

**Willem van den Berg, *The Vulture***  
(The Hague 1886 – 1970 Amsterdam)

Oil on board  
42 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 26 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches (107.3 x 67.3 cm)  
Signed and dated: '*WILLEM VAN DEN BERG. 1930*'

**Provenance:** Possibly Sale Phillips, London, 15 October 1990, lot 14<sup>1</sup>;  
Private Collection, The Netherlands

**Note:** Willem van den Berg was born on February 16, 1886 in The Hague, where he first trained with his father: Andries van den Berg, a painter, print-maker and art teacher. He later enrolled at the local Academie voor Beeldende Kunst. Van den Berg also took study trips to Belgium, Italy and England and worked with the Barbizon artists in France. One of his paintings was exhibited at the Jeu de Paume in Paris in 1926. In 1935, Van den Berg exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago and he continued to paint and exhibit internationally throughout his career. By 1938 he moved to Amsterdam, where he became the director of the National Academy of Fine Arts and remained until his death on 23 December 1970. In 1959 he received second prize at the International Art Exhibition in Edinburgh.

Van den Berg painted still lifes, landscapes and portraits although he is mostly known for renderings of peasants and Dutch fishermen. Besides paintings, he executed drawings, linocuts and lithographs. Although Van den Berg was very much inspired by paintings by Pieter Brueghel the Elder, as a result of his time among the Barbizon painters, a connection to Jean François Millet is also evident.

Willem van den Berg often worked in the Amsterdam zoo Artis, executing drawings of animals, later in the studio worked into lithographs or paintings. A large drawing of a vulture, now in the collection of the Teylers Museum, seems to just outline the bird on a branch. A woodcut of a vulture on a mountaintop, similar to the present painting, is in the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague. Although it is generally believed that these works have been executed after 1938 while Van den Berg was in Amsterdam, the woodcut bears the inscription of the artists' The Hague address, before he moved to Amsterdam. Another woodcut of the same image, now in the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam is dated 1925. An undated pastel, sold at Christie's Amsterdam on 21 January 2003, lot 375, shows us the same bird atop a mountain looking in the same direction as the other works on paper.

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<sup>1</sup> Not illustrated, dimensions 40 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 25 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (105 x 64 cm.)



Fig. 1 Willem van den Berg  
*A Vulture*  
Brown and grey washes, pencil  
307 x 227 mm.  
Signed 'Willem v.d. Berg'  
Teylers Museum, Haarlem  
Inv.no. KT 1985.4



Fig. 2 Willem van den Berg  
*A Vulture*  
Ink woodcut on Japanese paper  
235 x 201 mm.  
Signed 'WillemvdBerg'  
Gemeentemuseum, The Hague  
Inv.no. PRE 1920-0040



Fig. 3 Willem van den Berg  
*A Vulture*  
Pastel on paper  
980 x 700 mm.  
Signed 'Willem v.d. Berg'  
Present whereabouts unknown