

## An Artistic Tour of Holland c. 1500-1700, II: Dordrecht

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This is the second of six documents based on my PowerPoint presentations on the arts in The Hague, Dordrecht, Delft, Leiden, Haarlem and Amsterdam during the late medieval and early modern period, which I prepared for my class, *An Artistic Tour of Holland, 1200-1700*, and offered through the Second Half Life-Long Learning Institute in Southeastern Massachusetts.

Dutch Art of its Golden Age (late 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries) is usually presented as a coherent and unique art tradition that was a product of the new bourgeois culture that dominated the United Provinces, better known in English as the Dutch Republic. One of the chief characteristics of the art of the Northern Netherlands, especially in the seventeenth century, was its focus on depicting contemporary life. This was a result of its patrons, who chiefly consisted of members of the manufacturing, commercial and administrative elite, the city regents and ordinary middle class consumers. The Dutch Republic was the most urban society in Europe and its urban elite dominated political power in its cities, its most urban provinces and in the Republic as a whole. They managed to free themselves from the personal rule of a monarch, the aristocracy and traditional religion. At the same time, the old aristocratic, religious, cultural and military values retained a strong influence and appealed even to some of those whose wealth came from trade and industry. Dutch art in its Golden Age was far from unified and can best be understood by examining it through the context of the history and traditions of its most important cities. Although Dutch cities were not very far apart, and the Republic's efficient transportation system made travel inexpensive, safe, and fast, the work of its famous artists was rooted in the patronage of their home town. Research has shown that at least sixty percent of art produced by artists in a particular town was bought by their fellow citizens.

The idea for the course and its chief source is Elizabeth de Bièvre, *Dutch Art and Urban Cultures, 1200-1700* (2015). Other useful sources are listed in the first document of An Artistic Tour of Holland c. 1500-1700 on The Hague.

# Dordrecht



## Topographic map of Dordrecht 2014



## Kingdom of the Netherlands



Relief map of Europe



Dordrecht is on the same river delta as Rotterdam and during the late medieval period was the most important port in the region that provided access to France and Germany via the Rhine and the Maas and their tributaries.

## The Netherlands in 1250



The map shows the loss of land from 800 to 1250 in the southwest and northwest. Dordrecht is on the Merwede, a tributary of the Rhine. Much of this land was later reclaimed.

Color labels: Jonge Duinen--young dunes; Oude Duinen--old Dunes; Dijken--dikes; Niet aangelsloten dijken--unconnected dikes; Binnendijksland--land enclosed by dikes; Zout water--salt water; Zoet water--sweet water; Landaanwinning--recovered land; Moerassigland--marshland; Huidige kustlijn--current coastline.

George Braun and Frans Hogenberg, 1581, *Civitates Orbis Terrarum III*



© Historic Cities Research Project. Courtesy of Ozgur Tufekci

Human habitation began in the Dordrecht area around 1000 at the junction of the Rhine, Scheldt and Maas. As the Rhine came down to the sea it acquired different names, first the Waal and then the Merwede. Dordrecht developed on an island along the bank of the Merwede where it joined the Maas (now called the Old Maas) and two other streams. The counts of Holland realized that the location offered water access to Zeeland, Antwerp, England, France, the German Empire, Friesland, and Scandinavia. Dordrecht was part of a larger administrative district called the Island of Dordrecht or the Grote Waard.

The name Dordrecht comes from *Thuredriht* (circa 1120), *Thuredrecht* (circa 1200). The name seems to mean 'thoroughfare'; a ship-canal or -river through which ships were pulled by rope from one river to another, as from the Dubbel to the Merwede, or vice versa. Earlier etymologists had assumed that the 'drecht' suffix came from Latin 'trajectum', a ford, but this was rejected in 1996. It is now thought that the Drecht comes from 'draeg', which means to pull, tow or drag. Inhabitants of Dordrecht are *Dordtenaren* (singular: *Dordtenaar*). Dordrecht is informally called *Dordt* by its inhabitants. In earlier centuries, Dordrecht was a major trade port, well known to British merchants, and was called Dort in English.

Master of St. Elizabeth, *Altarpiece of the St. Elizabeth's Flood in Dordrecht and Surroundings*,  
ca. 1490. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



These are the outer panels of an altarpiece.

On the night of November 21, 1421, the feast-day of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, a storm flooded a large part of South Holland. Twenty-three villages were flooded and over 2000 people drowned. Dordrecht was spared but much of the land to the south and east of the city remained underwater until it was drained in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The geology of the region consisted of sea shells covered with clay from the rivers. The calcium produced rich meadows ideal for livestock sheep, pigs, horses, and cattle. A 17<sup>th</sup> century historian argued that the etymology of Merwede derives from *mer* or *merrie*, meaning male horse, and *wede*, *wei*, or *weide*, is Dutch for meadow. There is a much illustrated 14<sup>th</sup> century story about a man who stole a fat cow. He was caught by the sheriff of Dordrecht and taken to the count of Holland who judged and sentenced him on the spot. Cuyp's paintings of cows thus followed a long local tradition.

Adriaen van de Venne, frontispiece to Jacob van de Eyck, *Corte Beschryvinghe . . . Zuid Holland*, 1628



The middle ground shows a huge duck hunting device. In the foreground are two weathered men, one with fishing gear and the other with agricultural implements. On the other side stands a warrior in an old fashioned costume. The illustration sums up the trade, fishing, and agricultural interests as well the historical pre-eminence in Zuid (South) Holland.

Although the *Annals of Egmond Abbey* (1120) mentions that Dirk IV, Count of Holland, was murdered in Dordrecht in 1049, the earliest document that mentions the citizens of

Dordrecht was a privilege of 1200 granted by Dirk VII to members of the Taylors Guild, stating that they were the only ones allowed to sell cloth in the town.

The actual town charter dates from 1220. Dordrecht was the oldest town in Holland and guarded its privileges carefully. It was the administrative center of Zuid Holland. Its Latin School, founded in 1253, was the oldest in Holland. A Town Library was established in 1616 was open to the public. It was endowed by local notables, including Cornelis van Beveren. Among Dordrecht's distinguished writers were Samuel van Hoogstraten and Arnold Houbraken, two important early modern art historians, and the popular humanist writer Jacob Cats.

Otten van de Laen, *The Siege of Dordrecht*, c. 1490, Dordrecht Town Hall



The siege took place in 1418. The conflict was between Jacoba of Bavaria and her uncle, Jan VI of Bavaria, over control of Holland. The siege was part of a longer civil conflict between the Hoekse and Kabeljauwse (Hooks and Cods) in the province.

The Toll tower can be seen on the right. In 1299 the Count of Holland granted staple rights to Dordrecht. This consisted of the town's right to market and buy and sell the goods transported on the Merwede, the Lek, the Waal, the Maas and the IJssel. Dordrecht merchants supplied such key goods as wine, wood, iron, lime, marble, coal, grains and beans. The city's staple rights were attacked by other Holland towns and as late as 1541 were protected by Charles V

Aelbert Cuyp, *Huis te Merwede*, c. 1650, Earl of Yarborough, Brockelsby Hall



Huis te Merwede was the largest castle in the area. It was built by the Lords of Merwede in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century. It was used as a headquarters in the siege of Dordrecht in 1418 and was destroyed by the town's people after they defeated the besiegers. The ruin remained a prominent site in the approach to Dordrecht from the east. An archeological dig was done in the mid-twentieth century and it is today in a marshy preserve near an industrial site.

We only know of two ice scene paintings by Cuyp. His combination of brilliant warm light in a winter scene was unique. The reflection of light on the ice from an unseen low sun was innovative. The reflection of light on the ice from an unseen low sun was innovative. The horse on the right is partly lit from below. A low perspective is here combined with the strong vertical of the ruin. The jaunty nearby skater provides a festive atmosphere. A crowd has gathered around the food tent flying a Dutch flag. This Koekenzoopte is well stocked with beer. One of the barrels is marked with a swan, a Dordrecht brewery. Jan van Goyen painted many ice scenes around Dordrecht in the 1640s'

*Merwede House*



*Huis te Merwede-Archeological Reconstruction*



*Dordrecht Town Seal*



The Toll Tower became a symbol of the city. In 1339 it appeared on the town seal. The inscription is *Sigillum Oppidanarum in Durdrecht*, Seal of the Citizens of Dordrecht.

Originally the count had the right to appoint the Schout (sheriff) and nine schepenen (aldermen) but by the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century the town selected these and had become legally independent. Executive and administrative authority passed to the burgomaster, who was selected by a council of notables. The town's Grand Pensionary, who was the town's legal advisor, was also Dordrecht's representative to the States of Holland. The town's twelve guilds had their own council, which participated in the selection of the burgomaster and supervised the Guild regulations. Guild rights often produced tensions between the Guilds and town government, which as late as 1647 led the town council to request military help from the province to restore order. In 1283 Dordrecht was presented with the right to mint coins for Holland. The city also housed legal and administrative offices for Zuid-Holland and the all-important *dijkgraaf* (dike master) for the region. Dordrecht's economic and political privileges resulted in the existence of a substantial middle and upper middleclass population with a relatively conservative outlook.

*Dordrecht Groot Hoofdspoor, ca. 1325,*



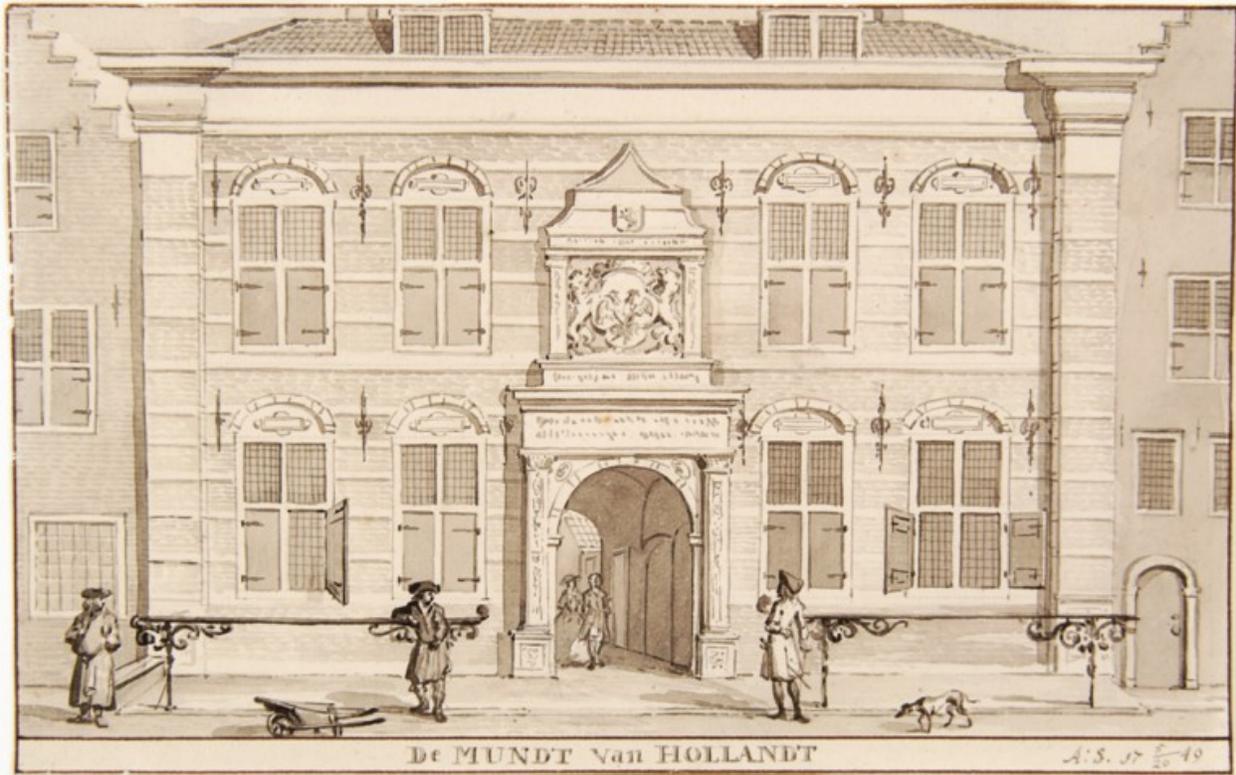
The facade is from 1618 and the little tower was added in 1692.

*Dordrecht Groot Hoofdspoor, detail*



The Dordrecht Maiden is sitting in the Garden of Holland, by Gillis Huppe, 16th century, The iconography of a virgin in a sitting in a walled garden was also used by the Province of Holland. She is surrounded by 15 city shields of cities, which rebelled during the eighty-years war against Spanish rule. From top right, the shields are of Holland towns, Monnickendam, Enkhuizen, Asperen, Heusden, Schiedam, Vlaerdingen, Geertruidenberg, Schoonhoven, Hoorn, Weesp, Leerdam, Naarden, Muiden, Medemblik, and Grootebroek.

*The Munt van Holland, 1749 print*



*Munt Entrance, Dordrecht*

Hosting Holland's mint was a privilege granted by the Count of Holland to Dordrecht. It was first mentioned in a document of 1282 and reaffirmed in 1367. It was an important asset for the city since its gold and silver stores needed to be defended and it provided both prestige and skilled employment. By the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century it had grown to a complex with 27 hearths.

*Holland Munt Entrance*



In 1555, the year Charles V retired, a monumental classical style entrance was added. The Emperor's profile, similar to the Imperial coinage, was chiseled on its medallions.

*Holland Munt, Dordrecht*



Joan Blauwe, *Map of Dordrecht*, (northwest on top), *Atlas van Loon*, 1649



This map shows the seventeenth century expansion of Dordrecht with new town quarters, harbors and town buildings.

*Grote Kerk, Dordrecht*

The original parish church, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. As the only stone vaulted church in Holland, it demonstrated the ambitions of Dordrecht. It is in the Brabant Gothic style. The north choir was constructed in 1285, somewhat later than the toll tower. The present church tower was started in 1340 and overshadowed the toll tower. In 1366 Duke Albrecht of Bavaria established a chapter of twelve canons in the Grote Kerk. Early in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the church acquired a fragment of the Holy Cross and it became a pilgrimage site. In 1457 a large fire destroyed the church, including the reliquary, but legend has it that the fragment miraculously survived, thus confirming its importance.

*Choir Stalls, 1538-42, Grote Kerk, Dordrecht.*



The choir stalls were rebuilt when Charles V celebrated his festive entry into Dordrecht. He commissioned the famous wood carver, Jan Terwen, to produce classical images to memorialize the Hapsburg bringing a Roman system of law and codified administrative regulations to the Low Countries. The frieze shows the victory parade of the Roman military aristocrat Mucius Scaevola, who proved his loyalty to the Roman Emperor by placing his hand in fire, a reference to Dordrecht's miracle of the true cross relic.

On the south side, the stalls show the triumphant procession of Jesus. From left to right are Eve, Adam, Noah with the Ark of the Covenant, Moses with the Tables of the Law, and the Aborted Sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham.

The Church interior was badly damaged during the Beeldenstorm and it became a Calvinist Church during the Republic

*Choir Stalls, Detail, Grote Kerk, 1538-42, Dordrecht*



*Misericord, Grote Kerk, 1538-1542, Dordrecht*



*Het Hof, Dordrecht*

In 1275 the Augustinians built a large monastery in Dordrecht. The monks did not only provide religious services but also offered education. Their abbey became famous in 1572 when twelve cities, led by Dordrecht, swore allegiance to William of Orange in the revolt against Spain. The delegates used the Statenzaal and the Princes of Orange continued to use it for many important meetings. The city bought the deteriorated building in 1835, used it as a school for a period, and restored it in the early 1970s. It now holds the Dordrecht regional archives and is used for cultural events.

Jacob Gerritsz Bornwater, *Crucifixion*, 1554, Dordrechts Museum



This old fashioned painter received a commission from the Augustinian monastery to produce this large painting. It remained in the building after the Alteration (when the state took Catholic Church property in the 1570s) despite its new function.

Frederik Börjes, *Kloveniersdoelent te Dordrecht*, 1858, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



The building was originally constructed in the 1530s and razed in 1857.

The first Militia was formed in Dordrecht in 1326 when the town became responsible for its own defense. Militia organizations started out as religious fraternities and had ties to the guilds.

*Doelen* were their practice fields and buildings. Originally they used crossbows. By the early 15<sup>th</sup> century they were joined by a longbow militia and by the 16<sup>th</sup> century they were using muskets and became known as Kloveniers (Arquebusiers). During the reign of Charles V, they built an elaborate complex in Dordrecht. The militias played an important role during this period because of raids from Maarten Rossum of Gelderland in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Fifty years later they played another important role by opening the city gates to the *Geuzen* who were critical early rebels in the early days of the revolt against the Spanish king. The first Protestant service in Dordrecht was held under an old lime tree on the Doelen field in 1572. This connected Christian ritual to ancient tree veneration in Northern Europe with the independence of Dordrecht and Holland.

Pauwels Weyts the Younger, *Synod of Dordrecht*, 1621, Dordrecht Museum



The Calvinist Synod of Dordrecht was held in the upstairs hall of the Kloveniersdoelen in 1618-19. The National Synod put an official end to the theological conflict between the Remonstrants and Anti-Remonstrants. The Conservatives won and forced the liberals, also known as Arminians, led by Jacobus Arminius, to submit to their views or leave the official Reformed Church. The States General agreed to support a new official translation of the Bible, known as the Staten Bijbel, which was completed in 1637.

Serious theological discussions helped develop Dordrecht's printing industry and perhaps explains why history paintings of religious subjects remained at about one-third of all paintings produced in Dordrecht according to inventories from 1620 and 1629. During the next twenty years the percentage went down only slowly in favor of portraits. It was not until 1660s that the largest category of paintings became landscapes, especially local works by Aelbert Cuyp.

*Stadhuis, Dordrecht*



Social unrest in Bruges and Ghent saw Flemish textile merchants move to Dordrecht in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In 1383 they built a Flemish Cloth Hall. In 1544 it became the Town Hall and received a new façade and steps with lions. The building is now used for ceremonies and weddings.

William Adriaenz Key, *The Last Supper*, 1550-60, Dordrechts Museum



After the Alteration, many paintings in churches were removed from churches after the *beeldenstorm* to serve a secular purpose. This one was moved to the Dordrecht town hall to serve as an exemplary council meeting.

Christiaan van Couwenbergh, *Samson and Delila*, 1630, Dordrechts Museum



This picture was commissioned by the town council to remind officials in a visual way about the dangers of seduction.

*Arend Maaratensz Hof Poort, Dordrecht, early 17<sup>th</sup> century*



Arend was the illegitimate son of a priest. He was legitimized by the States of Holland in 1596. He served as a clerk in the domain of Zuid-Holland and later worked as a town clerk. At the same time, he also worked as a private banker, lending money at very high interest rates. He made one of the largest fortunes in Dordrecht in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and was taxed in 1627 on capital of 325,000 *guldens*. In 1606 and 1608 he was excluded from the Last Supper by Reformed Church elders because of his high interest charges. He managed to redeem himself by constructing a complex of 38 almshouses and an endowment to support needy old and young women, with or without children, including military widows. On the entrance gate he announced that “*Naeckt com ick, neackt scheijde ik (Naked I am born, and naked I die).*” His coat of arms, which he acquired when he purchased Oost Barendrecht and became a Lord, was carried by two old women with the inscription that stated that old women should behave as if they were saints.

Arnold Houbraken *Arend Maaratensz* portraits, 1701



Arend Maartensz became respectable enough so that his daughter, Alida, married into the distinguished Van Beveren family. In the Regent room of *Maaratensz hof* are portraits of Arend, his three wives, his daughter and her husband Cornelis van Beveren and their four children, all of whom married into distinguished Dordrecht families.

*Arend Maaratensz hof* today, Dordrecht



Cornelis Bisschop, *The Regents of the Holy Sacrament's Hospital*, 1672, Dordrecht Museum



These are both the male and female Regents of this charitable institution in their expensive clothes. As an example of their good works, there is a barely visible image of a poor old man in the lower right-hand side.

Art Schouman, *A View of the Wijnstraat, Dordrecht*, 1745



In the late middle ages, it was wine that created the most wealth in Dordrecht. The city had the staple rights for the light white wines from Germany and what is now northeastern France.

Middleburgh had the rights to French and Spanish wines. Merchants imported the raw wine and stabilized it in locally made wooden barrels for about a year. The wine merchants lived on the most stable land and this allowed them to build substantial stone and brick houses with large cellars for wine storage. The trade was carefully regulated and the opening of new casks was a cause for celebration in the town. The houses were narrow and tall, as can be seen in this painting.

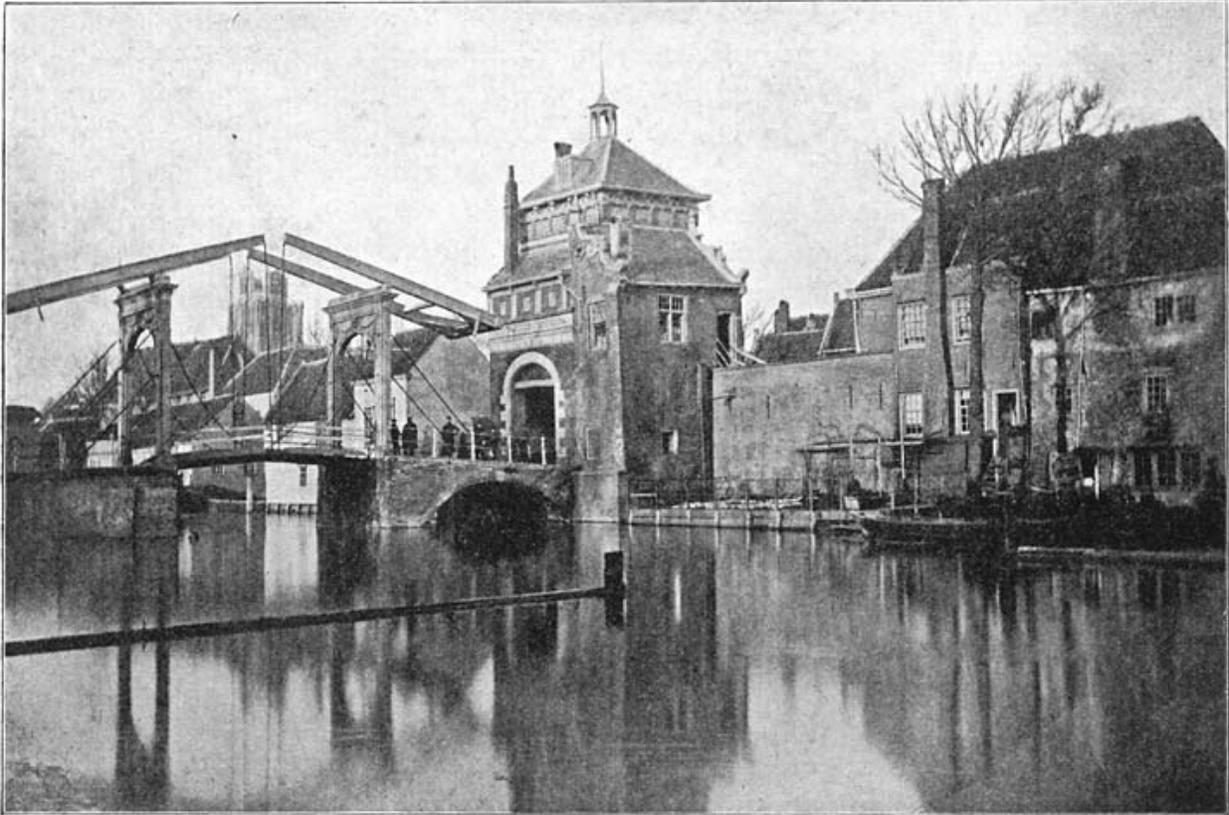
*Beverburgh, Wijnstraat, Dordrecht, 1556*



*Rietdijkspoort, 1589, Dordrecht*

During the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, wealthy investors in Dordrecht reclaimed the land that had been lost in the St. Elizabeth flood. These new polders contained rich agricultural land right outside of the city. The area became famous for breeding excellent cows and horses on its lush meadows, which led to the growth of a large scale dairy industry that exported its products.

*Spuipoort, 1608, Dordrecht*



Adam Willaerst, *View of Dordrecht*, 1629, Dordrecht Museum



The last major expansion of Dordrecht during the 17<sup>th</sup> century was during the period of the National Synod. This was when the Groothoofd Poort was restored and redeccorated. It was the water gate and was located at the most strategic point in the city where the three rivers come together.

As an entrepôt, or staplepoort, Dordrecht had an exclusive right to import English wool and woolen goods and thus the town merchants focused on trade rather than developing the town as a manufacturing center, such as Leiden or Haarlem. It did have sizable shipbuilding, ship repair, weapons, lime burning and fishing industries. These industries can be seen in the painting.

Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of Maria Trip*, 1639, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



The Trip family became one of the richest families in the Dutch Republic. Maria Trip, a daughter of Elias Trip, married Balthasar Coymans, Lord of Streefkerk, who was thirty years older and one of the richest men in Amsterdam. The merchant Elias Trip established himself in Dordrecht in 1590 and married Margaretha Greer from Liège, which connected him to its iron and weapons industry. He imported salt from Zeeland and shipped it to the Ardennes from where he brought back iron and weapons. Their sons, Elias and Jacob moved to Amsterdam and developed a large arms industry for both themselves and the Greer family based on trade with Scandinavia, West Africa, North America and Japan. The Trip family became one of the richest families in the Dutch Republic.



Gerrit Gerritsz Cuyp, *Dordrecht Maiden in the Garden of Holland*, c. 1600, St. Janskerk, Gouda



Gerrit Gerritsz Cuyp was born in Venlo in about 1565 and died in 1644 in Dordrecht. He moved as a glazier to Dordrecht in 1585. He was married five times and had 11 children, including the painter Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, and was the grandfather of Aelbert Cuyp. He became a master glazier in Dordrecht and received many commissions from the city council. This window, which was commissioned by Dordrecht as a gift to St. Janskerk in Gouda, has survived. The subject of the painting was the Maiden of Gouda. The city council must have been pleased with the design since they also used it on Dordrecht's Groothoofd Poort in 1618.

Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, *Portrait of Maria Stricke van Scharlaken*, 1650, Private Collection



Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp (1594-1652) trained with Abraham Bloemaert in Utrecht, a famous painter of religious subjects. He painted many half-portraits of local upper class residents that included a bucolic country element. He trained a whole generation of art students in Dordrecht, including his half-brother, Benjamin Cuyp, Paulus Lesire and probably also Ferdinand Bol. He played a key role in the establishment of the Guild of St. Luke in Dordrecht in 1642. Many of these artists left for Amsterdam where some were employed by the Trips and Witts families who had moved there.

Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, *Two Children with a Lamb*, 1638, Walraff-Richartz Museum, Cologne



He painted many of these Arcadian pictures with lambs and placid cattle.

Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, *Grape-Grower with Winemaking in the Background*, 1628, Hermitage, St. Petersburg



Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, *Fishstall*, 1627, Dordrechts Museum



This is an early example of a market scene on a grand scale. The scene is set against the Groothoofds Poort where the fish-stalls were found.

Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, *The Young Michiel Pompe van Slingelandt with a Falcon and Dog*, 1649, Dordrechts Museum



The background of a village reminds the viewer of the many agricultural interests of the family's many agricultural domains. The young boy's pretense to aristocratic status is suggested by the falcon, symbol of courtly hunting, his sword and his hunting dog. The elegant, colorful and luxurious custom is a striking contrast with the normal sober clothes by a Dordrecht upper class boy.

Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, *Portrait of a Family in a Landscape*, 1641, Israel Museum



The wealthy upper class monopoly on political power in Dordrecht came under serious threat from the local guilds during the 1640s. In 1647 there were demonstrations that accused the ruling burgomasters, Cornelis van Beveren and Jacob de Witt of nepotism and corruption, and, above all, for their exclusion of guild representatives from government. The issue was taken to The Hague for arbitration and the guilds were reprimanded for their behavior. At the same time, Jacob de Witt opposed the military plans of Stadholder William II. Although he was imprisoned for this in 1650, he set the example of how a Dordrecht wealthy regent could oppose the Stadholder. His sons Johan and Cornelis learned from their father's example, and for twenty years following the death of William II they ruled the country without an Orange Stadholder. During this period all army officers who had earlier sworn an oath of allegiance to the Prince of Orange were dismissed and replaced with "the Sons, or Kinsmen, of Burgomasters, and other Officers and Deputies in the State, which esteemed sure to the Constitutions of the Popular Government, and good enough for an Age, where they saw no appearance of Enemy at Land to attack them." The Dordrecht bourgeois upper class was in the process of creating a local gentry that surrounded itself with horses, hunting, fancy clothes, and paintings of themselves.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Avenue at Meerdervoort*, 1650, Wallace Collection, London



Aelbert Cuyp (1620-91) was the most important Dordrecht painter in the city where he lived his entire life and by the 1670s his pictures were the most listed inventories in the city. Regarded as one of the finest landscape painters of the seventeenth century, Cuyp began his career by painting tonal landscapes in the manner of Jan van Goyen and incorporated views of his native town of Dordrecht into his paintings. Around 1645, he began to assimilate the atmospheric light of the Dutch painters who had visited Italy, particularly Jan Both

In *The Avenue at Meerdervoort* the artist presents an evening view looking across the Merwede River with sailing ships, with the small castle of Meerdervoort on the left and a distant view of Dordrecht on the right with the Groot Kerk. This composition is an unusual combination of urban view and rural landscape, bisected by a central avenue which leads the viewer's gaze into the picture. The composition, colour and finish suggest that it was painted in the early 1650s, which makes it one of Cuyp's earliest seigneurial subjects.

It was probably commissioned by Cornelis van Beveren (1591-1663), who later added the name Meerdervoort to his surname. The picture remained in the Van Meerdervoort family until 1806. The castle was bought by Pieter Pompe when he settled in Dordrecht in about 1600. With the house came the seigneurial title of Heer (Lord) of Meerdervoort and the right to add its symbol to the family coat of arms. He gave the castle and the title to his son. When Michiel

Pompe was honored for diplomatic service by the English king, he was allowed to add the Rose to his shield. In 1637 the successful son married Adriana van Beveren, the daughter of one of the oldest noble families of Dordrecht. Michiel died in 1639.

In the Meerdervoort painting, the rustic avenue is a setting in which the subjects play out their dynastic roles. In the foreground a shaft of low sunlight shows an adolescent dressed in a red coat. He leads two ponies. The scale of the figures is small compared to the trees. The woman in the back with two small boys is in the center of the painting. She is Adtana Pompe with her two young sons who were eleven and twelve at the time.

The family motto of the Beverens was *Per Mare, Per Terram*, By Sea and by Land. The *Avenue* picture combines sea and land. Cornelis van Beveren was a legal specialist who served as an ambassador to England, Denmark, and France. On land he had Lordship over country holdings and served as Burgomaster of Dordrecht and held various government positions in Zuyd-Holland. He had an interest in history and poetry and was elected curator at the University of Leiden and at the local Latin School and library.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Lady and Gentleman on Horseback*, c. 1655, National Gallery of Art, Washington



This large double portrait on horseback is unusual in Dutch art, because equestrian likenesses were traditionally reserved for sitting princes and monarchs. Traditional portrait

convention would have placed the woman to the left and slightly behind the man, yet this elegant lady on her magnificent steed occupies center stage. There is a dispute about the identity of the subjects but De Bièvre argues that the brass star on the man's horse refers to the Pompe family shield and that the date and style of the picture fits with Cornelis Pompe's marriage in 1662 to his cousin Alida van Beverian. Cornelius followed his grandfather's adulation of the family by paying for a chapel with Corinthian columns in the Grote Kerk in Dordrecht. He placed this Bible phrase on the frieze: "Our life is like a river, which streams towards the sea of death." The family connection with land and sea thus continued into eternity.

About half of Cuyp's paintings were of Dordrecht and the surrounding countryside. He was known for his equestrian paintings with the rich in fancy clothes but he also painted many pictures of cows in the countryside and ships in or around Dordrecht. Several well-known Dordrecht painters-- Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-78), Nicolaes Maas (1634-93). and Aert de Gelder (1645-1727) -- came back to city in later years after spending time elsewhere.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Starting for the Hunt*, c. 1652-53, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



The identity of the young and mature men in the foreground of the *Avenue at Meerdervoort* can be learned from identified from an inventory. The young men are Cornelis and Michiel Pompe. Cornelis, the older one, died in 1653. The man on the dappled grey is the tutor. He is shown in a less central position. The servant holding the hunting dogs brings out the higher status of the

riders. The painting demonstrates the family's dynastic importance by showing their ties to an ancient nobility, the countryside, and the new wealth of Dordrecht's trade, shipping and fishing industries.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Huntsmen Halted*, c. 1653, Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham



Cornelis van Beveren, Adriane van Pompe's father, probably commissioned this painting of his three sons, their splendid horses and a black boy who holds the dogs against a background of a ruined castle, a symbol of aristocratic aspirations, while the black boy suggests wealth from international trade. The fleur-de-lys on the saddle cloth of the nearest horse was the symbol of the title Chevalier de l'Order de la Collade was given to the elder Cornelis by Louis XIII for his service to France in the 1630s. In the 1650s, Cornelis' painting commission was meant to insure the continuation of his family's role in history. Although his wife bore ten children, mortality was high. Three died in infancy and his youngest son died at seventeen. The painting of his daughter's two sons suggests that they were important to his family's continuation. Dordrecht was known as a center of horse breeding. Hunting and fine horses were associated with both the aristocracy and wealthy merchants while tutors were hired to provide their children with an education. Young men were expected to learn how to control their animal passions while dominating those of his horse.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Equestrian Portrait of Pieter de Roover as Lord of Hardinxveld*, c. 1645-50, Royal Picture Gallery, The Hague



Aelbert Cuyp was not only influenced by his father's style but also inherited his wealthy patrons. De Roover is high on his horse in a fanciful cavalry officer costume. De Roover can be identified by his coat of arms on the horse's harness. Two of his stately houses are in the background on the river bank. A fisherman approaches him with a salmon. His mother was a Pompe and he succeeded his father as Lord of Hardinxveld and bailiff of South Holland. His most important income was the salmon fishery.

According to Arnold Houbraken in 1718, a famous Dutch art historian, Aelbert Cuyp grew up on the prestigious *Voorstraat* in a "fine little house." After his apprenticeship with his father, he took at least three study trips, the first to Utrecht in 1640-41 and along the Rhine into hilly Gelderland, the second in 1646 through the dunes along the Dutch coast, and the third in about 1652 further up the Rhine into the mountains around Cleve and Kalkar. He used his sketches for his paintings but he mostly found his inspiration in Zuid Holland.

In 1658 at the age of 38 he married a local socially well connected and rich woman and his painting career almost ceased. In 1663 he moved into a larger house in the prestigious

*Wijnstraat*. Even though Cuyp enjoyed considerable success as a painter, he seems to have painted less frequently in the waning years of his life. During the 1660s and 1670s, he was also active as deacon and elder of the Reformed Church, regent of the sick house of the Grote Kerk in Dordrecht, and member of the High Court of Holland. When he died, he was one of the wealthiest men in Dordrecht.

No drawings or paintings by other masters were found in his house after his death. Houbraken, who knew Cuyp personally, argued that he painted exclusively from his own sketches and nature. He noted that Aelbert was a more precise and finer painter than his father. He painted a wide range of subjects, including “oxen, cows, sheep, horses, fruit, landscapes, [and] calm water with ships. All equally beautiful and natural taking into account the hours of the day when he painted his subjects, so that one could differentiate distinctly between the hazy morning or clear afternoon or saffron-colored evening hours.”

Note the wood in the river turned into gold by the sun, a reference to Dordrecht’s monopoly to import wood from Germany. On the left is an impressive trading ship gilded by the afternoon light. Some recent art historians have called Cuyp’s golden light in his river and harbor scenes as Italianate but earlier critics recognized that they reflected the light and wealth of Dordrecht.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Dordrecht viewed from the North with the Grote Kerk and the Hoofdspoor*, black chalk, gray wash, 1647, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



Cuyp filled numerous sketchbooks with panoramic views, often with distant city profiles silhouetted against the horizon, depictions of villages nestled along inland waterways, and detailed studies of figures, animals, or plants. Many of these drawings are remarkable for their painterly qualities, which Cuyp evoked using colored washes and gum arabic, a varnish-like medium that heightens the intensity of the foreground landscape elements. While the careful finish suggests that this drawing was an independent work of art, Cuyp may also have used it as

a model for one of his paintings, which often combine motifs from different drawings. Cuyp most likely painted in his studio, a common practice at the time, rather than directly from nature

Aelbert Cuyp, *Dordrecht Sunrise*, 1650, Frick Collection, New York



Cuyp has been praised as a painterly painter who is remembered for his ephemeral use of light. You can watch the sun rise hazily in the east over the Groothoofds Poort in *Dordrecht* in his paintings, watch it reflected in the rivers during the day and set in the evening,

Aelbert Cuyp, *View of Dordrecht from the Maas*, c. 1652, Kenwood House, London



Aelbert Cuyp, *View of the Maas at Dordrecht*, 1645-46, Getty Museum



Aelbert Cuyp, *The Maas at Dordrecht in a Storm*, 1648-50, National Gallery, London



Aelbert Cuyp, *The Maas at Dordrecht, early 1650s, National Gallery, Washington*



His focus here is on the large numbers of ships, which gathered here in July 1646 with 30,000 soldiers. The fleet was to set sail from here along inland waterways to Berg op Zoom in a last show of force before the peace negotiations in Münster that finally brought an end to the eighty-years war. The campaign never took place but Cuyp recorded the excitement of anticipation. The city is obscured behind the huge flotilla with red, white and blue flags flying in the wind and a dramatic cloud in the sky. The focus is on the large transport, a *pleyt*, filled to capacity with soldiers. The boat approaching with the standing officer wearing red and white sash, the city's colors. This could be Matthijs Pompe van Slingeland, who at the age of 25 was already a city magistrate and married the daughter of the burgomaster, Cornelis van Beveren. He probably commissioned the painting.

Aelbert Cuyp, *A Landing Party on the Maas at Dordrecht*, early 1650s, The Rothschild Collection, Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire



This is a pendant to the painting above. Together these paintings depict a continuous panoramic of this impressive gathering of ships. It has been proposed that Frederick Hendrik is among the distinguished individuals being transported to the awaiting ship.

Aelbert Cuyp, *VOC Senior Merchant*, c. 1640-60, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



The scene is the harbor in Batavia, the headquarters of the VOC, the Dutch East India Company, in Asia. The figure on the left is probably Jacob Martensen, a VOC merchant. His wife is next to him. The figure behind them is a slave holding a *pajong* over their heads, a status symbol in Javanese culture. The merchant points to his ship at anchor, which is ready to set sail for the Netherlands. Batavia Castle can be seen in the background. The Indonesian setting of the painting is quite unusual for Cuyp but the social situation and harbor view was typical of his work.

Aelbert Cuyp, *River Landscape with Cattle*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.



The sense of wellbeing pervades a great number of Cuyp's rural pictures and suggests the keen appreciation for country life in Cuyp's day. Not only were an increasing number of country houses built around midcentury, but the pleasures of country life were also frequently celebrated in so-called *hofdicht* or country house poems. They, like Cuyp's pictures, evoke the spiritual nourishment to be found in nature.

The Dutch countryside was fertile and its inhabitants were able to stretch its limits, using dikes and windmills to gain new land. They attributed their prosperity to God's blessing and compared themselves to the ancient Israelites, God's chosen people. According to William Temple, a seventeenth-century English traveler, the Dutch even called their country *vaderland* (fatherland), a term otherwise reserved exclusively for the Holy Land, the destination of every Christian pilgrim. Cuyp appears to have incorporated such spiritual ideas in his landscapes. As many Calvinists did not approve of depictions of God in human guise, allusions to God's presence were subtly indicated, whether through a centrally located church or spectacular light effects such as the beams breaking through the billowing clouds in Cuyp's *River Landscape with Cows*.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Herder with Sheep and Cattle*, c. 1639-49, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



Cuyp's depictions of dairy cows reflect the pride of the Dutch had in the dairy industry. They were eager to brag about the productivity and commercial value of their cattle. In seventeenth century texts and emblems a variety of meanings were attached to cows, such as fecundity, Spring, wealth, loyalty and moderation. However, the most popular meaning attached to a cow was as a symbol of Holland itself. From the sixteenth century on, the symbol of the cow was used as an allegory for the nation.

Hendrick Hondius, *Cows in a River*, etching, 1644



This is part of a series of five landscape etchings with patriotic themes. The caption reads: “Watchmen, do your best to see that the Dutch cow is not stolen from us.”

*Allegory of the Dutch Revolt*, Zeuws Museum, Middleburg



Queen Elizabeth is on the left and feeds the cow. Phillip II tries to ride it. It defecates against his representative in the Netherlands. Only William of Orange was able to milk the cow.

Paulus Potter, *The Bull*, Mauritshuis, 1647, Mauritshuis, The Hague



This is a life sized picture of a young bull. Monumental paintings of animals were rare in the period. Potter was only 22 when he completed the painting. The painting was enlarged by Potter, who added extra strips of canvas on both sides and at the top to his original composition, which originally just included the bull itself. The village in the background is Rijswijk, between Delft and The Hague. Though paintings of animals in landscape were Potter's specialty, this is his largest painting apart from his single life-size equestrian portrait. Livestock analysts have noted that it appears to be a composite of studies of six different animals of widely different ages. The cow was a symbol of prosperity to the Dutch and apart from the horse by far the most commonly shown animal in Dutch Golden Age painting. This is an enormous and famous picture which was in the Prince William V Gallery collection that Napoleon took to Paris in 1795 and hung in the Louvre for 20 years. It was returned in 1815.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Herdsmen with Cattle*, c. 1645, Dulwich Picture Gallery, London



Aelbert Cuyp, *Piping Shepherds*, 1643-44, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



Aelbert Cuyp, *The Negro Page with Horses*, c. 1652, Royal Collection, Windsor



Aelbert Cuyp, *Cows in a River*, c. 1650, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest



Cuyp must have been quite satisfied with this composition since he painted four versions of this. Almost no dry ground can be seen in the foreground. The distant bank is punctuated by a church tower and a few sailboats. A vigorous group of clouds are painted in gray. Cuyp has radically reduced the elements of this landscape to concentrate on the unified tones of water and sky, which set off the brown architectonic shapes of the cattle. He has carefully depicted the rippling reflections in the water with rich buttery passes of the brush.

Aelbert Cuyp, *The Mussel Eater*, c. 1650, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam



Cuyp also produced many genre paintings rooted in the Flemish tradition.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Orpheus Charming the Animals*, c. 1640, Private Collection, Boston



Cuyp also painted mythological and biblical scenes. A particularly ambitious large-scale picture of this type, painted early in his career, depicts the mythological hero Orpheus charming animals with his singing and playing. The scene may allude to harmonious leadership. Just as Orpheus tames different animals with his music and eloquence, a good leader unites the various segments of society. The subject gave Cuyp the opportunity to depict a wide variety of animals, even rare species that he had probably never seen. For example, the jaguars in the foreground (which are less detailed in their execution than the horse behind them), may have been based on a print, and the pangolin (the spiny Asian mammal at right), on a stuffed specimen from an aristocratic Cabinet of Wonders

Aelbert Cuyp, *The Baptism of a Eunuch*, 1642, The Merrill Collection, Houston



In the biblical story, an Ethiopian Queen's treasurer was on the way home from Jerusalem when he met St. Phillip. While they traveled together Phillip explained the Bible to the eunuch. When they came to a river, the eunuch asked to be baptized. Phillip agreed only after the eunuch was assured by Phillip that he believed all he had heard.

Aelbert Cuyp, *The Valkhof at Nijmegen*, c. 1655, Indianapolis Museum of Art



This subject was popular among Dutch landscape painters. Jan van Goyen and both Salomon and Jacob van Ruisdael painted this subject. *The Valkhof at Nijmegen* typifies the Dutch landscape. A small boat filled with fisherman wait to capture lobster. Two fat cows sit at the bank of the river, with their herder and two guests. The herder's red jacket is the focal point and draws the eye in and breaks up the muted tones of the rest of the painting. Across the river, the looming medieval architecture is bathed in a warm golden light from the seemingly setting sun. Boats float peacefully down the water banks without disturbing the water. A windmill pokes up from the cliff face. Small, chunky clouds hover peacefully over the bay. Overall, the feelings of peace and tranquility run through the painting, with the stillness of the cattle, people, and water all reflecting the peaceful nature of the painting. The light and the pastoral figures give us an idealized vision that transcends present reality.

The scene is based on sketches that Cuyp took during his travels to Nijmegen in 1652, however, Cuyp transformed the landscape by using a warm glow. Some argue that he adopted this style while in Utrecht from Jan Both. Later on, Cuyp's work has a profound impact on 19th-century landscape painters, including J. M. W. Turner and the impressionists later in the 19th century.

The town of Nijmegen was popular with artists during this period because the Valkhof was associated with patriotic history. Tacitus had written that Nijmegen was the stronghold of Gaius Julius Civilis, a Romanized barbarian hero who led the Batavians revolt against the

Romans during the first century AD. Charlemagne and his successors also used it as an important stronghold. It was thought to be the oldest town in the Netherlands. According to the contemporary literature of the Dutch Revolt it was founded by Celts and later named for Magus, one of the first kings of the Gauls. In chronicles it was listed first as the oldest city and the capital of the lands north of the Alps.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Landscape with a Rider and Peasants*, late 1650s, The Marques of Bute, on loan to the National Museum of Wales



This is the grandest of Cuyp's landscape paintings and a pinnacle in Dutch landscape art. It is his largest work. He painted it towards the end of his painting career. An elegantly dressed horse rider stops near a herdsman of cattle. Beyond are more peasants tending their flocks. In the distance on the left are towering buildings or a fortified town beneath a tall peak. Strong warm sunlight bathes the entire scene, casting long shadows in the foreground providing almost incandescent reflections on the lake. The hazy atmosphere in the extreme distance lends an elegiac and classicizing atmosphere feeling to the scene. The mountain does not look anything like places he traveled to but is similar to paintings of Jacob van Ruysdael during the period. The buildings across the lake have not been identified and suggest a generic medieval past.

Cuyp was not well known in the Netherlands in his lifetime beyond Dordrecht. The patron for the painting is unknown but it is assumed that the scene with the elegant rider and the deferential rider appealed to the regent and wealthy residents of Dordrecht with aristocratic ambitions. This painting was the first Cuyp painting brought to England in the 1740s. Cuyp became one of the most well-known old masters of landscapes in Britain in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The picture was cut down by about ten inches at the top, as was not uncommon in English aristocratic collections.

Jan van Goyen, *Fishing Boats off an Estuary*, 1633, Art Institute of Chicago



Van Goyen (1596-1656) was the son of a shoemaker in Leiden, and like Rembrandt studied with Nicolai van Sweenburgh. In 1616 he spent a year with Essaies van de Velde in Haarlem. In the 1630s he moved to The Hague. His earlier pictures are highly colored but during the 1620s he started to use cool colors, as in this river scene. In the late 1630s his pictures became more monochrome. He pictured many village and town scenes, including many of Dordrecht, as well as dune landscapes.

Jan van Goyen, *River Scene*, 1652, Walraff Ricartz Museum, Cologne.



Abraham van Calraet, *Dordrecht with the Apple Market and the Oude Haven*, before 1694.  
Private Collection



We know that Calraet's brother was a student with Aelbert Cuyp and perhaps Abraham also studied with Cuyp. His paintings have the same sort of golden light used by Cuyp. Apples are unloaded from larger ships and taken by baskets to smaller boats. The viewer looks straight at the Nieuwbrug across the water from the Oude Haven, which lay at the heart of the city. The growth of trade in Dordrecht required the building of a second harbor. The bridge has a small opening that allows ships with a tall mast to pass, as the one that just moved into the old harbor. A man is about to lower a hinged plank to close the bridge.

Jan Both, *An Italianate Landscape with Ferry*, c. 1652, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



Cuyp may have met Jan Both (c. 1610/18-1658) in Utrecht after the latter returned from Italy in 1641. Both made his career in landscape painting. In the middle of the 1640s, Cuyp's paintings became more colorful and he bathed them in morning and evening light.

Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Trompe l'Oeil of Cupboard Door*, 1655, Akademie der Bildende Kunst, Vienna



Hoogstraten (1627- 1678) grew up in Dordrecht but went to Amsterdam in 1642 to work as Rembrandt's apprentice, but after six years he was back in his home town. He traveled widely in Europe and worked in many genres but has been remembered chiefly for his studies of perspective in his still-lives and perspective boxes. His still-lives demonstrated that one can be illusionistic without depth in a flat surface.

Samuel van Hoogstraten, *A Peepshow with Views of the Interior of a Dutch House*, c. 1655-60,  
National Gallery, London



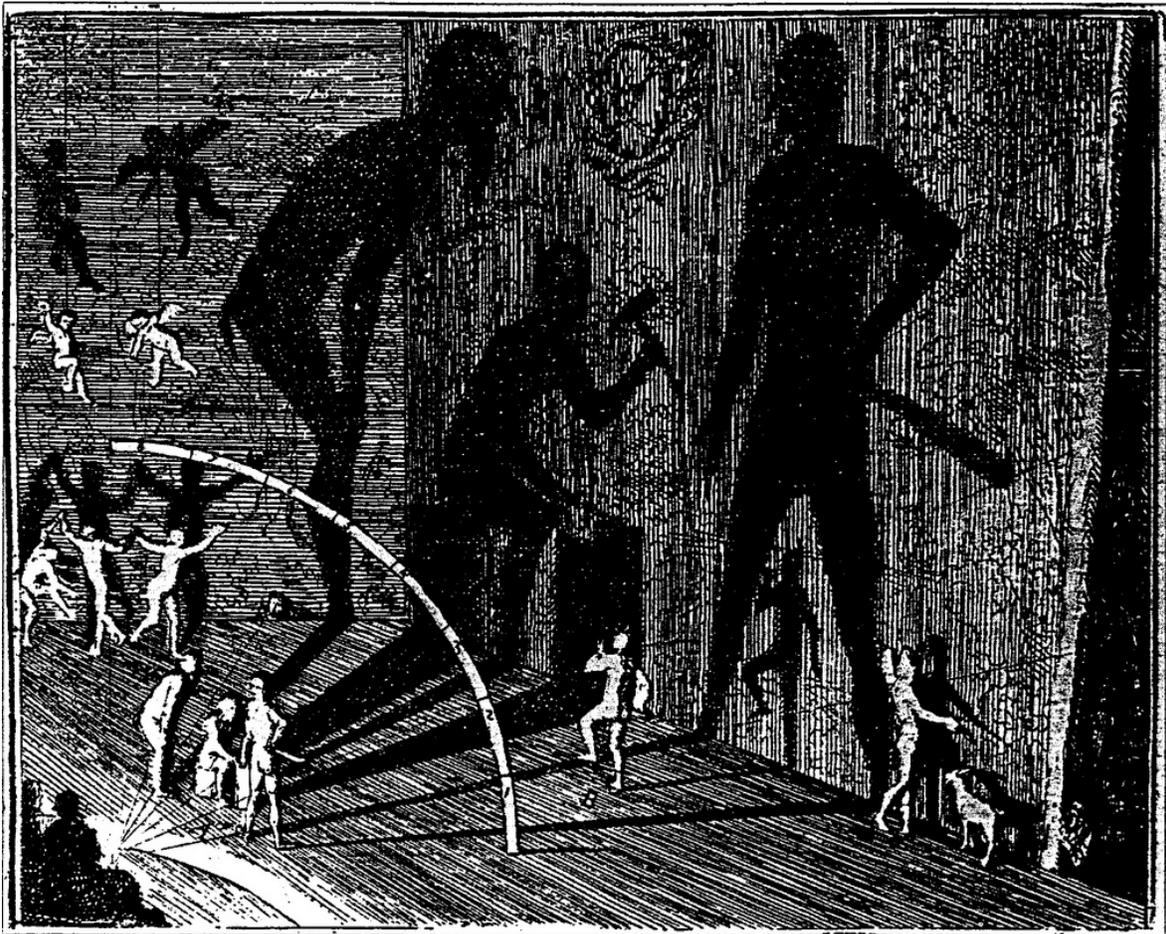
The peepshow is a rectangular box. Its interior is painted on three sides, as well as on the top and bottom. The sixth side is open. Originally light would have entered the box from this side, perhaps through specially treated paper stretched across it. The box would have been placed near a window or a candle would have been provided for illumination. There are peep holes in the two shorter sides which provide the illusion of the three-dimensional views of the interior.

Hoogstraten's box is an unusually elaborate example, decorated on the exterior with allegorical paintings which correspond to chapters in a theoretical study that the artists wrote later. The long side illustrates love of wealth as a motivation for the artist, who appears with a

*putto* holding a cornucopia. Love of art and the fame are the subjects in the paintings on the short sides, while the top is decorated with an allegory of physical love, representing Venus and Cupid in bed, painted in anamorphic (distorted) projection).

His *Inleydeing tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkunst* contains one of the rare contemporary appraisals of Rembrandt's work. Hoogstraten was a man of many talents. He was an etcher, poet, director of the mint in Dordrecht, and art theorist

Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Dance of Shadows*, print for *Inleydeing tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkunst (Introduction to the Art of Painting)*, 1678, Rotterdam



Hoogstraten expressed his philosophy of painting as a “science to give shape to all ideas, or thoughts, which the complete visible world can give, and to convince the eye that they are real with the help of contours [silhouettes] and paint. To achieve this one has to use details that communicate in a concealed manner.” In the attic of his house, a stage was constructed with, a large sheet of white paper separating the audience from the stage instead of curtains. At a considerable distance behind the sheet stood a large lit candle. In the space between the candle and the sheet, his students acted out a play in such a way that the growing or diminishing dimensions of their shadows reflected the drama. This was similar to Plato’s thoughts on the deceptiveness of shadows in his allegory of the Cave in the *Republic*.