

The Baroque Period in the Netherlands Flanders and Holland

Rubens: Flemish

Leyster : Dutch

Rembrandt : Dutch

Vermeer : Dutch

The Sometimes Confusing Netherlands



- During the 17th century the Netherlands was a single country in Northern Europe.
- In the **North** was Holland.
- The people who live there are called Dutch.
- They are generally Protestant, having left the Catholic Church during the Reformation.
- In the **South** was Flanders, what we now call Belgium.
- The people who lived there were called Flemish, today Belgian.
- They are generally Catholic, having remained loyal to the Church after the Reformation.
- Belgium became independent of the Netherlands in 1830.
- Remember, at one time Spain controlled the Netherlands.

The Southern Netherlands / Flanders



- The southern Netherlands, called Flanders and later Belgium, remained Catholic after the Reformation.
- This gave artists ample incentive to produce BOTH secular and religious paintings.
- After nearly a century of conflict with their Spanish rulers, Flanders won independence in the early 17th century.
- Several great artists lived and worked in the capital Antwerp, developing international reputations.
- The most well known of these artists was **Peter Paul Rubens**.

Peter Paul Rubens 1557- 1640

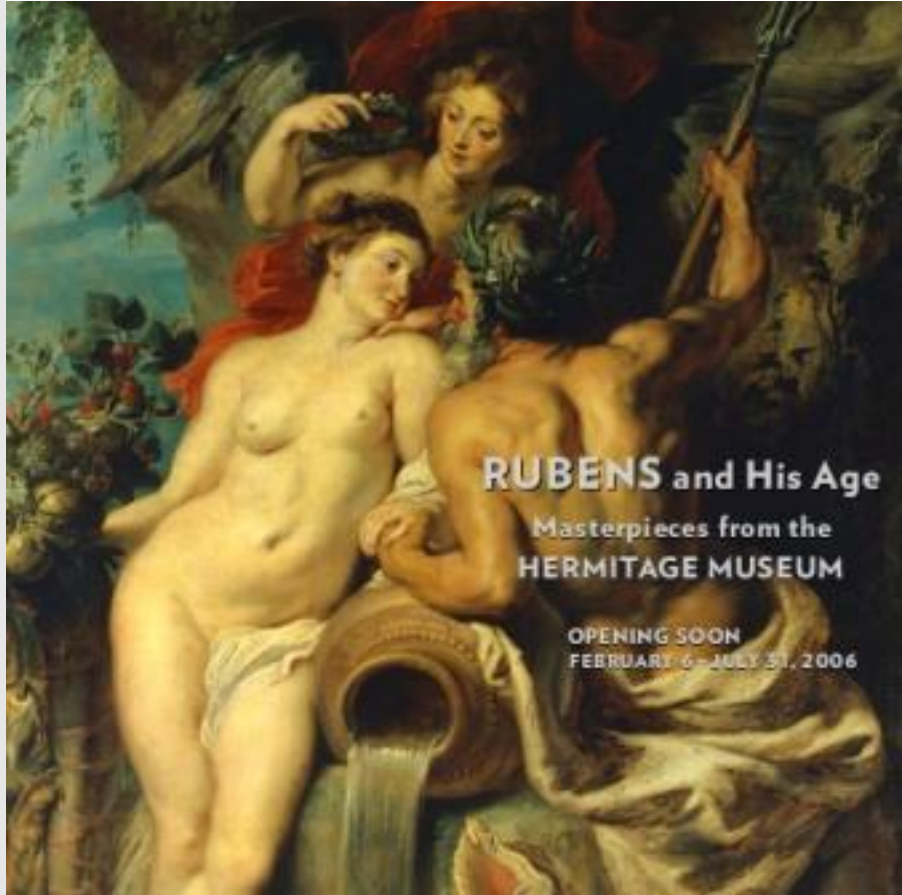


- Rubens, whose painting has become synonymous with Flemish Baroque was born in Germany, where his Protestant father fled to escape persecution in Flanders.
- After the death of his father, his Catholic mother returned the family to the Flemish capital, Antwerp.
- In 1600 he traveled to Italy, where he was offered a position as a court painter in Mantua.

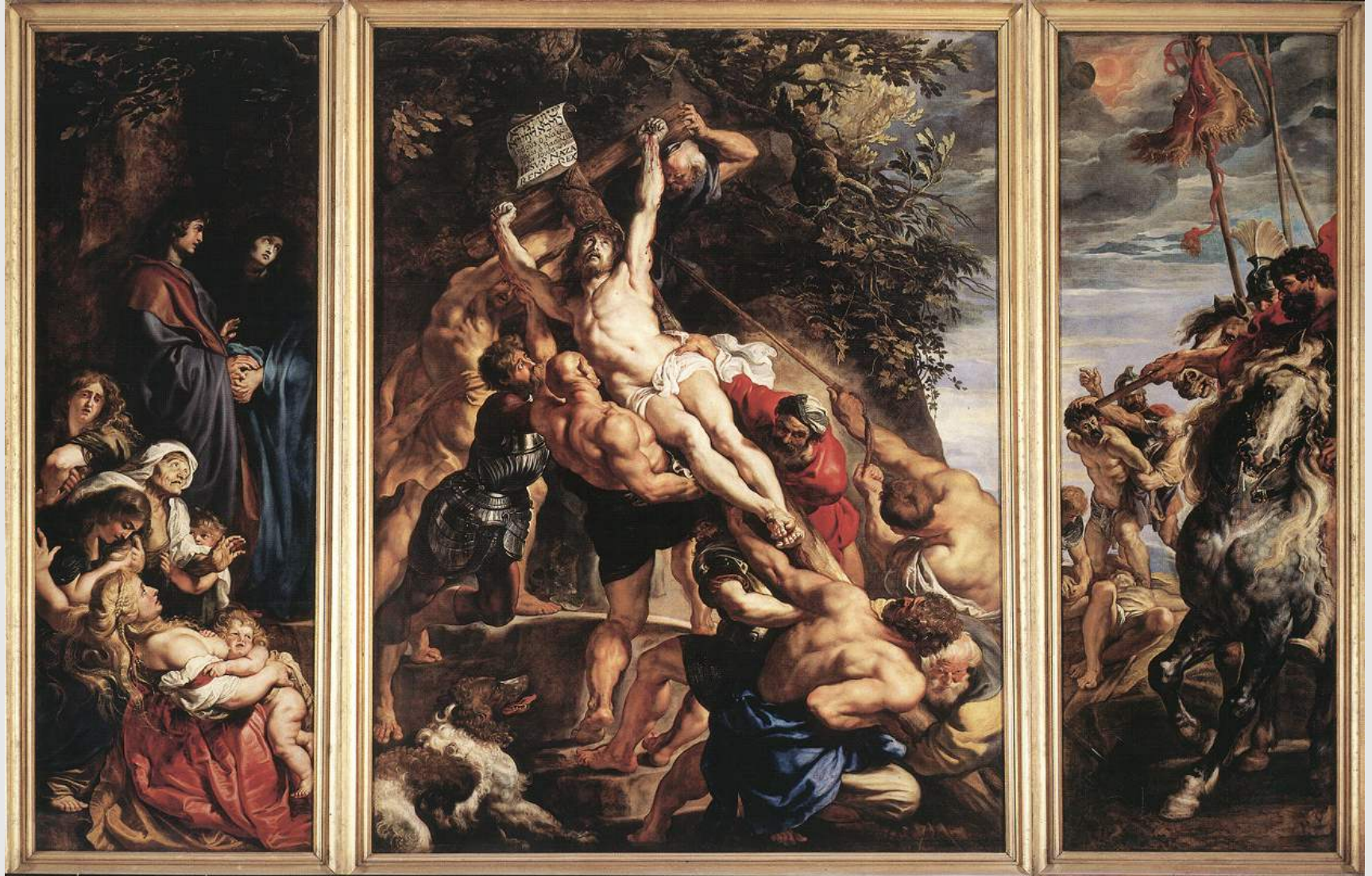


- Rubens traveled extensively, visiting every major city in Italy as well as cities in Spain.
- He studied the work of Renaissance masters and the ancient Romans.
- In 1608, Rubens returned to Antwerp, and accepted a position with the Hapsburg government.
- His studio in Antwerp is still open to the public, where visitors can stand on the balcony overlooking Rubens's work area, just as visitors did in the 17th century.

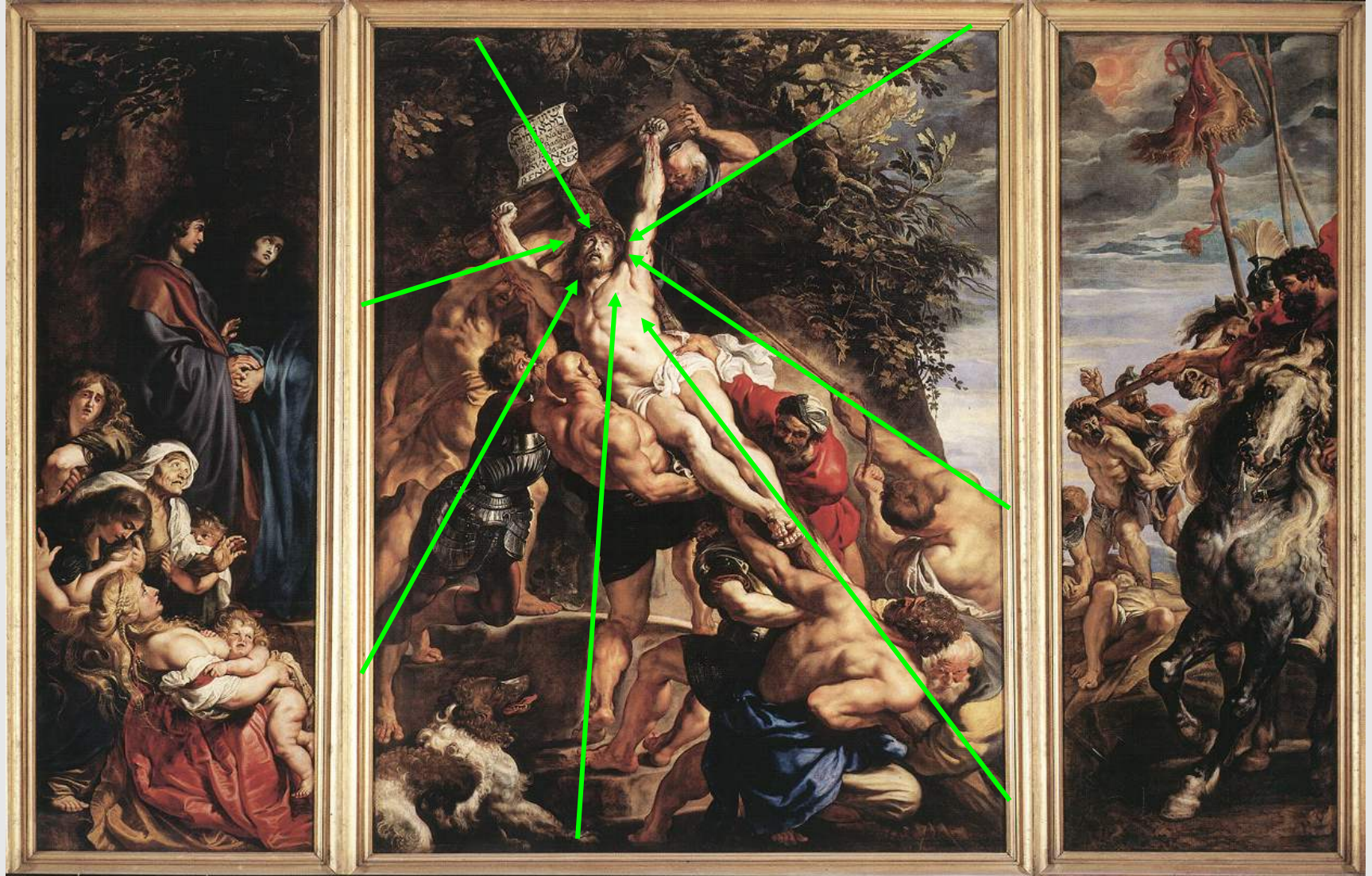
Rubens: Key Points



- High Energy secret to Rubens life and art.
- His work explodes with a flurry of brushstrokes.
- **Worked primarily from life, unlike many of his contemporaries who worked from plaster casts.**
- Rich, luscious colors
- Full bodied, sensuous nudes
- Warm, luminous flesh tones



- **Raising of the Cross**, 1610, Oil on panel
- 460 x 340 cm (centre panel), 460 x 150 cm (wings)
- Vrouwekathedraal, Antwerp
- Typical Baroque style but with a “you are there” accuracy



- Triptych acts as one continuous space across the three panels
- Strong diagonals direct viewer toward Christ
- Dramatic use of lighting and heroic figures
- Intensely religious yet spontaneous

PPR



Caravaggio





- **Judith with the Head of Holofernes**, c. 1616, Oil on canvas
- 120 x 111 cm, Herzog Ulrich Anton-Museum, Braunschweig

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Rubens and The Marie de Medici Cycle 1622-1625



- Marie de' Medici, daughter of the Grandduke of Tuscany.
- Twenty one huge historical paintings allegorically retelling the life of Marie de' Medici, Queen of France, wife of Henry IV.
- Oil on canvas, located in the Louvre, Paris.
- Twenty-one of the paintings depict Marie's own struggles and triumphs in life.
- The remaining three are portraits of herself and her parents.
- Painting at left is a portrait of Marie by Rubens.
- The cycle was finished by the end of 1624, to coincide with the celebrations surrounding the wedding of her daughter, Henrietta Maria to Charles I of England on May 11 1625.

Function: Propaganda



Cycle in the Louvre today

- Commissioned by the queen herself for one of the two galleries in the Luxembourg Palace, her newly-built home in Paris.
- In both scale and subject matter, this cycle is unprecedented
- The cycle is a piece of propaganda
- Idealizes and allegorizes Marie's life; highlighting the peace and prosperity she brought to the kingdom, not through military victories but through wisdom
- It least that's the message she wanted to communicate.

Context



- *Henri IV Receives the Portrait of Marie de' Medici*, from the Marie de' Medici Cycle
- 1621-1625, oil on canvas.
- Depicts the conclusion of a two year marriage negotiation.
- The painting represents Henry's engagement to Marie de Medici as a union ordained by the gods.
- In reality, the merits of the union were encouraged not by the gods, but by the alliances of French and Italian diplomats.
- Marriage worked well for Henry, a Protestant, to have a Catholic wife.
- He was also heavily in debt to the Medici family
- Also he was 50 years old and needed an heir. (Marie 27, went on to have five children with Henry.)

Content



- The ancient gods of marriage and love—Hymen and Cupid, present Marie’s portrait to Henry IV, the king of France.
- Hymen holds a flaming torch, symbolizing love
- Cupid explains the virtues of the Medici princess.
- Henry seems to like what he sees.
- Jupiter and Juno, the happy, hand-holding Olympian couple approve from above.
- On Earth, whispering in Henry’s ear is the personification of France.
 - She is probably telling Henry to go for it. The marriage makes good political sense.
 - What are the cherubs at the bottom doing?

Marie the Matchmaker



- The theme of peace, which runs throughout the cycle, became a reality through the marriage alliances arranged by Marie for her children:
 - Her son, Louis XIII married a daughter of the Spanish king
 - Her daughter Elisabeth married the heir to the Spanish throne (the future King Philip IV)
 - Her daughter Henrietta married Charles I of England.



Image Set 86

86. *Henri IV Receives the Portrait of Marie de' Medici*, from the *Marie de' Medici Cycle*. Peter Paul Rubens. 1621–1625 C.E. Oil on canvas.



Henri IV Receives the Portrait of Marie de' Medici

© EMN Grand Palais/Art Resources, NY



Rembrandt van Rijn

1606-69

- One of the most well known artists in history.
- During his lifetime, Rembrandt was an extremely successful portrait painter.
- **Today his reputation rests principally on the introspective painting of his later years.**
- During the first 20 years of his career, Rembrandt's portraits were in great demand, he also painted biblical and historical scenes in the Baroque style.
- *Self Portrait*, 1628, age 22



- His later works, beginning with the *Night Watch* in 1642, reflected a marked change in his painting.
- His beloved wife had died and he had already lost three children in infancy.
- A palette of rich reds and browns began to dominate his paintings, as did solitary figures and a pervasive theme of loneliness.
- He pushed the limits of chiaroscuro, using gradations of light and dark to convey mood, character and emotion.
- *Self Portrait*, 1669, the year he died at age 63



The Anatomy Lecture of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp

1632

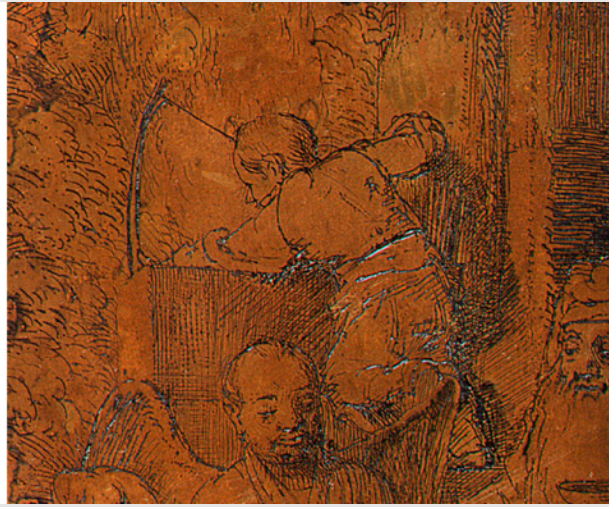
Oil on canvas, 169,5 x 216,5 cm

Mauritshuis, The Hague



- **Sampling Officials of the Drapers' Guild**
- 1662, Oil on canvas, 191 x 279 cm
- Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Etching



- Etching is a printmaking process in which a metal plate (usually copper) is coated with a waxy, acid-resistant material, called the ground.
- Artist draws through this ground with an etching needle to expose the metal.
- The plate is then dipped in acid, which “bites” into the exposed metal leaving behind lines in the plate.
- By controlling the amount of time the acid stays on the plate, the artist can make shallow, fine lines or deep, heavy ones.
- The waxy coating is then removed, the plate is inked and wiped, the ink that settles into the incised lines remains.
- The inked plate and paper then go through a high pressure press, forcing the ink onto the paper,

Rembrandt

Master Etcher



- Rembrandt is greatest etcher in the history of art
- Pioneered the popularity of the medium
- Lots of variety in his etching, explored many subjects
 - history, landscapes, still life, nudes, genre scenes and portraits.
- Worked on a soft ground, which made his etching seem quick and spontaneous, like sketches
- Very unique style

Self Portrait with Saskia



- The two married in 1634 and remained together for thirteen years until Saskia's untimely death at the age of 30.
- Only etching that Rembrandt ever made of Saskia and himself together.
- The two figures are presented in half-length, seated around a table before a plain background.
- Rembrandt dominates the image as he engages the viewer with a serious expression.
- The brim of his hat casts a dark shadow over his eyes, which adds an air of mystery
- Saskia, rendered on a smaller scale and appearing rather self-absorbed, sits behind him.
- Almost as if we have interrupted the couple as they enjoy a quiet moment in their daily life.



- In his left hand he holds a drawing tool and appears to be looking up from his drawing.
- Here Rembrandt varied the degree to which he etched the plate.
 - The figure of Rembrandt is more deeply bitten than that of Saskia,
 - a technique that not only suggests that the artist is closer to us, but also places greater emphasis on him.



- Saskia is more lightly etched, with the effect that she is seated farther away and plays a less important role
- Rembrandt may have etched Saskia first, and then added himself
- This theory is supported by the lines of her dress, which appear to continue under his overcoat.

Image Set 87

87. *Self-Portrait with Saskia.* Rembrandt van Rijn. 1636 C.E. Etching.



Self-Portrait with Saskia

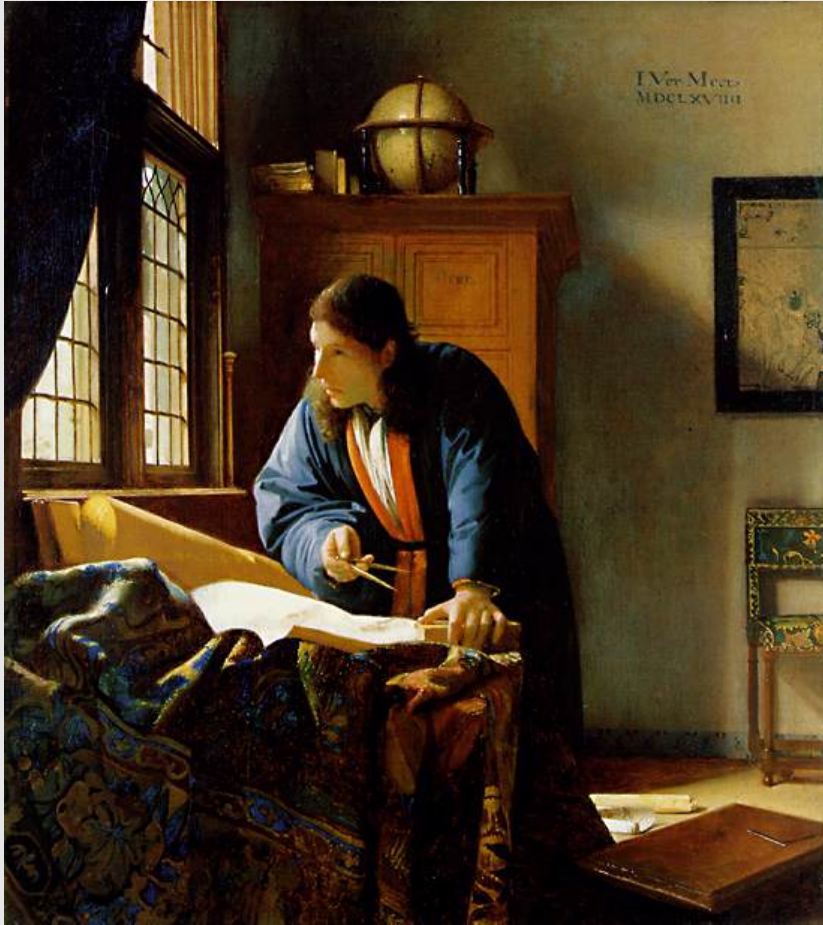
© The Pierpont Morgan Library/Art Resource, NY

Jan Vermeer

1632-1675

Dutch genre painter who lived and worked in Delft, Holland and created some of the most exquisite paintings in Western art

Jan Vermeer 1632-1675



"The Geographer", c. 1668-1669
Oil on canvas, 20 1/2 x 17 15/16 in.
Stadelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt

- Little is known for certain about Vermeer's life and career.
- He was born in 1632, the son of a silk worker with a taste for buying and selling art. Vermeer himself was also active in the art trade.
- He lived and worked in Delft all his life.
- His works are rare.
- **Of the 35 or 36 paintings generally attributed to him, most portray figures in interiors.**
- There is a quality of the **voyeur** in many of Vermeer's paintings,
- All his works are admired for the sensitivity with which he rendered effects of light and color .
- He died bankrupt at the age of 43.



"The Girl with the Red Hat", c. 1665
Oil on panel, 9 x 7 1/16 in.
National Gallery of Art, Washington

- No painter, except for perhaps van Eyck or van der Weyden, was as skilled as Vermeer in his masterful use of light.
- While many other artists used a gray/brown/green palette, Vermeer's colors were brighter, purer, and glowed with an intensity unknown before.
- **In addition to his expert handling of color and light, Vermeer was a master of perfectly balanced compositions.**
- His handling of paint was also revolutionary, applying paint in dabs and dots so that the raised surface of the paint reflected more light.
- **One critic described his paint surface as "crushed pearls melted together"**

Girl with a Pearl Earring

c. 1665

Oil on canvas

46 x 40 cm

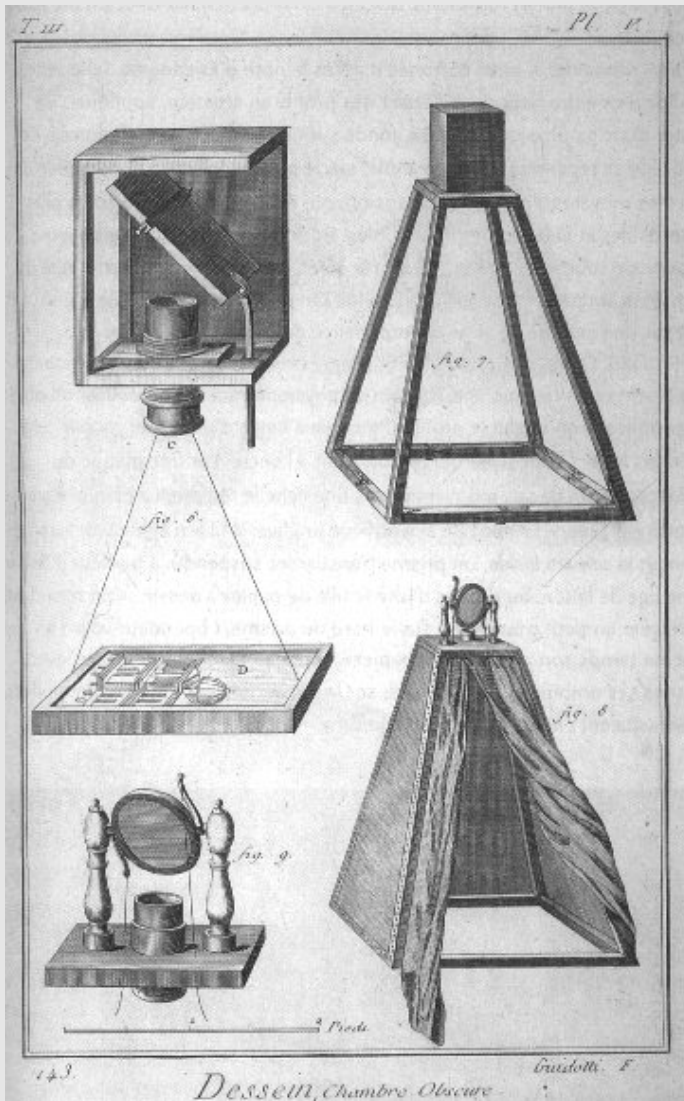
Mauritshuis

The Hague





Camera Obscura



- A camera obscura (Latin for "dark room") is an optical device that led to photography and the photographic camera.
- The device consists of a box or room with a hole in one side.
- Light from an external scene passes through the hole and strikes a surface inside, where it is reproduced, inverted (thus upside-down), but with color and perspective preserved.
- The image can be projected onto paper, and can then be traced to produce a highly accurate representation.
- Using mirrors, as in an 18th-century overhead version, it is possible to project a right-side-up image.

**Young Woman with
a Water Jug**

1660-62

Oil on canvas

45 x 40 cm

Metropolitan
Museum of Art
New York









- *Woman Holding a Balance*
- 1664 CE
- oil on canvas
- National Gallery of Art
- Washington. DC

- Very small 16" x15"
- Vermeer uses an everyday scene to communicate deeper meaning.

- What's really going on?
 - Very quiet
 - Very still
- What do we see?
 - She seems wealthy
 - Deep in thought
- She is weighing nothing
 - Nothing on the balance
- Notice the last Judgment painting







Image Set 92

92. *Woman Holding a Balance.*
Johannes Vermeer. c. 1664 C.E. Oil on
canvas.



Woman Holding a Balance

© National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., USA/The Bridgeman Art Library

Vanitas Paintings



- Type of symbolic work of art often associated with still-life painting in Flanders and the Netherlands in the 16th and 17th centuries
- **The Latin word means "vanity" and loosely translated corresponds to the meaninglessness of earthly life and the transient nature of all earthly goods and pursuits.**
- Vanity is used here in its older definition of "**futility**"
- From the Bible verse [Eccl. 1:2;12:8] in Latin:
 - Vanitas vanitatum omnia vanitas,
 - **Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.**
- Related to **memento mori**
 - artistic or symbolic reminders of mortality.



Rachel Ruysch

1664-1750

- Famous female Dutch painter
- Very successful still life artist
- Specialized in flowers
- Self taught
 - Her father was a botanist
 - She studied his specimens in detail
- Painted for more than 60 years
- Sold paintings for double what Rembrandt got
- Married and had 10 children, but continued to paint



- *Fruit and Insects*, 1711 CE , oil on wood.

Symbolism



- Seems to be about the harvest.
- The grapes and wheat also have Christian symbolic value
- Bread and wine of the Eucharist

Context



- Invention of the microscope
- The unseen could now be seen
- Reflects careful study and interest in categorizing the natural world
- Paintings are almost scientific studies

Content



- Vanitas Painting: Transient nature of life
- Grapes and wheat, bread and wine
- Flies and Insect could represent decay
- Fall fruits, harvest time foreshadows coming winter and death.
- At the Last Judgement, Christ will harvest souls for Heaven

Hope



- Bird's eggs can symbolize new life
- Butterfly, which goes through metamorphosis, is symbolic of the Resurrection.
- What about the lizard?

Image Set 96

**96. *Fruit and Insects*. Rachel Ruysch.
1711 C.E. Oil on wood.**



Fruit and Insects

© Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, Italy/The Bridgeman Art Library

Early 18th Century Japanese Painting



Historical Background



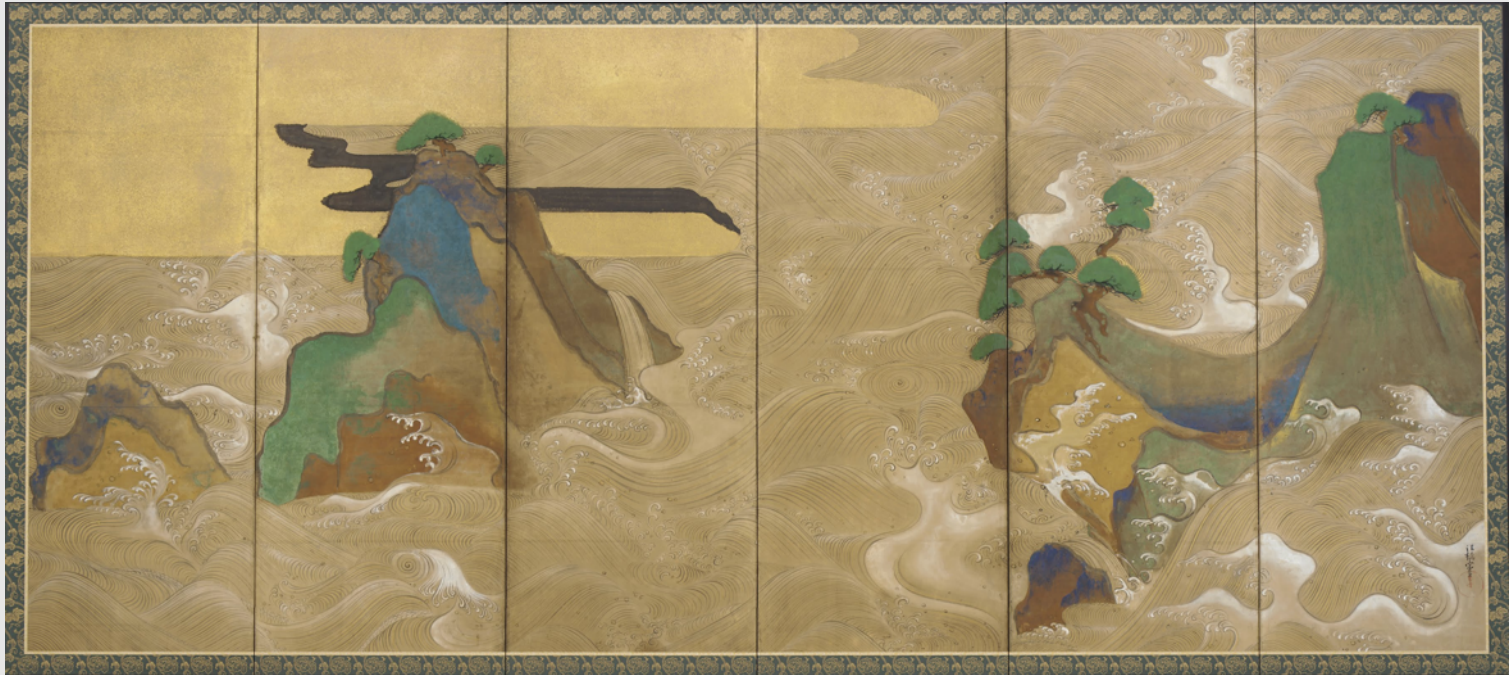
- Japan is one of the few countries in the world that has never been successfully invaded by an outside army.
- Because of the relatively sheltered nature of the island chain, and the infrequency of foreign interference, Japan has been able to hold onto its artistic traditions.

The Edo Period



- The Edo period, (1603-1867) in Japanese history, started with the relocation of the capital from Kyoto, where the imperial family resided, to Edo (modern Tokyo).
- While the preceding period had been characterized by chaos and civil wars, the **Edo period marked the beginning of more than 250 years of peace.**
- During this time, a highly centralized feudalistic society was built, where the feudal lords were given the role of administrators and distinctions between the statuses of warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants were heavily enforced, leading to a segmented society.

Rinpa School Style



- The Rinpa school was a key part of the revival in the Edo period of indigenous Japanese artistic styles.
- Paintings, textiles, ceramics, and lacquer wares were decorated by Rinpa artists with vibrant colors applied in a highly decorative and patterned manner.
- Themes, often included nature and the seasons
- Rinpa traces its origins to two 17th century Japanese painters Koetsu and Sotatsu,



- The name Rinpa derives its name (*pa*, or school, of [Ko-rin) from **Ogata Korin** (1658–1716).
- Korin and his brother Kenzan (1663–1743) were artists from a Kyoto family of textile merchants that serviced samurai, a few nobility, and city dwellers.
- Working in vivid colors or ink monochrome, often on gold ground, Korin developed a painting style that was more abstract and simple than the earlier Japanese painters.



Ogata Korin
White and Red Plum Blossoms.
c. 1710–1716 C.E.
Ink, watercolor, and gold leaf on paper screen.



- Korin was interested in the contrast of the curving stream and the angular trees, geometric versus organic
- Stylized curves in the stream represent water flowing
- Colorful plum blossoms contrast with the muted colors of the stream and trees
- Non Western perspective
- Two different points of view, stream from above, trees from ground level

Technique and Style



- Korin uses **Tarashikomi** technique, dropping ink and pigments on to surfaces still wet, created the mottling effect on the tress

Image Set 210

210. *White and Red Plum Blossoms*. Ogata Korin. c. 1710–1716 C.E. Ink, watercolor, and gold leaf on paper. (2 images)



White and Red Plum Blossoms

© MOA Museum of Art



White and Red Plum Blossoms

© MOA Museum of Art

Resources

- Kleiner, Gardner's Art Through the Ages, Wadsworth, 2013
- Marilyn Stockstad's Art History: Fifth Edition (Volumes one and two)
- Metropolitan Museum of Art's "Timeline of Art History."
Available online at <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/splash.htm>
- Strickland, Carol. The Annotated Mona Lisa. 1992
- "The Web Gallery of Art." Available online at <http://www.wga.hu>
- Kahn Academy, <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/ap-art-history>
- College Board
- Annenberg Learner
- <http://www.learner.org/courses/globalart/>