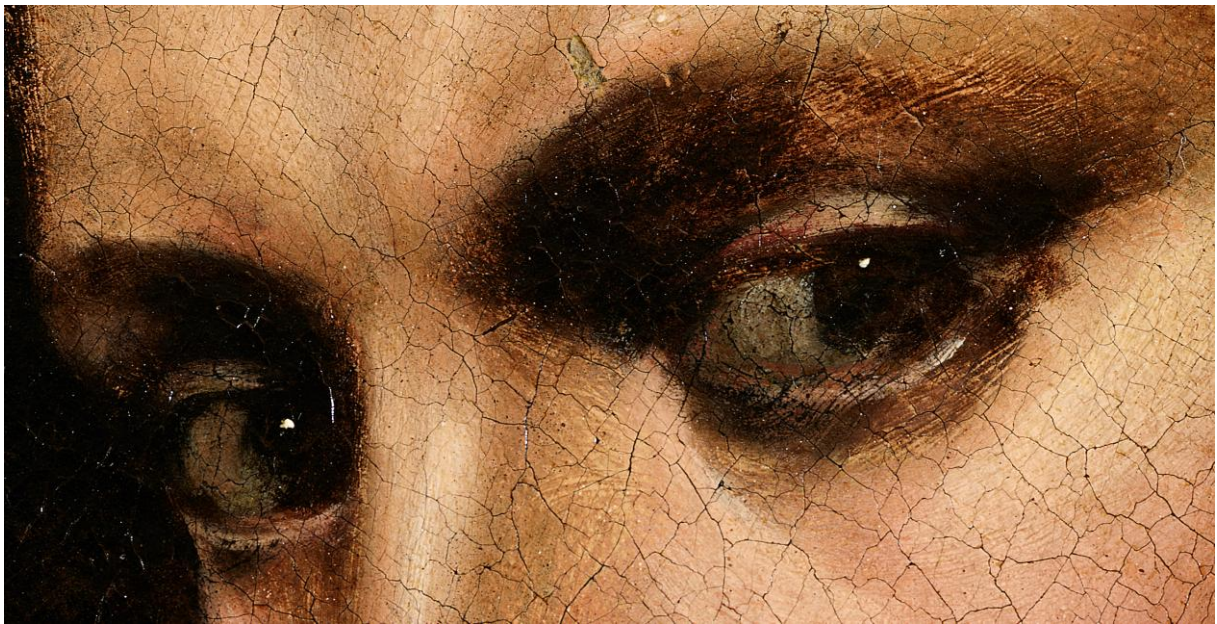


FINANCIAL TIMES

Rediscovered Caravaggio goes up for auction



Detail of Judith's face © Cabinet Turquin

[Melanie Gerlis](#)

The so-called “Caravaggio in the attic” — an imposing painting of “Judith and Holofernes” (c1607) which was found in 2014 in a house near Toulouse — has been released from its French export ban and will be offered at auction at LaBarbe in Toulouse on June 27 for between €100m and €150m (no reserve).

Since its discovery it has been in the hands of Old Masters expert Eric Turquin, who has been working on proving its authorship; the work vanished from records around 1619.

There is no hard evidence that the painting is a Caravaggio, though Turquin believes “it cannot be by anybody else”. His research has focused on matching the attic work to a 1607 description by the Flemish painter Frans Pourbus and to a known copy of the lost painting, attributed to the artist and dealer Louis Finson (1580-1617). Scientific analysis has revealed several underdrawings in “Judith and Holofernes”, visible to the naked eye since cleaning. These, Turquin says, make it highly unlikely that the attic painting is a copy. Experts who support his attribution include Keith Christiansen, the chair of European paintings at New York’s Metropolitan Museum.

The work was kept in France for 30 months, in part to give the country's museums the opportunity to own it. Specialists at the Louvre analysed the work, but Turquin says, "its value is 15 times their annual acquisition budget".

"Judith and Holofernes" came to London this week and is on view at Colnaghi in Mayfair until March 9.



'Judith and Holofernes', believed to be a lost work by Caravaggio dated c1607 © Cabinet Turquin