

# ARCHIVED PRESS RELEASE

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## THE FRICK COLLECTION

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### FIRST MAJOR U.S. EXHIBITION ON ANTHONY VAN DYCK IN MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS TAKES A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT THE ARTIST'S ACTIVITY AND PROCESS AS A PORTRAITIST

#### *Van Dyck: The Anatomy of Portraiture*

March 2 through June 5, 2016



Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641), *Mary, Lady van Dyck, née Ruthven*, ca. 1640, oil on canvas, Museo Nacional del Prado

Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641), one of the most celebrated and influential portraitists of all time, enjoyed an international career that took him from his native Flanders to Italy, France, and, ultimately, the court of Charles I in England. Van Dyck's elegant manner and convincing evocation of a sitter's inner life—whether real or imagined—made him the favorite portraitist of many of the most powerful and interesting figures of the seventeenth century. His sitters—poets, duchesses, painters, and generals—represent the social and artistic elite of his age, and his achievement in portraiture marked a turning point in the history of European painting. *Van Dyck: The Anatomy of Portraiture*, on view only at New York's Frick Collection, looks comprehensively at the artist's activity and process as a portraitist. It is also the first major exhibition devoted to his work to be held in the

United States in more than twenty years. Through approximately one hundred works, the show explores the versatility and inventiveness of a portrait specialist, the stylistic development of a draftsman and painter, and the efficiency and genius of an artist in action. Organized chronologically around the different geographic chapters of Van Dyck's career, the exhibition documents the artist's development from an



Van Dyck, *The Princesses Elizabeth and Anne, Daughters of Charles I*, 1637, oil on canvas, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh; purchased with the aid of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Scottish Office, and the Art Fund 1996

ambitious young apprentice into the most sought-after portrait painter in Europe. The show also includes a small selection of comparative works by Van Dyck's contemporaries, including Rubens, Jordaens, and Lely, and a special installation of the *Iconographie*, Van Dyck's celebrated series of portrait prints. Lenders to the exhibition include the Palazzo Pitti in Florence, the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, the British Museum and National Gallery in London, the Prado Museum in Madrid, and major private collectors such as the Duke of Devonshire and the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry.

***Van Dyck: The Anatomy of Portraiture*** was organized for The Frick Collection by Stijn Alsteens, Curator, Department of Drawings and Prints, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and Adam Eaker, Assistant Curator of Northern Baroque Paintings in the Department of European Paintings, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (and formerly Guest Curator, The Frick Collection.) An illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition. Principal support is provided by an anonymous donation with additional leadership contributions from The Honorable and Mrs. W. L. Lyons Brown and an anonymous gift in memory of Melvin R. Seiden. Major support has also been provided by Melinda and Paul Sullivan, The Christian Humann Foundation, Aso O. Tavitian, The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation, John and Constance Birkelund, Mrs. Daniel Cowin, Margot and Jerry Bogert, Gilbert and Ildiko Butler, Fiduciary Trust Company International, Mrs. Henry Clay Frick II, the General Representation of the Government of Flanders to the USA, Howard S. Marks and Nancy Marks, and Dr. and Mrs. James S. Reibel, with additional contributions from Mr. and Mrs. Charles M. Royce, The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, Barbara G. Fleischman, Helen-Mae and Seymour Askin, George and Michael Eberstadt in memory of Vera and Walter Eberstadt, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Otto Naumann and Heidi D. Shafranek, the Robert Lehman Foundation, and an anonymous gift in memory of Charles Ryskamp. The exhibition is also supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.



## ABOUT VAN DYCK

Born in 1599 to a family of patrician merchants, Anthony van Dyck endured a childhood marred by his mother's early death and his father's financial instability. In 1610, he enrolled as an apprentice to the painter Hendrick van Balen, although Peter Paul Rubens, Antwerp's most celebrated artist, would exert a far greater influence on his development. By his late teens, the young Van Dyck was already assisting Rubens on large-scale commissions. A brief sojourn in England followed by a stay of roughly six years in Italy cemented his emergence as a mature painter in his own right, familiar with the great masters of the Italian Renaissance and the most sophisticated courts of Europe. One of the most important loans in the exhibition was painted during this



Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641), *Cardinal Guido Bentivoglio*, 1623, oil on canvas, Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti, Florence

period: Van Dyck's 1623 portrait of Cardinal Guido Bentivoglio, from the Galleria Palatina at the Palazzo Pitti in Florence, at right. In the Baroque period, Van Dyck's depiction of Bentivoglio was much emulated and became the benchmark for any portrait of a prince of the Church. Its exclusive trip to the Frick marks only the second time in the painting's history that it has left Italy.



Van Dyck, *Charles I and Henrietta Maria Holding a Laurel Wreath*, 1632, oil on canvas, Arcibiskupský zámek a zahrady v Kroměříži, Kroměříž

In 1632, Van Dyck was appointed principal painter to Charles I of England. The portraits he produced over the following decade, before his premature death in 1641, are among his most celebrated and feature heavily in the exhibition. Included in the exhibition is a horizontal portrait of Charles I and his queen Henrietta Maria, now in the collection of Archiepiscopal Castle and Gardens, Kroměříž, The Czech Republic. This remarkable canvas has never before traveled to the United States. Coming from the National Gallery of Art,

Washington D.C., is Van Dyck's portrait *Queen Henrietta Maria with Jeffrey Hudson* (featured in detail on the catalogue cover shown on page 5). A more intimate work of Princesses Elizabeth and Anne comes to New York from the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (page 1, at right).

In addition to showcasing notable works from European collections, *Van Dyck: The Anatomy of Portraiture* will also shine a spotlight on important paintings by Van Dyck from American private and public collections, many of which have not been included in previous exhibitions on the artist. These paintings are a legacy of the longtime fascination that Van Dyck has exerted on American collectors, including Henry Clay Frick, who acquired no fewer than eight



Van Dyck, *Genoese Noblewoman*, ca. 1625–27, oil on canvas, The Frick Collection; Henry Clay Frick Bequest; photo: Michael Bodycomb

paintings by the artist. Among these is the portrait of Frans Snyders, a fellow painter and close artistic collaborator, purchased in the summer of 1909 by Frick, who also acquired that same year the pendant portrait of Snyders's wife, Margareta de Vos. Painted about 1620 when the artist was roughly twenty years old, the two portraits (above) reveal the prodigy's startling talent, expressed in likenesses that combine supreme elegance with a subtle element of melancholy. Other Frick-owned works included in the exhibition will be the full-length canvas *Lady Anne Carey, Later Viscountess Claneboye and Countess of Clanbrassil*, and the recently conserved *Portrait of a Genoese Noblewoman*, at left.



Van Dyck (1599–1641), *Frans Snyders*, ca. 1620, oil on canvas, The Frick Collection; Henry Clay Frick Bequest; photo: Michael Bodycomb; Van Dyck, *Margareta de Vos*, ca. 1620, oil on canvas, The Frick Collection; Henry Clay Frick Bequest; photo: Michael Bodycomb

## APPROACH TO PREPARATION OF PORTRAITS A MAJOR THEME

Van Dyck's singularity is most apparent in his approach to preparing a portrait, and initial sketches and unfinished paintings compose one of the major themes of the show. Portrait drawings by his contemporaries, including Peter Lely and Jacob Jordaens, will highlight the distinct way he created his celebrated portraits. Whereas many artists made detailed studies of a sitter's face before beginning work on a painting, Van Dyck preferred rough sketches



Museum, Louisville; Museum Purchase, Preston Pope Satterwhite Fund



Van Dyck, *Portrait Study of Nicholas Lanier*, ca. 1628, black chalk, heightened with white chalk, on blue paper, Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh; Lady Murray of Henderland gift 1860 as a memorial of her husband, Lord Henderland

that mapped a sitter's pose but left many details unresolved. He would then usually paint the sitter directly from life, studying his or her face without an intermediary drawing. This approach is apparent especially in unfinished works, such as the *Portrait of a Woman* from the Speed Museum in Louisville, above. Here, the haunting depiction of the unknown woman's face contrasts with passages intended to be completed by studio assistants. The Frick's exhibition will reunite preparatory works and finished paintings, in some cases for the first time since they left Van Dyck's studio several hundred years ago. A preparatory drawing of the English court musician and painter Nicholas Lanier, at left, from the Scottish National Gallery, for example, will be displayed alongside the related portrait, on loan from Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum, at right. In the

drawing, Van Dyck worked with black and white chalk on blue paper, swiftly laying out the fall of fabric of Lanier's cloak, the play of his curls, his elegant hands, and his almost supercilious expression. Nonetheless, the artist made a number of changes in the final composition: instead of holding out a glove in his right hand, Lanier's arm is akimbo, the hand tucked invisibly at his side. Less obviously, Van Dyck removed a lock of hair to leave Lanier's temple exposed. These alterations indicate how Van Dyck continued to think through his composition as he transitioned from preparatory drawing to canvas. Remarking on the artist's meticulous process, Lanier told the painter Peter Lely that he "sat seven entire days" for his portrait, but "was not permitted so much as once to see it till [Van Dyck] had perfectly finished the face to his own satisfaction." Such anecdotes combine with the physical evidence of Van Dyck's works to allow for the exhibition's reconstruction of the artist's working method.



Van Dyck, *Nicholas Lanier*, ca. 1628, oil on canvas, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

## PAN-EUROPEAN DISTRIBUTION OF HIS WORK IN PRINT

Van Dyck made astute use of reproductive prints to ensure that his portraits had a pan-European distribution. This is particularly apparent in his so-called *Iconographie* series of printed portraits, depicting a range of sitters who included fellow Flemish artists, learned scholars, statesmen, and aristocratic ladies. The *Iconographie* will receive its

own special installation at the Frick, encompassing prints, drawings, oil sketches, and one of the earliest bound volumes of Van Dyck's portrait prints, on loan from the Rijksmuseum.



Van Dyck, *Frans Snyders*, 1627–35, etching, Fogg Museum, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge; Gift of Walter C. Klein, Class of 1939

As well as the work of professional engravers, the *Iconographie* features some of Van Dyck's autograph etchings, which are among the greatest prints ever made. These include Van Dyck's etching, at left, after his portrait of Frans Snyders (illustrated on page 3). In his paintings of Snyders and his wife, the young Van Dyck depicted the pair amidst various trappings of prosperity—elegant clothing, furniture, and a distant view of parkland. In his print, made more than a decade later, Van Dyck stripped Snyders's portrait down to just head and shoulders. Translated from oil on canvas into a new medium, the etching reveals the variety of Van Dyck's graphic vocabulary. Stippling maps the contours of Snyders's brow, cheekbones, and forehead, yielding to loose crosshatching in areas of greater shadow. Calligraphic lines, meanwhile, convey Snyders's nonchalantly arranged hair and upturned mustache. Such a minimal etching was intended to appeal to the most sophisticated collectors, but Van Dyck also collaborated with highly skilled professional engravers to create more traditional prints for wider distribution. To assist these engravers, Van Dyck prepared both drawings and exquisite grisailles, or gray-scale oil sketches. In the exhibition, four of these grisailles, one of which is shown at right, will demonstrate Van Dyck's unusual mastery of this refined medium.



Van Dyck, *Adriaen Brouwer*, ca. 1634, oil on panel, The Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, KBE, Boughton House, Northamptonshire

## BEYOND SOCIETY: FAMILY AND SELF-PORTRAITS



Van Dyck, *Margaret Lemon*, ca. 1638, private collection, New York

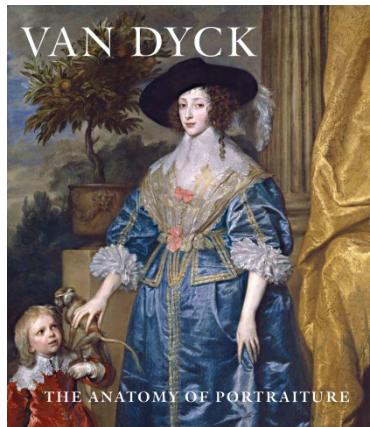
Van Dyck used portraiture to represent the very pinnacle of contemporary society, but it also provided him with a vehicle to explore intimate relationships and his own identity. The exhibition will include portraits of Van Dyck's wife, Mary (page 1), as well as the woman believed to have been his mistress, the courtesan Margaret Lemon, at left. Lemon appears in three-quarter profile, delicately touching the fabric at her shoulder in a gesture of refinement that would fascinate subsequent generations of artists. The painting, long considered lost but now in a New York private collection, inspired a spate of imitations during the seventeenth century. Van Dyck was an avid self-portraitist throughout his career, and four of his self-portraits will be included in the exhibition. In the earliest of these, executed about 1613–15, an adolescent Van Dyck turns his head to study his own



Van Dyck, *Self-Portrait*, ca. 1613–15, oil on panel, Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste, Vienna

likeness. His piercing stare and the boldness of his brushwork presaged a career that would prove seminal for the history of European painting. Visitors to *Van Dyck: The Anatomy of Portraiture* will have an unprecedented chance to immerse themselves in that achievement.

## PUBLICATION



A landmark volume accompanies the exhibition, providing a comprehensive survey of the portrait drawings, paintings, and prints of Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641), one of the most celebrated portraitists of all time. Written by Stijn Alsteens and Adam Eaker with contributions by An Van Camp, Ashmolean Museum; Xavier F. Salomon, The Frick Collection; and Bert Watteeuw, Rubenianum, Antwerp; the book showcases the full range of Van Dyck's fascinating international career and makes a compelling case for the distinctiveness and importance of his work. Published by Yale University Press in association with The Frick Collection, the book is available in the Museum Shop or can be ordered through the Frick's Web site ([frick.org](http://frick.org)) or by phone at 212.547.6848. Softcover (\$45, Member price \$40.50) and hardcover (\$65, Member price \$58.50) editions, 9 ½ x 11 inches, 267 illustrations.

## INTERACT

Social: /FrickCollection

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## BASIC INFORMATION

**General Information Phone:** 212.288.0700

**Web site:** [www.frick.org](http://www.frick.org)

**Building project:** [www.frickfuture.org](http://www.frickfuture.org)

**E-mail:** [info@frick.org](mailto:info@frick.org)

**App:** [frick.org/app](http://frick.org/app)

**Where:** 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue

**Museum Hours:** open six days a week: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays through Saturdays; 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Limited hours (11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day

**Admission:** \$22; senior citizens \$17; students \$12; “pay what you wish” on Sundays from 11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS:** Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection

**Subway:** #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68th Street station; Bus: M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street

**Tour Information:** included in the price of admission is an Acoustiguide Audio Tour of the permanent collection. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

**Shop:** the shop is open the same days as the Museum, closing fifteen minutes before the institution.

**Group Visits:** Please call 212.288.0700 for details and to make reservations.

**Public Programs:** A calendar of events is published regularly and is available upon request.

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For further press information, please contact Heidi Rosenau, Associate Director of Media Relations & Marketing

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