



## THE ART NEWSPAPER

**Johannes Vermeer** // News

# Vermeer blockbuster officially breaks record at Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum

The recently-closed exhibition drew 650,000 visitors in its four month run



Over the course of its five month run, the Vermeer exhibition drew 650,000 visitors

Photo: Rijksmuseum/ Henk Wildschut

**Gareth Harris**

5 June 2023

Share



The blockbuster Johannes Vermeer exhibition at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, which closed on 4 June, drew 650,000 visitors, making it the museum's most visited exhibition. The standard admission fee for the show, which ran for 16 weeks, was €30.

More than half (55%) of visitors came from the Netherlands; visitors also came from France (7.7%), Germany (7.2%), United Kingdom (7.2%), and the United States (6.3%).

The exhibition featured 28 of the 37 works by the Dutch Old Master including *The Milkmaid* and *The Girl With the Pearl Earring*, which was returned to The Hague's Mauritshuis museum in March. Crucially, the Rijksmuseum also upgraded three paintings including *Girl with a Flute* (1664-67 or later) from the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC.

Taco Dibbits, the general director Rijksmuseum, says in a statement: "We wanted the visitors to enjoy it to the fullest. This was only possible by limiting the number of visitors. The Rijksmuseum is grateful for the generous loans from museums around the world that have enabled it to bring together more works by Vermeer than ever before."

“Though it was a logistical miracle to corral three-quarters of Vermeer’s output into one show, 28 is still very few paintings to hang in a large exhibition space. Luckily for us, the curators Gregor J.M. Weber and Pieter Roelofs have kept their nerve and trusted in ‘less is more,’” wrote the novelist Tracy Chevalier in our [Big Review](#).

More than 100,000 copies of the *Vermeer* catalogue, priced at €35, have also been sold, more than any other exhibition catalogue in the history of the Rijksmuseum. Various research projects were also initiated during the exhibition. One such project concluded of *The Milkmaid*: “the can and board visible in the underpainting, but not in the final painting, indicate that Vermeer continued to seek tranquility and the perfect composition during the painting process”, says a project statement.

Although the show is closed, Vermeer fans can still get their fix: from 7 June to 10 October, six paintings by the artist will remain on display in the Gallery of Honour of the Rijksmuseum. *The Girl in the Red Hat* (National Gallery of Art, Washington DC) and *Young Woman at the Virginal* (The Leiden Collection, New York) will go on show alongside works by Vermeer from the Rijksmuseum collection.