

National Gallery of Art

NEWS RELEASE

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ANNOUNCES FIRST MAJOR CATALOGUE ON ITS SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY DUTCH PAINTINGS

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The National Gallery of Art today announced the publication of Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century by Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., Gallery curator of northern baroque paintings. This is the first comprehensive, scholarly assessment of the Gallery's renowned collection of seventeenth-century Dutch paintings. An appendix of artists' signatures and monograms, an essay on attribution issues related to Rembrandt and his school, and comparative illustrations revealing compositional changes discovered through examinations in the Gallery conservation laboratories are among the highlights of the 452-page book. It also contains color illustrations of the paintings, artist biographies, up-to-date technical notes, and text that examines the meanings and stylistic characteristics of Dutch paintings of this period.

"This book is an important addition to scholarship on seventeenth-century Dutch paintings," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "Our collection of Dutch paintings from the Golden Age is without parallel, and this catalogue is a milestone in the Gallery's research and publishing programs."

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The Gallery's collection of seventeenth-century Dutch paintings is not large, numbering ninety-one works, but it is exceptional in quality. Its core--twenty-three paintings by Rembrandt and his school, seven by Frans Hals, five by Meindert Hobbema, four by Aelbert Cuyp, three by Pieter de Hooch, three by Johannes Vermeer, and one attributed to Vermeer, as well as excellent works by other major landscape and genre painters--come from Gallery founder Andrew W. Mellon and the Widener family.

The works by Rembrandt and his school were acquired over a period of thirty years beginning in 1894 by Mellon, and P.A.B. Widener and his son Joseph. The intrigues involved in these, and other, acquisitions have become part of the lore surrounding a number of works discussed in this catalogue. Although the Dutch collection has greatly benefited from subsequent donations and acquisitions, its essential character remains remarkably true to the collecting philosophies of these early benefactors.

Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century is the eighth volume in the Gallery's systematic catalogue, a series documenting more than 5,000 paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts in the Gallery's permanent collection.

The volume is published by the National Gallery and distributed to the trade by Oxford University Press. It is available for \$85 in the National Gallery Shops and can be ordered by mail from the address listed below:

Oxford University Press
Order Dept.
2001 Evans Road
Cary, North Carolina 27513