

Apollo

Old Masters, New Amsterdam

24 APRIL 2026

Young Woman Feeding a Parrot (1663; detail), Frans van Mieris. Leiden Collection, New York. Courtesy Leiden Collection



This year the United States celebrates its semiquincentennial, but it is also 400 years since the Dutch founded New Amsterdam on the island of Manhattan. To mark the occasion, the New York Historical is putting on an exhibition that explores what life in the settlement might have looked like before the English captured it and renamed it New York some 50 years later (1 May–30 August). The Old Masters on display – 45 of which come from the Leiden Collection, owned by the investor and philanthropist Thomas S. Kaplan and his wife, Daphne Recanati Kaplan – were made in the Low Countries rather than in America, but they give a sense of the material culture that travelled across the Atlantic in the 17th century. Visitors are greeted by Jan Steen's rambunctious *Peasants Merrymaking Outside an Inn* (c. 1676) and continue through six sections organised by themes including domestic life, work, food and drink and recreation. Much of this is light-hearted, but one section makes clear how the lives of settlers relied on slavery and the oppression of Indigenous people, too.

*Peasants Merry-making
Outside an Inn (c. 1676), Jan
Steen. Leiden Collection, New
York. Courtesy Leiden
Collection*



*Man with a Fur-Trimmed Hat (c.
1646–48), Ferdinand Bol. Leiden
Collection, New York. Courtesy
Leiden Collection*





Young Woman Feeding a Parrot
(1663), Frans van Mieris. Leiden
Collection, New York. Courtesy
Leiden Collection