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by François Chauveau

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ACQUISITIONS/ THE ENTRY OF QUEEN CHRISTINA INTO PARIS IN 1656

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Fig. 1 François Chauveau (1613–1676), The Entry of Queen Christina of Sweden into Paris on 8 September 1656, 1656. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, traces of underdrawing in black chalk, on paper, 412 x 540 mm. Purchase: the Hjalmar and Anna Wicander Fund. Nationalmuseum, NMH 63/2017.
The Nationalmuseum has acquired a drawing by François Chauveau of the procession for the entry of Queen Christina of Sweden into Paris on 8 September 1656 (Fig. 1).1 At the time of her visit to France that year, Christina’s reputation was at its height, and large crowds took to the streets of the city to catch a glimpse of her. The event was recorded in several prints, and this drawing was no doubt the design for an engraving of the occasion that was never made.2

Following her abdication, Christina had left Sweden in the summer of 1654. She broke her journey with an extended stay in the Spanish Netherlands, before continuing on her way to Italy in the autumn of the following year. On 3 November she publicly confessed her Catholic faith in Innsbruck, and just before Christmas 1655 she arrived in Rome, with no firm plans for the future. The ongoing conflict between France and Spain left its mark on diplomatic life at the papal court. In the years immediately prior to this, Christina had favoured Spain, but the winter of early 1656 saw a shift in her relationship to the great powers. She broke with the Spanish ambassador in Rome, dismissed her Spanish retinue and gravitated towards France.3 In secret correspondence between Christina and...
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France’s first minister, Cardinal Mazarin, plans were forged for a joint military venture against southern Italy, with a view to making Christina Queen of Naples, while also solving her increasingly pressing financial problems. After her death the throne would pass to a French prince, in the first instance Louis XIV’s younger brother, Philippe, Duc d’Anjou. Mazarin could not afford to spare Philippe as things stood at the time, as Louis was still unmarried. The fact that Christina retained the rank of a reigning queen (recognised by both France and Spain) and that she was without issue made her an acceptable candidate for both the Neapolitans and the French.

In July 1656, Christina set off for France to finalise plans for the Neapolitan venture, the official explanation being that she was on her way to Sweden to negotiate her financial settlement. The 18-year-old Louis XIV was aware of the plans and ordered that Christina be received in France as a reigning monarch. She landed in Marseille on 29 July and the following month travelled north, feted and welcomed with lavish ceremonies in one city after another. In the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris there is a variant of the Nationalmuseum drawing, less sketchily executed and worked out in more detail, but identical in composition (Fig. 2). That sheet is inscribed “Chauveau” at the bottom right, a strong indication of its author’s identity. François Chauveau (1613–1676) is best known as a printmaker. He illustrated many literary works with etchings after his own or other artists’ drawings. In the 1660s he engraved images of the carousel arranged by Louis XIV in 1662 to celebrate the birth of his son, work which earned Chauveau the title of court engraver. The Nationalmuseum already owned another example of Chauveau’s drawings of grand processions: a set representing part of the ceremonial entry into Paris in conjunction with the marriage of Louis XIV and Marie-Thérèse in 1660 (Fig. 3). Close parallels can be observed between the drawings, especially in the rendering of the pages, who in the drawings of Christina carry torches around the canopy and in that of Pierre Séguier walk alongside him, shading the mounted chancellor with parasols. Compared with Chauveau’s large output of

Fig. 3 François Chauveau (1613–1676), The Chancellor Séguier at the Entry of Louis XIV and the Infanta Maria Theresa into Paris on 26 August 1660. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, red chalk on paper, 345 x 597 mm. Nationalmuseum, NMH 2717/1863.
prints, relatively few drawings by him are preserved or known. For a long time, the starting point for our knowledge of Chauveau as a draughtsman was his name on the Paris version of the *Entry of Christina*. Later research, however, has been able to attribute more drawings to him, more or less clearly associated with printmaking.9

Representations of processions were a flourishing genre in the 17th century. They were a kind of arranged reportage image, which recorded in an accessible manner – but with no requirement of topographical realism – the sequence of events, the identity of the participants and their positions in the procession. Prints provided an official picture of the often very costly festivities, aimed at both other countries and the nation’s own subjects. In Chauveau’s drawing, the long procession winds its way towards the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, whose Gothic portals and precinct can be made out in the top right corner. This part of the drawing is considerably more worked out in the Bibliothèque Nationale version, which was probably intended as the model for the engraving.

In the foreground, Christina is riding side-saddle with a walking stick in her hand. In front of her, four officials carry a ceremonial canopy. The queen was presented with such a canopy, embroidered with the national coat of arms of Sweden, at the Porte Saint-Antoine, and the intention was that she would ride beneath it.10 According to *La Gazette*, however, her horse Licorne (“Unicorn”) shied at it, so it had to be carried in front of the queen. Licorne, a white ambler, had been lent to her by the Duc de Guise, who had been entrusted with escorting Christina and riding just behind her.11 Various delays along the way meant that the entry took place so late in the evening that darkness had fallen, hence the torchbearers. The Nationalmuseum drawing includes the names or descriptions of the participants at their respective places in the procession, whereas these are not found in the Paris version. In the engraving, the text would have been placed in the cartouche at the top, with corresponding numbers or letters in the actual image, so the engraver basically needed access to both drawings.12

Christina’s entry into Paris was depicted in several prints, which varied in focus.13 Some of them show the figure of the queen close up, with the rest of the procession reduced to details in the background. There was a good deal of interest in the strikingly simple appearance and attire of the famous queen. She had dressed for the occasion in a grey skirt, gold-embroidered scarlet justaucorps, and black hat over a light-coloured wig. In most prints she has her legs and skirt on the left side of the horse, the usual way of riding side-saddle. As an engraving, Chauveau’s composition would have been reversed, which is presumably why, in the drawing, the queen is riding with her legs to the right. Just over a year later, the acclamation of the French for Christina turned into indignation and hatred when she had her crown equerry, Monaldesco, brutally executed at the Château de Fontainebleau, after he had betrayed and thereby thwarted her plans for Naples.14

Notes:
1. NMH 63/2017. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, traces of underdrawing in black chalk, on paper, 41 x 52.9 cm, purchased at Artcurial, Paris, 22 March 2017, lot 100.
5. Inv. no. Est Qb1, 1656; see *Christina: drottning av Sverige 1666* (note 2), no. 654.
6. We get an idea of Chauveau’s work from a manuscript in the National Library of Sweden in Stockholm (Handskriftssamlingen, S. 16, “Catalogue des Œuvres de François Chauveau, Dessinateur et Graveur de l’Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture”), previously owned by Carl Gustaf Tessin, which not only includes works by Chauveau himself.
7. Per Bjurström, *French Drawings: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Nationalmuseum, Stock-