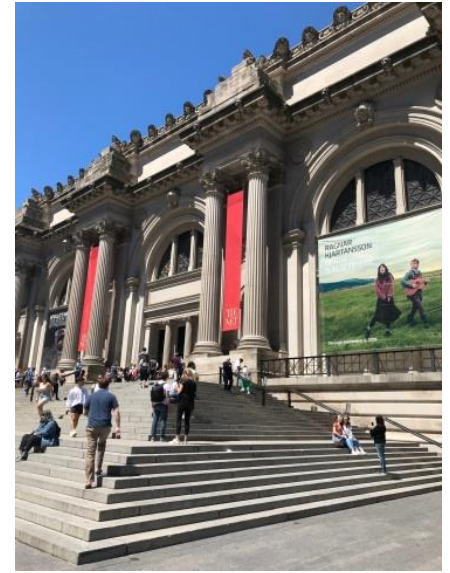


In Praise of Painting: Dutch Masterpieces at The Met

At The Met Fifth Avenue

OCTOBER 16, 2018–OCTOBER 4, 2020

Over the course of eighty years of warfare, finally concluded in 1648, the northern provinces of the Netherlands achieved independence from Spain and established the Dutch Republic. In this officially Protestant state, artists could not rely on church or court commissions; instead, they developed a recognizably modern art market that encouraged experimentation and led to the emergence of new secular kinds of painting, such as landscape and still life.



Dutch paintings were among the first works purchased by The Met after its founding in 1870. Subsequent gifts and purchases built one of the world's great collections of Dutch art, focused on three towering figures: Rembrandt van Rijn, Frans Hals, and Johannes Vermeer. There are, of course, blind spots in the story these particular acquisitions tell. Colonialism, slavery, and war—major themes in

seventeenth-century Dutch history—are scarcely visible here, and only one picture painted by an early modern Dutch woman has entered the collection over the course of nearly 150 years.

#MetDutchMasterpieces

The exhibition is made possible by the HATA Foundation Fund.

This exhibition presents The Met's fabled seventeenth-century Dutch paintings in a new light. Famous works appear in dialogue with others long kept in storage, and pictures usually shown in separate parts of the Museum—including paintings from the Robert Lehman Collection—are united in a thematic arrangement that emphasizes the controversies that animated the era, whether about religion or realistic depictions of human body.

This exhibition title comes from an address the Dutch artist Phillips Angel gave in 1641, in which he promoted painting's ability to imitate nature. Gathering together realist and idealist works, icons of the Museum and remarkable rediscoveries, this presentation brings back to life seventeenth-century debates about art, faith, and consumption.

