Golden Ages in the Low Countries: Seventeenth-century Painting in the Southern and Northern Netherlands
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Some of the most famous European artists of the seventeenth century practiced their careers in the Low Countries. Rubens and Van Dyck, Rembrandt and Vermeer—these names testify to the importance of Netherlandish artists. In many ways, the art of the seventeenth century in what is modern-day Belgium and The Netherlands forms the beginnings of modern art. Most painters worked for an open art market, secular subject matter became increasingly dominant, and the primary purchasers of paintings and prints formed what can be called the Netherlandish middle classes. We will trace the evolution of new subjects and styles, and investigate the careers of five painters who have come to epitomize the art of this era: Peter Paul Rubens, Anthony van Dyck, Frans Hals, Rembrandt van Rijn, and Johannes Vermeer. All but Vermeer are represented in the collections of the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Oct. 13 Introduction to the Low Countries, and a brief historical survey. Peter Paul Rubens, painter, diplomat, spy, and family man: the greatest painter in Europe around 1630.


Nov. 3 Frans Hals, the great innovator in portraits; the later development of still life and landscape painting—Amsterdam calls.

Nov. 10 Rembrandt van Rijn: painter and printmaker nonpareil.

Nov. 17 Johannes Vermeer, “the Sphinx of Delft,” and genre painting after 1650.