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March 21, 2017  
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## *The Art Institute of Chicago Acquires Drawings by Shelley Reed*



Shelley Reed, *Men (after Van Dyck)*, 1993, ink on paper

Chicago, Ill. – The Art Institute of Chicago has acquired a series of seven drawings by Boston-based artist Shelley Reed. The artist's 1993 series, "Men (after Van Dyck)," joined the Museum's collection of prints and drawings as a gift after its exhibition as part of the *Van Dyck, Rembrandt, and the Portrait Print* exhibition of 2016.

Reed's series is based on 17<sup>th</sup> century Flemish artist Anthony Van Dyck's famed series of etchings known as the "Iconography," a group of perhaps one hundred portraits of prominent nobles, scholars, and artists from his time. Reed's works reprise and appropriate a selection of Van Dyck's influential prints at small scale using the everyday household materials of ballpoint pen and Typex correction fluid. Sharply observed and meticulously drawn in a manner reminiscent of Van Dyck's distinctive free etching style, Reed's works show the influence of Van Dyck's series on contemporary artists and extend its meaning into our current contemporary context.

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As the Curator who oversaw the drawings' acquisition, Prince Trust Curator and Interim Chair in the Department of Prints and Drawings Dr. Victoria Sancho Lobis explains, "Portrait prints in Van Dyck's time were largely the province of men—male producers, male subjects, male audiences. I liked the idea of including a female artist who was responding directly to Van Dyck's portrait etchings on artistic terms, albeit centuries later."

In another contextual twist, while the original subjects of Van Dyck's "Iconography" were depicted to valorize their famous subjects, Lobis points to ways Reed's drawings subvert their acclamatory function by recasting their famous subjects as an anonymous series of faces. Lobis writes that Reed "evokes the freely etched quality of Van Dyck's prints while subsuming the identity of the subjects. Van Dyck's goal was to record the names and faces of his contemporaries, particularly his artistic peers; Shelley's drawings invert his effort by rendering the faces without the names, which appear as inscriptions on the prints." Reed's appropriation of Van Dyck's work inflects a contemporary understanding of his works' cultural repercussions, in their time and in ours.

Reed's studious engagement with Van Dyck's 17<sup>th</sup> century works through appropriation bridges classical and contemporary techniques, demonstrating that the dialogues of art are vital and ongoing. In the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago, Reed's drawings reside among the great works of the past they reconsider.

The Art Institute of Chicago is one of the world's foremost museums with a permanent collection that encompasses some 300,000 works of art from artistic traditions around the globe. Shelley Reed is represented by Sears-Peyton Gallery, a contemporary art gallery located in New York's Chelsea gallery district at 210 Eleventh Avenue, and in Los Angeles. Her works can be viewed in selected exhibitions, or by appointment. Sears-Peyton Gallery's New York location is open 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. For more information or to request further press images, please contact the gallery at [info@searspeyton.com](mailto:info@searspeyton.com).