

COLNAGHI

A detailed pen and ink drawing of a bald man's face, shown in a three-quarter view. The man has a prominent mustache and a full, dark beard. His eyes are looking down and to the left. The drawing uses extensive cross-hatching and fine line work to create deep shadows and highlight the texture of the skin and hair. The overall style is characteristic of 17th-century European portraiture.

Wenceslaus Hollar
Figure study of a bald man, 1648

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WENCESLAUS HOLLAR
(Prague 1607 – 1677 London)

FIGURE STUDY OF A BALD MAN, 1648

Etching on laid paper
6.7 x 4.6 cm.; 2 5/8 x 1 3/4 in.

Signed and dated (upper right): *Leonardo da Vinci inv. W. Hollar Fecit 1648*.

Provenance

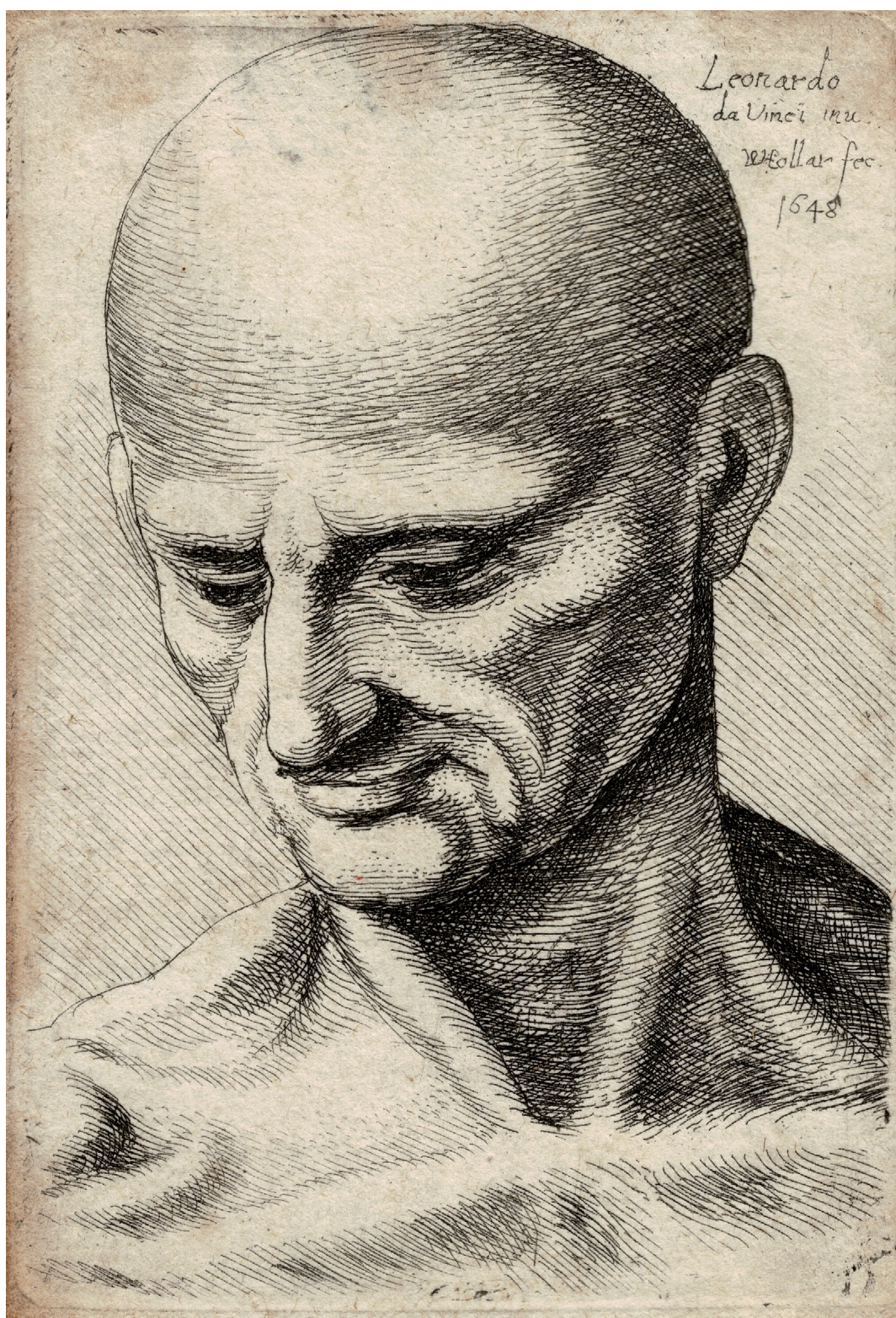
Belgian private collection.

Literature

R. Pennington, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Etched Work of Wenceslaus Hollar 1607–1677*, Cambridge 1982, no. 1578.

G. Luijten and R. Zijlma (eds.), *The New Hollstein: German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts, 1400–1700*, Ouderkerk aan den IJssel 1996–, no. 1018.

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Hollar left his native Prague in 1627. He spent several years travelling and working in Germany before his patron, the Earl of Arundel brought him to London in 1636. It is during this time that Hollar engraved, amongst other works, the drawings of Leonardo da Vinci from the Arundel collection. During the civil wars, Hollar fought on the royalist side, after which he spent the years 1644-52 in Antwerp. Hollar's views of London form an important record of the city before the Great Fire of 1666. Among his most ambitious projects was a set of plates of women's costumes, entitled *Ornatus muliebris Anglicanus*, or, *The severall habits of English women from the nobilities to the country woman* (1640). He was prolific and engraved a wide range of subjects, producing nearly 2,800 prints, numerous watercolours and many drawings.

The present work represents a figure study of a bald man, head and bare, sinewy neck, head tilted to look downs. He is clean-shaven and the bones and sinews of neck and chest are very prominent. This engraving was made after a drawing by Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) in the Royal Collection at Windsor (RL 19003 recto, fig. 1) from the series of “Caricatures and deformities after Leonardo” (Pennington, 2002, cat. nos. 1558–1610B). This work is from a series of thirteen etched plates and additional title page after Leonardo da Vinci, with studies of heads, including grotesques; see New Hollstein (Hollar) 737-750.

A very good sharp early impression with full plate border and tread margins. On a dense thin laid paper. Condition is very good with no folds or tears and very mild foxing near the margins. Remains of old hinges on the backside. Untouched condition.



Fig. 1. Leonardo da Vinci, *The superficial anatomy of the shoulder and neck; The muscles of the shoulder*, c. 1510-1511, pen and ink with wash, over black chalk, 29.2 x 19.8 cm. Windsor Castle, Royal Collection.

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