

36 “The Calling of Saint Matthew.”

Painted by Terbrugghen, 1621

2020

Tomonori Manabe

Terbrugghen is a painter from the Caravaggio school. He was born in the Netherlands during the Baroque period.

We will try to revalidate his work “The Calling of Saint Matthew” 1621 while comparing it with the same name’s work painted by Caravaggio in 1600.



“The Calling of Saint Matthew” 1621 Terbrugghen Central Museum Utrecht

*Saint Matthew is the sitting tax collector with glasses.

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Terbrugghen is not so famous Japan.

Try to know the painter from Wikipedia Japan (2020)

It explains that, Terbrugghen was born on 1588 in Hague, Netherlands. His family moved to Utrecht in 1590' s. He learned art from the painter Abraham Bloemaert when he was thirteen.

Terbrugghen traveled to Rome to improve his skill up in 1604.

He was the man who directly met Caravaggio on his live.

He died in 1629 at Utrecht.

He learned Caravaggio' s work from Roman Caravaggio school of artist In Orazio Gentileschi.

It is true that Terbrugghen' s work will not materialize without meeting Caravaggio at Rome.

The most important fact is Terbrugghen from was the lucky to have met Caravaggio in person.

We may have adept understanding of "The Calling of Saint Matthew" from the painter' s point of view by asking Caravaggio directly with regard to the latter' s work.

Now, let' s clarify the rationale that Terbrugghen had known about who is Saint Matthew in the painting.

### 1 The way of eye-line around the table



"The Calling of Saint Matthew"

Terbrugghen

Caravaggio

As first, the way of eye-line of young servants are leading outside

of the frame. (The blue arrow)

It means Jesus is truly standing outside of the frame.

This fact is also the same as Jesus' s standing point in "The Calling of Saint Matthew" painted by Caravaggio.

I name this method "Volume packing method of Caravaggio"

Next important point is the way of eye-line of Peter. (the yellow arrow)

He is looking at the sitting man with glasses, not the bearded man.

His eye-line follows the main object we should look at.

## 2 The same communication scene between Jesus and the bearded man



Terbrugghen



Caravaggio

"The Calling of Saint Matthew"

If we are going to interpret their movements, the conversation will go like this;

The bearded man whom Caravaggio painted is asking using his left hand.

"Who are you looking for? Me or him?" using his thumb and index finger.

On the other hand, the bearded man whom Terbrugghen painted, is asking using his right hand.

"Are you looking for me?"

But Jesus denied him using his hand gesture, and might have said, "I' m looking for your left tax collector-the man with glasses on."

Looking at Jesus hand, it is very clear that he is pointing at the man with glasses on.

### 3 Unclear Jesus' s index finger line



“The Calling of Saint Matthew”

Terbrugghen

Caravaggio

The common point of both work body is that Jesus' s finger line is not clear.

The index finger of Jesus in Caravaggio' s work looks weak and curved. Understanding the flow of body movement, Jesus might have rotated his right arm slowly to, to mean “Follow me, you the man over there” .

Jesus didn' t put strength in his hand, so the index finger line is unclear.

His right wrist is also very relaxing.

On Terbrugghen' s work, Jesus' s right index finger is also not clearly painted.

The first reason is that he couldn' t draw the wrist of Jesus well in his work.

But, his drawing-intent is understandable for me.

The second reason why the wrist is curved outside of Jesus means his intent is “No, I' m looking at your left side, the tax collector with glasses on”

In addition to the reason why the index finger curved to the right,

is the body reaction of his hand is strongly curved out.

So, he can't extend his index finger straight.

If the viewer doesn't know this fact, they may have misunderstood the way of index finger was intended for bearded man.

As a result, Jesus's right hand that Terburgghen painted meant to call the sitting bearded tax collector.

### 3 Homage to Caravaggio



St. Matthew



"The Calling of Saint Matthew"

Terburgghen

Caravaggio

Terburgghen painted Saint Matthew as the sitting tax collector with glasses on.

On the other hand, Caravaggio painted Saint Matthew as the tax collector that is leaning on the table with glasses on.

The common point is that Saint Matthew is the tax collector with glasses.

But, what does it mean?

I suppose Terburgghen had known who was Saint Matthew in the work of Caravaggio.

Terburgghen respected Caravaggio and payed homage to his work on his own "The Calling of Saint Matthew"

5 The reason Terburggctorhen didn't paint the young tax collector

Caravaggio painted the young tax collector, but Terbrugghen didn't include him in the work.

This fact means also Terbrugghen had known who is Saint Matthew in Caravaggio's work.

Terbrugghen should know who is Saint Matthew in the work of Caravaggio. Because he didn't paint the same style young tax collector in his work. (\*see the man in the red circle)



Terbrugghen



Caravaggio

“The Calling of Saint Matthew”

I suppose Terbrugghen omitted the young collector in his work for the viewer not to mistake the young tax collector as saint Matthew.

## 6 The common point of time-line expression

These two works have common point of time-line expression.

The Caravaggio's work has a story like movies.

\*The bearded man asked to Jesus by his left hand, using thumb and index finger.

“Who are you looking for? Me or him?”

\*Jesus moved to see clearly the face of the man with glasses. Because from his first standing position it was hard to see the face of the man with glasses.

\*Jesus answered to the question with physical movement.

Jesus rotated his right arm to the man with glasses and said "Follow me" .

The most Important point is that Jesus never pointed to the man with glasses.

Many viewer would interpret to Jesus' action by ignoring his left hand and his right foot placement.

On the other side, Terbrugghen also expressed time-line.

\*The bearded man asked to Jesus "Are you looking for me?" by his index finger.

\*Jesus ignored the question by extending his arm with curved out rightwrist.

\* At the same time, Jesus pointed to the man with glasses and said, "Follow me" .

As a result, the both works have commonly have a time-line, and also have Baroque' s characteristic that have advanced Renaissance.

## 7 The same basic composition of the story

Both stories are not simple. Both stories start WITH a question.

On both case, Jesus made a denial to the first question, and then subsequently showed who is St. Matthew in the crowd.

The final moment is also same in both stories.

It' s Jesus saying, "Follow me" .

## 8 The characters



\*The three persons have a hat. Because they came over the tax office in the daytime. They are Taxpayer.

\*So, the man with glasses must be the tax collector.

Try to check the characters in “The Calling of Saint Matthew” of Terburgghen.

We will find that the fore person around the table.

Among them the three persons have a hat.

From the left is a young man with colorful patterned on his head.

The bearded man in the center perhaps the boss, has a hat in his left hand and ask Jesus who Jesus is looking for.

Next to the bearded man is a young man with hat on. His left hand is on the shoulder of the man with eyeglasses and points forward to the tax documents with his right hand.

Then, the man with eye glasses is the tax collector – who turned out to be Saint Matthew whom Jesus called.

9 the art expression technology of Terburgghen





It was unfortunate that the art expression technology of Terburgghen was a just of low ability.

Specifically, the right hand of the bearded man and the right hand of Jesus pointing to the man with glasses are poor technology of drawing.

He shouldn' t learn art-anatomy before time, so he couldn' t draw a real structural finger.

This fact should downgrade the value of art expression technology about Terburgghen.

#### 10 The element and composition of "The Calling of Saint Matthew" painted by Terburgghen

But, I want to reveal the truth for the sake of his honor.  
He must have known who is Saint Matthew in the work of Caravaggio.

The evidence of it is that Terburgghen reconstructed the same screen structure parallel to Caravaggio and made main character of Saint Matthew as the man with glasses.

By accident, the work of Terbrugghen showed us the answers to the mystery of Caravaggio' s work "The Calling of Saint Matthew" .

The element and composition of “The Calling of Saint Matthew” by Terbrugghen should be a good guide in understanding Caravaggio’s work.



St. Matthew



“The Calling of Saint Matthew”

1621  
Terbrugghen  
Central Museum Utrecht  
Utrecht

1600  
Caravaggio  
San Luigi dei Francesi  
Rome