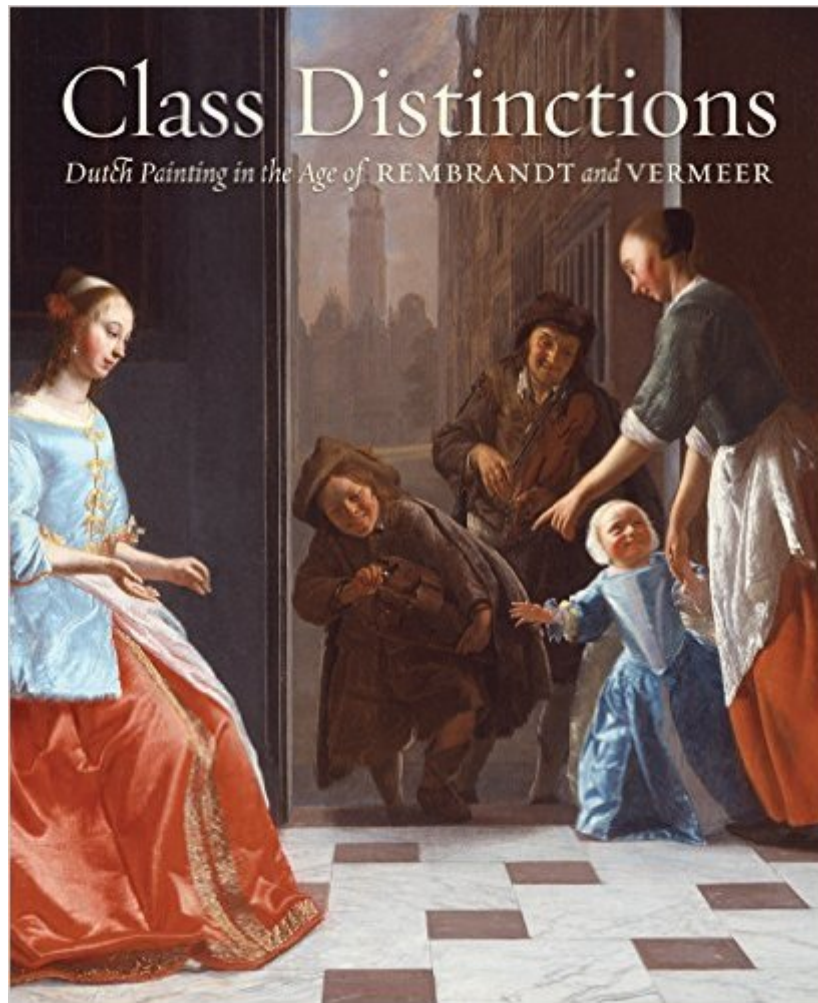


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# Class Distinctions: Dutch Painting In The Age Of Rembrandt And Vermeer



## Synopsis

The Dutch Republic in the 17th century was home to one of the greatest flowerings of painting in the history of Western art. Freed from the constraints of royal and church patronage, artists created a rich outpouring of works that circulated through an open market to patrons and customers at every level of Dutch society. The closely observed details of daily life captured in portraits, genre scenes and landscapes offer a wealth of information about the possessions, activities and circumstances that distinguished members of the social classes, from the nobility to the urban poor. The dazzling array of paintings gathered here--by artists such as Frans Hals, Jan Steen, Pieter de Hooch and Gerard ter Borch, as well as Rembrandt and Vermeer--illuminated by essays from leading scholars, invites us to explore a vibrant early modern society and its reflection in a golden age of brilliant painting.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is the catalogue accompanying the exhibit of the same name organized by Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and mounted at the Museum from October 2015 to January 2016 and then at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri, from February to May. The exhibition was curated and the catalogue is edited by Ronni Baer, Senior Curator of European Paintings at the MFA, a specialist in Golden Age Dutch and Flemish painting, who has previously written extensively on such figures as Gerrit Dou, Jacob van Ruisdael, Frans Hals, Rubens, Rembrandt, and other old masters. There are hundreds of monographs and exhibition catalogues on Netherlandish painting in

the seventeenth century, but what distinguishes this volume is its examination of the art through the prism of the class structure of the society. One can easily understand how the liberation of an artistic culture from ecclesiastical and aristocratic patronage, and the liberation of an entire society from domination of church and court, opened up huge opportunities for paintingâin subject, in style, in intention, and even in the kinds of people creating it and buying it. The enormous economic expansion of the Low Countries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries led, for the first time, to a kind of free market in art that partook fully in the mercantile explosion: it is estimated that around five million paintings were produced in the region in that latter century, i.e., almost a thousand a weekâtruly, to quote the very appropriate title of Simon Schamaâs celebrated book on the period, an âembarrassment of riches.

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