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Dutch and Flemish Art, 1600-1700

The art of 17th-century Holland and Flanders (modern Netherlands and Belgium) marks a change with the past. The patronage of a successful mercantile elite in an increasingly republican society lead to the proliferation of art of a more domestic scale and greater diversity. Though history paintings of biblical and mythological subjects continued to be painted, there was a growing interest in the new genres of landscape, still life, and domestic scenes. At times weighted with a moral or symbolic message, these works are often simply about the convincing portrayal of believable reality. They demonstrate painters' abilities to represent accurately the appearance and substance of everyday life and the surrounding environment. Landscape paintings celebrated the beauty and grandeur of the countryside, bringing images of the rural land into the homes of the urban populous. At the same time, foreign trade and colonization expanded artists' consciousness of the world at large; they depicted exotic objects and scenes that displayed the reach and wealth of an adventurous and industrious people.



Jan Steen

Dutch, 1626-1679

***The Rape of the Sabine Women*, c. 1665**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 269

Steen represented the more light-hearted and humorous side of 17th-century Dutch painting in his satirical and moral genre pictures. However, he also painted classical subjects,

the first of which is this work. To secure wives for his people, Romulus, king of Rome, invited the neighboring Sabines to observe games and while the men were engaged, the Romans abducted the Sabine women. Steen's classical figures are taken from prints after works by baroque artists, though they have acquired a jovial irreverence in this translation.



Frans Francken II, and studio

Flemish, 1581-1642, active in Antwerp

***Flemish Cabinet with Scenes from the Old Testament*, c. 1610**

Oil on panel, wood case with ebony and tortoiseshell

Museum purchase, 1974, SN 1950

Painted Flemish cabinets such as this were popular exports from Antwerp throughout Europe. Constructed with ebony and tortoise veneer and decorated with painted doors and lids, the cabinets were used to store jewelry, documents, and other small treasures. Inside the center cupboard is a series of mirrors flanked by gilded columns with an inlaid floor. Biblical or mythological scenes were common for the paintings adorning such cabinets.



David Teniers II
Flemish, 1610-1690

Fiddler in a Tavern, c. 1640
Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 243

David Teniers the Younger was the shining star of a large family of Antwerp painters, and devoted his career to representing the common life of the peasant and the interior

scenes and landscapes that served as backdrops to this genre. His appointment as court painter to Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria, and custodian of the Archduke's art collection, afforded him access to an impressive group of Old Master paintings to study and copy.



Johannes Lingelbach
German, c. 1622-1674

An Imaginary Harbor, 1667
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 272

Early in his career, the German-born Lingelbach traveled to Rome where he joined the group of northern painters known as the *Bamboccianti*. There he

devoted his time to producing the group's trademark naturalistic genre scenes featuring peasants, travelers, and soldiers. This harbor is likely a pastiche of several views compiled from the artist's travels and studies. A statue of Mercury, patron of commerce, dominates the center of the quay, and groups of figures are carefully placed across the fore and middle grounds to animate and balance the pleasing composition.



Frans Post
Dutch, 1612-1680

Rural Landscape in Brazil, 1664
Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 275

Post was the most prominent of the artists who accompanied Count Johan Maurits of Nassau-Siegen, the newly appointed Dutch governor, on his expedition to Brazil from 1637 to 1644. Joined by other painters and

scientists, the young Post recorded various aspects of Brazilian life, including the plants, animals, and natives. Although the Dutch colonies in Brazil were soon lost to the Portuguese, the artist spent the remainder of his career producing the highly popular and exotic views he had seen there.



Adam Pynacker
Dutch, 1620-1673

Landscape with Hunters, c. 1665
Oil on canvas

Museum purchase, 1971, SN 896

Like many landscape painters from Holland, Pynacker traveled to Italy, where he spent three years in Rome and toured the Roman *campagna*. His Italian-inspired depictions of nature are more rustic and wild than his contemporaries though, as Pynacker merged northern terrain with the light and atmosphere of Italy. The artist's wondrous mastery of light and contrast create a dramatic image, taking the viewer from a darkened corner of the woods to the luminescent mountainscape in the distance.



Frans Snyders, and studio
Flemish, 1579-1657, active in Antwerp

Still Life with Dead Game, c. 1625/30
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 234

A student of Pieter Brueghel the Younger and later a close friend of Rubens, Snyders specialized in the still life genre, often depicting the hunt and its spoils. He became the finest animal painter of his day. This large and impressive work is an example of the high level of quality achieved by his workshop in Antwerp. The primary version for the composition is in the Gemäldegalerie, Dresden, and remains one of Snyder's greatest masterpieces.



Jacob Fopsen van Es
Flemish, c. 1596-1666

Still Life with Oysters
Oil on panel

Museum purchase, 1952, SN 661

A popular genre in all the Netherlands, still lifes ranged from simple images of a few objects in modest settings to elaborate presentations of all manner of fine and luscious goods. This panel is typical of the spare still lifes of Van Es. The individual objects have little overlap or visual relationship, imparting a sense of isolation that combined with the overall darkness of the scene, lends a somber air to the painting. At the same time, each element is painted with great attention and sensitivity within a composition that, though stark, is balanced and thoughtful.



Anonymous
Dutch, 17th century

Still Life with Fruit, Flowers and a Lizard, c. 1635
Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 291



Johannes Gerritsz. van Cuylenburch,
attributed
Dutch, active 17th century

A Smithy in Zwolle
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 271

Influenced by a painting by Gerard ter Borch, Van Cuylenburch depicted an ideal of the honest hard-working knife grinder to serve as a model of virtuous conduct. Despite the air of quiet in this carefully observed backyard in the town of Zwolle, chaos is about to break out. The two roosters will soon fight and the dog in the foreground will snarl if anyone comes near its jealously guarded bone. The two buildings in the background are identified as the *Gelderse toren* and the *Luttekepoort*, both part of the double fortification of the city.



Paulus Potter
Dutch, 1625-1654

Cattle Resting in a Landscape, 1645
Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 281



Corenlis Cornelisz. van Haarlem,
follower of
Dutch, 1562-1638, active in Haarlem

The Golden Age
Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 209



Frans Francken II

Flemish, 1581-1642, active in Antwerp

The Triumph of Neptune and Amphitrite,
1631

Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 230



Jan Brueghel the Elder, attributed to
Flemish, 1568-1625

View on the River Scheldt near Antwerp,
c. 1610

Oil on panel

Gift of Jacob Polak, 1963, SN 765



Hendrick van Cleve III, attributed to
Flemish, c. 1525-1589

The Tower of Babel
Oil on panel

Museum purchase, 1968, SN 848



Frans Snyders, attributed to
Flemish, 1579-1657, active in Antwerp

Still Life with Fighting Monkeys, 1630s
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 235



Jan van Kessel
Dutch, 1641-1680, active in Amsterdam

Landscape with a Stag Hunt, 1663
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN279



Jan Looten
Dutch, c. 1618-c. 1681, active in
Amsterdam and England

Hunters in a Forest Landscape, 1650s
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN276