



PRESS RELEASE

from

THE FRICK COLLECTION

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MEDIA ALERT: SPRING 2011 EXHIBITION CONSIDERS REMBRANDT THROUGH THE EYES OF TWO COLLECTORS

REMBRANDT AND HIS SCHOOL: MASTERWORKS FROM THE FRICK AND LUGT COLLECTIONS

February 15, 2011, through May 15, 2011

When **Henry Clay Frick** (1849–1919) was asked whose talents he would most like to possess, he declared: “Rembrandt’s.” And as the largest individual railway stockholder in the world, Frick is reported to have said that “railways are the Rembrandts of investment.” Like Frick, the Dutch art historian **Frederik Johannes Lugt** (1884–1970) was a great admirer and collector of works by the Dutch artist Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669); as a teenager he wrote a biography of the artist, illustrated with his own copies after Rembrandt’s most famous works. In the spring of 2011 The Frick Collection will present a selection of Rembrandt’s works as seen through the eyes of these two renowned collectors,

devoting three exhibition spaces (the Oval Room, the Cabinet, and the downstairs exhibition galleries) to the work of Rembrandt and his school. On

display in the Oval Room will be five paintings by Rembrandt and his school from the Frick’s permanent collection—four acquired by Henry Clay Frick between 1899 and 1919 and the fifth by the trustees in 1943 from the collection of J. Pierpont Morgan. Three of these works are unquestionable masterpieces by the artist—*Nicolaes Ruts* (1631), *The Polish Rider* (c. 1655), and the *Self-Portrait* (1658). Two of the paintings—*Portrait of a Young Artist* and *Old Woman with a Book*—were acquired by Frick as Rembrandts but are today attributed to artists in his entourage. This will be the first time that all five paintings have been united in a monographic display. The Cabinet will feature a selection of etchings and drawings by Rembrandt acquired by Henry Clay Frick at the end of



Rembrandt (1606–1669), *Self-Portrait, Frowning: Bust*, 1630, etching, 72 x 61 mm (sheet: 74 x 63 mm), Fondation Custodia, Paris

his life. These works on paper, part of the founding bequest and therefore unavailable for loan, are rarely on display.



Rembrandt (1606–1669), *Nicolaes Ruts*, 1631, oil on mahogany panel, 46 in. x 34 3/8 inches, The Frick Collection, New York

On view in the Frick's downstairs exhibition galleries will be a loan exhibition of 66 works on paper by Rembrandt and his school from the collection of Frits Lugt, now housed in the Fondation Custodia, Paris. The Lugt Collection's extensive holdings of Rembrandt and Rembrandt-school drawings have been catalogued by the leading authority on Rembrandt's drawings, Peter Schatborn, whose two-volume publication, *Rembrandt and His Circle: Drawings in the Frits Lugt Collection*, is expected to appear later this year. Schatborn's selection of the Lugt Collection's finest works has served as the basis for this presentation, which will feature all eighteen drawings by Rembrandt, including such well-known masterpieces as *Woman Leaning on a Window Sill*, *Interior with Saskia in Bed*, *The Windmill on the Bulwark*, and *Shah Jahan*.

Among the prints from the Lugt Collection will be a group of Rembrandt self-portraits that record the artist in a variety of costumes, settings, and humors, and create a powerful dialogue with the Frick's painted *Self-Portrait*. The exhibition is completed by 36 master drawings by Rembrandt's most prominent pupils and students, including Ferdinand Bol (1616–1680), Lambert Doomer (1624–1700), Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (1621–1674), Carel Fabritius (1622–1654), Govaert Flinck (1615–1660), Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627–1678), Philips Koninck (1619–1688), Jan Lievens (1607–1674), and Nicolaes Maes (1634–1693). Several of these drawings were once thought to be by the master himself. The portion of the exhibition concerning works collected by Henry Clay Frick closes on May 15, but the works on loan from the Fondation Custodia, Paris, will remain on view through May 22.*



Rembrandt (1606–1669), *Self-Portrait*, dated 1658, oil on canvas, 52 3/4 x 40 7/8 inches The Frick Collection, New York

Rembrandt and His School: Masterworks from the Frick and Lugt Collections is organized by Colin B. Bailey, the Frick's Associate Director and Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator, in conjunction with Margaret Iacono, Assistant Curator, and Joanna Sheers, Curatorial Assistant. Principal funding for the exhibition is provided by The Christian Humann Foundation, Jean-Marie and Elizabeth Eveillard, and Melvin R. Seiden. Corporate support is provided by Fiduciary Trust Company International. The exhibition is also supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. The catalogue is made possible by the Robert Lehman Foundation, Inc. It is also underwritten, in part, by public funds from the Netherlands Cultural Services and by the Netherland-America Foundation.

A BORN COLLECTOR, A SELF-TAUGHT ART HISTORIAN



Rembrandt (1606–1669), *Interior with Saskia in Bed*, c. 1640–41, drawing, 142 x 177 mm, Fondation Custodia, Paris

The only child of a civil engineer from Amsterdam, Lugt left school at sixteen to pursue a career at the auction house of Frederik Muller & Company. He was a born collector, who, by the age of eight, had sold a significant gathering of shells to the natural history department of Amsterdam's royal zoo. By twelve, he talked his way into the print room of the Rijksmuseum to study the Dutch Golden Age drawings. Three years later he began work on a catalogue of this collection, with some 955 entries to his credit. A defining viewing experience for the young man was the great exhibition devoted to Rembrandt organized in September 1898 to celebrate Queen Wilhelmina's coronation, where more than 120 paintings and 350 drawings were on display. Not only did the exhibition inspire the fourteen-year-old to write a biography of the artist, which he illustrated with his own drawings after Rembrandt's work, but it instilled in him a life-long admiration for Rembrandt, his favorite artist. (Lugt owned no fewer than thirty drawings attributed to Rembrandt, twenty of which are today considered as autograph, as well as a virtually complete set of his etchings.)

With the outbreak of the First World War and the collapse of the art market, Lugt left Muller's auction house to deal on his own and to pursue his scholarship on Dutch and Flemish drawings. He, his wife, and growing family—five children in all—lived in an eighteenth-century country house in the province of Utrecht. Lugt and his wife traveled frequently to Paris, where he would be engaged over the next three decades in cataloging and publishing the Northern drawings in each of the city's principal public collections: the Petit Palais, the Musée du Louvre, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and the École des Beaux-Arts.

In his thirties, Lugt also began to collect in a more serious and systematic way, initially specializing in Dutch and Flemish drawings and prints, always his chief interest. During the 1920s, the decade in which Lugt made his most important acquisitions, he also bought fifteenth-century Italian drawings and eighteenth-century French sheets: in 1925, he acquired three drawings by Watteau in one week. The death of Lugt's father-in-law, in 1935, ensured that his family's financial situation was secure and allowed him to continue his research and writing without the constraints of holding an official position. Lugt was among the founders and principal supporters of the Rijksbureau voor Kuntshistorische Documentatie (RKD), the institute devoted to the study of Netherlandish art and artists, established in The Hague in 1930. With the onslaught of World War II, Lugt sent his most important prints and drawings in sixty registered envelopes to Switzerland, where he and his family resided between September 1939 and May 1940. They spent the rest of the war years in Ohio at Oberlin College, and Lugt crisscrossed the country delivering lectures at many institutions, including the Frick Art Reference Library. Having returned to

Europe in 1945, Lugt was eager to establish his collection in an active, urban center, and he chose Paris over The Hague and Haarlem when in 1947 he created the Fondation Custodia in Paris. In 1953, Lugt acquired the Hôtel Turgot at 121, rue de Lille, as a home for his collection, and it was in this building that the Institut Néerlandais was inaugurated by René Coty, the President of the French Republic, and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands in January 1957. The institute was created to serve as the cultural center of the Netherlands in the French capital, and for the next thirteen years, Lugt poured his considerable energy into organizing dozens of exhibitions, writing catalogues, and arranging hundreds of concerts and lectures. After his death, the activities of the Fondation continued unabated, and its collections were extended by his successors, Carlos van Hasselt (1929–2009), who served as director between 1970 and 1994, and Mària van Berge-Gerbaud, the current director.

Today, the Fondation Custodia holds more than 7,000 drawings and 30,000 prints; as well as paintings, books, and artists' letters. This spring, it presented an exhibition of Lugt's French eighteen- and nineteenth century holdings. The works were catalogued by Colin B. Bailey, the Frick's Associate Director and Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator, and the related exhibition (*Watteau to Degas: French Drawings from the Frits Lugt Collection*) made its debut in New York City at that institution (October 6, 2009 through January 10, 2010).

BASIC INFORMATION

General Information Phone: (212) 288-0700

Web site: www.frick.org

E-mail: info@frick.org

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

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: \$18; senior citizens \$12; students \$5; "pay as you wish" on Sundays from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

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

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

72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street; crosstown M72 stopping eastbound on Madison at 70th Street or westbound on Fifth Avenue at 72nd Street or 69th Street

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

Gallery Talks and Education Programs: an array of docent-led discussions and other gallery talks are now offered, many included with admission. Please refer to our website for further information.

Museum 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.

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