

Rembrandt's World

Art 461: Tuesday 2:00-4:50

Dr. Natasha Seaman

Art Department, Rm. 206

Course Description: The works of Rembrandt van Rijn, the son of miller from Leiden, have captivated viewers since his earliest career. Loved and reviled during his lifetime and after, Rembrandt's works continue to challenge and enchant. In this course, we will look closely at Rembrandt's works from throughout his career, surveying the many genres in which he worked and the many sources from which he drew inspiration. Knowledge will be gained through (brief) lectures, class discussion on paintings and readings, a visit to the RISD print collection, and your own research.

Goals: To obtain deep knowledge of Rembrandt and his world through close reading of works of art, primary texts, and existing scholarship. To develop skills in discussion, argumentation, public presentation, visual analysis, research, and writing.

Required Text: Mariët Westermann, *Rembrandt*, Phaidon, 2000 (at RIC bookstore and on reserve at Adams Library)

Texts are available on Blackboard and on e-reserve at the library. This will be designated in the syllabus.

Recommended: Christina Maranci, *A Survival Guide for Art History Students*, 2005 (at bookstore)

Course Requirements:

Class participation - discussion and reading preparation: 30%

Oral presentations of reading (2-3): 20%

First oral presentation of topic and first draft of paper, 12-15 pages: 20%

Second oral presentation and final paper, 12-15 pages: 30%

For each class:

1. You **MUST** read the two key works that will be presented by others.
2. You **MUST** read the Westermann chapters (these are comparatively easy).
3. You **MUST** at least skim **ALL** the readings: be able to answer the question "what is this article/book/chapter about?" and say more than just what the title tells you. Not being prepared in your reading defeats the purpose of the seminar and is unkind to your fellow student.

Online Resources: Course information, assignments, announcements, etc., will be handed out in class and posted on Blackboard. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE REGULAR ACCESS TO THE INTERNET, PLEASE LET ME KNOW.

Assignments are due in class on their designated date. Late submission MUST be with prior permission of the instructor. Those without permission or a doctor's note will be marked down 3 points per day for lateness. You may submit papers via email, but only if you provide a hard copy at the next class period. Papers submitted without hard copies will not be graded.

Exams: There is no exam. I may quiz on the readings.

Attendance: Attendance at all classes is **required**. If you miss more than two classes, your participation grade will become an F. Poor attendance will cripple your ability to succeed in the class.

Academic Honesty: *The highest standards of academic honesty are expected.* For details, consult your RIC Student Handbook under Student Conduct. The Student Handbook is provided by the Office of Student Life or can be found on the RIC Web site.

General Grading Criteria:

- A Exceptional work; far beyond what is simply required; shows superior control of course material; participates enthusiastically in classroom discussions.
- B Good; demonstrates a solid grasp of the material and participates consistently in classroom discussions.
- C Average; demonstrates adequate comprehension of course material and participates sporadically in classroom discussions; work that is enough to "get by."
- D Below average; understanding of material and participation in class are poor, but just enough to pass.
- F Not passing; careless approach to course requirements and deadlines; little or no effort applied to essays and class discussions; poor attendance.

Course Schedule (Subject to Change):

9/1	<p>Introduction to Rembrandt and the Dutch Golden Age</p>	<p>What interests you about Rembrandt? What is a monographic seminar? Who else would you like to study like this? How to read: different kinds of texts Catalogue raisonnée Monograph Museum catalog Journal article Scholarly study Book review textbook Coffee table book “all the paintings in color”</p> <p>How to look at paintings: different kinds of questions</p> <p>Dutch scholarship vs. American</p> <p>Big questions in Dutch art</p> <p>How to skim/read</p> <p>Engaging in reading not just for information, but also in how information is read – how do various authors deal with the same information?</p>
9/8	<p>1. Rembrandt studies today: Rembrandt Research Project</p> <p>2. Student and Colleague: Rembrandt with Lastman and Lievens</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>1. Rembrandt Research Project, A 50 “Bust of a Young Woman” and C68 and C69, “Portrait of a Man” and “Portrait of a Woman” (on Blackboard)</p>	<p>Everyone brings in a painting that they like by Rembrandt – via email</p> <p>Rembrandt, not Rembrandt Lievens vs. Rembrandt</p>

	<p>Sylvia Hochfield, “Rembrandt: The unvarnished truth?” <i>Art News</i>, LXXXVI/10 (Dec. 1987) 102-111 (on Blackboard)</p> <p>Svetlana Alpers, Introduction, <i>Rembrandt’s Enterprise</i>, 1-13 (on Blackboard)</p> <p>2. Westermann, “Becoming an Artist,” in <i>Rembrandt</i>, 21-60</p> <p>Broos, “Lastman and Rembrandt’s <i>Coriolanus</i>” in <i>Simiolus</i> (on Blackboard)</p>	
<p>9/15 Last day to add courses</p>	<p>1. Rembrandt and Italy</p> <p>2. Rembrandt and Art Theory</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>1. Clark, <i>Rembrandt and the Italian Tradition</i>, Ch. 4 “Rembrandt and the Venetians” (on e-reserve)</p> <p>Berger, “Methodological Interlude IV: On Revisionary Allusion – Rembrandt and the Italian Renaissance,” in <i>Fictions of the Pose</i>, 427-461 (on e-reserve)</p> <p>2. Emmens, English summary of <i>Rembrandt en de Regels van de Kunst</i>, 193-205 (on e-reserve)</p> <p>Slive, <i>Rembrandt and His Critics</i>, 8-26 (on e-reserve)</p>	<p>What was contemporary art theory and how can reading it inform us about Rembrandt?</p> <p>What is the importance of Italy?</p> <p>What are current discussions about influence/allusion?</p>
<p>9/22</p>	<p>Rembrandt’s Studio</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Life in the studio 2. Techniques of drawing and painting <p>Reading:</p> <p>1. Westermann, “Rembrandt’s Workshop and Collection,” <i>Rembrandt</i>, 209-232</p> <p>Alpers, <i>Rembrandt’s Enterprise</i>, 34-57 (on e-reserve)</p> <p>Haverkamp-Begemann, “Rembrandt as Teacher” in <i>Rembrandt after 300 Years</i>, 21-30 (on e-reserve)</p>	

	<p>2. Bomford, “The painter’s studio” in <i>Art in the Making: Rembrandt</i> 17-33(on e-reserve)</p> <p>Schatborn, “Aspects of Rembrandt’s Draughtmanship,” in <i>Master and His Workshop</i>, 1-21 (photocopy and scan)</p>	
9/29	<p>Rembrandt’s Self Portraits</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Drawings and prints 2. Paintings <p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwLE72M0cxI</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chapman, “Discovery of the Self” in <i>Rembrandt’s Self Portraits. A study in Seventeenth-Century Identity</i>, 10-33 (photocopy and scan) Bal, <i>Reading Rembrandt</i>, 247-55 (photocopy and scan) 2. De Winkel, “Costume in Rembrandt’s Self Portraits,” in <i>Rembrandt By Himself</i>, 60-74 (photocopy and scan) Chapman, “Rembrandt’s Biblical Roles,” in <i>Rembrandt’s Self Portraits</i>, 105-127 (photocopy and scan) 	<p>What is a self portrait?</p> <p>Good place to discuss something about the papers</p>
10/6	<p>Rembrandt’s Portraits</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Painter for patrons 2. Entrepreneur <p>Library visit 2:00-3:30: Meet at Adams Library in reference area</p> <p>Reading: Westermann, “Portraitist in Amsterdam,” in <i>Rembrandt</i>, 63-98</p> <p>Alpers, <i>Rembrandt’s Enterprise</i>, 88-122 (on e-reserve)</p> <p>Schwartz, <i>Rembrandt, His Life, His Paintings</i>, 132-62 (photocopy and scan)</p>	<p>Portraits for others vs. self</p> <p>Looking at objects in person – etiquette, advantages</p>
10/13	Monday Schedule, no class	

10/20	<p>Go To RISD Museum (\$3 charge per person with student ID)</p> <p>Reading: Ivins, <i>How Prints Look</i> (Recommended if you are unfamiliar with prints) (on reserve)</p> <p>Dickey, “‘Judicious Negligence’: Rembrandt transforms an emblematic convention,” <i>Art Bulletin</i> LXVIII/2 (June 1986), 253-62 (on Blackboard)</p> <p>Rassieur, “Looking Over Rembrandt’s Shoulder: The Printmaker at Work,” in <i>Rembrandt’s Journey, Painter, Draughtman, Etcher</i>, 49-60 (photocopy and scan)</p>	
10/27	<p>1. Single Figure Paintings and Portraits 2. <i>Tronies</i> and historical figures</p> <p>Initial topic presentations; annotated bibliography due</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>1. Smith, “I Janus: Privacy and the gentlemanly ideal in Rembrandt’s Portraits of Jan Six,” <i>Art History</i> XI/1 (Mar 1988), 42-63 (on e-reserve)</p> <p>2. Hirschfelder, “Portrait or Character Head? The Term <i>Tronie</i> and its Meaning in the Seventeenth Century,” <i>The Mystery of the Young Rembrandt</i>, 82-91 (photocopy)</p> <p>Schwartz, “Prophets and Apostles,” and “Figures and Faces” in <i>Rembrandt, His Life, His Work</i>, 98-105; 195-201 (photocopy)</p>	
11/3 Last day to withdraw is 11/6	<p>Histories I: Rembrandt and Religion: Catholicism, The Dutch Reformed Church, and Judaism</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Westermann, “Painting History,” <i>Rembrandt</i>, 101-142</p> <p>Zell, “Encountering Difference: Rembrandt’s Presentation in the Dark Manner” in <i>Art History</i> (on e-reserve)</p>	

	<p>Smith, "Towards Protestant Aesthetics: Rembrandt's 1655 <i>Sacrifice of Isaac</i>," <i>Art History</i> VIII/3 Sept. 1985, 291-302 (on e-reserve)</p> <p>Christian Tümpel, "Catholic Clients," <i>Rembrandt</i>, 128-139 (photocopy)</p> <p>Schwartz, "The Passion," in <i>Rembrandt, His Life, His Work</i>, 106-118 (photocopy)</p>	
11/10	<p>Histories II: Secular Works</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Late Style and the <i>Oath of Claudius Civilis</i> 2. <i>Bathsheba</i> <p>Reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Van de Wetering, "Rembrandt's Brushwork and Illusionism; an Art Theoretical Approach," <i>Rembrandt: The Painter at Work</i>, 155-190 (on e-reserve) Margaret Carroll, "Civic Ideology and Its Subversion: Rembrandt's <i>Oath of Claudius Civilis</i>" <i>Art History</i> 9, 1986, 10-35 (on e-reserve) 2. Alpers, "The Painter and the Model," in Adams, ed. <i>Rembrandt's Bathsheba Reading King David's Letter</i>, 147-158 (photocopy) Carroll, "Uriah's Gaze," in Adams, ed., 159-178 (photocopy) 	What is a footnote?
11/17	<p>Group Portraits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Married couples and families 2. <i>Nightwatch</i> and Anatomy Lessons <p>Reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Smith, "Rembrandt's Early Double Portraits and the Dutch Conversation Piece," <i>Art Bulletin</i> 64 (1982), 259-88 (on Blackboard) 2. Ernst Haverkamp-Begemann, <i>Rembrandt: The Nightwatch</i>, 9-20; 21-50 (skim); 51-63; 65-114 (photocopy) Schwartz, <i>The Nightwatch</i>. (photocopy) 	

	Heckscher, <i>Rembrandt's Anatomy of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp</i> , (pages TBA)	
11/24	<p>Rembrandt and Women</p> <p>First draft of paper due</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Sluijter, <i>Rembrandt and the Female Nude</i>, (pages TBA)</p> <p>Clark, <i>The Nude</i>, (excerpt) 448-342 (photocopy)</p> <p>Schama, "Rembrandt and Women," <i>Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences</i>, 38, (1985), 21-47 (on Bb)</p> <p>Tümpel, <i>Rembrandt</i>, 1986, 173-185 (photocopy)</p>	John Berger on YouTube
12/1	<p>Rembrandt and the Dutch Landscape</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paintings 2. Drawings & Prints <p>Reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schneider, <i>Rembrandt's Landscapes</i>, Ch. 1 "Rembrandt's Development as Landscape Artist," (read) Ch. 2 "The Exotic Landscape" (skim), Ch. 3 "The Native Landscape" (skim), Ch. 4 "The Question of Meaning," (read) (photocopy) 2. Nevitt, "Rembrandt's Hidden Lovers," <i>Nederlands Kunsthistorische Jaarboek</i> 48, 162-91 (on e-reserve) <p>Stone Ferrier, Linda, "Rembrandt's Landscape Etchings: Defying Modernity's Encroachment" <i>Art History</i> 15/4 (Dec. 1992), 403-433 (on e-reserve)</p>	Seghers
12/8	Presentations	
12/14 (first day of	Final Paper Due	

exams)		
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