

National Gallery of Art

ages
6 and up

FAMILY GUIDE
Dutch and French
Paintings



GALLERIES

51

48

46

Dutch Paintings of the 1600s

Pronk & Portraits

Beware. Looks can be deceiving. Seventeenth-century Dutch people believed in appearing modest, not showy, and the dress code for adults was black. Still, they displayed luxury—**pronk**—in sly ways. Look carefully at images of Dutch people—portraits—in galleries 51, 48, and 46.



Find examples of

- black clothes** made of wool, satin, or velvet
- starched **white linen** and **lace** on collars and cuffs
- felt hats** (usually black, gray, or tan), made by hand from beaver skins and very expensive
- stylishly mussed long hair** on men (very cool at the time)
- bright colors**—young men and women, unmarried soldiers, and children could wear brightly colored outfits

Choose words you think describe the subjects' style.

gloomy **playful** **serious** **decked out** _____ **other**

Who revealed more *pronk* in their portraits—men or women? **Study** details such as jewelry, leather, fur, and feathers. Remember, the Dutch often avoided the appearance of luxury because of their belief in modesty. **Compare** your choices.

GALLERIES

47

49



Landschappen (Landscapes)

The Netherlands hugs the ocean and sits mostly at or below sea level, so the Dutch turned their northern, watery environment to their advantage. They built windmills and dikes to control the water and to create land for farms and pastures, and canals to provide transportation routes across the country.

Search for clues among the paintings in galleries 47 and 49 to find out what your life would have been like in the seventeenth century.

Which animals might you have at home?

dog sheep chicken pet bird cow pig horse

How would you get your cow across the river?

What creates power to grind wheat for your bread? *hint: wind*

How would you travel to a friend's house or school?

boat horse walk ice-skate sled

Weather Watch! The Netherlands is located on the North Sea between Belgium and Germany. What do the broad skies in Dutch landscapes tell you about the weather?

sunny warm chance of rain cloudy cool windy

GALLERY

50



Stilleven (Still Life)

Paintings of Dutch food, table settings, and flowers are known as **stilleven**. Dutch artists tried to make paintings of such objects appear lifelike, even though it sometimes meant exaggerating textures or pairing items that would not be together in nature—such as flowers that bloom at different times of the year.

Find the still-life painting in gallery 50 that looks most lifelike to you. Defend your choice using evidence such as

- Exact details:** veins on leaves, light glinting on metal plates, fruit fuzz
- Textures:** scaly reptile skin, downy feathers, silky flower petals
- Setting:** indoor, outdoor, tabletop, display in a vase

Look at the paintings and decide what you would choose for a snack right now.

ham olives peach grapes beer*

plums bread oysters (seasoned with vinegar!)

*Adults drank beer, and children drank a watered-down version because industries such as bleaching and dyeing cloth polluted Dutch waterways.

Before you leave this gallery, see if you can **find**

- tulips**—the Netherlands' symbolic flowering bulbs
- fish**—oysters, herring, sardines, native to this country of waterways and seas

GALLERIES

89

86

85

84



Nineteenth-Century French Galleries

Paris & Daily Life

Feel the pulse of life in nineteenth-century France — wide boulevards for strolling, cafés and nightlife, and art that catches people in a moment's time. Young artists in Paris wanted to capture modern life in the city: casual moments, daily activities, work, and fun.

Find the paintings described below (in gallery 89) and **match** them to the activities listed.

two young women at a Paris theater

daily activity

a man playing music

casual moment

a girl braiding her hair

work

a child flopped in a chair

fun

a group of people standing together

Compare and **defend** your matches with your group.

Did all of you make the same choices?

French artists were awed by the Japanese art they saw at the World's Fair in 1867. Using the pictures here as guides,

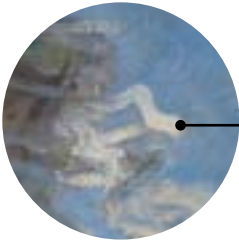
find paintings with

- a Japanese-inspired item (spelled **f__n**)
- figures or objects flattened and space tilted up, as in the Japanese print at left

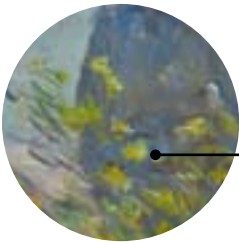
GALLERIES

86

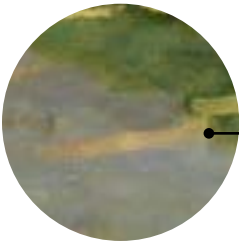
85



squiggle



dab



drag

Seeing Light along the Seine River

What kind of image can capture a single moment in time? A group of French artists devoted themselves to the task, using dabs of paint to create fleeting impressions of light and atmosphere in nature. These artists were called **impressionists**.

Choose one landscape painting in these rooms and study dabs, dashes, drags, and squiggles of paint on the canvas close up, then from a distance.

List the colors of light reflected on land or water.

Circle the types of light you see in your painting.

sparkles glints ripples glares shadows sunshine

Share your ideas and see if you agree (or not) on the painting's weather, time of day, and season.

Monet lived in many places along the Seine in France, including Argenteuil, Vétheuil, and Giverny. Before you leave these rooms, **find**

- one of Monet's gardens (he had one wherever he lived)
- two paintings of the same subject at different times of day
- the lily pond and the Japanese bridge Monet built at his last home in Giverny



Sounds & Silence of France

Step aside, sun-dappled impressions of nature. In these rooms, three artists track the sights, sounds, and essence of the places they loved in France and beyond. Follow the **prompts** below to walk with them.

Read about the lives of Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh, and Paul Cézanne.

Gauguin Born in Peru, raised in Paris, he was **forever drawn to faraway places**—Brittany (Le Pouldu, Pont-Aven), Martinique, and the Indonesian Islands (Tahiti, Marquesas)—picturing their ancient customs and gentle waters.

Van Gogh Dutch-born, he was never truly at home regardless of where he lived. He read deeply, loved art, and **tried to root himself in the South of France** (Arles, St. Rémy). His fragile emotions are almost traceable in his brushstrokes.

Cézanne Raised in the southern French town Aix-en-Provence (Aix), he returned to his childhood home after periods in Paris as a young adult. He **loved to walk in and around Aix**, painting its great mountain (Mont Sainte-Victoire), which was always changing in the light, and the steep hillsides and gullies of his youthful haunts.



Look at each artist's paintings and **listen** to them. Where do you hear these sounds—or sense the silence—in nature?

thud of wooden clogs on earth

lapping ocean waves

soft sea breeze

voices chanting

moos of cows

rustling of olive trees in the winds over southern France

hiss of a snake

murmur of a stream

solitude of a steep mountain

creak of naked branches over a valley



Paul Gauguin decorated these wooden shoes when he lived in rural Brittany. See them in the West Building's Ground Floor Sculpture Galleries.

The nineteenth-century French adored (and copied) British sports such as horse racing. Edgar Degas' wax figures of horses are on view in the Ground Floor Sculpture Galleries, along with his most famous sculpture — *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*.

Tulip bulbs were first imported to the Netherlands from Turkey.

The word "Netherlands" means low lands.

A family outing in nineteenth-century Paris often meant visiting one of the city's parks to picnic, play hoops, or take a carriage or boat ride.

...

With many waterways frozen in winter, Dutch children often skated and played on the ice. **Kolf** — a cross between hockey and golf — was a favorite game. Its goal was to hit a target on the ice, such as a pole, in the fewest strokes.

Captions

All illustrations in this booklet are details from the following works of art:

Cover

Abraham Mignon, *Still Life with Fruit, Fish, and a Nest*, c. 1675, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. H. John Heinz III

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Aelbert Cuyp, *Lady and Gentleman on Horseback*, c. 1655, reworked 1660/1665, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection

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Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Windmill*, 1641, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of R. Horace Gallatin

Aelbert Cuyp, *Lady and Gentleman on Horseback*, c. 1655, reworked 1660/1665, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection

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Jan van Huysum, *Still Life with Flowers and Fruit*, c. 1715, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Patrons' Permanent Fund and Gift of Philip and Lizanne Cunningham

Abraham Mignon, *Still Life with Fruit, Fish, and a Nest*, c. 1675, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. H. John Heinz III

Jan Davidsz de Heem, *Vase of Flowers*, c. 1660, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Fund

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Edgar Degas, *Madame Camus*, 1869/1870, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Chester Dale Collection

Edo Period, *Interior: A Yujo and an Attendant Heating Water*, 1615–1868, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, Gift of Charles Lang Freer

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Squiggle and Dab: Claude Monet, *Woman with a Parasol—Madame Monet and Her Son*, 1875, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon

Drag: Claude Monet, *Argenteuil*, c. 1872, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection

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Paul Gauguin, *Self-Portrait Dedicated to Carrière*, 1888 or 1889, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon

Vincent van Gogh, *Self-Portrait*, 1889, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney

Paul Cézanne, *Self-Portrait* (recto), c. 1880/1882, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon

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Paul Gauguin, *Haystacks in Brittany*, 1890, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of the W. Averell Harriman Foundation in memory of Marie N. Harriman

Vincent van Gogh, *The Olive Orchard*, 1889, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Chester Dale Collection

Paul Cézanne, *Houses in Provence: The Riaux Valley near L'Estaque*, c. 1883, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon

Paul Gauguin, *Pair of Wooden Shoes (Sabots)*, 1889/1890, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Chester Dale Collection

Back cover

Claude Monet, *Argenteuil*, c. 1872, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection

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