

**The exhibition Hata Stichting supported will begin.**

# Johannes Vermeer. On Reflection

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

Zwinger with Semperbau

04/06/2021–12/09/2021



Johannes Vermeer's "Girl Reading a Letter at an Open Window" is one of the world's most famous works from the 'Golden Age' of Dutch painting. It was acquired for the collection of the Saxon Elector Frederick August II in Paris in 1742 and since then it has been part of the Dresden Old Masters Picture Gallery.

Since 2017, this early masterpiece by Vermeer has been undergoing restoration following careful scientific investigation. Recent research has shown that the extensive area of overpainting in the background was not done by Vermeer himself. Removal of this overpainting has revealed a depiction of a standing Cupid (god of love) as a "painting within the painting" on the rear wall of the room, thus radically changing the overall appearance of the work. The spectacular result of the restoration will give viewers a different perspective on the painting.

The "Girl Reading a Letter" will be the centrepiece of the exhibition in the rooms of the Semper Building set aside for special exhibitions. Along with nine other paintings by Vermeer, including the "Woman in Blue Reading a Letter" (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) and the "Lady Standing at a Virginal" (London, National Gallery), which are closely related to the painting, some 50 works of Dutch genre painting from the second half of the 17th century will be on display. Paintings by Pieter de Hooch, Frans van Mieris, Gerard Ter Borch, Gabriel Metsu, Gerard Dou, Emanuel de Witte and Jan Steen will show the artistic environment in which Vermeer worked and with which he was in close contact. Selected examples from other artistic genres, such as drawings and prints, sculptures and historical furniture will further enrich the exhibition. A segment of the exhibition will be specifically devoted to Vermeer's painting technique and the restoration of the "Girl Reading a Letter" in order to illustrate the complex, experimental process used in creating the painting.

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