can see that the general pose is similar, with the sitter's gaze directed at the viewer and there is a heavy black cloak draped across his chest. Notably the Nuneham portrait does not include hands and there is no lace on top of his high black collar. The composition of his face, his hairstyle, moustache and beard are very alike, which certainly suggests that the two portraits depict the same sitter. Possibly, one of the paintings even formed the model for the other. However, without closer investigation and knowledge of the Nuneham portrait, it is impossible to make any firm conclusions about the relation between the two portraits.

We have many printed copies of *Portrait of Francis Beaumont* with identifying inscriptions, used, for example, for later publications of his plays. One of the earliest of these prints dates from 1712 by George Vertue (figure 9). It appears that George Vertue copied this portrait of Francis Beaumont twice, once in 1712 (figure 9), and a second time in 1727 (figure 10). This later occasion was recorded in his Note Books Volume I, on a visit to "draw some of the poet's heads from pictures in the possession of his grace, by whom he was wel receiv'd and etertaind during his

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Auction Catalogue," n.d., Beaumont sitter box, Heinz Library and Archive; British Museum, "Portrait of Francis Beaumont, Gg, 1.426," *British Museum Collection Online*, accessed August 6, 2015, http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=752648&partId=1&searchText=Francis+Beaumont+Knole&page=1.

3 John Pinkerton, "A Tour to the West of England, in 1788. By the Rev. S. Shaw, M.A. Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge.," in *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in All Parts of the World, Digested on a New Plan*, 2nd ed. (London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, Paternoster-Row'and Cadell and Davies, in the Strand, 1808), 197, https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Yl8OAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA196&lpg=PA196&dq=nuneham+house+paintings&source=bl&ots=hJoJTO7tey&sig=ATe7TjNHXFwHMBWmPP8dTUKIYPY&hl=nl&sa=X&ei=GSMhVf-lEpbxaNuXgLAJ&ved=0CFcQ6AEwBzgK#v=onepage&q=beaumont&f=false.

4 In 1911, when the photograph was taken, it is still said to be part of the collection of 'Rt Hon. Lewis Harcourt at Nuneham.' In 1948 Nuneham Estate was sold to the University of Oxford, and currently it is used as a retreat centre. The paintings that used to be part of the Harcourt collection are not in Nuneham house anymore, and the current whereabouts are unfortunately unknown to us. A copy of the photograph can be found in the sitter box of Francis Beaumont in the National Portrait Gallery's Heinz.

stay.'[5] On page 35 he describes the painting as 'Francis Beaumont Esqr died March 9th 1615. Eta: buried at the Entrance of St Beneticts Chapple in Westminster Abby. His picture in the possession of the Earl of Dorset. Painted by Cornelius Johnson….'[6] This means that at least at the beginning of the eighteenth century we can be certain that the sitter was identified with Francis Beaumont.

Another means of confirming an identity could be provided by contemporary accounts of Beaumont's physical appearance. Unfortunately, however, we could not find any such accounts. So although our research is based on the assumption that the eighteenth-century identification of the sitter as Francis Beaumont corresponds to the actual identity of the seventeenth-century sitter, we have to acknowledge that currently we cannot be entirely certain of this.

Biography of the sitter

Francis Beaumont was born around 1584-5 as the third son of a judge, also called Francis Beaumont, and Anne Pierrepoint in the county of Leicestershire.[7] The Beaumonts were among the leading county families. He went to study law at Oxford and later joined the Inner Temple, a professional association for lawyers and judges in London, in the footsteps of his grandfather, father and his elder brothers. Despite his education in law, he set out to write poems and plays, rather than to become a judge like his father. Early on he was praised for his writing skills. This is evident in, for example, a correspondence with Ben Johnson, a poet that acted as a mentor for Beaumont:

> even there, where thou prayest mee,
> For writing better, I must envie thee.[8]

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5 Vertue Note Books," *The Walpole Society Journal* 18, 20, 22, 24, 26 and 30 (1929-1950). Reprinted by Wm. Dawson & Sons, 1968.

6 This attribution was dropped later in the 18th century but further research and technical comparison to known Cornelius Johnson paintings would be valuable.

7 P.J. Finkelpearl, "Francis Beaumont (1584/5-1616)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1871.

8 Ben Jonson, "LV. To Francis Beaumont," in *The Workes of Benjamin Jonson* (London: Printed by Richard Bishop, and sold by Andrew Crooke [etc.], 1640), http://0-gateway.proquest.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xr i:ilcs&rft_id=xri:ilcs:ft:e_poetry:Z300406028:3.

Later Johnson writes of Beaumont to another poet Drummond of Hawthornden: 'Beaumont loved too much himself and his own verses,' indicating that Beaumont also was pretty well aware of his own skill.[9] Beaumont is, however, not most known in his own right, but as part of his collaboration with John Fletcher. They seem to have joined forces by about 1608. They are said to have been very close, as John Aubrey writes:

> They lived together on the Banke side, not far from the Play-house [probably the Globe theatre], both batchelors; lay together – from Sir James Hales, etc.; had one wench in the house between them, which they did so admire; the same cloathes and cloake, &c., betweene them.[10]

Interestingly, in comments on Beaumont's and Fletcher's collaboration, Beaumont's contribution is often referred to as being the better judge of the two – probably referring to his educational background, while Fletcher would be the one with most imagination.[11] So a contemporary, John Earle, stated that Beaumont's 'maine businesse was to correct the overflowing of Mr. Fletcher's luxuriant Fancy and flowing witt.'[12] In 1647 – after Beaumont's death – the first of a large folio that contained plays of Beaumont and Fletcher was published – though scholarly consensus is that not all plays were actually written by them together. Fletcher seems to have written quite a few by himself or in collaboration with other poets such as Shakespeare.[13] The publication does imply that the 'Beaumont-Fletcher' collaboration had gained a higher status than any of Fletcher's (or Beaumont's for

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9 R.F. Patterson, ed., "Ben Ionsiana: Informations Be Ben Johnston to W.D. When He Came to Scotland upon Foot 1619," in *Ben Jonson's Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden* (London; Clasgow, Bombay: Blackie and Son Limited, 1923), 14, https://archive.org/details/benjonsonsconver00jonsuoft.

10 Andrew Clark, ed., *"Brief Lives," Chiefly of Contemporaries, Set down by John Aubrey, between the Years 1669 & 1696*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898), 96, https://archive.org/details/brieflives01clargoog.

11 See for example: John Bridgman, *An Historical and Topographical Sketch of Knole, in Kent, with a Brief Genealogy of the Sackville Family* (London: W. Lindsell, W. Hodsoll and T. Clout, and Strange, and Nash, Tonbridge Wells, 1817), 131.; Emery Walker, *Historical Portraits 1600-1700: The Lives of Fletcher*, Reprint 2013 (London: Forgotten Books, 1909), 66, http://www.forgottenbooks.com/readbook/Historical_Portraits_The_Lives_of_Fletcher_1000143237#85.

12 Clark, *"Brief Lives,"* 1:96.

13 Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 2. Finkelpearl, "Francis Beaumont (1584/5-1616)."

that matter) plays alone could enjoy. Their continuing popularity is evidenced by the writings of John Dryden in 1668:

> They [Beaumont and Fletcher] understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much better [than Shakespeare]; whose wild debaucheries, and quickness of wit in repartees, no poet can ever paint as they have done. […] Their plays are now the most pleasant and frequent entertainments of the stage; two of their being acted through the year for one of Shakespeare's or Johnson's: the reason is, because there is a certain gaiety in their comedies, and pathos in their more serious plays, which suits generally with all men's humours. Shakespeare's language is likewise a little obsolete, and Ben Johnson's wit comes short of theirs.' [14]

Beaumont wrote his last play by himself in 1613: a *masque* for the marriage of Princess Elizabeth and Frederick V. In the same year he married to Ursula, an heiress of Henry Isly of Sundridge, and is said to have stopped writing after that. Explanations for this include financial stability because of the fortunes of his wife, though it has also been said that he suffered from a stroke in 1613 and that that was the reason he stopped writing.[15] Francis Beaumont died at the age of 31 or 32 in 1616. He is buried in Westminster Abbey, near Chaucer and Spenser, in what came to be known as the Poets' Corner.

When could the portrait have been painted?

When speculating the date range for the painting, we can initially establish the first possible date for the portrait. If we assume that the sitter is indeed Francis Beaumont, the first possible date of execution must have been in his lifetime. The play *Philaster* (1608-10) was the first highly successful play by Fletcher and Beaumont, and the succeeding plays of *The Maid's Tragedy* (1610) and *A King and No King* (1610-11) were both also very popular. It seems plausible then, regarding financial possibility, that the portrait was commissioned at a date after Beaumont's

[14] W.P. Ker, ed., "An Essay of Dramatic Poesy (1668)," in *Essays of John Dryden*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), 81, https://archive.org/details/essaysjohndryde01drydgoog.

[15] Finkelpearl, "Francis Beaumont (1584/5-1616)."

established success as a poet (so not earlier than 1608).[16] Another possible occasion that could have prompted the commissioning of a likeness is his marriage in 1613. It would certainly financially have been possible at this date, as his wife is said to have been a rich heiress. A further possibility is of course that it was commissioned after his death, perhaps by a family member or by an admirer of his literary works. As will become evident later in the report, the painting does match stylistically and technically with portraiture of the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Moreover, as discussed in the following section, the painting seems to fit well into developments of Jacobean sensibilities that favoured immigrant artists.

IMMIGRANT ARTISTS IN THE JACOBEAN PERIOD

This portrait, like so many other portraits from this period, remains unattributed. However, it fits technically and stylistically within a genre of the immigrant artist working in England during the Jacobean period. There were a large number of foreign artists working in Britain during the Jacobean period. Netherlandish trained artists in particular dominated the art market since the previous century, having a huge influence stylistically. Paul von Somer, Daniel Mytens, and second generation immigrant artists such as John De Critz the Elder and Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger all worked for the Jacobean Royal Family and were in high demand by the aristocratic elite.

Not surprisingly, the presence of so many foreign artists was a recurring cause for complaint by the Painter-Stainers' Company in London, protesting that all of the court commissions were going to outsiders. They were granted a royal charter by Queen Elizabeth in 1581 to restrict the influx for foreign artists,[17] claiming that their members should be receiving these commissions to prevent the decay of art in Britain.[18] Later, in 1634, there was apparently still reason for complaint. Henry

[16] Although it is of course also a possibility that the portrait was commissioned by means of family money, rather than with money earned by himself.

[17] Christopher Brown, "British Painting and the Low Countries from 1530-1630," in *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Joacobean England 1530-1630*, by Karen Hearn (London: Tate Publishing, 1995), 29–33.

[18] S. Foister, "Foreigners at Court: Holbein, Van Dyck and the Painter-Stainers Company," in *Art and*

Peachum states in *Treatise on Drawing and Limning:* 'I am sorry that our courtiers and great personages must seek far and near for some Dutchman or Italian to draw their pictures, our English men being held for Vauniens.'[19] While some native artists, such as Robert Peake and William Larkin emerged successful during this time, there was a general desire to employ the more fashionable foreign artists. It was believed that the significant artistic developments were happening elsewhere, namely France, Italy and the Low Countries and it was easier to import the skills than send native artists abroad for training.[20] The importation of artistic development was largely economic, facilitated by an active trade route between England and Antwerp, the nearest large town on the Continent.[21] It was further encouraged by the religious and political relationship between the Low Countries and Britain, which became closely intertwined by the turn of the seventeenth century.[22] Many Protestant artists fled to England to be able to practice their faith. By the beginning of the seventeenth century there was a general diaspora of Netherlandish artists throughout Europe, primarily spurred by the promise of highly regarded court commissions and financial gain.[23] Overall, the transitory nature of cultural objects during this period makes it particularly difficult to distinguish between artistic practices in Britain and the Low Countries. That said, there has been significant contribution of recent research at the National Portrait Gallery London, the Courtauld Institute of Art and other institutions to our understanding of this period, which has aided the interpretation of our findings for this particular portrait.

Recent technical research has shown the difficulty of defining distinct workshop practices between native and immigrant painters in Britain after the

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Patronage in the Caroline Courts: Essays in Honour of Sir Oliver Millar, ed. D. Howarth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 32–50.

19 Brown, "British Painting and the Low Countries," 29–33. Quoted by H, Gerson, *Ausbreitung und Nachwirkung der Holländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhundert* 1942, 2nd ed., (Amsterdam, 1983), 369. The word "Vaunians" translated roughly "worth nothing," from French "veaut neant."

20 Ibid., 27–8.

21 Ibid., 28–9.

22 Ibid., 29.

23 Ibid., 31.

1590s.[24] By this time, the native artists had absorbed painting techniques and style introduced by foreigners, while at the same time the immigrant artist was adjusting to meet the aesthetic preferences of local taste.

The style and techniques of *Portrait of Francis Beaumont* fit somewhere between the static Elizabethan portraiture typical of native artists and the dynamic, naturalistic paintings that were being introduced from abroad. Continental painting style and technique is evident in the paintings layer structure as well as the focus on modelling a convincing likeness. Subtleties in his pose are also distinctly Continental, for example, the gesturing right hand was relatively uncommon for half-length portraits in Jacobean portraiture, though it was very familiar in Dutch portraiture of the period, for example the *The Banquet of the Officers of the St George Militia Company,* painted by Frans Hals in 1616, where hand gestures are present throughout (figure 11). Also, the particular manner in which the sitter has casually rested his hand on his sword belt with his elbow protruding towards the viewer is seen more in Dutch and Flemish portraits such as this portrait by Frans Hals (see figure 12, *Paulus van Beresteyn* painted 1619-1620) In contrast, the more forward facing pose with the hand resting on the sword belt and the elbow generally directed sideways in portraits by English painters. See for example, this portrait by native artist Robert Peake (figure 13, Henry Frederick, Prince of Whales painted around 1603-1605). However, this portrait of Beaumont retains some of the formal qualities of English painting in the carefully rendered drapery and costume and the strangely fixed stillness of the seemingly dynamic pose. The likeness, though convincing naturalistic, is somewhat idealized especially in the face. His skin is pale and marble smooth, cheeks dramatically rosy, and his eyes are ambiguously almond shaped.

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[24] Caroline Rae, "Marcus Gheeraerts, John de Critz, Robert Peake and William Larkin," in *Painting in Britain 1500-1630: Production*, *Influences and Patronage*, ed. Tarnya Cooper et al. (Oxford: British Academy and Oxford University Press, 2015), 178. Also see recent Technical studies done by the National Portrait Gallery on their website: National Portrait Gallery, "Making Art in Tudor Britain," *National Portrait Gallery*, accessed June 1, 2015, http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/making-art-in-tudor-britain.php.

PROMOTING THE SITTER

Immigrant artists were hugely popular for aristocratic or royal commissions. Interesting for our purposes is that the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century saw an increase in availability of portraiture for groups other than the royal and high-aristocratic levels of society, or what we can call the rise of the citizen portrait.[25] So it is during this period that we see the emergence of portraits of poets (see of example portraits of Ben Jonson, William Drummon of Hawthornden and John Fletcher, figures 14-16).

Coinciding with this development, from the sixteenth century onwards there also appeared to be an increased awareness of the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process.[26] As Stephen Greenblatt observed 'in the sixteenth century […] fashion seems to come into wide currency as a way of designating the forming of a self.'[27] Also Anna Bryson noted that gentlemen of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England '[…] showed a newly elaborate concern with the body as the site for the inscription and enactment of values of status' and that it is not only wealth that makes a gentlemen, but equally the presentation of the right social image.[28] The popularity of etiquette books support the claim that there was a concern to behave and promote the self in a desired manner.[29] Such English texts tended to concentrate on academic and moral qualities, but nevertheless rarely omitted mention of proper behaviour and 'control of the body.'[30] Portraiture can be seen to reflect this concern, and actively help construct a desired image befit of a gentleman. On the function of literary portraits Tarnya Cooper writes: 'part of their

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25 Tarnya Cooper, *Citizen Portrait: Portrait Painting and the Urban Elites of Tudor and Jacobean England and Wales* (New Haven [Conn.] ; London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2012).

26 Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 2.

27 Ibid.

28 Anna Bryson, "The Rhetoric of Status: Gesture, Demeanour and the Image of the Gentleman in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England," in *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture c.1540-1660*, ed. Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion, 1990), 136–7, 141.

29 Examples of these texts are for example Castiglione's *The Booke of the Courtyer* (appearing in Hoby's version in 1561), or Peacham's *Compleat Gentleman*, *The Schoole of Vertue* (1550) of Francis Seager, *The Schoole of Good Manners* (1609) of William Fiston, and *The Booke of Demeanor* (1619) by Richard Weste.

30 Bryson, "The Rhetoric of Status," 137.

contemporary purpose was to confer a gentlemanly status and to a lesser extent champion the activity of literary endeavour […] probably produced for display in a domestic context.'[31] Portraits are not objective likenesses of the sitters; they are constructed images that send clues as to the promoted identity of the sitter. Clothes, jewellery, attributes, the setting in which they were painted, but also the pose and gestures are only a few indicators that can send the viewer messages of the wealth, power, learning, and profession of the sitters. By looking at such aspects of *Portrait of Francis Beaumont* we might reconstruct how the sitter's identity is promoted through the painting.

Setting and props

What is striking about the portrait of Francis Beaumont is that he is depicted in a non-particular setting, before a plain dark olive green background, without any props. Compared to the likeness of his collaborator Fletcher of circa 1620, Beaumont's portrait seems rather unspecific in terms of references to his profession (figure 16). Fletcher is leaning with one hand on a writing table on which pen and ink and a written note lie. This is a conspicuous reference to his profession as a playwright. Also in Fletcher's other likeness painted later in the seventeenth century, there is an indication of his profession (figure 17). Namely, the laurel he is carrying is commonly associated with poets. The lack of props, or a particular architectural setting, does – however – leave us with a portrait from which there is no distraction from the appearance of the sitter. This is strengthened by the discovery that the scalloped oval shape of the inner panel was the original shape of the painting (see figures 3 and 4 showing the painting mid conservation treatment). Because his hand, part of his cloak and left sleeve are cut-off, and because the figure is crammed in the relatively small space of the background, the painting looks like a close-up. The fact that the sitter takes up most of the space of the portrait, increased by the bulkiness of his dress, enhances his presence. Furthermore, the contrast between his

[31] Cooper, *Citizen Portrait*, 171.

particular hand gesture, which as we will see later is a speaking gesture, and his closed mouth might suggest that there is more focus on the contemplation of his inner character. This echoes the verse on the note in Fletcher's portrait which expresses sentiments about the inability of painting, as opposed to poetry, to convey the mind of the sitter.[32]

Attire

In establishing the wealth and promoted status of the sitter we can look at the clothes he is wearing. He wears a black doublet, a common garment of the English gentlemen during the Renaissance and continuing in the seventeenth century, over which he wears a large black cloak draped diagonally over one shoulder to his waist. His bulky sleeves are deep purple – the colour made visible during cleaning – with hints of a dotted pattern (perhaps suggesting it was a slashed sleeve). His left hand is resting against an adorned belt (see figure 18 and a detail under magnification figure 18a). His dress is completed by the delicate lace collar. As described by Tanya Cooper, black was the favoured colour for dress for merchant, lawyers, elder statesmen, courtiers, and generally for the elite across Spain, Italy and France throughout the sixteenth- and early seventeenth century.[33] These clothes were highly expensive, particularly fine black fabric, as it was a difficult and time-consuming process to perfect this colour.[34] Black fabric often had patterns and much more details than we can see on seventeenth-century portraits today. This has partially to do with the sensitiveness of the black pigments that were used in these portraits, which often resulted in losses in black painted areas during subsequent cleaning campaigns.[35] So it is possible that the clothes Beaumont is wearing originally appeared even more lavish than we can determine in the present day.[36]

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32 National Portrait Gallery, "John Fletcher," *National Portrait Gallery*, accessed June 9, 2015, http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw125409/John-Fletcher.

33 Cooper, *Citizen Portrait*, 78.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

36 We can perhaps see traces of what used to be patterned black fabric in the area under Beaumont's belt. Namely, we could just distinguish traces of what might have been a diamond-like pattern embroidered or ruched fabric.

The rendering of many folds of his cloak, and his bulky sleeves indicate that large pieces of (fine quality) fabric were used to model his clothes. Together with his expensive lace collar, the sitter is thus promoted as a wealthy man.

The cloak is not typical of paintings made in the first two decades of the seventeenth century, but became more in vogue after Anthony van Dyck's visit in England in 1621, and even more so after he settled at the English court in 1632. This does not exclude the possibility that the portrait was painted before the influence of Van Dyck. An engraving of 1606-1616, thus before Van Dyck's arrival in England, shows an English ambassador wearing a similar costume as Beaumont's, with a cloak draped over his left shoulder (figure 19).[37] The lace collar does not appear typical either. While the pattern of lace is very common, the way it is worn is unusual and not seen in portraits from the first two decades of the seventeenth century, nor before or after. There are numerous examples of late sixteenth – or early seventeenth-century portraits in England and abroad that wear similar, or almost identical lace as Beaumont (see figure 20, as well as previously shown portraits figures 13 and 14). Also pieces of lace in museum collections that are very similar to that worn by Francis Beaumont are dated to the end of the sixteenth, and the first two decades of the seventeenth century (figure 21 is a piece of lace with the same patter in the V&A collection, dated to 1600-20). The type of lace that is represented might thus well fit with a dating of the portrait within the first two decades of the seventeenth century. However, the type of collar is uncommon. Jacobean sitters might wear standing collars made of lace similar to Beaumont's (see for example figure , *Portrait of Friedrich V*; or 22, portrait of Richard Sackville, 3rd earl of Dorset). Alternatively they might wear lace collars falling from the neck down (see figure 23, *The Three Brothers Browne*). It is safe to say, however, that the lace collar indicates that the sitter is promoted as a man with a certain wealth and social standing. When comparing the collar to the more modest ones of likeness of the contemporary poets Ben Johnson and William Shakespeare, this becomes more

[37] The engraving depicts multiple ambassadors that visited Utrecht, The Netherlands, in 1609 for negotiations of the Twelve Years' Truce.

obvious (figures 13 and 24).

An additional reading of Beaumont's relatively untypical dress is also possible. The bulky cloak, the distinctive, rich purple colour of his sleeve, and slightly incongruous lace collar tucked into the neck line of his doublet, could possibly also be interpreted as a costume. This could relate to a popular trend of gentlemen portraits wearing costumes inspired by a Jacobean perception of Classical Antiquity (see figure 25 depicting Philip Herbert 4th Earl of Pembroke dressed in *masque* costume). These costumes would have been worn in the exclusive court plays, or *masques*, written by poets such as Beaumont himself.[38]

Reading gestures and pose

Apart from dress, gestures and pose can also communicate aspects of the promoted identity of the sitter. Joaneath Spicer has written on the pose of the prominent protruding elbow, calling it the Renaissance elbow.[39] She has shown that it was originally often paired with military associations, and furthermore was associated with men of power and certain social standing.[40] By the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century this pose became ubiquitous. Portraits can often be seen resting their hand against their sword-belt, underlining their military skills. We can also see the hint of a belt against which Beaumont rests his hand on our portrait – made visible only during cleaning – but a lack of other indicators should warn us not to necessarily view Beaumont as a military man. Indeed, the pose was adopted by many sitters who promoted military qualities, though there is an equally a substantial amount of portraits that lack such explicit military references at this particular time (see figure 26 a self portrait by Isaac Oliver as well as several previously shown images including 11,12,13 and 16). Rather, the elbow can be read as a popular self-assertive pose of a sitter who claimed 'gentleman-status.'

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38 Although Beaumont wrote only one masque, namely in 1613 for the marriage of Princess/Queen Elisabeth, these plays were hugely popular among the Jacobean elite, and often required elaborate staging and costumes.

39 Joaneath Spicer, "The Renaissance Elbow," in *A Cultural History of Gesture: From Antiquity to the Present Day*, ed. Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 84–127.

40 Ibid., 86–7, 90–7.

Furthermore the protruding elbow allows us to see his beautifully slashed sleeve and the bulky cloak draped over his left shoulder in full glory, which underscores his concern to show-off the rich fabrics he is wearing.

While his Renaissance elbow is fairly common in portraiture of his age, the gesture of his right hand is very specific (figure 27). Particular conspicuous hand gestures are found in sixteenth-century portraits, but they are more common in portraiture of the seventeenth century, often by Dutch or Flemish artists (figure 11). Because his hand is not pointing towards something inside the picture plane, and we have no evidence that it could refer to a companion portrait, his gesture can be interpreted as a communicative action expressed to the viewer. To learn how the original audience would have understood this, we can look to a mid-seventeenth-century publication on gestures (figure 28). John Bulwer, in his *Chirologia, or The Naturall Language of the Hand,* specifies the meaning and use of particular hand gestures. About Beaumont's gesture he writes: 'The two inferior Fingers shut in, and the other three presented in an eminent posture in the extended Hand, is a *speaking* Action, significant to *demand silence,* and *procure audience.*'[41] He then goes on to explain how this gesture was commonly used by ancient orators, before they would start a speech or address an audience. This interpretation would fit well with the contemporary trend in England that valued classical learning.

This, mid-seventeenth century interpretation of this gesture would also fit well with what we know of Beaumont's personality: a celebrated playwright, poet, while also being trained as a lawyer, the essence of his profession was dealing with an audience. In this portrait, then, we still have a reference to his profession. He is addressing the viewer, his audience, the moment before his speech. Of course, it is not the living Beaumont that is speaking to us – again underscored by his closed mouth; but we can read his speech in the poetry and plays that he left us.

In terms of the intended function of the portrait, the previous observations

[41] John Bulwer, *Chirologia, Or, The Naturall Language of the Hand c [microform] : Composed of the Speaking Motions, and Discoursing Gestures Thereof : Whereunto Is Added, Chironomia, Or, The Art of Manual Rhetoricke, Consisting of the Naturall Expressions, Digested by Art in the Hand ... : With Types, or Chyrograms, a Long-Wish'd for Illustration of This Argument* (London: Tho. Harper, 1644), 67–8, https://archive.org/details/gu_chirologianat00gent.

regarding the manner in which the sitter fashioned himself agree with the assertion of Cooper on such portraits: the painting confers gentlemanly status and to a lesser extend his literary capacities.

MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES

Non invasive techniques: Infrared photography, x-radiography, ultra violet light, x-ray fluorescence (XRF), microscopy.

Invasive techniques: Cross section samples for microscopy, staining and SEM-EDX

Support preparation

The primary panel has a distinctive original shape consisting of an oval with twelve symmetrical scallops cut roughly two centimetres deep around the edges. The panel is composed of three vertical oak boards of unequal width, butt joined together.[42] The wood grain runs vertically and is visible in the x-radiograph (see figure 33) as well as under normal light in the thinner passages of paint. All three boards are of high quality wood though they are cut and finished to varying levels. They are all radially cut, the smaller outer boards are split and centre board is sawn (see figures 2 and 4 showing the reverse of the panel).

The perimeter has a hand tooled continuous, wide, and shallow chamfer on the verso, which follows the scalloped shape. There are extensive tool marks of varying roughness visible on the verso of the primary panel. The outer boards have rough, wide horizontal marks, which are more typical of marks left by an asp. An Asp was characteristically used when wood was split rather than sawn. In contrast, the central board has very smooth and consistent horizontal marks suggesting a saw was used. It was not unusual to find boards prepared differently joined together in the seventeenth century.[43] The left (when viewed from the verso) board has two

[42] Untested, medullary rays are visible on the verso of the panel indicating the use of radially or tangentially cut boards: Wadum, Jorgen. "Historical overview of panel-making techniques in the Northern Countries" in *The structural treatment of panel paintings: Proceedings of a Symposium at the J. Paul Getty Museum 24-28 April*. Page 151.

[43] Walker, Phillip, The making of panels: history of relevant woodworking tools and techniques. In Book. *The structural conservation of panel paintings: proceedings of a symposium at the J. Paul Getty Museum, 24-28 April 1995*. Pages 178-185.

sets of intersecting incised marks on the lower left and top left which were done on top of the chamfer, their function is unknown (figure 30).

Standard size panel sizes in the seventeenth century

The boards width of the primary panel are: 21 cm, 30.1 cm and 25.5 cm, from left to right respectively. Average board width from the period was usually in the range of 25-29 cm.[44] By the end of the sixteenth century panels were being produced on the continent in roughly standardized sizes made to fit into standardized frames.[45] Preliminary research on English workshops from the period suggest that roughly standardized panels were being used for portraiture to increase efficiency, unless specific demands were made by a patron.[46] This panel was probably prepared in a more traditional rectangular format and then cut to the scalloped shape. Due to this painting's unusual shape, it seems quite likely that the format was patron led, and the possibility of this being a repurposed piece of wood, say from a tabletop, is currently being considered. No other examples of paintings with this distinctive shape have been found to date.

Preparatory layers

In general, the materials used in this painting were good quality and widely available in Britain and the Continent in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. The

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[44] Jorgen Wadum, "Historical Overview of Panel-Making Techniques in the Northern Countries," in *The Structural Treatment of Panel Paintings: Proceedings of a Symposium at the J. Paul Getty Museum 24-28 April* (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 1998), 154.

[45] Jorgen Wadum, "The Antwerp Brand on Paintings and Panels," in *Looking through Paintings: The Study of Painting Techniques and Materials in Support of Art Historical Research* (Baarn: De Prom, 1998), 182.

[46] This was observed by Caroline Rae on the workshop of John Decritz, and is briefly discussed in: Caroline Rae and Aviva Burnstock, "A Technical Study of Portraits of King James VI and I Attributed to John De Critz the Elder (D. 1642): Artist, Workshop and Copies," in *European Paintings 15th-18th Century: Copying, Replicating and Emulating CATS Proceedings, I, 2012*, ed. Erma Hermens (London and Copenhagen: Archetype Publications Ltd in association with The Centre for Art Technological Studies and Conservation, 2014), 58–66, http://www.cats-cons.dk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/CATS-Proceedings-I-samlet-udgave.pdf. Also see J. Kirby, "The Painter's Trade in Seventeenth Century: Theory and Practice," *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 20 (1999): 18–9; I. Tyers, "Panel Making Sources of Wood, Construction 'trademarks' and Conclusions on the Making and Trade in the UK," in *Painting in Britain 1500-1630: Production, Influences and Patronage*, ed. A. Burnstock and M. Howard (London: British Academy, 2014).

panel was prepared in a manner that is typical of seventeenth century northern panel painting preparation.[47] It is sized with a proteinaceous material such as animal skin glue, and prepared with a creamy white chalk layer bound in glue. This chalk layer is present in cross sections taken from the edge of the panel indicating the ground was applied after the panel was cut to this shape. The ground was applied thinly, barely filling the vertical wood grains, which are very prominent on the painted surface in normal light. Panels from this period were often prepared by panels-makers, and therefore the preparation technique may not be indicative of a painting studio workshop practice. Elemental analysis reveals the ground layer contains natural chalk mixed with lead white. There is a thinly applied lead white priming layer. In the x-radiogram it can be seen that the priming layer was applied in a streaky manner (see figure 29) perhaps even using the palm of the hand – a practice known to be used by panel makers of the period.

A pale- grey preparatory layer is uniformly applied across the painting and is visible inside the worn edges of the cracks – as seen in this micrograph taken from the face (figure 31). It is also visible as a pale grey layer above the ground in cross section samples. It consists of granular lead white and finely ground carbon black particles. The grey layer is present on the outside edge of the original panel and would have occurred during the painting process when small amounts of paint inadvertently were applied around the side edges. This grey priming layer is typical of Netherlandish practices, and was found to be especially useful to create modeling in the flesh tones.[48]. However, by the seventeenth century a grey preparatory layer was used by both immigrant and native artists working in Britain.[49] Gheeraerts, De Critz and the native artist Peake all used grey preparatory layers in some of their paintings.

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47 Wadum, "Historical Overview of Panel-Making Techniques," 24–8.

48 Annetje Boersma and Giltaij J. Jeroen, *The Intriguing Changes through Restoration of a Newly Discovered Painting by Corneis Cornelisz van Haarlem " Looking through Paintings: The Study of Painting Techniques and Materials in Support of Art Historical Research* (Baarn: De Prom, 1998), 154.

49 Rae, "Marcus Gheeraerts, John de Critz, Robert Peake and William Larkin."

Paint application

The portrait is well painted with a convincing likeness and showing evidence of refined brushwork and the application of thin glazes. These are characteristic of Netherlandish trained seventeenth century workshop practices. The palette is economical with a limited range of pigments used. Lead white, carbon black, a full range of earth colours such as ochres, siennas and iron oxides are used along with vermillion all very finely ground. A rich, cool red lake on an aluminium substrate is the only expensive pigment present, and was reserved for the luxurious silk sleeves.

No drawing is visible in infrared light. Instead, it appears that a black modelling layer was used to establish the forms and composition of this portrait. Overall the painting was accomplished efficiently with only two or three thin layers of paint present above the grey priming layer. General forms were painted in a thinly applied modelling layer made up of carbon black and umber with a varying amount of lead white depending on the tone of the final colour. This layer was utilized economically to model the forms and was exploited to achieve the final colouring. For example it is visible under the pink glaze of the sleeve where it is allowed to show through resulting in the final pale purple colour (see figure 32). It can be seen in a cross section taken from the sleeve (figure 33) below the upper pink layer. The black cloak is almost entirely modelled in this layer, with only a thin glaze of transparent black on top. After laying out the forms the background was painted as a flat, cool, dark brown using carbon black, umber and earth colours, and leaving a reserve for the figure.

The face and hands are the focus of this portrait and particular care is evident in the hair and beard. The flesh tones are developed confidently, using short, opaque brush strokes applied relatively thickly on top of the modelling layer. These paint layers consist of lead white, earth tones, vermilion and red lakes. Creamy highlights are built up allowing the grey modelling layer to show through in the mid-tones, developing the shapes of the face and hands in a sophisticated manner. The sitter's complexion and lips are distinctively rosy, his red hair meticulously rendered in detail (see figure 34). A similar painting sequence was used for the

costume. The sleeves were painted wet into wet with lead white and red lakes to build up the texture of the fabric. Enticing finishing touches of the costume, such as the stitching on the sleeve, the refined lace collar and an embroidered button on the sitters' right sleeve were achieved working wet into wet in the final stages. There is a thin cool reddish glaze present around the flesh tones reinforcing the shapes against the background.

The overall method of paint application would reduce the amount of work needed to achieve the desired final effects and demonstrates an impressive level of confidence and efficiency, which is evident throughout the materials and techniques used by this artist.

Addition

The outer panel was added at a later date, possibly as part of a redecorating campaign at Knole around 1700. The wood used is a soft wood, possibly red pine,[50] which was typically used for making frames during this period. The panel is made of three vertically oriented planks butt joined together. The inside was cut out to fit the scalloped perimeter of the primary panel (see figure 2, reverse before conservation treatment). A rebate was shaped for the primary panel to rest in. Three thick layers of chalk ground were applied to the outer panel followed by a layer of brown paint, which closely matches the original colour of the background of the sitter.

To join the two panels, thirteen nails of varying width and length were inserted from the front of the primary panel into the rebate on the reverse. Additionally a thick layer of glue was applied to the rebate to provide adhesion between the panels. An older inscription, no longer visible, was added to the top left corner of the outer panel reading "Mr. Francis Beaumont". This is visible in the x-

[50] Red pine is native to North America but was being imported to England and would have been readily available. Jacob Simon, who has studied the frames at Knole, describes orders from the 1690's being made of carved red pine wood. See Jacob Simon, "A Guide to the English Picture Frames at Knole, Kent," *National Portrait Gallery*, accessed June 11, 2014, http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/the-art-of-the-picture-frame/guides-knole.php.

radiogram. A faux oval was painted roughly the same size as the original scalloped edge. This required extensions of the sitters left fingers, and overpainting some of the scallops.

Restorations

Due to the join between the two incompatible panels repeatedly failing, several whole-scale restoration campaigns were accomplished. These can be tracked but the layer structure of the outer panel, which show that there were three whole-scale restorations which extending into the original panel. The panels shifted out of plane due to their varying response to environmental changes. At one point the upper right quadrant of the central panel was planed down where it was proud, and where it was low. a thick (up to 3 mm) chalk fill was used to fill the gap between the two panels and fill where they were not level extending up to 6 cm into the picture.

PROVENANCE AND MATERIAL HISTORY

Portrait of Francis Beaumont and the Poets Parlour

One of the questions we asked in our research was since when and why *Portrait of Francis Beaumont* entered the collection of the Sackville family and formed part of the Poets Parlour at Knole House. Additionally, we asked whether changes in the physical shape of the painting correlated to developments of the decoration scheme in the Poets Parlour.

Linking to the section on the possible dates and occasions of the commissioning of the portrait earlier in this paper, we can ask whether the painting always belonged to the Sackville family, perhaps commissioned by one of the earls, rather than by Beaumont himself. In a monograph of 1914 on Francis Beaumont, Charles Mills Gayley expresses his belief that the picture indeed always belonged to the Sackvilles.[51] The first inventory that mentions the portrait of Beaumont in the

[51] Charles Mills Gayley, *Francis Beaumont: Dramatist; With Some Account of His Circle, Elizabethan and Jacobean, and of His Association with John Fletcher* (London: Duckworth & Co, 1914), 191, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/34214/34214-h/34214-h.htm#Footnote_121_121.

Poets Parlour dates from 1799.[52] Beaumont's portrait is unattributed in this inventory, indicating that by the end of the eighteenth century knowledge of the artist of this painting had been lost. The portrait is also included in later inventories of the collection at Knole where it is similarly grouped with Fletcher, and other poets in the 'Dining Room' or 'Poets Parlour.' A description of Knole of 1771 dates the presence of the painting in the Poets Parlour further back into the eighteenth century. Richard Onely starts his description of the Dining Parlour: 'Like Apollo amidst the Muses, Charles Earl of Dorset, the famous patron and poet, with the most eminent English poets.'[53] Then follows a list of portraits, including that of Beaumont and Fletcher. This gives us the information that by 1771 a room was designated to house a scheme of portraits of poets (and of Charles Earl of Dorset), that the room was used as a dining parlour, and that Beaumont and Fletcher were seen as a pair.[54]

An engraving of 1729 provides the earliest documentary evidence when we can securely connect *portrait of Francis Beaumont* to the Sackvilles, as the inscription under the engraving mentions the 'noble, eminent Lionel, Duke of Dorset' (see figure 10).[55]

The portrait of Beaumont and Fletcher do not seem to be originally meant as a pair. Namely, the portrait of Fletcher, most likely a copy of a portrait in the National Portrait Gallery (figure 17), differs substantially from Beaumont's: it is

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52 Thomas Clout, John Bridgman, and James Clout, "A Copy of the Inventory of The Pictures, Statues, Busts Household Goods & Furniture, at Knole, Directed by the Will of the Late Duke of Dorset, To Be Left as Heir Looms. Taken by Thomas Clout, John Bridgman, & James Clout, August 12 &c. 1799," 1799, Knole, Notes on Collections III, Heinz Library and Archive. An earlier inventory of c. 1690, of which a copy is also at the Heinz Archive, does not mention the portrait of Francis Beaumont. In fact it mentions very little paintings in general, which could either indicate that there were very little paintings at Knole or that they did not bother to record them.

53 Richard Onely, *A General Account of Tunbridge Wells, and Its Environs: Historical and Descriptive.* (London: printed for GPearch, No12, Cheapside, 1771), 49.

54 They are listed as 'Beaumont and Fletcher,' while all the other poets are listed seperately.

55 Lionel (1687-1765) was the first Duke of Dorset. The inscription reads:
'Celsifsimo Principi Leonello Duci de Dorset &c.
Nobilifsimo Ordinis Periscelides Equity.
Hane Tabulam ad Archetypum in ipsius Adibus expressam Humil. D.D.D.G. Vertue'

painted in a later seventeenth-century style, does not have the same dimensions, and is painted on canvas rather than wood. The discovery that the strange scalloped oval shape was the original format of the painting makes it less likely that the painting was originally intended to be part of a set of (poets') portraits: the shape is very unusual, and we have not found any other portraits (of a comparable size) in the same shape. If originally part of a set, the painting would stand out and perhaps not suit a unified scheme. With this in mind it becomes more plausible that the portrait entered the Poets Parlour, and perhaps even the collection of the Sackvilles, at a later date, at which point the outer panel was added to make it a more conventional rectangular shape. At the same time it needs to be acknowledged that the Poets Parlour was never commissioned as a complete set from the start, as evidenced by the fact there are portraits were painted in different centuries, although they have hung in their present state at least since the end of the eighteenth century. That all said, the date when the Poets Parlour was created as such remains uncertain.

We believe, however, that the creation of the Poets Parlour could be dated at the latest to the beginning of the eighteenth century. We propose that the addition of the outer panel of *portrait of Francis Beaumont* took place shortly after 1701, coinciding with a redecoration scheme of the Poets Parlour.

Change of format and redecoration scheme under Sixth Earl of Dorset

Physical changes

The panel's format has changed from its original scalloped oval shape to a more traditional rectangular format, which fits the current frame. We would like to suggest that an early eighteenth-century decorating scheme under the Sixth Earl of Dorset might have provided a reason to add the outer panel, and change the painting from the oval shape to a more conventional rectangle to fit in with the other paintings in the scheme. It was during this time that the earlier inscription in the upper left corner, now only visible in the x-radiograph, was added, and it is also like that it was put into its current frame.

This inscription reads in small script lettering "Mr Francis Beaumont" -- similar in style to the inscription on the pedestal of this 1712 print of the painting by George Vertue (see figure 9). This inscription is present on other portraits in the Poets Parlour though not all. During our visit to the Poets Parlour at Knole, we could just make out similar inscriptions under partially obscuring overpaint on several other portraits.[56] The same style of inscription was discovered during cleaning of another painting from Knole treated at the Courtauld, *Portrait of John Dryden*.[57] This painting depicts another poet and also hangs in the Poets Parlour.

In the 1930 catalogue raisonne by C.J. Phillips the author identified another portrait of a poet from Knole, portrait of *M. Charles de Saint-Evremond* as also having the same inscription.[58] He described the portrait as being signed by the artist and dated 1701 on the reverse of the canvas.[59] This suggests that the inscription was added after 1701, and if we can believe that the George Vertue's 1712 print was copying an inscription on our portrait, it would have been present by 1712.

The current historic frame (see figure 35) also fits the stylistically in this suggested date range. Jacob Simon and Gerry Alabone estimated the carved gilt frame to be from the late seventeenth to early eighteenth century based on style and construction.[60] The frame has not been modified in size, and fits our painting precisely indicating that it was made to fit the painting in its current format. It is similar to frames on several other portraits of variable sizes at Knole, including the portrait of Fletcher. It is likely that these paintings, with matching frames and

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56 We could see evidence of the older inscriptions on several other paintings in the Poets Parlour when examining closely with a torch on site. Paintings we noted evidence of now covered inscriptions in the top left corner include: Nich Rowe Esq, (workshop of Godfrey Kneller) Fletcher, Beaumont, Wycherly, Dryden, and Matthew Prior (bottom left).

57 See Maclennan, "CIA 2273 Report: Portrait of John Dryden," 10–1.

58 See Ibid.Maclennan, "CIA 2273 Report: Portrait of John Dryden," 10–1.

59 C.J. Phillips, *History of the Sackville Family. Together with a Description of Knole, Early Owners of Knole and a Catalogue Raisonne of the Pictures & Drawings at Knole* (London: Cassel & Company Ltd., 1930).

60 Carved pine wood egg and dart repeating pattern with leaf corners, mitred corners with corner levers, deep rebate, original tacks, creamy white preparatory layer water or oil gilt, covered bark edge. Personal correspondence with Gerry Alabone and Jacob Simon, December 2014 and July 2015 respectively.

inscriptions, may have been part of a large scale decorating campaign and meant to hang together.[61]

Redecoration campaign

It is clear that the art collection at Knole has been in flux during its history. In 1701 the Sackvilles were in financial problems, resulting in the sale of Copt Hall, which through marriage also had become part of the Sackville heritance.[62] Much of the furniture and pictures, however, were moved to Knole. All of a sudden, thus, Knole had much more portraits than it had before, and we think this can relate to the redecoration program that is connected to the top left signatures on the outer panel done, most likely, shortly after 1701.

The earl during this busy period of movement of paintings to Knole was Charles, Sixth Earl of Dorset. It is this earl of whom a portrait hangs in the Poets Parlour, surrounded by earlier and also contemporary poets (figure 36). Charles was very much interested in poetry, being an amateur poet himself, and generally a lover of the arts. It is not unthinkable then, that he instigated a redecoration scheme that included matching inscriptions and frames for the Poets Parlour with his own portrait included, or that he even formed the Poets Parlour as such.

All these things taken together indicate that it is likely that our portrait has been hanging in the Poets Parlour at least since the early eighteenth century, which may coincide with the creation of the Poets Parlour itself.

CONCLUSION

This paper had the aim of placing the previously unstudied *Portrait of Francis Beaumont* in a cultural, historic context. We discovered that we could not answer all of the questions that arose during our research. We do not know, for example, why

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61 Simon, "A Guide to the English Picture Frames at Knole, Kent." This frame is possibly associated with a bill of the carver and gilder, Henry Miles, dated 12 March 1698 where 'A whole length frame for Lionel(?) Cranfield Earl of Mid'sex' is one of four charged at £3 each. The pattern may have continued in use over a period of years and evidently became something of a house style at Knole.

62 Ibid.

the painting originally had such an unusual shape. Also, we could not confirm with incontrovertible certainty that the sitter depicted is actually Francis Beaumont. However, this paper has argued that the manner in which the sitter styles himself does agree with what we know of Francis Beaumont and can be seen reflective of cultural developments of the Jacobean period. The painting fits stylistically and technically into the genre of portraiture by immigrant artists working in early-seventeenth century Britain.

By means of a 1729 print we could firmly connect *Portrait of Francis Beaumont* with the Sackville family from this time onwards. Archival evidence proved that the painting must have hung in the Poets Parlour at least since 1771. Additional research relating to the signatures and frame suggested that the portrait was already part of the Poets collection in the early eighteenth century. During this time, we suggested, the outer panel and current frame were likely added as part of a redecoration campaign at Knole during the time of Charles Sackville, sixth earl of Dorset.

Our complementary art historical and technical research allowed us to attain a more complete picture of where this painting can be placed in a genre within art history. The technical examination was much aided by the fact that the painting was undergoing a full conservation treatment in the studio. This also gave us previously unknown information regarding the painting's original appearance and further facilitated an increased appreciation of the portrait's aesthetics. It is our hope that the findings of our pioneering study can be used as a basis for further research, and will inspire more of such fruitful art-historical and technical collaborations.

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FIGURES

Figure 1: General View, Before Treatment

Figure 2: Reverse, Before Treatment

Figure 3: General View, During Treatment

Figure 4: General View, During Treatment

Figure 5: Detail of x-ray, top left corner. early inscription “Mr Francis Beaumont” only visible in xray.

Figure 6: Detail of top center. Later inscription in buff lettering “Fras. Beaumont OBT 1615” . The visible inscription was added after a restoration campaign and tracer an early identical one below.

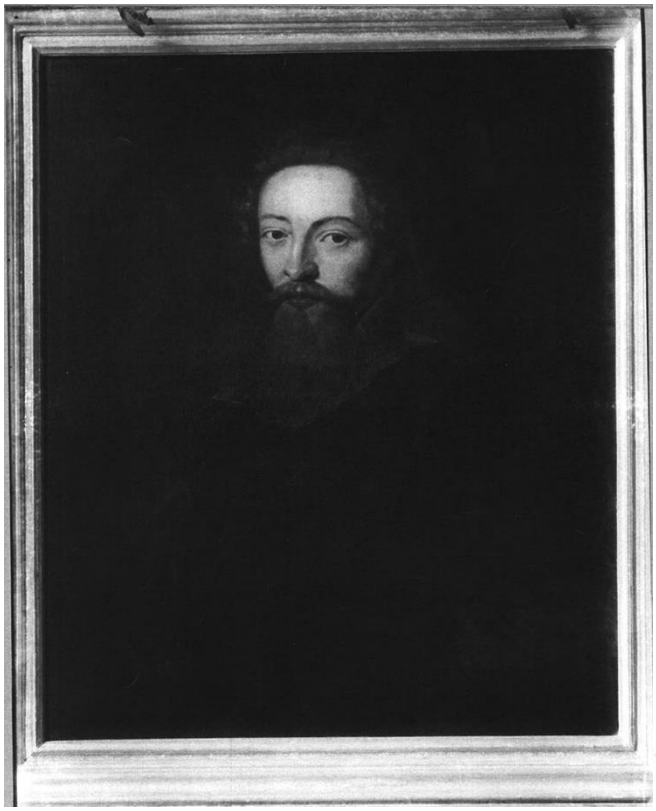


Figure 7: 1911 Photograph of *Portrait of Francis Beaumont* Harcourt Collection, current location unknown. Known as the Nuneham Portrait.

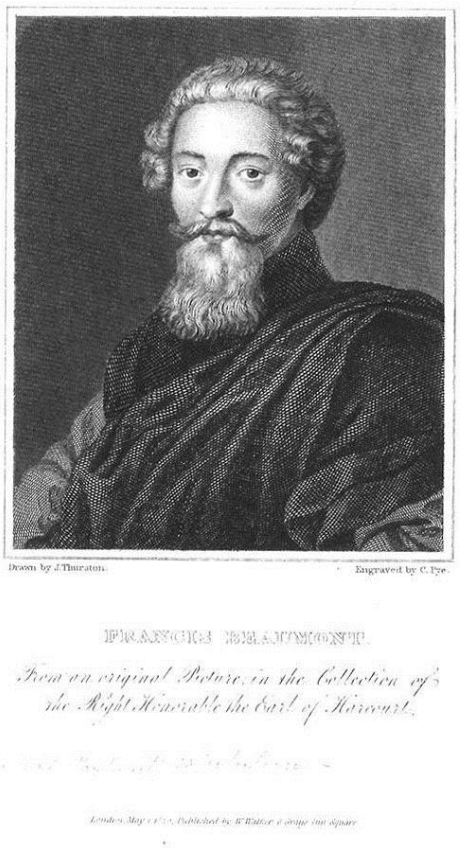


Figure 8: Print of Nuneham Portrait, showing more details in costume. Heinz Library, NPG.

Figure 9: George Vertue, *Portrait of Francis Beaumont,* 1712 Engraving 168 x 108 mm, British Museum

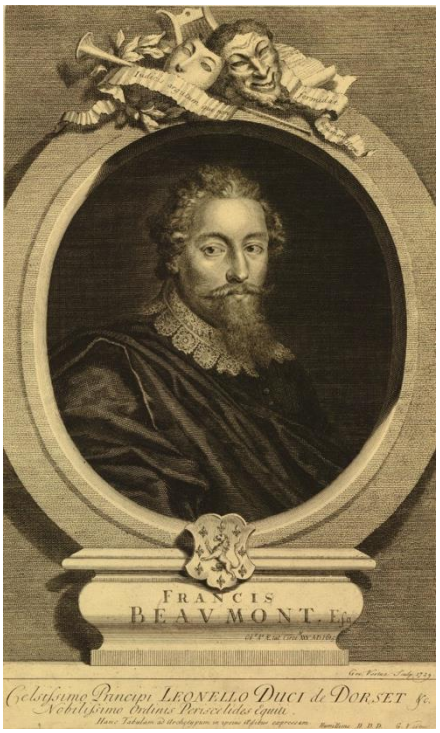


Figure 10: George Vertue, *Portrait of Francis Beaumont,* 1729, Engraving 367 x 220 mm, British Museum

Figure 11: Frans Hals
The Banquet of the Officers of the St George Militia Company, 1616
Oil on linen, 1750x3240 mm
Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem

Figure 12: Frans Hals, *Paulus van Beresteyn*, 1619-1620
Oil on Canvas, 1395x1025 mm Louvre

Figure 13: Robert Peake
Henry Frederick (1594-1612) Prince of Whales, 1603-1605
Oil on Panel 581x480 mm
Museum of London

Figure 14: Abraham van Blyenberch, *Ben Jonson,* oil on canvas, 470 x 419 mm, National Portrait Gallery London

Figure 15: Abraham Blyenberch, *William Drummon of Hawthornden*, 1612, oil on canvas, 604 x 485 cm, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, London

John Fletcher (a copy of this painting hangs at Knole), late 17th century, oil on canvas, 737 x 616 mm. National Portrait Gallery, London.

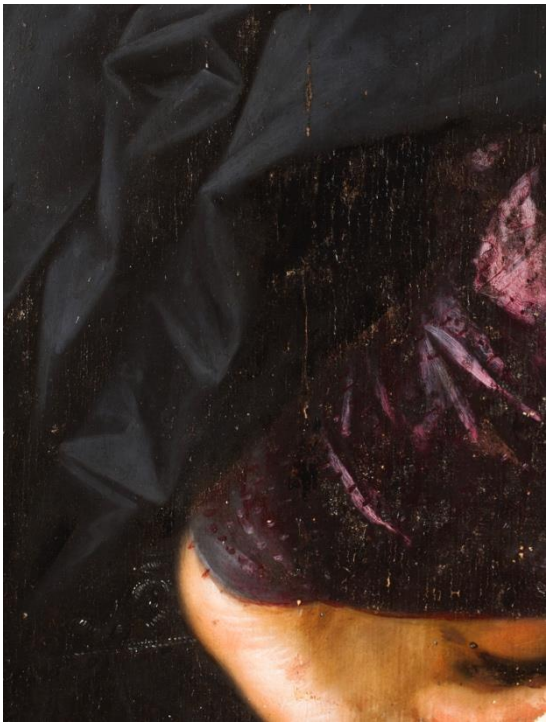


Figure 18: Detail of left hand showing stitching on sleeve and belt.

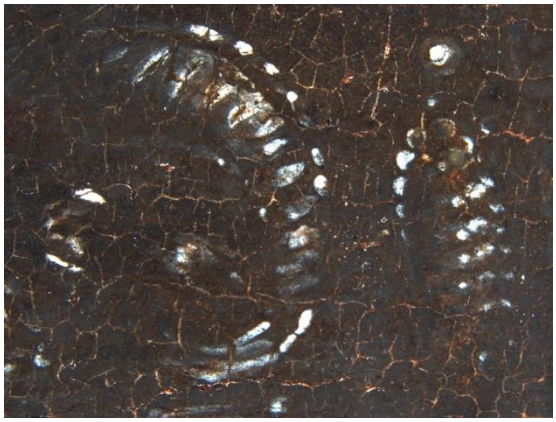


Figure 18a: Photomicrograph of belt.


H. Rudolf Winnwoe Ridder Ambas. ordi..
van Groot-Britanien aen de H. Staten.


FREDERIK V.
KONING VAN BOHEME.
1596 — 1632.

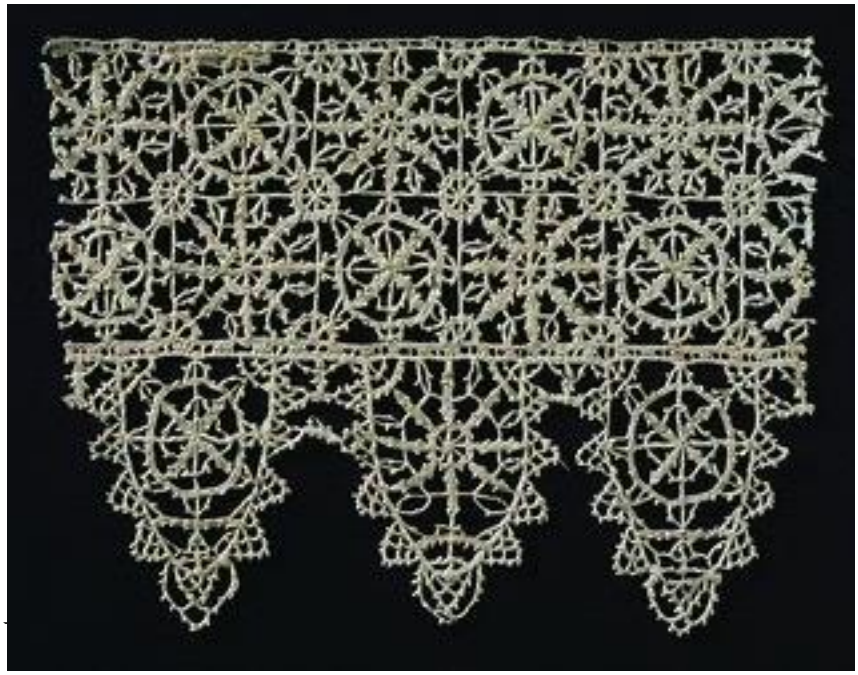


Figure 22: Isaac Oliver
Richard Sackville, 3rd Earl of Dorset, 1616, miniature, watercolour on vellum, 235 x 153 mm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Figure 23: Isaac Oliver
The Three Brothers Browne, 1598, Miniature, 240 x 260 mm
Burghley House, Stamford

Figure 27: Detail of right hand gesture

Figure 28: Detail of page 95 in *Chirologia, or, The NaturalLlanguage of the Hand*, 1644, by John Bulwer.

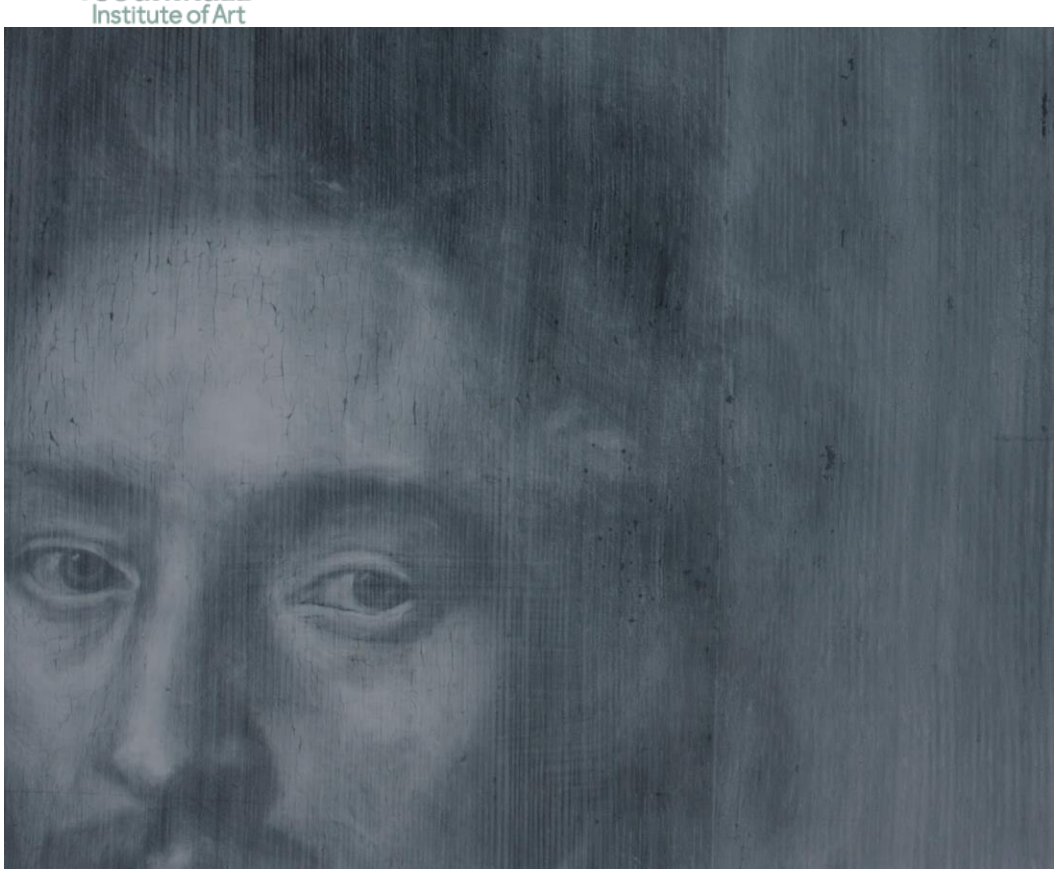


Figure 29: Detail of x-radiograph showing vertical wood grain.

Figure 30: detail of reverse showing chamfer and incise marks.

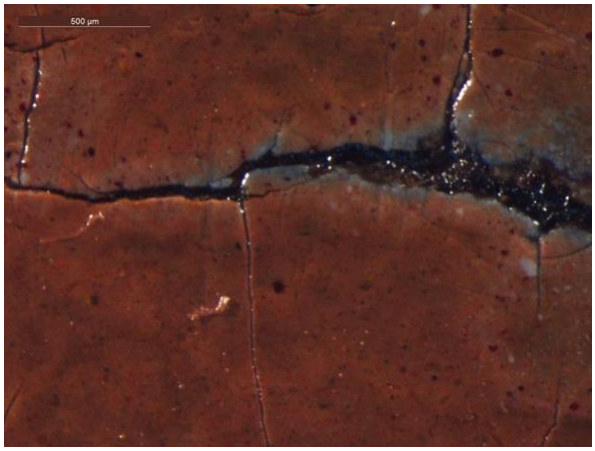


Figure 31: Photomicrograph x7.3 showing grey priming layer visible in the crack.

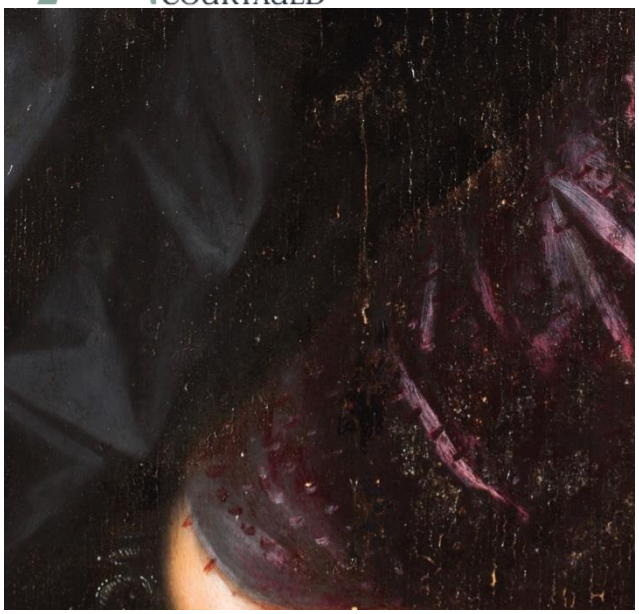
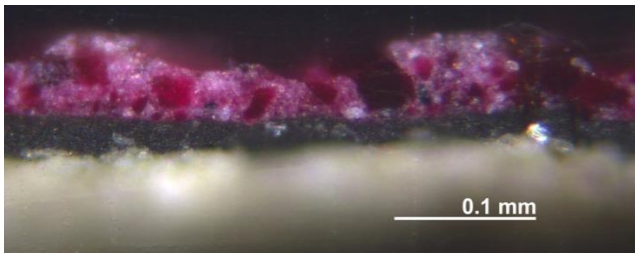
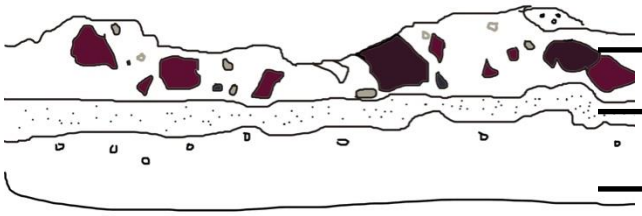


Figure 32: detail of sleeve and drapery showing use of the grey-scale modelling layer to achieve final effects.





Layer 3 – upper paint layer, lead white and large red lake particles.
Layer 2 – lower paint layer, finely ground carbon black and lead white.
Layer 1 – grey priming layer (not in focus), lead white and carbon black.

Figure 33: Cross section from purple sleeve showing paint layer structure and composition with schematic diagram.

Figure 34: photomicrograph x7.3 showing final details such as facial hair.

Figure 35: Corner detail of carved gilt frame. The reverse shows a tapering dovetail join typical the turn of the 18th century.

Figure 36: View of the Poets Parlour Showing a portrait of Charles, the 6th Earl of Dorset.