

Dutch Art The Golden Age

The Golden Age of Dutch Art

Masterpieces from the Collection of the Rijksmuseum

Dutch Historical Chronology

1555 – Philip II of Spain succeeds to his father the Emperor Charles V. The Netherlands are under Spanish sovereignty. Philip begins a campaign to eradicate Protestantism from his domains. He transfers the capital of the Netherlands to Brussels.

1568 – The 7 northern provinces of the Netherlands rebel against Spanish rule. Beginning of the “Eighty years war”.

1579 – The 7 provinces unite under the treaty of Utrecht to form the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands.

1581 – The Act of Abjuration or Plakkaat van Verlatinghe was signed on July 26, 1581, and was the formal declaration of independence of the northern Low Countries from the Spanish king. William of Orange (1533 -1584), the founder of the Dutch royal family, leads the Dutch during the first part of the war. Calvinism is the dominant religion of the new state.

1584 – William is assassinated in Delft and is succeeded by his son Maurice.

1585 – The Spanish take Antwerp. Many of its wealthiest citizens and merchants flee to Amsterdam.

During the Eighty Years' War the Dutch provinces became the most important trading centre of Northern Europe, replacing Flanders and the port of Antwerp in this respect. Amsterdam will become the leading city and port. Dutch ships hunted whales off Svalbard, dominated the Baltic trade, traded spices in India and Indonesia (via the Dutch East India Company) and founded colonies in New Amsterdam (New York), South Africa and the West Indies.

1602 – Founding of the Dutch East India Company given the monopoly on trade east of the Cape of Good Hope (with India and the Far East).

1609 – Truce signed with Spain.

1611 – Founding in Amsterdam of the first stock exchange in Europe.

1619 – Batavia (later Jakarta) becomes the main trading post of the East India Company in Indonesia.

1621 - Founding of the Dutch West India Company which specializes in the slave trade between Africa and America. The Netherlands become the pre-eminent slave trading country in Europe, a position overtaken by Britain around 1700.

1621 – Hostilities with Spain resume.

1625 – Death of Maurice succeeded by his half brother Frederick Henry who will lead the Dutch to great military victories over the Spanish (taking of Breda, 1637).

1637 – Speculation in the tulip trade led to a first stock market crash, but the economic crisis was soon overcome.

1641 – Opening of a trading post in Japan, near Nagasaki, which will remain the only foreign settlement in Japan until 1853.

1648 – The Peace of Westphalia, signed on January 30, 1648, confirms the independence of the United Provinces from Spain and the Holy Roman Empire.

1649 – Death of Frederick Henry. Beginning of new city hall on Dam square in Amsterdam.

1650 – The new stadtholder William II, Prince of Orange suddenly died of smallpox; his son, the later stadtholder and subsequent king of England, William III, was born only 8 days later, hence leaving the nation without an obvious successor. Since the conception of the Republic, there had been an ongoing struggle for power between the 'regents', an informal elite of affluent citizens on the one hand and the House of Orange on the other hand, whose supporters, Orangists, were mainly to be found among the common people. For now, the regents seized the opportunity: there would be no new stadtholder (in Holland) for 22 years to come. Johan de Witt, a brilliant politician and diplomat, emerged as the dominant political figure.

1652 - First Anglo-Dutch War over trade disputes ends with the Treaty of Westminster (1654).

1658 – The Dutch control Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

1672-78 – 1672 is known in the Netherlands as the "Disastrous Year" (Rampjaar). England declared war on the Republic, (the Third Anglo-Dutch War), followed by France, Münster and Cologne, which had all signed alliances against the Republic. France, Cologne and Münster invaded the Republic. Johan de Witt and his brother Cornelis, who had accomplished a diplomatic balancing act for a long time, were now the obvious scapegoats. They were lynched, and a new stadtholder, William III, Prince of Orange, was appointed. An Anglo-French attempt to land on the Dutch shore could only just be repelled in three desperate naval battles under command of admiral Michiel de Ruyter. The advance of French troops from the south could only be halted by a costly inundation of the Dutch heartland, by breaching river dykes. With the aid of friendly German princes, the Dutch succeeded in fighting back Cologne and Münster, after which the peace was signed with both of them, although some territory in the east was lost forever. Peace was signed with England as well, in 1674 (Second treaty of Westminster) and with France in 1678.

1688 - 1713 - After three essentially undecided Anglo-Dutch Wars, the relations with England reached crisis level once again. Stadtholder William III decided he had to take a huge gamble when he was invited to invade England by Protestant British nobles feuding with William's father-in-law the Catholic James II of England. This led to the Glorious Revolution and cemented the principle of parliamentary rule and Protestant ascendancy in England. James fled to France and William ascended to the English throne as co-monarch with his wife Mary, James' eldest daughter. This maneuver secured England as a critical ally of the United Provinces in its ongoing struggle with Louis XIV of France. William was the commander of the Dutch and English armies and fleets until his death in 1702. During William's reign his primary focus was leveraging British manpower and finances to aid the Dutch against the French. Nevertheless, the end of the War of the Spanish Succession (1713) marked the end of the Dutch Republic as a major player. In the 18th century, it just tried to maintain its independence and stuck to a policy of neutrality. The Netherlands slowly lost its position as the trading centre of Northern Europe. Amsterdam was gradually replaced as the central financial market and book market in Europe by London.

A Selection of Dutch works on exhibition at the Pinacothèque de Paris:

Painters and their studios:

Wallerant Vaillant (1623 - 1677) – Portrait of Maria von Oosterwijck, Flower Painter c. 1671

Lodewijk van der Helst (1642 – after 1682) – Portrait of Willem van de Velde, Marine Painter c. 1660-72

Adriaen van Ostade (1610 - 1685) Painter's Studio c. 1670-75

Cornelis Dusart (1660 - 1704) – Painter in his Studio c. 1690

Still Life:

Hendrijk Hondius (1573 - 1650) – Vanity with Artist's Instruments 1626

Wallerant Vaillant (1623 - 1677) – Vanity c.1665-75

Aalbert Jansz van der Schoor (c. 1603 – c. 1672) Vanity (Skulls on Table) c. 1660

Jan Davidsz de Heem (1606 – 1683/84) – Still Life with Books c. 1625-29

Jan Davidsz de Heem (1606 – 1683/84) – Still Life with Flowers in a Glass c. 1675-80

Abraham Mignon (1640 - 1679) – Still Life with Flowers, Oysters and Porcelain Pot c. 1660-79

Herman Saftleven (1609 - 1685) – Barbary Fig in Flower 1683

Marines, Landscape, Cityscape:

Ludolf Backhuysen (1631 - 1708) Ship Building Yard in Amsterdam c.1655-60

Ludolf Backhuysen (1631 - 1708) The Galleon Briele on the Meuse near Rotterdam 1689

Jacob van Ruysdael (1628/29 - 1682) – View of Haarlem from the North-West c. 1670

Jacob van Ruysdael (1628/29 - 1682) – Watermill c. 1655-60

Meindert Hobbema (1638 - 1709) – The Watermill c. 1666

Albert Cuyp (1620 – 1691) – View of Dordrecht from the East c. 1640-45

Anthonie van Borssom (1630 - 1677) – Lock and Windmill outside Amsterdam c. 1665

Jan van de Capelle (1626 – 1679)– Winter Scene c. 1650-55

Paulus Potter (1625 - 1654) - Cow in a Field near a Farm 1653

Pieter Jansz Saenredam (1597 - 1665) – City Hall, Hertogenbosch 1632

Gerrit Berckheyde (1638 - 1698) – Amsterdam City Hall 1693

Emanuel de Witte (1616/18 - 1692) – Portuguese Synagogue, Amsterdam 1680

Domestic scenes, Genre:

Quiring van Breklenkam (c. 1620 – c. 1668) – Tailor's Workshop 1661

Jan Steen (1626 - 1679) The Leyde Baker Arent Oostward and his Wife Catharina Kaizerswaard c. 1658

Adriaen van Ostade (1610 - 1685) – Peasants in an Inn c. 1661

Pieter de Hooch (1629 - 1684) Maternal Duty c. 1658-60

Johannes Vermeer (1632 - 1675) – The Love Letter c. 1669-70

Jan Steen (1626 - 1679) Woman at her Toilette c. 1659-60

Nicolas Maes (1634 - 1693) – Old Woman Praying c. 1650-60

Oriental and Biblical scenes:

Aert de Gelder (1645 - 1727) – King David 1680

Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (1606 - 1669) – Oriental Figure 1635

Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (1606 - 1669) – The Denial of St Peter 1660

Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (1606 - 1669) – Titus as a Monk 1660

Portraits:

Franz Hals (1581/85 - 1666) Portrait of a Clergyman? c. 1657-60

Franz Hals (1581/85 - 1666) Portrait of Young Woman c. 1635

Jan de Bray (c.1627 - 1697) – The Haarlem Printer Abraham Casteleyn and his Wife Margarieta van Bancken 1663

Gerard ter Borch (1617 - 1681) Jacob de Graeff in Officer’s Uniform c. 1674

Albert Cuyp (1620 – 1691) – Portrait of Young Man c.1651

Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (1606 - 1669) – Portrait of the Goldsmith Jan Lutma 1656

Dirck Dircksz van Santvoort (1610 - 1680) Portrait of Clara Alewijn 1644

Adriaen van Velde (1636 - 1672) – Couple with Children and their Nurse 1667

Jacob Jansz Coeman (died 1676) Pieter Cnoll with his Family 1665

Gerard ter Borch (1617 - 1681) Young Woman in Peasant Costume (Gesina ter Borch) c. 1650

Leendert van der Cooghen (1632 - 1681) – Head of Young Woman 1653

Moses ter Borch (1617 - 1681) Self Portrait Smiling c. 1661