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October 11, 1960

Mr. Robert L. Parsons, Director
The DeEtte Holden Cummer Museum Foundation
852.Riverside Ave.
Jacksonville 4, Fla.

Dear Mr. Parsons:

Enclosed please find the photographs of the Cranach in its cleaned state, and of a detail to show the peculiar surface distortion.

It is the fourth painting by Cranach where I have observed these lumps and waves which are caused by a deterioration in the gesso. Not of the whole layer of gesso but of sections where the glue of the sizing must have been affected by moisture or by an excess of resinⁱⁿ the panel. If such resinous sections in a panel are not insulated, or not fully coated, the extremely acid exudation reacts upon the glue and creates swelling and differences in the structure or hardness of the gesso. On an other Cranach which I transferred 2 years ago I found the gesso badly discolored where lumps showed on the surface.

The damages as you will see very clearly correspond to "high" areas, besides the chipping along cracks or joints. In the process of mounting the thinned down panel to plywood the restorer has tried to flatten these lumps by incising them with a knife or needle and putting the unit under strong pressure. I suspect that in doing so the facing must have stuck to the paint, or better the paint had more adhesion to the paper than to the priming, and when removing the facing the peaks of the lumps were detached and so lost.

Of the hand of the Child I found 2 fingers burried under some putty. I am convinced that the hand on the photo "before the last restoration" was new. The index finger is pointing too much upward, judging from the remnants of the hand, and particularly

for a child's pose.

A signature did not show up. But the panel is slightly cut on the left side and the lower left corner is missing, replaced by a new piece of oak. Adjoining this new corner I can see traces of light paint, and that makes me wonder whether there was not a stump of a tree like on the Christophorus reproduced in Friedlaender's book under no.97 carrying the signature.

Now I have a problem which needs your decision. On many sections of the visible joints is a difference in level. The enclosed photo shows fillings covering only the actual glue line or lacunae along the cracks. Filling up to a compromise level would necessitate covering some of the original paint. I, personally, dislike this idea but I would prefer to hear from you how ^{you} feel about it, so a later dissatisfaction can be avoided.

The panel has received a good wax impregnation which will be repeated along the cut edges of the plywood.

Until I hear from you I shall ^{be} attend the retouching of damaged which will not ^{be} affected by your decision about the joint fillings.

With kindest regards,

most sincerely yours,

Edvard Munch