

**A GOLDEN MOMENT FOR THE LEIDEN COLLECTION AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM:
“THE AGE OF REMBRANDT AND VERMEER: MASTERPIECES OF THE LEIDEN COLLECTION”
ATTRACTS MORE THAN 1.15 MILLION VISITORS**

**WORLD TOUR OF THE LEIDEN COLLECTION CONTINUES WITH THE UNVEILING
AT LOUVRE ABU DHABI OF FOUR RECENTLY ACQUIRED REMBRANDTS AND
THE LAUNCH OF AN ENHANCED ONLINE CATALOGUE OF THE COLLECTION**

February 6, 2019—The Leiden Collection is pleased to announce that *The Age of Rembrandt and Vermeer: Masterpieces of The Leiden Collection*, organized in partnership with The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia, has attracted more than one million visitors during its 18-week presentation. In the last two weeks of the exhibition’s run, 97,000 visitors came to see the show, lifting the final total to 1,154,280. This constitutes one of the Hermitage’s most popular exhibitions last year. As an exhibition of paintings, it has also been one of the most—if not the most—well-attended shows in the world last year.

“Having long been captivated by Rembrandt’s ability to ‘touch the soul’, my wife Daphne and I are moved to see the Master reach more than a million people at the Hermitage. For if Amsterdam is Mecca to lovers of Rembrandt, then surely Saint Petersburg has proven anew that it is Medina,” said Dr. Thomas Kaplan, founder of The Leiden Collection. “This milestone truly represents a deeply gratifying public endorsement of the mission of The Leiden Collection—to encourage and facilitate global connection, as well as a global conversation about the enduring humanistic values embodied in these masterpieces from the Dutch Golden Age. We will never forget the extraordinarily warm reception we were given at the Pushkin and Hermitage Museums, and thank the Russian people for reminding us all that the transcendent influence and illuminating insights of Rembrandt continue to inspire artists and touch the public across the globe.”

The Leiden Collection made its public debut at the Musée du Louvre in early 2017. The Collection then travelled to China, where it was enthusiastically received at The National Museum of China in Beijing and The Long Museum in Shanghai before its showing at The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow, and The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg. The next leg of its world tour will take it to Louvre Abu Dhabi with an exhibition opening on February 14, 2019.

Rembrandt, Vermeer & the Dutch Golden Age at Louvre Abu Dhabi will bring together paintings and drawings by Rembrandt van Rijn and his contemporaries, drawn from The Leiden Collection as well as from the Musée du Louvre. The exhibition will explore Rembrandt’s artistic journey in Leiden and Amsterdam and his relationships with rivals, students, and contemporaries, including Jan Lievens, Ferdinand Bol, Carel Fabritius, Gerrit Dou, Frans van Mieris, Frans Hals, and Johannes Vermeer. The show is organized in partnership between Louvre Abu Dhabi, The Leiden Collection, the Musée du Louvre, and Agence France-Muséums.

At Louvre Abu Dhabi, The Leiden Collection will present to the public for the first time four works by Rembrandt that it has acquired since the unveiling of the Collection at the Musée du Louvre in 2017.



Rembrandt, *Portrait of a Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped* (1660)

Portrait of a Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped is the first work from Rembrandt's late career to enter The Leiden Collection, and hence expands its ability to present the full scope of this extraordinary master's career. The painting has a distinguished provenance that reaches back to the important English collector Sir Abraham Hume (1749-1838), and it was first catalogued as by Rembrandt in his collection in 1824. A powerfully expressive portrait of an elderly woman, it was created during a period when Rembrandt's exploration of the human soul had reached an unsurpassed profundity. Rembrandt suggests the aged character of the subject's skin by using vigorous brushstrokes of all types and colors—ochers, pinks, whites. Seated in an armchair with her hands crossed in her lap, the woman is physically at rest, but emotionally and spiritually engaged with her thoughts.

Rembrandt and Workshop, *Man with a Sword* (1644)

Man with a Sword, which Rembrandt signed and dated 1644, was acquired in 2017. Its complex and fascinating history, which was only recently discovered, provides new insights into Rembrandt's workshop practice in the mid-1640s. Technical analysis of the painting, including X-ray and infrared imaging, indicate that a number of compositional changes took place in the depiction of the figure and his costume, transforming the image from a formal portrait to a powerfully engaging representation of a man in historicizing dress. While Rembrandt began this portrait, evident in the figure's smoothly modelled head and hair, and later signed and dated it, he appears to have engaged a student or assistant to guide the second stage of the painting's execution.



Rembrandt, *Portrait of Petronella Buys* (1635)

After being sequestered in a private collection for decades, *Portrait of Petronella Buys* re-emerged in 2017 and was acquired by The Leiden Collection in 2018. Believed to have been commissioned by her brother-in-law, a major patron of Rembrandt's works, the painting was executed in 1635 together with its pendant, Rembrandt's *Portrait of Philip Lucasz*, which hangs in the National Gallery in London. Petronella constitutes a wonderful example of Rembrandt's portraiture during the mid-1630s in Amsterdam, engaging the viewer with a gentle sensibility and self-possessed bearing. While earlier research by the Rembrandt Research Project had suggested that this portrait may have been the work of an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop, new research indicates that Rembrandt painted the work himself, employing smooth confident handling on Petronella's face and an innovative style of bravura brushwork on her ruff and collar.

Rembrandt, *Bust of a Bearded Old Man* (1633)

Long considered one of Rembrandt's greatest gems, this work represents Rembrandt's smallest known painting and the only grisaille by the artist in private hands. Formerly a favorite of the collector Andrew Mellon, The Leiden Collection acquired it in 2018 after a period when it was exhibited publicly only once in two decades. Emanating a jewel-like quality, this monochromatic oil sketch pulsates with life. *Bust of a Bearded Old Man* transcends Rembrandt's earlier depictions of elderly men with its bold execution and its ability to evoke at once a great sense of sensitivity and immediacy. With lips parted and a body seeming to rise with a passing breath, the elderly man occupies a world that is nearly the viewer's own. Rembrandt's vigorous brushstrokes animate the sitter's psychological being and physical presence, making this bust-length image seem far larger than it is in reality.

"These recent acquisitions allow for an extraordinary view into Rembrandt's career at a number of key moments in his artistic development and workshop practice," said Lara Yeager-Crasselt, Curator of The Leiden Collection. "As we share these works with the public through the exhibition at the Louvre Abu Dhabi, and continue to do so through our enhanced and expanded website and online catalogue, we hope that people's understanding of Rembrandt as a fascinating, complex, and deeply human artist will grow richer—and spur new ideas and excitement."

Since its launch in 2017, The Leiden Collection's online catalogue has undergone several major developments in content and digital scholarship, solidifying its standing in the growing world of digital art history. The Collection has made open-access high-resolution images and the presentation of technical imaging (such as X-rays and infrared) available for nearly all of its Rembrandt paintings. In addition, the website now integrates scholarly entries with news and media content about the exhibition during its world tour. The dynamic redesign provides more points of connection across the Collection's activities, and enables users to enter into a larger conversation about the continuing resonance of the Dutch Golden Age.

About The Leiden Collection

The Leiden Collection, founded in 2003 by Dr. Thomas S. Kaplan and his wife Daphne Recanati Kaplan, includes approximately 250 paintings and drawings. It represents the largest and one of the most significant private collections of 17th-century Dutch paintings in the world. The Collection was named after Rembrandt's native town as a tribute to the great Master. Previously anonymous in its lending, the Collection was introduced to the public for the first time in 2017 through a special exhibition at the Louvre and is presently on a world tour that has taken it to China, Russia and soon the United Arab Emirates.

To learn more about the Collection, the public is invited to explore *The Leiden Collection Catalogue* (www.theleidencollection.com). This online scholarly catalogue, edited by Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., is an open-access publication that includes detailed entries on 179 of the Collection's works, biographies of its artists, and essays by leading scholars about seventeenth-century Dutch art.

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Image Captions (Left to Right):

Rembrandt, *Portrait of a Seated Woman with Her Hands Clasped*, c. 1660. Canvas, 77.5 x 64.8 cm. New York, The Leiden Collection

Rembrandt and Workshop, *Man with a Sword*, c. 1644. Canvas, 102.2 x 88.9 cm. New York, The Leiden Collection

Rembrandt, *Portrait of Petronella Buys*, 1635. Panel, 79.5 x 56.3 cm. New York, The Leiden Collection

Rembrandt, *Bust of a Bearded Old Man*, 1633. Panel, 8.9 x 6.4 cm. New York, The Leiden Collection

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