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THE FRICK COLLECTION

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MASTERPIECES FROM THE MAURITSHUIS TO TRAVEL IN 2013 FIRST MAJOR U.S. TOUR IN NEARLY THIRTY YEARS

*de Young/Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
January 26, 2013, through June 2, 2013*

*High Museum of Art, Atlanta
June 22, 2013, through September 29, 2013*

*The Frick Collection, New York
October 22, 2013, through January 19, 2014*



Johannes Vermeer (1632–1675), *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, c. 1665, oil on canvas, 44.5 x 39 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague

The Frick Collection is pleased to announce that in the fall of 2013, it will be the final venue of an American tour of paintings from the Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague. This prestigious Dutch museum, which has not lent a large body of works from its holdings in nearly thirty years, is undergoing an extensive two-year renovation that makes this opportunity possible. Between January 2013 and January 2014, the Mauritshuis will send thirty-five paintings to the United States, following two stops at Japanese institutions. The American exhibition opens next winter at de Young/Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, traveling on to the High Museum of Art in Atlanta for the summer of 2013. A smaller selection of fifteen masterpieces will be on view at The Frick Collection in New York from October 22, 2013, through January 19, 2014. Among the works going on tour are the famous *Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Johannes Vermeer and *The*

Goldfinch by Carel Fabritius, neither of which will have been seen by American audiences in ten years.

Emilie Gordenker, Director of the Mauritshuis, comments, “We are delighted to have three excellent museums as partners for our U.S. tour. This agreement allows us to present our collection on both the west and east coasts of the United States, in large as well as more intimate venues.”

ABOUT THE ROYAL PICTURE GALLERY MAURITSHUIS

Housed in a magnificent seventeenth-century city palace, the museum is celebrated for its masterpieces from the Dutch and Flemish Golden Age, including paintings by Vermeer, Rembrandt, Steen, Hals, and Rubens. The works on permanent display provide a magnificent panorama of Dutch and Flemish art of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries; from Flemish primitives to sunlit landscapes, from biblical characters to meticulous still lifes, and from calm interiors to humorous genre scenes. The core holdings of the Mauritshuis were acquired by Stadholder William V, Prince of Orange-Nassau (1748–1806), whose son, King William I (1772–1843), presented them to the Dutch nation in 1816. Consisting of nearly 300 paintings in 1822, the holdings of the Mauritshuis have grown to approximately 800 such works.



Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669), “Tronie” of a Man with a Feathered Beret, c. 1635, oil on panel, 62.5 x 47 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague

MASTERPIECES TO BE SHOWN AT THE FRICK COLLECTION

At the Frick, the exhibiton will be called *Vermeer, Rembrandt, and Hals: Masterpieces of Dutch Painting from the Mauritshuis*. It will be coordinated by Deputy Director and Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator Colin B. Bailey and Assistant Curator Margaret Iacono. Bailey selected the works in conjunction with Edwin Buijsen, Head of Collections at the Mauritshuis. Continuing in the Frick’s tradition of presenting masterpieces from acclaimed museums not easily accessible to the New York public, this exhibition follows four acclaimed shows of similar size that drew, respectively, upon works from the Toledo Museum of Art (2002), the Cleveland Museum of Art (2006), the Norton Simon Museum (2009), and Dulwich Picture Gallery (2010). At the Frick’s Mauritshuis exhibition, Vermeer’s *Girl with a Pearl Earring* will have pride of place as the sole work on view in the Frick’s Oval Room, with the other fourteen paintings being shown together in the large East Gallery. The loans coming to the New York venue are primarily by artists collected by founder Henry Clay Frick, such as Vermeer, Rembrandt, Hals, and van Ruisdael, but; the selection is complementary, however, in its inclusion of work by Steen and Fabritius and, as well as the addition of two fine still lifes, a genre less well-represented at the Frick.

The fifteen paintings coming to the Frick, all highlights of the Mauritshuis collection, represent the range of subject matter and technique prevalent in seventeenth-century painting in The Netherlands. They are Johannes Vermeer’s *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, c. 1665; four works by Rembrandt van Rijn (*Simeon’s Song of Praise*, 1631; “Tronie” of a Man with a Feathered Beret, c. 1635; *Susanna*, 1636, and *Portrait of an Elderly Man*, 1667); Frans Hals’s pendant portraits of *Jacob Olycan* (1596–1638) and *Aletta Hanemans* (1606–1653), both painted in 1625; Pieter Claesz’s *Vanitas Still Life*, 1630; Carel Fabritius’s *The Goldfinch*, 1654; Nicholas Maes’s *Old Lacemaker*, c. 1655; Gerard ter Borch’s *Woman Writing a Letter*, c. 1655; Jan Steen’s *Girl Eating Oysters*, c. 1658–60, and ‘*The Way you Hear It, Is the Way You Sing It*’, c. 1665; and Jacob van Ruisdael’s *View of Haarlem with Bleaching Grounds*, c. 1670–75; and Adriaen Coorte’s *Still Life with Five Apricots*, 1704.

Portraits were plentiful in seventeenth-century Holland, often commissioned to commemorate important occasions. Hals likely painted the prosperous beer brewer and burgomaster *Jacob Olycan* and his wife *Aletta Hanemans* in honor of their marriage. The portraits were restored in 2006–7 revealing Hals’s fastidious rendering of the pair’s lustrous silk garments trimmed with expensive lace and gold brocade. Less formal in its execution is Rembrandt’s virtuoso *Portrait of an Elderly Man*. A work from the artist’s maturity, he renders the unidentified sitter with loose, vigorous strokes creating an image of great charm and genuineness. Though not technically a portrait, *Girl with a Pearl Earring* (see page 1) is one of Vermeer’s most engaging paintings, demonstrating the master’s mesmerizing rendering of light. As in so many of the artist’s images, this seductive portrayal leaves the viewer to ponder the sitter’s identity and the circumstances surrounding its creation. Like Vermeer’s *Girl*, Rembrandt’s “*Tronie*” of a *Man with a Feathered Beret* is not intended to be a portrait of a specific person but rather is a stock character in historical costume. Rembrandt’s “*Tronie*” was probably painted some thirty years before Vermeer’s *Girl*, yet it makes a telling parallel to the Delft master’s affecting vision.

Although best known for his innovative portraits, Rembrandt intended to be a history painter. The fervent *Simeon’s Song of Praise*, a work from his early years, evokes a very different mood from more carefree images such as his *Elderly Man*. Depicting the biblical account from the gospel of Luke, Rembrandt deftly modulates the light and dark passages to highlight the pious man with heaven-cast eyes, who acknowledges the future messiah cradled in his arms. Rembrandt’s talent for painting poignant historical and biblical subjects is evident again in his powerful *Susanna*. The artist presents his subject—who shields her naked body from the gaze of the unscrupulous voyeurs—in his characteristic forthright manner while acknowledging earlier Italian and Netherlandish pictorial traditions.



Carel Fabritius (1622–1654), *The Goldfinch*, 1654, oil on panel, 33.5 x 22.8 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague

Carel Fabritius (1622–1654), a student of Rembrandt, developed his own dexterity in painting light. His exquisite *Goldfinch* is one of the few surviving paintings by this talented artist who died prematurely. Following conservation treatment in 2003, the delicate panel demonstrates anew Fabritius’s masterful illusionism in describing the curious house pet. In Adriaen Coorte’s (c. 1665–after 1770) *Still Life with Five Apricots*, a luscious pile of the downy-skinned fruit teeter on the edge of a worn table, again exemplifying the Dutch interest in painting the natural world. Related to these two paintings in its realistic rendering of objects is *Vanitas Still Life* by Pieter Claesz (c. 1597–1660). This portentous image is far more sober in meaning, however, with its skull, timepiece, and overturned glass all reminding the viewer of the fragility of life.

Like still lifes, genre scenes were frequent subjects in the Dutch painting tradition. *Woman Writing a Letter* by Gerard Ter Borch (1617–1681) features a young woman absorbed in her correspondence. Ter Borch was renowned for his meticulous rendering of surfaces and for his portrayals of middle-class women involved in daily tasks, as superbly exemplified by the Mauritshuis’s painting. *The Old Lacemaker*, c. 1655, painted by Nicolaes Maes (1634–1693), also depicts a woman industriously engaged in a household activity. Such domestic pursuits were

highly praised by writers and moralists during the period of the painting's manufacture. A very different image of female virtue (or lack of it) is presented in *Girl Eating Oysters* by Jan Steen (1626–1679), where the young woman's consumption of the shellfish—long regarded as an aphrodisiac—hints at her wantonness. Steen mocks moral dictates once more in the droll painting *The Way You Hear It, Is the Way You Sing It*. Using his own family as models, the artist illustrates a popular Dutch proverb warning parents of the hazardous effect of their conduct on impressionable offspring.

Representing the Dutch contribution to landscape painting is *View of Haarlem with Bleaching Grounds* by Jacob van Ruisdael (1628/29–1682), a splendid exultation of the sun-drenched, lush Dutch countryside and the city's valued linen industry. While many of the paintings in the exhibition vary in their subject matter and technique, the selection as a whole eloquently represents the artistic achievements of the Dutch Golden Age.

To commemorate this exceptional viewing opportunity, the curators at the Mauritshuis will produce a fully illustrated scholarly catalogue to be sold in the museums' shops. The Frick will also host a series of educational programs including public lectures, seminars, and gallery talks to offer visitors a variety of occasions to enjoy and engage with these spectacular paintings.

U.S. TOUR VENUE INFORMATION:

de Young/Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

DATES: January 26, 2013, through June 2, 2013

TITLE: *Girl with a Pearl Earring: Dutch Paintings from the Mauritshuis* (35 works)

High Museum of Art, Atlanta

DATES: June 22, 2013, through September 29, 2013

TITLE: *Girl with a Pearl Earring: Dutch Paintings from the Mauritshuis* (35 works)

The Frick Collection, New York

DATES: October 22, 2013, through January 19, 2014

TITLE: *Vermeer, Rembrandt, and Hals: Masterpieces of Dutch Painting from the Mauritshuis* (10 works)

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