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Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Deijman* on view in the Hermitage Amsterdam from 19 March

From Saturday 19 March, Rembrandt's painting *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Deijman* will be featured in the exhibition *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* in the Hermitage Amsterdam. The original sketch from 1656 will also be exhibited. The sketch provides us with a rough idea of how the original composition must have looked. Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Deijman* is one of the seven works of art being added to the exhibition. Besides Rembrandt's painting, anatomy lessons by Adriaen Backer (1635/36 - 1684) and Nicolas Pickenoy (1588 – 1650/56) can be viewed in the two new cabinets. For the first time, these works of art will be placed within the context of the traditional Dutch group portrait from the 17th century.



Image captions:

Image 1: Rembrandt (1606 - 1669), *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Deijman*, 1656, Amsterdam Museum

Image 2: *Preparatory sketch for 'The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Deijman*, 1656, Amsterdam Museum

The anatomy lesson as a group portrait

The group portraits in the exhibition *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* reflect the citizenship of the Golden Age. They depict members of the civic guard, regents, and surgeons performing their social function in 17th century Amsterdam. The surgeons' guild organised a public anatomy lesson once a year. Commissioned by the surgeons' guild of Amsterdam, Rembrandt painted *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Deijman* in 1656. The middle section which has been preserved to this day depicts Dr. Jan Deijman (1619 – 1666) dissecting the brain of Joris Fonteijn, an executed criminal. The assistant Gijsbert Calkoen is holding the top of the deceased's skull in his hand.

Original sketch (on temporary loan)

In 1723, a significant portion of the group portrait was lost in a fire in the surgeons' guild chamber in De Waag on Nieuwmarkt. A sketch of the original composition has been preserved and will be exhibited exclusively over the next three months. The sketch provides us with a rough idea of how the original composition must have looked. In addition to Deijman, his assistant Calkoen and the corpse of Fontejn, seven other surgeons were originally depicted in the painting. Both the painting and the sketch are part of the Amsterdam Museum's collection.

Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age

The exhibition *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* has attracted more than 250,000 visitors since it opened in November 2014. The more than thirty enormous group portraits on loan from the Amsterdam Museum and the Rijksmuseum are supplemented by other paintings and artefacts. Together they illustrate the story of collective citizenship that is so typical of the Netherlands. These 'siblings' of *The Night Watch* are unique in the world and, due to their size, are rarely seen. Thanks to a special partnership between the Amsterdam Museum, the Hermitage Amsterdam and the Rijksmuseum as generous lenders, these masterpieces can now be seen by a large (international) public. The exhibition *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* has been made possible with financial support from the BankGiro Loterij, the Mondriaan Fonds and the VSB Fonds.

For more information: www.portraitgalleryofthegoldenage.com

Note to editors (not for publication):

Invitation to photo opportunity

On Friday 18 March at 10:00, the painting will be hung in the *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* in the Hermitage Amsterdam. You are welcome to attend. The programme is as follows:

9:50: Gather at the group entrance to the Hermitage on Nieuwe Keizersgracht

10:00: Hanging of the painting

10:15: End of photo opportunity

If you wish to attend, please send an email to pr@amsterdammuseum.nl stating 'Dr. Deijman' in the subject line.
