Impressionism

and the Golden Age of Dutch Art

And yet wouldn't it be interesting later on to have portraits of those who are managing the city now! When we go to Amsterdam, the painting of the *Syndics* [fig. 19] stops us in our tracks. Why? Because it is the true impression of something seen.

—Édouard Manet

These Dutch paintings representing the contemporary life of the artists naturally make one dream of the art of our time. . . . For a start, what happens today will be history tomorrow. . . . Who prevents one from making a masterpiece of a meeting of diplomats around a table—just as Rembrandt created a masterpiece of the *Syndics of the Drapers' Company*? Of an orator at a parliamentary rostrum, a teacher surrounded by young people; of a scene at the races, an outing to the opera, a stroll in the Champs Élysées; or simply men working at anything, or women enjoying anything.[1]

Fig. 19
Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn
(1606–1669)
Syndics (The Sampling Officials), 1662
Oil on canvas, 75⅜ x 109⅞ in. (191.5 x 279 cm)
Collectie Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, SK-C-6

From a different perspective, the painter and critic Eugène Fromentin, in his lively account of his visit to the Netherlands, *Les Maîtres d'autrefois* of 1876, characterized the essential aim of the "free and national" Dutch art as "the portrait of Holland, its exterior image, faithful, exact, complete and like, with no embellishment. Portraits of men and places, citizen habits, squares, streets, country places, the sea and sky, . . . In appearance nothing can be more simple than the discovery of this art of earthly aim."[18] While grumpily noting ways in which certain contemporary painters were currently availing (or misavailing) themselves of the Dutch old masters, he also reminded his readers of the salutary "influence of Holland" on French landscape in recent decades.[19]

The example of Dutch landscape had indeed been important to the Barbizon painters and was frequently invoked in the critical debates of the 1830s and 1840s in which Thoré had participated.[20] In the wake of the 1848 Revolution, Dutch painting continued to be an important historical resource for Gustave Courbet and the Realist movement, particularly in civic group portraiture and genre painting.[21] The exiled Thoré could not contribute directly to the critical debates about Realism, but instead, as "W. Bürger," he turned his attention to the art of the past, especially the innovative naturalism of certain old masters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[22] The artists he singled out included (among others) Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez, Jean-Antoine Watteau, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Jean-Siméon Chardin—but above all the Dutch School in general as "the most determined, the most original, the most varied, the most revolutionary, the most natural and the most human at the same time: it is definitely the [school] which is most liberated from the past, which sticks closest to nature, and thereby best indicates one of the directions of future art."[23] In his *Salons* of the 1860s W. Bürger frequently alluded to the originality and technical skills of Dutch naturalism as instructive for contemporary artists. During these years he wielded a double authority, both as W. Bürger, the leading scholar and connoisseur of seventeenth-century Dutch art, and as Théophile Thoré, the veteran republican critic whose earlier judgments had been vindicated.[24] His views were known not only through his publications but also through personal contacts with artists, collectors, and critics. He frequented studios of contemporary artists and played an active rôle in the art market—especially in drawing to the attention of collectors, critics, and artists his favored old masters.[25] Most significantly, his general championship of the seventeenth-century Dutch School and his reshaping of the canon coincided with Manet's most intense and complex involvement with the art of the past and with the crucial formative years of the younger artists later to be termed the Impressionists.

Thoré's criteria for both contemporary and past art concerned subject matter or formal qualities—or both. Thus decorative, smoothly painted mythological or historical scenes by such artists as Adriaen van der Werff and Gerard de Lairesse were castigated as decadent in subject and treatment; the formerly popular Italianate landscapists such as Nicolaes Berchem and Jan Both were banished as "pseudo-Italians" or "de-naturalized Dutchmen";[26] and Gerrit Dou and the other *fijnschilders* were reproved for overmeticulous industrious finish and contrived artificial light effects on the grounds that "true art never has these futile preoccupations. Art is more spontaneous in its response, more frank in its results."[27] As will be seen, while effectively sending these artists offstage, he ushered others into the limelight, appealing to criteria that were consistent with some values of the contemporary avant-garde.

Naturalism, according to Thoré-Bürger, did not rest only on subject matter (the what) but also on the execution (the how). The crux of his argument was that seemingly trivial, familiar subjects could be imbued with as much significance and *poésie* as the most elevated themes of religious, historical, or mythological narrative through what he considered the essential means of painting—color, light, and chiaroscuro (rather than the linear or sculptural draftsmanship of *dessinateurs*). He valued spontaneous, rapidly executed paintings—from which he inferred attributes of sincerity, truth, and originality of artistic response—and he belittled "finishers" (*finisseurs*). Thus in 1868 he defended Johan Barthold Jongkind's controversial sketchy manner as preferable to the "patient knitters of lengthily ruminated images," insisting that "true" artists painted quickly and *d'impression.* And he cited, among other "glorious" earlier examples, Dutch artists such as Hals, Rembrandt, and Jan van Goyen.[28] He lauded paintings that conveyed the artist's personal response and a heightened sense of life and nature—especially the sense of all-enveloping air and natural light, of which he found abundant examples in Dutch art.

But were such Dutch works readily accessible to Manet and the young Impressionists? Although Thoré urged painters to visit the Dutch museums, even devising a fortnight's itinerary for impecunious artists,[29] Paris too provided ample opportunities for artists to study Dutch painting. By the 1860s the Musée du Louvre held (among others) well-known works by Rembrandt, Meindert Hobbema, Jacob van Ruisdael, Nicolaes Berchem, Van Goyen, Aelbert Cuyp, Willem

This passage by the renowned French critic and art historian Théophile Thoré (writing under his pseudonym, W. Bürger[2]) is taken from his pioneering study on Frans Hals published in 1868. Thoré could not have known the extent to which his dreams for the art of his time were to be realized during the following decades by the Impressionist painters whose most consistent hallmark would be their depiction of contemporary life as viewed and experienced: scenes of everyday leisure and work life of Paris and its suburbs; views of cities, towns, villages, and countryside; portraits and still lifes—all familiar, accessible, secular pictures with minimal reference to the traditional iconography or procedures of earlier European art.

Manet and the younger Impressionists surely knew of Thoré's contention that the legitimate ancestors of modern art were those old masters who themselves had depicted the life of their own times—most notably the seventeenth-century Dutch School, which Thoré characterized in the first of his two groundbreaking guides to the Dutch museums in 1858 as

> Life, *living life,* man—his customs, his occupations, his pleasures, his caprices. Some [artists] chose the citizen active in public life . . . ; others chose families at home, or in their outdoor recreations; here the upper classes, there the working classes, or outcasts. Others represented the environment of social life—the sea and beaches, with the maritime events so dear to the country; or the countryside and the forests, with laborers who till the earth or care for animals; rustic and hunting scenes; canals and streams, with mills, boats, fishermen; the towns, squares, and streets where the population circulated in all its variety. Everywhere animation, contemporary life, which is also eternal life—the history of the people and of the country.
>
> A true history . . . in luminous and faithful images; a kind of photography of their great Seventeenth Century, men and things, feelings and customs—the actions and gestures of a whole nation.[3]

Thoré attributed the emergence of this original school of painting in the seventeenth-century Dutch republic to its hard-won political and religious freedom and to the independence and energy of its citizens. Not only had they secured their land from the threatening sea, they had "by a spontaneous outburst of national genius"[4] re-created their society and their moral and intellectual world. Unlike their Flemish neighbors, they threw off the yoke of Catholic Spain and set up a democratic Protestant republic, and rejected the arcane religious, classical, and mythological subject matter of Italianate Renaissance art that served rulers and church. Instead, their new art, naturalism, served the entire society and was "art for mankind" (l'art pour l'homme).[5] As the first school to renounce the past and turn toward the new, it was the beginning of modern art.[6]

Thoré-Bürger was not the first (or last) writer to characterize Dutch art in these terms.[7] However, his two guides to the Dutch museums, *Musées de la Hollande,* which inaugurated a new era in the historiography of this school, gave wide currency to these ideas.[8] This, together with his argument for the special historical role of the Dutch School (as he defined it) for modern art, made Thoré a key figure in establishing the terms in which the seventeenth-century Dutch School was understood in France from the 1860s on. With varying emphasis, both the political context and the originality of descriptive naturalism as the essential quality of Dutch art of the Golden Age are reasserted by other French writers on Dutch art at the time.[9]

One of the best-known critics was Charles Blanc,[10] founder of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (1859) and famous for his monumental project *Histoire des peintres de toutes les écoles,* which became an important resource for Manet and the younger Impressionists.[11] Blanc played a major role in the dissemination of knowledge of Dutch art both through his publications on Rembrandt and his installments on individual Dutch painters. These were published intermittently from 1849 before being collected in two volumes in 1861. Blanc's introductory essay explained the naturalism of the great Dutch School in the context of national independence, democracy, and Protestantism.[12]

Another French writer known to the Impressionists, Henry Havard,[13] in whose company Claude Monet visited the Rijksmuseum (then in the Trippenhuis) in 1871, insisted that only after the Dutch nation "had taken possession of itself" could its own original art flourish, and he ceded to Dutch landscapists the "inextinguishable glory" of having been "the first among the moderns to understand and interpret nature."[14] He stressed the "extériorité" (externality) of their art (excepting only Rembrandt, whose sublimity was generally agreed on)[15] and especially commended Dutch genre painting for representing the varied aspects of current life and catering to the wide range of tastes and domestic circumstances of their citizen-patrons.[16] Havard also emphasized that artists of the Dutch republic were the first to portray and celebrate their own cities, as had several artists of republican France, whose civic affection for Paris was evident in their paintings of "all aspects of our great city."[17]

van de Velde, Gabriel Metsu, Gerard Terborch, Adriaen van Ostade, Jan Davidsz de Heem, and Willem Claesz Heda.[30] In 1869 the collection was amplified by approximately fifty Dutch paintings from the La Caze bequest—including Rembrandt's *Bathsheba*, Hals's *The Gypsy* (fig. 23), Terborch's *Reading Lesson*, and Maes's *Benediction*. In 1870 the museum acquired its first Vermeer—*The Lace Maker* (fig. 20). Fromentin could reasonably claim in the mid-1870s that, except for the group civic portraits in Holland, a visit to the Louvre provided a "just idea of Dutch art," of "its spirit, its character, its perfections, the diversity of its styles."[31]

However, besides the Louvre, it is especially relevant that during the 1860s and 1870s artists in Paris were witness to the high profile of Dutch paintings on the flourishing art market. A series of spectacular public sales and occasional exhibitions of old masters from well-known private collections served to publicize increasingly valuable Dutch paintings. In his chapter on private collections in Paris written for the *Paris-Guide* of 1867 (the year of the Exposition Universelle), Thoré took the reader on a lively, whirlwind tour of the most famous private galleries in the city, commenting in passing that "it's not my fault, if, in all the collections, the Dutch outdo all!"[32]

This disclaimer was somewhat disingenuous, for Thoré, more than any other, had been instrumental in making known and promoting his favored Dutch artists to collectors, critics, and artists. In fact, in 1874 (the year of the first Impressionist exhibition and just five years after his death) a major exhibition from private collections held at the Palais Bourbon included among the much-vaunted paintings works by two Dutch artists whose prominence owed much to Thoré: Frans Hals and Johannes Vermeer ("van der Meer").[33]

Both these painters, one rescued from notoriety and the other from obscurity, were of special interest to Manet and his circle. While the patchy, perceptible brushwork, bright color, apparent spontaneity, and lively activity of the paint surface that would come to characterize Impressionism is not comparable to the palette and procedures of seventeenth-century Dutch painting, aspects of Hals and Vermeer were seen as having "modern" relevance. In Hals's case his bold, gestural brushwork, his suggestive areas of "unfinish," and the informal naturalness of his figures were instructive. In Vermeer's works, the luminous nuances of natural light and air were admired, whether achieved by harmonies of color, blurred, unfocused areas, overlapping contours, or occasional distinctive *pointillé* highlights. In both, of course, the primacy of visual experience was crucial.

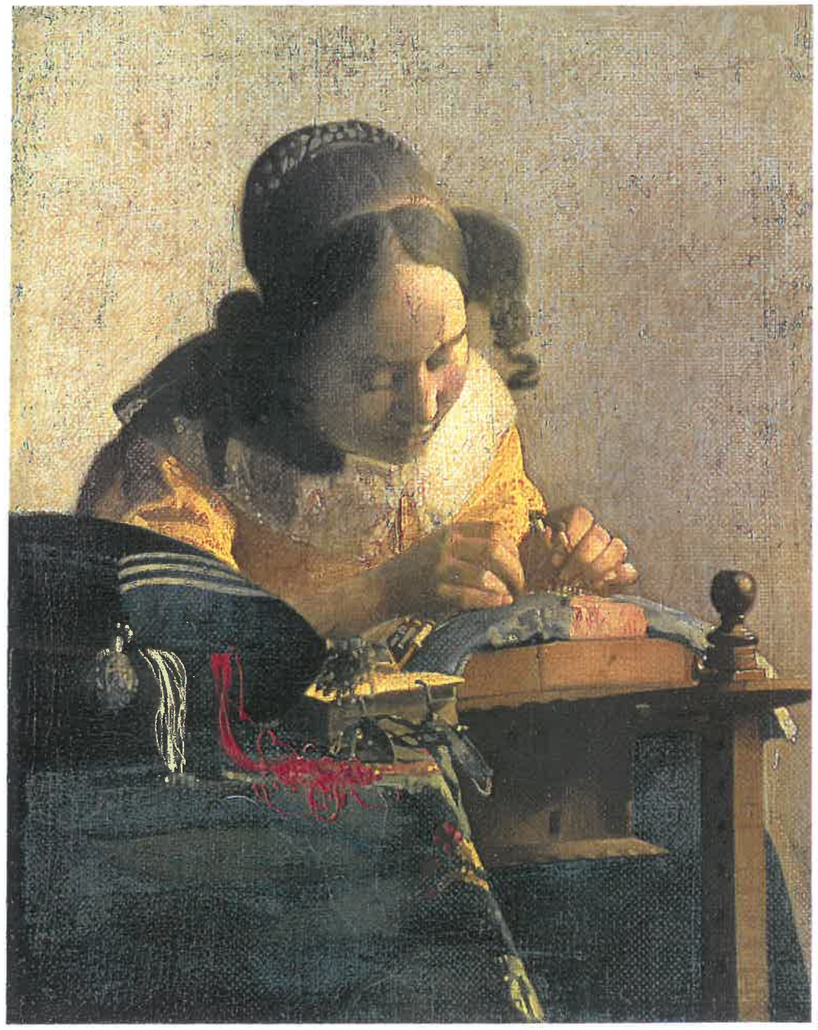


Fig. 20
Johannes Vermeer (van Delft)
(1632–1675)
The Lace Maker, 1669–70
Oil on canvas laid down on wood,
12¼ x 9½ in. (31 x 24 cm)
Musée du Louvre, Paris, France

Cat. 42
Frans Hals
Fisher Boy, 1630–32

Hals's works had for the past century generally languished on the art market, often dismissed as slapdash and unfinished, the work of a talented but uneven artist whose feckless debauchery was legend.[34] Hals's construed impetuosity had been censured in the eighteenth century by the painter-academician Sir Joshua Reynolds and lamented by prominent dealers, who warned contemporary painters to avoid his vice of painting too quickly.[35]

Thoré, by contrast, was an enthusiastic advocate for Hals's much maligned procedure:

> He painted so much! He painted so quickly—and so well! Even the slightest painting by him is attractive and offers a lesson to artists. All aspects of his work are instructive, his faults as well as his strengths—for his faults are always those of a great practitioner. In his exaggerated brusqueness, his risky contrasts, his informal carelessness, there is always the hand of a bountifully talented painter, and even the sign of a certain kind of genius—somewhat superficial, it is true, and inspired by the external appearances of things, by movement, style, color, and effect, by whatever moves and glitters, rather than by the secret and inner spiritual side of life, even somewhat vulgar, if one can so refer to genius—but frank and bold, as irresistible as instinct.[36]

Hals's *Singing Boy with Flute* (fig. 21), then in the Suermondt collection, is described as

> [a] lively study, slashed on in one go. He never did otherwise. All his brushstrokes stand out, aimed exactly and wittily where they should. One could say that Frans Hals painted as if fencing, and that he flicked his brush as if it were a foil . . . such beautiful passes. Sometimes a little reckless to be sure, but as skillful as he is bold.[37]

Not many of Hals's works were readily available in public collections at that time. In 1860 the Louvre had one work attributed to Hals—a portrait of Descartes.[38] For those who traveled to Holland, there were a few paintings

in Dutch museums, such as the so-called *Portrait of the Artist and His Wife* and *The Merry Drinker* (fig. 25) in Amsterdam, but most of his civic group portraits remained in relatively inaccessible municipal buildings in Haarlem.[39] However, this situation changed dramatically after the establishment of the Frans Halsmuseum in Haarlem in 1862, when eight great civic group portraits (eighty-four figures in all) were displayed together, celebrating not only the original commissioning bodies but also the artist.[40] Henceforth, a journey to visit the Dutch museums invariably included the new Haarlem museum, as can be seen by the visitors' registers.[41] The signatures of Monet and Manet appear, respectively, in 1871 and 1872, and in 1873 Mary Cassatt visited the museum, where she made a much-treasured copy of part of one of Hals's *Officers and Sergeants of the Saint Hadrian Civic Guard*.[42] A different response was later recorded by Berthe Morisot, who noted somewhat petulantly that she preferred Hals's paintings in the La Caze collection.[43]

It was indeed in Paris, the center of the European art market, that several of the finest of Hals's dispersed paintings first surfaced during the 1860s—to the acclaim of his new audiences. By 1864 the Pereire collection could boast of Hals's *Portrait of a Woman* (fig. 22), which was recommended by Thoré as exemplary for modern artists—especially the "marvelous" depiction of her clasped hands "achieved by a . . . few bold strokes which precisely show up the form and movement."[44] In 1865 an elegant *Portrait of a Man* (later dubbed *The Laughing Cavalier*) was acquired by Lord Hertford for an unprecedented sum at auction, and the following year the disappointed underbidder, Baron James de Rothschild, expensively acquired the small, informal *Portrait of Van Heythuysen,* in which the sitter is tilting back his chair.[45] In 1866 the famous *Exposition Rétrospective* of old masters from private collections, held in a gallery next to the contemporary Salon, displayed Hals's *Portrait of a Woman* from the Pereire collection and the alluring *Jeune paysanne souriante* (also known as *La Bohémienne [Gypsy]*) from the La Caze collection (fig. 23),[46] painted, in Thoré's words, "in tones of gold, with the wildness of his

Fig. 21
Frans Hals
Singing Boy with Flute, c. 1623/25
Oil on canvas, 27⅛ × 21¾ in.
(68.8 × 55.2 cm)
Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen
zu Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Fig. 22
Frans Hals
Portrait of a Woman
Oil on canvas
Location unknown

Fig. 23
Frans Hals
The Gypsy, 1628–30
Oil on wood, 22⅞ × 20½ in. (58 × 52 cm)
Musée du Louvre, Paris, France

Cat. 53
Édouard Manet
Gypsy with a Cigarette, c. 1862

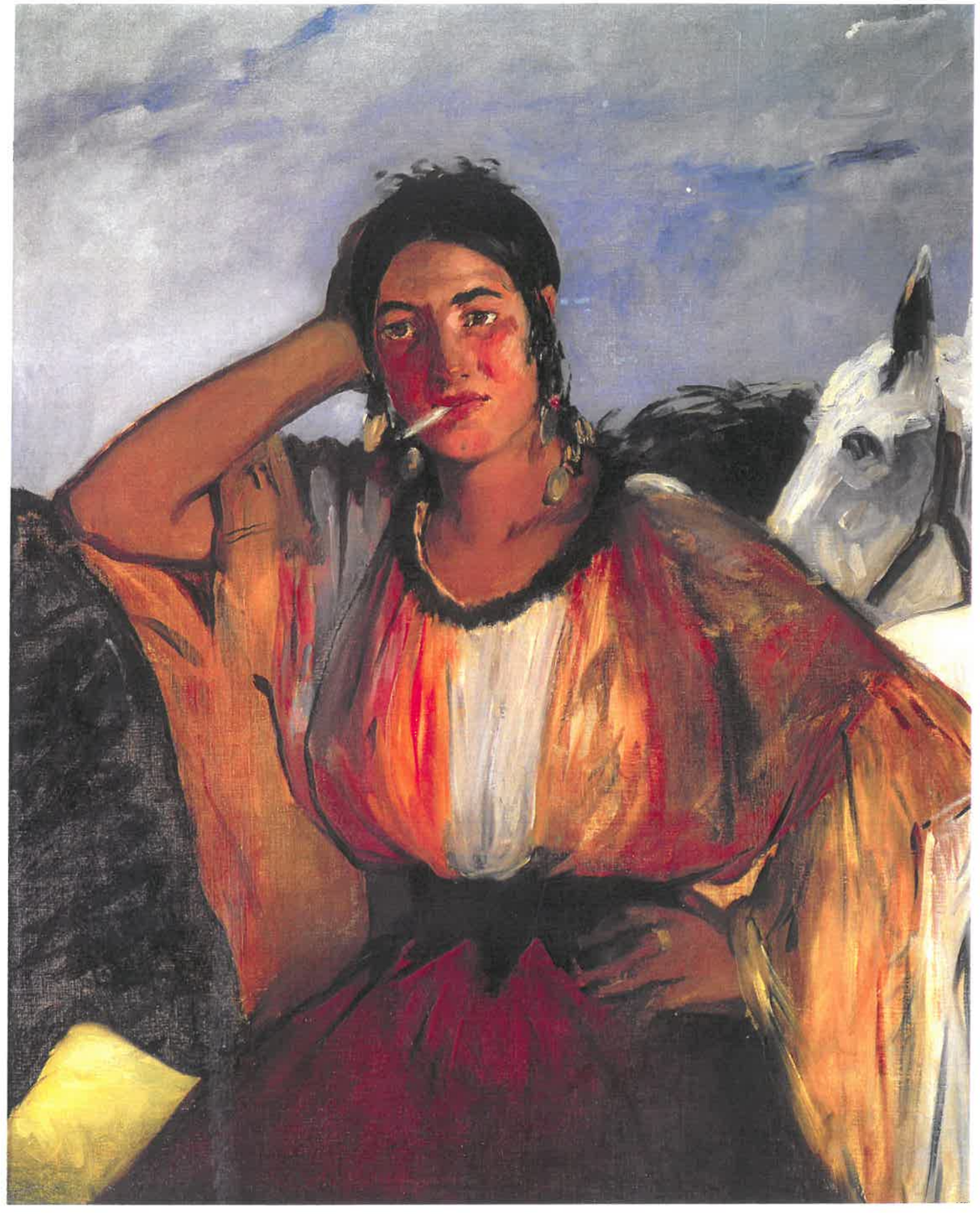
early style: a masterpiece improvised in a few hours of bright light and good humor."[47] In 1867 Thoré rhetorically applauded Hals's pride of place in the most celebrated collections in Paris: "May one of the most valiant portraitists in the world, may Frans Hals reclaim his legitimate place!"[48] By the following year, in his pioneering study of Hals, he located approximately thirty of his paintings in Paris.[49]

Hals's special resonance for the contemporary avant-garde was explained in 1866 by Manet's friend and champion Zacharie Astruc in his review of the *Exposition Rétrospective:*

> The reputation of this master will owe much to the modern school which particularly takes to him and celebrates him as an inspiration. The truth is that he represents a healthy and invigorating approach, that he is true to his vision, and that it is now or never that the sincere path must be followed if we wish the domain of French art to strengthen and grow.[50]

Hals's art was not only construed as expressing the boldness, optimism, and liveliness of the new freedom-loving republic, it was also increasingly associated with modern aesthetic values.[51] Hals's apparent spontaneity and gestural brushwork, which both animated his figures and brought the painting process to the fore, were now viewed as a brilliant example of improvisatory painting *en premier coup* (painting directly onto the canvas without preparation), and the immediacy and freedom of his procedure were praised for their prophetic modernism.

While Hals became an inspiring example to a wide variety of artists in the late nineteenth century, his works were particularly instructive to Manet and the young Impressionists—and to their audiences. Manet's contemporaries frequently commented on presumed allusions or similarities to Hals in his works, particularly after his third visit to Holland in 1872. His well-received *Le Bon Bock* (fig. 24) in the Salon of 1873 was generally considered to be a Halsian paraphrase of such works as the *Merry Drinker* (fig. 25) then in the Amsterdam museum.[52] Théodore Duret later commented that it was Hals who inspired Manet to paint Émile Belot with a beer mug "en souvenir."[53] Elsewhere Paul Mantz referred to the presence of "Hals, that great swashbuckler, [in] the way the paint is applied to the canvas,"[54] while Edgar Degas reportedly quipped, somewhat facetiously, that Manet "did not paint fingernails because Frans Hals did not depict them."[55] In a decidedly hostile vein, Fromentin commented, "all of Manet is already in Hals, but that the Frenchman has copied the weaknesses of Hals, the results of his senility."[56] Most significant, however, is Antonin



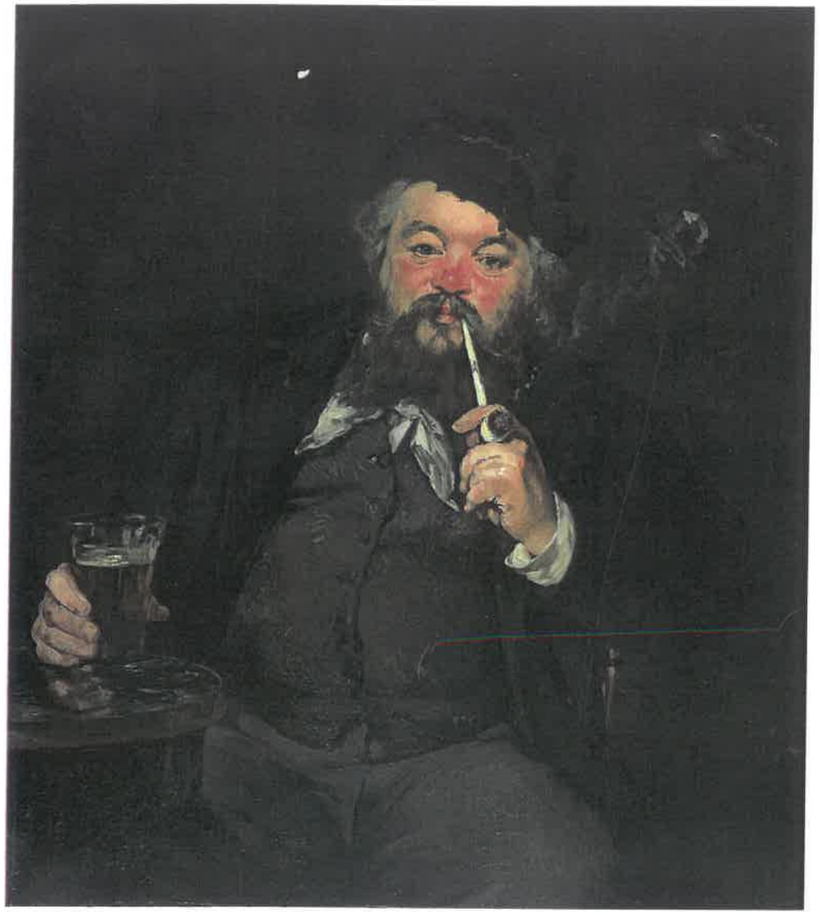


Fig. 24
Édouard Manet
Le Bon Bock, 1873
Oil on canvas, 37¼ x 32¾ in.
(94.6 x 83.3 cm)
Philadelphia Museum of Art,
The Mr. and Mrs. Carroll S. Tyson, Jr.,
Collection, 1963

Fig. 25
Frans Hals
Merry Drinker, 1628–30
Oil on canvas, 31⅞ x 26⅛ in.
(81 x 66.5 cm)
Collectie Rijksmuseum Amsterdam,
SK-A-135

Proust's suggestion that it was Hals who inspired Manet's ambition to paint the Paris of his own time: "the boldness of Frans Hals's own style made such an impression on him [Manet] in Holland that back in Paris, armed with all those memories, he decided to tackle frankly the diverse aspects of Parisian life."[57]

Hals's paintings remained firmly in the public eye in Paris—whether in exhibitions, sales of major collections, or through publications. In 1874 an exhibition at the Palais Bourbon of works from private collections[58] included, among the many Dutch paintings, more than ten works attributed to Hals, and his popularity was attested to in subsequent exhibitions. In 1883 the avant-garde Belgian journal *L'Art Moderne* published the article "Le Modernisme de Frans Hals," asserting that Hals's works expressed the current preoccupations of contemporary painters: "Frans Hals is a modern [painter]. His aesthetic, his color, his draftsmanship, his procedures, belong to our time."[59] Contemporary art thus cast a retrospective modernity on the old master—bearing out Michael Baxandall's comment: "Arts are positional games and each time an artist is influenced he rewrites his art's history a little."[60]

Whereas Hals's widespread popularity from the 1860s on was reflected in studios, sale rooms, and private and public collections, interest in the rare Vermeer was initially limited to a smaller circle of artists and amateurs. The Parisian public had its first sight of the unknown Vermeer at the famous *Exposition Rétrospective* of 1866, which displayed some eleven putative works by him: four figures in interiors (e.g., fig. 26) (the only paintings to retain their attribution), three landscapes (fig. 27), two "interiors of towns" (fig. 28), and two scenes of beguinages (untraced).

Vermeer's presence was entirely owing to Thoré's determination to publicize his "rediscovery" of the obscure Vermeer, who had been mainly known by three works in Holland: the *View of Delft* (fig. 29) on view in the Mauritshuis and two works then in the Six collection in Amsterdam, *Woman Pouring Milk* and the *Little Street* (both now in the Rijksmuseum). Thoré's indefatigable researches, which began only during the last years of his exile,[61] now culminated with the publication of his critical study and catalogue raisonné a few months after the exhibition.[62] Reviewers responded enthusiastically to their first view of Vermeer's works. Manet's friend Astruc, for example, marveled that this hitherto neglected artist, now brought to light,

> pleased, astonished, seduced; his gallant style, the fine qualities of his observations, his concise and sparing manner,

Fig. 26
Johannes Vermeer (van Delft)
(1632–1675)
A Young Woman Standing at a Virginal,
c. 1670–72
Oil on canvas, 20⅛ x 17¾ in.
(51.7 x 45.2 cm)
The National Gallery, London

Fig. 27
Dirk Jan van der Laen
(1759–1829)
The House in the Country
Oil on canvas, 19½ x 16¼ in.
(49.5 x 41.4 cm)
Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen
zu Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Fig. 28
Jacobus Vrel (act. 1654–62)
Street Scene, c. 1654–62
Oil on panel, 16¼ x 13½ in.
(41.3 x 34.3 cm)
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles,
California, Gift of J. Paul Getty

OPPOSITE:
Fig. 29
Johannes Vermeer (van Delft)
(1632–1675)
View of Delft, c. 1660–61
Oil on canvas, 38 x 45¼ in.
(96.5 x 115.7 cm)
Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis
The Hague

> the fervor of his brush, his delicate and fluid harmonies, his understanding of the overall effect [*effet*], and the concentration on the essential parts of the subject—all this strikes at first view, and further study only reinforces this first favorable impression. From now on all the world will celebrate the interesting Meer.[63]

Vermeer's new appreciative audience was undeterred by the diversity of the works displayed. The interiors were praised for revealing his versatile skill in the depiction of light filtering through windowpanes, spreading across surfaces, highlighting, shimmering, sparkling, enveloping.[64] Of the landscapes, *The House in the Country* (fig. 27) (now attributed to Dirk Jan van der Laen) was reportedly especially popular among artists who were entranced by the golden rays filtering through trees onto white cottage walls. A townscape—or "intérieur de ville" (fig. 28) (now attributed to Jacobus Vrel)—was admired for its casual simplicity of subject matter and its transparency and harmony of color.[65] All commentators, like Thoré, stressed the luminosity, color, and space depicted in Vermeer's paintings.[66]

As in the case of Hals, it seems that Manet was the first to acknowledge Vermeer in his own paintings. It has been convincingly argued that Manet's *Luncheon in the Studio* of 1868 (fig. 30), a genre scene of figures in a domestic interior, was in part an attempt to incorporate the recently "rediscovered" Vermeer into his work, as seen in the quality of natural light, the foreground chair and still life, the disposition of the figures, and the suggestion of a map on the back wall.[67]

Unlike Hals, Vermeer's popularity during the 1860s was limited to a relatively small circle. During his lifetime Thoré placed a few important paintings in private collections but was unable to persuade any

Fig. 30
Édouard Manet
Luncheon in the Studio, 1868
Oil on canvas, 46½ × 60⅝ in.
(118 × 154 cm)
Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen,
Neue Pinakothek, Munich

public museum to acquire a Vermeer—despite Vermeer's relatively low prices.[68] However, a year after Thoré's death in 1869, the Louvre acquired the *The Lace Maker* (fig. 20), the "delicious little painting" he had introduced ten years earlier.[69]

The Lace Maker, remarkable for its intimacy, diffused forms, informal, close-up pose, gentle light, varied textures of paint, and *pointillé* highlights, was reportedly Pierre-Auguste Renoir's favorite painting. According to Jeanne Baudot, who accompanied Renoir to the Louvre in the mid-1890s, "Renoir was sensitive to the sincerity with which the Dutch and Flemish painters expressed the charms of everyday life. He particularly liked Terborch and [Pieter] de Hooch. But his favorite was *The Lace Maker* by Vermeer."[70] Renoir might have had in mind the quiet concentration of the lace maker when chosing such subjects as *Christine Lerolle Embroidering* (cat. 87, p. 53) or the well-known close-up *Woman Reading* (Musée d'Orsay, Paris).

During the 1870s and 1880s Vermeer's other paintings were only occasionally on public view.[71] However, in 1872, *Little Street* and *Woman Pouring Milk* were in an exhibition in Amsterdam of Dutch art from private collections, where they were probably viewed by Manet—who might also have read Havard's enthusiastic review in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*.[72] Havard later wrote a book on Vermeer in which he characterized Vermeer's style in primarily formal, almost abstract, terms—describing *taches* as "agreeable notes in an adorable concert of fine, delicate, melting, enveloping tonalities . . . ; each local tone has its own accent . . . and in it they play an important role in this melodious symphony, it is by 'la tache' made and not by the idea expressed."[73]

Vermeer's *View of Delft* became his most celebrated painting—with its astonishing luminosity, diffused highlights, and varied textures—and, like paintings by Hals, acquired a kind of retrospective modernity that continued into the twentieth century.[74] His magisterial view of Delft as well as the more modest townscapes were exemplary precedents for the cityscapes and intimate street scenes by Camille Pissarro, Alfred Sisley, and Monet.

Typically Dutch themes of windmills, water mills, canals, ports, and seascapes under huge expanses of sky (cat. 1, p. 94) are frequent subjects in Impressionist paintings (cat. 57, p. 95). The recent exhibition *Manet and the Sea* vividly demonstrated Manet's awareness of traditional marine painting in which the Dutch specialized.[75] His *Moonlight over Boulogne Harbor* (1868; Musée d'Orsay, Paris), recalls nocturnal landscapes and moonlit marines of Dutch paintings, one of which Manet owned.[76]

Although Monet's interest in harbors and working waterways—sail and steam craft—presumably had to do with his growing up in Le Havre, his awareness of the picturesque possibilities of these marines may have been stimulated by earlier Dutch art, to which he would have been introduced by Eugène Boudin and the Dutch painter Jongkind before the first of his three visits to Holland in 1871, when he took refuge after fleeing the Franco-Prussian War.[77] Monet's name was recorded in the visitors' registers of the Rijksmuseum on June 22 (in the company of Henry Havard and the painter Henri Michel-Levy) and of the Frans Halsmuseum in Haarlem in October.[78] It is tempting

to speculate that he may also have traveled with Bürger's *Musées,* especially since the older (now deceased) critic had warmly and cheerfully commended the young Monet's two paintings in his *Salon* of 1866.[79]

During his stay in the village of Zaandam, Monet painted several scenes of windmills such as *Windmill and Boats near Zaandam, Holland* (cat. 60, p. 96), in which the massive mill on the bank, set against the huge sky and skudding clouds, recall Ruisdael's famous *Windmill at Wijk* (fig. 31), then in the Van der Hoop collection in Amsterdam. Monet also created his own brightly colored version of traditional Dutch town portraiture in his several views of Zaandam (cat. 61, p. 97).[80] Monet made at least two more visits to Holland, in 1874 and 1886, resuming his interest in Dutch town and canal views—as in his *The Zuiderkerk, Amsterdam (Looking up the Groenburgwal)* of 1874 (cat. 64, p. 60).

That Monet may have emulated the harmonious and luminous tonalities found in popular Dutch landscapes was implied by Alfred de Lostalot, a perceptive and sympathetic critic, who commented that certain of Monet's landscapes were probably more to the public's liking than the artist's. He describes a particular *View of Rouen* (fig. 32), as "painted in a discreet light, muted by a mist-laden sky, intercepting the violet radiation . . . with a faded, deep amber sky which seems cut out from a picture by Cuyp" (fig. 33).[81]

Hobbema is frequently cited in relation to Impressionist landscapes—especially his famous *The Avenue at Middelharnis* (fig. 34), famous for its boldly receding central road. Both Sisley and Pissarro, whose compositions frequently used a receding road to lead the eye and to create the compositional space, would have been familiar with this work from their London visits.[82]

Although Dutch still life seems on the whole to have been less important to the Impressionists than French or Spanish precedents,[83] Thoré's eloquent commentary on the oxymoronic French term *nature morte* in the second of his *Musées* serves as an apt introduction to the typically vibrant Impressionist still lifes:

> We still do not know how to replace it [*nature morte*] by a term that would include, at the same time, dead game birds, animals and birds, fish . . . flowers and bouquets, fruit, vases and utensils, arms and musical instruments, jewelry and diverse ornaments, drapery and costumes, and the thousand objects that can be grouped together to create a pretext for a pleasing colored representation under the effect of light. "Nature morte" is absurd.
>
> Aren't flowers alive? They have their breath and their health; they are gay and brilliant, or sad and dull; they are in constant motion, although almost imperceptibly, while turning toward the light, separate to allow importunate branches to pass, droop in response to thirst, swell and spread in the caress of a ray of light. Flowers are not "nature morte"; . . . There is no such thing as "nature morte."[84]

It is interesting that the flower painting that Manet presented to Thoré, *Peonies with Secateurs* (Musée d'Orsay, Paris) is strangely reminiscent of a game still-life.

Of all the Impressionists, Manet's references to Dutch art are the most complex and varied. His early copies of Dutch paintings were obviously learning experiences.[85] Yet his *Surprised Nymph* (fig. 35), once suggested as having been prompted by Rembrandt's *Susannah* (fig. 36), has since been shown to have a more complex, sometimes indirect, range of sources.[86] By contrast, *Madame Manet at the Piano* (fig. 37) refers directly to Metsu's *Woman Playing the Harpsichord* (fig. 38), which Manet probably knew through the engraved reproduction entitled *Hollandaise au clavecin* (*Dutch Woman at the Harpsichord*) in Blanc's *Histoire des peintres* (fig. 39).[87] The painting could be understood as an affectionate, even humorous, transposition of the earlier image into his own domestic world—Manet's Dutch wife now the subject of the painting. Furthermore, his frequent inclusion of identifiably Dutch motifs, such as a peeled lemon, a half-balanced knife, or oysters, were quotations from the traditional vocabulary of Dutch still life.[88]

Other reminders of Dutch portraiture include Renoir's portrait of Alfred Sisley (fig. 40), which recalls the informal pose of leaning over the back of the chair frequently used by Hals, as in his *Portrait of a Seated Man* (fig. 41),[89] and Degas's *Portrait of Edmond and Thérèse Morbilli* (c. 1865; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), which may allude to Rembrandt's etched *Self-Portrait with His Wife*.[90] Dutch genre in all its variety was well known to the Impressionists—from staid bourgeois interiors to suggestive *conversations*, from placid productive rustic life to bawdy tavern scenes. Thus, although Pissarro's paintings of local markets were based on his firsthand experience, he would also have been familiar with a work such as Metsu's famous *Vegetable Market* (Musée du Louvre, Paris). Likewise, Manet's *Chez le Père Lathuille* (1879; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tournai) and his other modern café paintings have, as Robert L. Herbert has suggested, "many

Cat. 1
Ludolf Backhuysen
The "Koning Willem III" and Other Ships in the Sea-lanes off Texel, c. 1690

Cat. 57
Édouard Manet
Marine in Holland, 1872

Cat. 60
Claude Monet
Windmill and Boats near Zaandam, Holland, 1871

Fig. 31
Jacob Isaacksz van Ruisdael
(1628–1682)
Windmill at Wijk, 1668–70
Oil on canvas, 32⅝ x 39¾ in.
(83 x 101 cm)
Collectie Rijksmuseum Amsterdam,
SK-C-211

Cat. 61
Claude Monet
Windmills near Zaandam, 1871

Fig. 33
Aelbert Cuyp (1620–1691)
The Maas at Dordrecht, c. 1650
Oil on canvas, 45¼ x 67 in.
(114.9 x 170.2 cm)
National Gallery of Art, Washington,
Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1940.2.1

Fig. 32
Claude Monet
View of Rouen, 1872
Oil on canvas, 21¼ x 28⅞ in.
(54 x 73.3 cm)
Private collection, courtesy
of Pyms Gallery, London

Fig. 34
Meindert Hobbema
The Avenue at Middelharnis, 1689
Oil (identified) on canvas,
40¾ × 55½ in. (103.5 × 141 cm)
The National Gallery, London

Fig. 36
Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn
(1606–1669)
Susanna, 1636
Oil on panel, 18⅞ x 15¼ in. (47.4 x 38.6 cm)
Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis
The Hague

forebears among the taverns and cafés of seventeenth-century painting," with their themes of courtship and seduction.[91]

A familiar topic in accounts of Dutch art in the second half of the nineteenth century is how certain Dutch painters "discovered" particular beauties in nature and invented ways of depicting them. Thus, Van Goyen, reputed to have roamed the countryside, sketching directly from nature, was praised as the first to reveal the poetic possibilities of luminous harmonies in low horizons of water under vast skies in his rapidly and freely painted transparent oil washes;[92] Jan Wynants was deemed the first to realize the picturesque possibilities of casually or accidentally discovered sites in his native Holland,[93] while Hals, as has been shown, was viewed as the first to animate his figures by wielding his brush with such freedom and bravura.

The Impressionists' debt to the old masters of the Golden Age of Dutch painting (as then understood) took many forms. However, whether explicit or implicit, whether by specific quotation or compositional borrowings, whether by emulation or transposition, it was never in the spirit of imitation of the earlier artists. As Pissarro insisted, their kinship served rather to enhance the originality of the Impressionists, for they too looked "with their own eyes." He explained this in a letter to his son, written after he had visited Amsterdam to see the great exhibition of Rembrandt in 1898:

> I haven't had time to write about what I felt when I looked at Rembrandt's masterpieces: they're admirable, and the thought that struck me after I had seen not only the Rembrandts, but the works of Frans Hals, Vermeer, and so many other great artists, was that we modern painters, we are unassailably correct to seek, or rather to feel differently, since different we are, and that for the rest their art is so definitely of their time that it would be absurd to try to follow in their path. Also, as I have often told you, I am suspicious of those adroit painters who know how to pastiche the old masters. I have not as much respect for these adroit ones as I have for those who, even without making masterpieces, yet look with their own eyes! But how can I describe Rembrandt's portraits to you? The paintings by Hals, and the *Canal* [*View of Delft*] by Vermeer, a masterpiece akin to the works of the impressionists; I returned from Holland more than ever an admirer of Monet, Degas, Renoir, Sisley. . . . Happy are those artists who see and love nature![94]

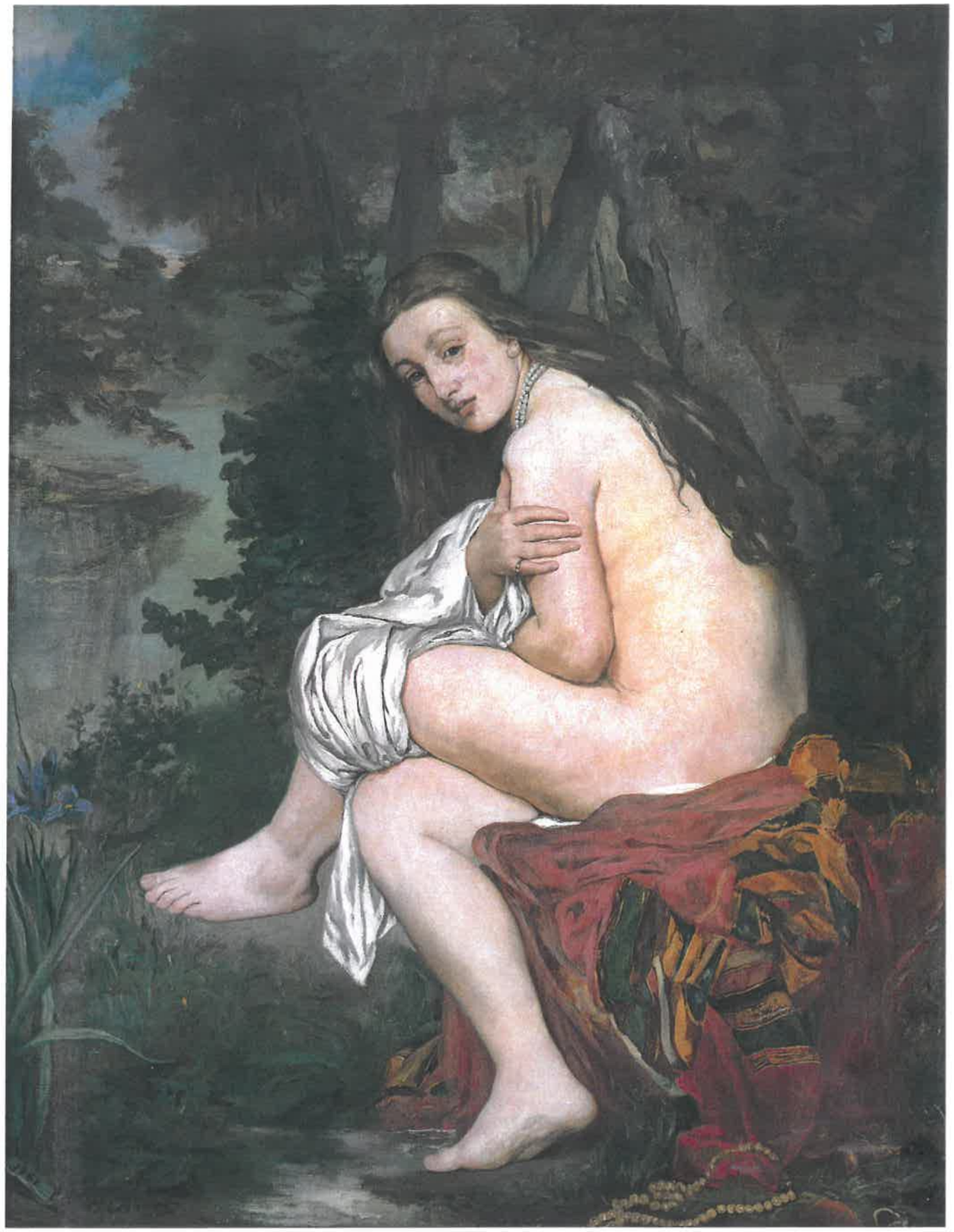


Fig. 35
Édouard Manet
The Surprised Nymph, 1861
Oil on canvas, 56⅞ x 44¼ in.
(144.5 cm x 112.5 cm)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes,
Buenos Aires

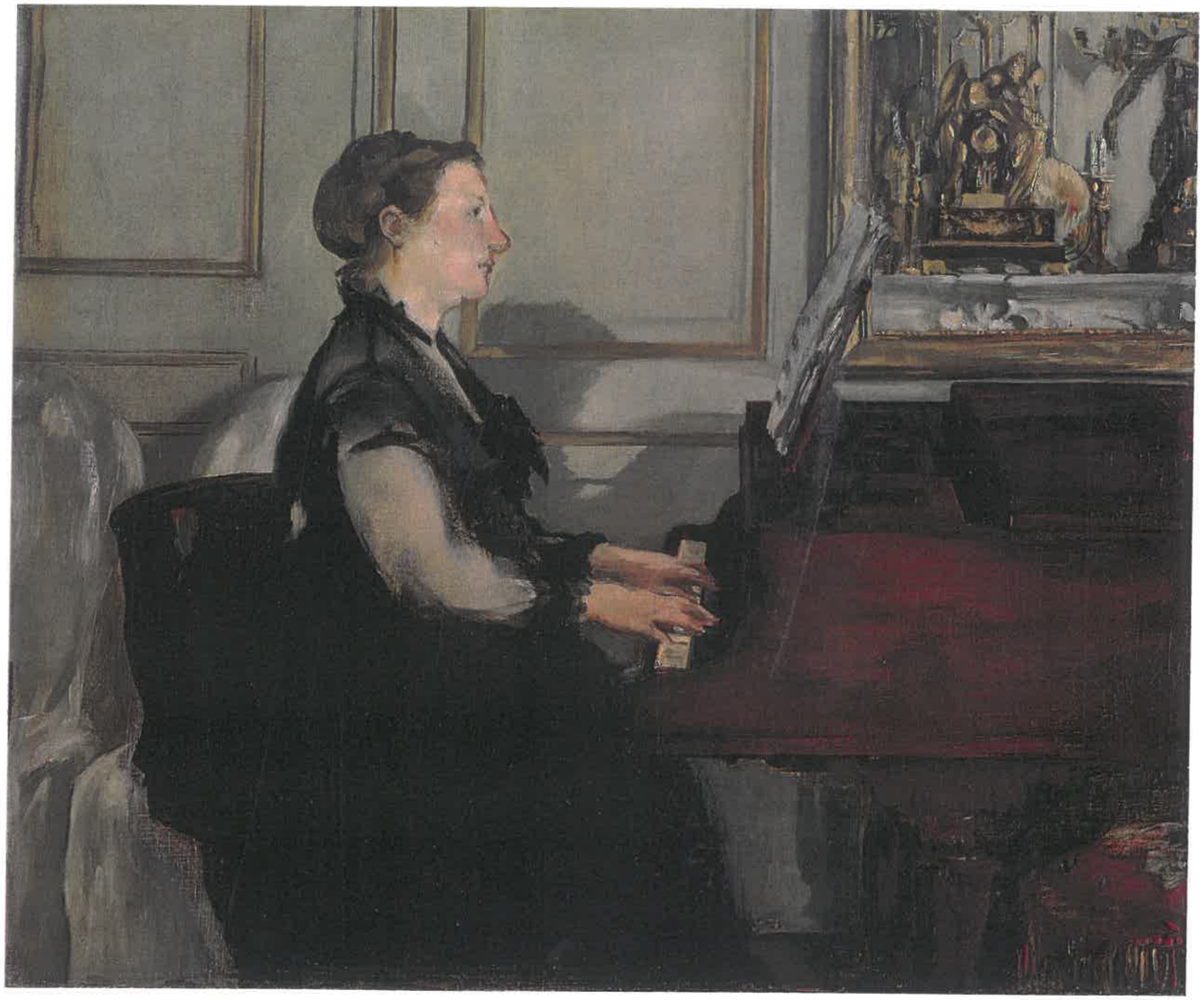


Fig. 37
Édouard Manet
Madame Manet at the Piano, 1868
Oil on canvas, 15 x 18¼ in. (38 x 46.5 cm)
Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

Fig. 38
Gabriel Metsu (1629–1667)
Woman Playing the Harpsichord
Oil on wood, 9⅜ x 7⅞ in. (23.9 x 19.9 cm)
Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris

Fig. 39
Engraving after Metsu, *Dutch Woman at the Harpsichord.* From Blanc, *Histoire de peintres de toutes les écoles, École hollandaise*

Fig. 40
Pierre-Auguste Renoir
Alfred Sisley, 1875–76
Oil on canvas mounted on composition board, 26⅛ x 21⅝ in. (66.4 x 54.8 cm)
Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Larned Coburn Memorial Collection, 1933.453, The Art Institute of Chicago

Fig. 41
Frans Hals
Portrait of a Seated Man, c. 1645
Oil on oak, 16¾ × 13 in. (42.4 × 33 cm)
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa,
Purchased 1969

Notes

Epigraph: "Et cependant quel intérêt n'auraient pas plus tard les portraits des hommes qui gèrent actuellement de la ville! Lorsque nous allons à Amsterdam, le tableau des *Syndics* nous empoigne. Pourquoi? Parce que c'est l'impression vraie d'une chose vue." Proust 1913, p. 95.

1. "Ces tableaux hollandais représentant la vie contemporaine des artistes font songer aussi très-naturellement à l'art de notre époque, . . . D'abord, ce qui est aujourd'hui sera de l'histoire demain; . . . Qui empêche de faire un chef d'oeuvre avec une assemblée de diplomates assis autour d'une table, de même que Rembrandt à fait un chef-d'oeuvre avec les *Syndics* de la corporation des drapiers? Avec un orateur à la tribune des deputés, un professeur au milieu de la jeunesse; avec une scène des courses, une sortie de l'Opéra, une promenade aux Champs-Elysées; ou simplement avec des hommes qui travaillent à n'importe quoi, des femme qui s'amusent à n'importe quoi." Bürger 1868, p. 436.

2. Théophile Thoré (1807–1869), known posthumously as Thoré-Bürger, was the prominent French art critic exiled for his radical republican activities after the 1848 Revolution. He used the pseudonym W. Bürger (John Citizen) from 1855 for publications on the art of the past and retained it after his return to France in 1860 for both art historical writings and art criticism. I will refer to him as "Thoré," while noting the authorship of W. Bürger where appropriate. For studies of his work, see, for example, Chaumelin 1867; Marguery 1926; Heppner 1938; Meltzoff, "Vermeer" 1942; Rebeyrol 1952; Grate 1959; and Jowell 1977, "Art Market" 1996, 1998, 2001, 2003.

3. "La vie, *la vie vivante,* l'homme, ses moeurs, ses occupations, ses joies, ses caprices. Les uns ont pris le citoyen en action pour la chose publique . . . ; les autres ont pris les familles chez elles, ou dans leurs distractions extérieures; ceux-ci les classes distinguées, ceux-là les classes laborieuses, où les classes excentriques. D'autres ont représenté le milieu où s'agite la vie commune, les mers et les plages, avec les episodes de l'existence maritime, si chère au pays; les campagnes et les forêts, avec les dompteurs de la terre et les dompteurs des animaux; scenes agrestes et scenes de chasse; les canaux et les ruisseaux, avec des moulins, des barques, des pêcheurs; les villes, places et rues, où la population circule avec toute sa variété. Partout l'animation, la vie présente, qui est aussi la vie éternelle,—l'histoire du people et du pays. Véritable histoire . . .

en images lumineuses et justes, une sorte de photographie de leur grand XVII siècle, hommes et choses, sentiments et habitudes,—les faits et gestes de toute une nation." Bürger 1858, pp. 322–23. (Thanks to Tim Ades for advice on the translation of this passage.)

4. "par un élan spontané du génie national." Bürger 1858, p. x.

5. Ibid., p. 326. This motto, coined in the 1840s, was derived from Pierre Leroux's quasi-religion *l'Humanité,* a democratic socialist doctrine that preached the fraternal future of mankind. On Leroux and Thoré, see Grate 1959; Jowell 1977, esp. pp. 23–92, 144–68; and MacWilliam 1993, esp. pp. 181–87.

6. "l'art hollandais est le premier qui ait renoncé à toute imitation du passé, et qui se soit tourné vers du neuf." Bürger, *Musées* 1860, p. xv.

7. There is a considerable literature on the historiographical sources of these ideas, some of which can be traced to Hegel. See Demetz 1963, pp. 97–115; or the summary in Chu 1974, esp. chap. 2. The frequent confusion of Flemish and Dutch Schools by French critics is damned by Thoré as "historical heresy," a phrase quoted from the Dutch author Westrheene 1857; see Bürger 1858, pp. 319–20.

8. On Thoré-Bürger's pivotal role in the changing canon of Dutch art, see Hecht 1998, pp. 169–73; and Jowell 2001, pp. 45–60.

9. Nineteenth-century appreciation of Dutch naturalism was undisturbed by theories of visual perception or iconographic research into allegorical meanings that later complicated and enriched the interpretation of Dutch art. On current controversies, see de Jongh 2000; and Franits 1997.

10. Charles Blanc (1813–1882) had a distinguished career as art historian, theoretician, critic, editor; he was twice appointed Director of Administration of Fine Arts and professor at the Collège de France.

11. On the importance of this publication, see Reff 1970.

12. Blanc 1861, vol. 1, pp. 18–19.

13. Henry Havard (1838–1921) was for a while an expatriate in Holland, where he worked as a journalist and art critic. His publications on seventeenth-century Dutch art included exhibition reviews and articles for the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* as well as volumes on the school in general. Havard 1879–81, 1882. For more on Havard, see Bakker 1986, pp. 29–32; Pickvance 1986, pp. 99–100, 135; and Hertel 1996, esp. pp. 85–92.

14. "c'est pour les Hollandais un titre de gloire impérissable que d'avoir été les premiers, parmi les modernes, à comprendre et à interpreter la nature." Havard 1872–73, p. 394; and Havard 1882, p. 190.

15. Havard 1882, p. 18.

16. Ibid., pp. 119–20.

17. Havard 1879–81, vol. 3, pp. 2–3. Havard argues that it was only in the Dutch and Venetian republics that the citizens' love and loyalty toward their own cities resulted in the portrayal of all aspects of urban scenes. "Par ordre d'émancipation, c'est donc en Hollande que cette peinture civique, urbaine, ou pour parler un langage plus courant, cette peinture de ville, a vu le jour tout d'abord. Nous l'y trouvons dès l'aurore de la liberté, c'est à dire, dès le commencement du XVIIè siècle."

18. Fromentin 1963, p. 131.

19. On Fromentin, see Meyer Schapiro's introduction to Fromentin 1963, pp. ix–xliv. Schapiro comments, pp. xxxvi–xxxvii: "In the defense of Impressionism (as of Realism in the generation before) the example of the Dutch painters had been a powerful argument. The art of the 1860's and 70's renewed a tradition of bourgeois painting that had been interrupted by the authoritative grand style of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The painter Boudin wrote that the people and the landscape of his own century were no less worthy subjects of painting than had been the Hollanders and Holland of the seventeenth. The actuality of color and brushstroke, light and atmosphere, outdoor painting and direct vision in the most recent art made the old works seem almost contemporary. It would have been impossible at this time to write about the Flemish and Dutch masters without hinting at the modern school."

20. van der Tuin 1948, pp. 79–116; see also Grate 1959, pp. 188–220; Jowell 1977, pp. 144–68; and Chu 1974, pp. 18–31. On the role of Dutch painting in the development of Barbizon artists, see Robert L. Herbert in Boston 1962, esp. pp. 18–19.

21. Chu 1974, esp. chaps. 4 and 5.

22. While some of these ideas are found in Thoré's earlier writings, he developed them further after seeing the great Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition in 1857; see Bürger 1857.

23. "la plus deliberée, la plus originale, la plus varieé, la plus revolutionnaire, la plus naturelle, et la plus humain à la fois; c'est assurément celle qui est la plus degagé du passé, qui adhere la plus à la nature, et qui par là signale le mieux une des tendances de l'art à venir." Bürger 1861, p. 258. These ideas, from his little-known *Salon* of 1861, are taken from an earlier essay, "Nouvelles Tendances de l'art" of 1857, first published in 1862 in the *Revue Germanique* (Bürger 1862) but more prominently in 1868 as the preface to the republication of his earlier *Salons;* see Thoré-Bürger 1868. It is worth mentioning that although especially renowned for his advocacy and elucidation of the Dutch School, Thoré's writings on the French, Spanish, and English Schools were also well known and influential. On the significance of his writings to Manet, see Fried 1996.

24. Paul Mantz, reviewing the republication of Thoré's *Salons* (see note 23 above), recalled how Thoré supported innovators, courageously celebrated the boldness of the new school, and believed in "the insulted Delacroix, the unknown Decamps, the prohibited Rousseau" (à Delacroix insulté, à Decamps méconnu, à Rousseau proscrit). Mantz 1868, p. 401.

25. See Jowell 1995, "Art Market" 1996, 2003. He once resorted to sending a resplendent fish still life by the then little-known Abraham Hendricksz van Beyeren for exhibition in the studio of the restorer-dealer Étienne François Haro (1827–1897), where it could be seen and admired by artists and amateurs. See Bürger 1864, pp. 312–13.

26. He found comparable villains in contemporary art, and his opposition to Italianate or Neoclassical landscape had been an issue in his art criticism of the 1840s, when he condemned the pernicious authority of Italianate art in French art. See Jowell 1977, esp. chap. 6, "French Art and the Italianate Tradition," pp. 117–43; and Jowell, "Géricault" 1996.

27. "mais l'art véritable n'a point de ces préoccupations futiles. L'art est plus spontané d'impression, plus franc dans ses resultants." Bürger 1858, pp. 82–83. For recent discussion of Thoré's role in "Dou's slide into obscurity," see Wheelock 2000, pp. 15–16. The reputations of these artists, demoted for various artistic vices, did not recover until well into the next century.

28. "les patient tricoteurs d'images longuement ruminées." See Thoré-Bürger 1870, vol. 2, pp. 514–15. As cogently argued by Jane Mayo Roos, a general connotation of the term *impression,* or painting *d'impression,* was well established by the 1870s, but she omits Thoré's significant contribution to the earlier critical debate with Blanc in the 1860s. See Roos 1996, pp. 162–64. More surprising is the absence of any reference to contemporary critical commentary about "the Old Master precedent for the extraordinary flowering of rapid painting in France during the second half of the nineteenth century" in the otherwise excellent essay by Richard R. Brettell in London, *Impression* 2000, p. 29.

29. Written soon after his return from exile, it included practical information about major public and private collections, not unexpectedly recommending his recently published *Musées* as the most reliable and informative guides to the Dutch School. See Bürger, "Petit Guide" 1860.

30. Rembrandt (*Slaughtered Ox*), Hobbema (*Watermill*), Ruisdael (*The Bush*, *Tempest*), Metsu (*Vegetable Market*, *The Virginal Lesson*), Van Goyen (*View of Dordrecht*), Van Ostade (*Family Portrait*), De Heem (*The Dessert*). For information on the mid-nineteenth-century holdings in the Louvre, see Villot 1853; see also Brejon de Lavergnée, Foucart, and Reynaud 1979, esp. Index 8, Provenances, pp. 188–97, for dates of acquisitions.

31. Fromentin 1963, p. 168.

32. "c'est ne pas ma faute si, dans toutes les collections, les hollandaise priment tout." Bürger 1867, p. 541. Two years later he commented on the increased commercial value on the art market of Dutch pictures of familiar, simple scenes. Bürger 1869, p. 6; see also Jowell, "Art Market" 1996, p. 124.

33. Paris 1874. On this important exhibition, see Mantz 1874.

34. See Jowell 1974; and Jowell 1989.

35. Such as Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Lebrun: "His works would sell for higher prices had he not produced so much, or painted so quickly; for a painting to fetch a high price, it is not sufficient that it bear the mark of genius, it must also be properly finished; or else, I must concede that that which has been quickly executed is similarly regarded and paid for. Advice to contemporary artists who do not base their reputations firmly on finished works and precious study" (Ses productions se seraient vendues beaucoup plus cher s'il avait pas tant produit, ni peint si vite: car, pour qu'un tableau soit payé fort cher, il ne suffit pas qu'on appercoive l'empreinte du génie, il faut encore qu'il soit finit; autrement, j'admets que cequi a été fait vite se regarde et se paie de meme. Avis aux artistes modernes, lorsqu'ils n'asseoient pas leurs reputations sur des ouvrages achevés et précieux d'étude). Lebrun 1792–96, vol. 1, pp. 71, quoted in Jowell 1974, p. 104.

36. "Il a tant peint! Il peignait si vite—et si bien! Il n'y a pas la moindre peinture de lui qui ne soit attirante pour les artistes et qui ne leur offer des enseignements. De lui, tout est instructif, ses défauts autant que ses qualités; car ses défauts sont toujours d'un grand praticien. Dans ses brusqueries exagérées, dans ses contrastes hasardés, dans ses négligences trop sans façon, il y a toujours la main d'un peintre généreusement doué, et même le signe d'un certain genie, assez superficiel il est vrai, et provoqué par l'aspect extérieur des choses, par le mouvement, la tournure, la couleur, l'effet, par ce qui remue et brille, plus que par les caractères secret et intimes de la vie,—assez vulgaire même, si l'on peut parler ainsi du génie,—mais franc et brave, irrésistible comme l'instinct." Bürger, *Études* 1860, p. 13.

37. "Vive étude, sabré de premier coup,—il n'en fait jamais d'autres. Tous ses coups de brosse marquent, lancés justement et spirituellement où il faut. On dirait que Frans Hals peignait comme on fait de l'escrime et qu'il faisait fouetter son pinceau comme un fleuret. Oh l'adroit bretteur . . . ! Parfois un peu téméraire sans doute, mais aussi savant qu'il est hardi." Ibid., pp. 13–14.

38. *Portrait of Descartes,* now considered a copy of small portrait in Copenhagen, see Slive 1970–74, vol. 1, pp. 164–65.

39. Bürger 1858 and *Musées* 1860.

40. See Chu 1987 for a fascinating account of the museum as a place of artistic pilgrimage.

41. Ibid., pp. 112–14, 130–41.

42. Private collection: illustrated in ibid., p. 124, fig. 7.8. See Sweet 1966, p. 27: "Mary Cassatt also visited Holland at this time, being chiefly interested in the works of Frans Hals. In Haarlem she copied his Meeting of the Officers of the *Cluveniers-Doelen*, of 1633, and managed to achieve the spirit and freshness of the original, without slavish imitation of each brushstroke. In later years she was proud of this copy and used to show it to young art students, assuring them that such an exercise was essential for their development." See also ibid., p. 195, for Cassatt's later advocacy of studying after Hals.

43. Morisot 1950, p. 127.

44. "Les deux mains unies ensemble sont merveilleuses. . . . On ne sait trop comment c'est fait, par quelques touches hardies qui accusent juste la forme et le mouvement." Bürger 1864, p. 299.

45. 50,000 francs at the Pourtalès sale in 1864 and 35,000 francs at the van Brienen sale in 1865, respectively. The latter is now considered to be replica; see Slive 1970–74, vol. 3, pp. 65–66, no. 123.

46. See Paris 1866. Both works were subsequently reproduced in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts:* the *Portrait of a Woman* in 1868 (Bürger 1868, 231) and *The Gypsy* in 1870, soon after it had entered the Louvre; see Mantz 1870, p. 396, where it is accompanied by a eulogistic description.

47. "dans les tons d'or, avec la sauvagerie de la première manière: un chef-d'oeuvre improvisé en quelques heures de vive lumière et de bonne humeur." Bürger 1868, pp. 435–37.

48. "Qu'un des plus vaillants portraitistes du monde, que Frans Hals reprenne sa place légitime!" Bürger 1867, pp. 536–51. Comte Mniszech owned approximately a dozen paintings attributed to Hals, eight of which are presently identifiable. Other collectors included Lord Hertford, Baron James de Rothschild, the Pereires, Oudry, Double, La Caze, and Lavalard.

49. Bürger 1868, pp. 444–47.

50. "La reputation de ce maitre devra beaucoup à l'école moderne qui le prise singulièrement et lui fait partout fête comme à un inspirateur. La vérité est qu'il représente un côté d'étude sain et fortifiant, qu'il ne ment point à sa vision, et que c'est le moment où jamais de suivre les voies sincères si l'on veut que la domaine de l'art français se fortifie pour s'aggrandir." Astruc 1866; first cited in Flescher 1978, p. 299.

51. The introduction to a large portfolio of reproductive etchings published in 1873 attributed Hals's popularity to the modern preference for "original creations marked by strong individuality" to more "considered and finished works, fruits of a more advanced culture, perhaps, but by the same token less spontaneous and less natural. The more a work of art reveals its initial inspiration, the more it springs freshly and vibrantly from the brain of the artist, the more it awakens our interest and sympathy" (les créations originales et frappés au coin d'une forte individualité bien audessus des oeuvres plus réflechies, plus travaillées, fruit d'une culture plus avancées, peut-etre, mais par la meme moins spontanées et moins naturelles. Plus ses productions trahissent l'inspiration première, plus fraiche et vibrante elle jaillessent du cerveau de l'artiste, et plus elle éveillent chez nous d'intéret et de sympathie." Vosmaer 1873, pp. 28–29. Vosmaer's text was translated into French, German, and English.

52. The critic Albert Wolff's complaint that Manet had put "water in his beer" provoked the painter Alfred Stevens to reply that it was "pure Haarlem beer." Quoted in Hamilton 1986, pp. 166–67.

53. Duret 1902, pp. 82–84. Belot was a habitué of the Café Guerbois; see Hamilton 1986, p. 165. Duret insisted that only the pose was reminiscent of Hals.

54. Courthion and Cailler 1960, p. 170.

55. From Degas's table talk at Berthe Morisot's, as recorded in a notebook and reprinted in Valéry 1989, pp. 81–83.

56. Fromentin is an interesting witness, since he was hostile to the Impressionists and occasionally criticized Hals as too "fashionable" or overly witty and showy, with too much "hand." See Jowell 1989, pp. 73–74.

57. "la hardiesse des parties pris de Franz Hals lui causa, en Hollande, une telle impression que, revenue à Paris, armé des tous ces souvenirs, il se décida à aborder franchement les divers aspects de la vie parisienne." Proust 1996, p. 88. Some years later (c. 1879) Manet wrote to the authorities offering to decorate the rebuilt Hôtel de Ville (destroyed during the Commune) with scenes of Paris, which would include such subjects as "Paris-Markets, Paris-Railways, Paris-Port, Paris-Underground, Paris-Races, and Parks" and a gallery around the ceiling with appropriate portrayals of "living men who in the civil realm have contributed or are contributing to the grandeur and richness of Paris" (J'aurais Paris-Halles, Paris-Chemins de fer, Paris-Pont, Paris-Souterrain, Paris-Courses et Jardins. Pour le plafond, une galerie autour de laquelle circuleraient dans les mouvements appropriés tous les hommes vivants qui, dans l'élément civil, ont contribué ou contribuent à la grandeur et à la richesse de Paris). It was signed Édouard Manet, "Artist painter, born in Paris" (Artiste peintre, né à Paris). Proust 1913, p. 94.

58. *Exposition aux Palais Bourbon aux profit des Alsaciens-Lorrains*, reviewed by Paul Mantz in Mantz 1874.

59. "Frans Hals est un moderne. Son esthétique, son coloris, son dessin, ses procédés, appartiennent à notre époque." The writer added that nothing could be more precious for young modern artists seeking to learn from the experience of a great master than a visit to the museum at Haarlem; such a pilgrimage would be "among artistic excursions one of the most fertile in observation, the most fruitful in instruction, the most attractive that we know" (l'une des excursions artistiques les plus fertiles en observation, les plus fécondes en enseignements, les plus attrayantes que nous connaissions"). Anon. 1883, p. 302.

60. Baxandall 1985, p. 60.

61. Although his claim to have been struck by Vermeer's *View of Delft* in 1842 is usually taken at face value, it seems to me to be wishful retrospective thinking. There is no evidence dating from those years, and in 1858 he was somewhat critical of the painting. See Jowell 1998.

62. Bürger 1866; republished in Blum 1946. Further on Thoré's "rediscovery" of Vermeer, see Meltzoff, "Vermeer" 1942; Jowell 1995; and Jowell 1998.

63. "l'artiste a plu, étonné, séduit; sa crane allure, les fines qualités de son observations, sa manière concise et sobre, sa chaleur de pinceau, ses harmonies délicates et souples,—cette entente de l'effet qui concentre tout l'intérêt sur les parties essentielles au sujet,—tout cela a frappé à première vue, et l'étude n'a fait que fortifier cette première impression si favourable. Tout le monde fêtera désormais l'intéressant Meer." Astruc 1866, quoted in Jowell 1998, pp. 37–38, 51 n. 9.

64. The four figure paintings were *Soldier with Laughing Girl* (The Frick Collection, New York), then in the Double collection; two works owned by Thoré, *Woman with a Pearl Necklace* (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin) and *A Young Woman Standing at a Virginal* (The National Gallery, London; fig. 26); and *The Geographer* (Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt).

65. These paintings—some of which remained in the hands of Thoré-Bürger's heirs (see Jowell 2003)—were included in the summary catalogue in Havard 1888.

66. Countering Francis Haskell's view of Thoré's attitude to Vermeer (in Haskell 1976, pp. 89–90), Henri Zerner and Charles Rosen have shown how Thoré compared aspects of Vermeer's handling to the contemporary avant-garde—such as the exaggerated impasto in the *View of Delft* or the prodigious light and bold color in the *Little Street*—"Nothing but a wall, and a few casements without the least ornament, But what color!" (Rien qu'un mur, et quelques ouvertures sans la moindre ornamentation. Mais quelle couleur!). Bürger 1866, p. 463; see Rosen and Zerner 1984, esp. pp. 192–202.

67. Fried 1996, pp. 105 and 497 n. 169. It has also been suggested that Degas may in part owe his use of the pictorial device of a picture within a picture

to Vermeer's example. Reff, *The Artist's Mind* 1976, pp. 91–94.

68. Jowell 1998, pp. 49–50.

69. Bürger, *Musées* 1860, pp. 70–72. For an interesting discussion of this painting, see Liedtke 2000, pp. 256–57.

70. "Il etait sensible au charme de la vie quotidienne exprimé avec tant de ferveur par les Flamands et les Hollandais. Il aimait tout particulièrement Terburg, de Hoog et surtout *la Dentellière* de Vermeer." Baudot 1949, p. 29, quoted in Ottawa 1997, p. 228. It is interesting that in his *Salon* of 1868, Thoré's recommendation of the skillful depiction of impalpable air around figures achieved by seventeenth-century Dutch artists is immediately followed by lyrical praise for Renoir's *Lise* (Folkwang Museum, Essen)—for its interplay of colored shadows: "The dress of white gauze, enriched at the waist by a black ribbon whose ends reach to the ground, is in full light, but with a slight greenish cast from the reflections of the foliage. The head and neck are held in a delicate half-shadow under the shade of a parasol. The effect is so natural and so true that one might very well find it false, because one is accustomed to nature represented in the conventional colors of bad painting. Does not color depend on the surrounding environment?" (La robe de gaze blanche, ceinte à la taille par un ruban noir dont les bouts tombent jusqu'à la terre, est en pleine lumière, mais légèrement verdacée par les reflets du feuillage. La tête et le cou sont tenus dans une delicate pénombre à l'abri d'un parasol. L'effet est si naturel et si vrai, qu'on doit le trouver faux, car on est habitué à se représenter la nature sous les couleurs conventionnelles de la mauvaise peinture. Est-ce que la couleur ne depend pas du milieu qui l'enveloppe?"). Thoré-Bürger 1870, p. 531.

71. The few Vermeers in Paris collections were dispersed in sales, while the three major figure paintings in Thoré-Bürger's own collection remained in the hands of his heirs until 1892. On Thoré-Bürger's collection, see Jowell 2003.

72. Havard 1872–73.

73. "Beaucoup d'entre ces personnages ne figurent là, en effet, que comme des taches heureuses. Ce sont des notes agréables dans un concert adorable de tonalités fines, délicates, fondues, enveloppées. Ils ne commandent pas le reste; rien ne leur est subordonné; chaque ton local, au contraire, a sa valeur proper et son accent voulu, et, s'ils jouent un rôle important dans cette mélodieuse symphonie, c'est par la tache qu'ils font, et non par l'idée qu'ils expriment." Havard 1883, pp. 213–14; and Havard 1888, p. 20.

74. By the twentieth century it was possible to mount an exhibition in which a wide range of paintings by subsequent artists were, as it were, bathed in Vermeer's light. See Paris 1966.

75. See esp. DeWitt 2003, pp. 1–14, where the composition of Manet's *Battle of Kearsage and Alabama* (1864; Philadelphia Museum of Art) is compared with Ludolf Backhuyzen's *Vessels on a Stormy Sea* (Musée du Louvre, Paris) and considered in the context of the Dutch marine tradition.

76. A moonlit schene by Aert van der Neer, which he evidently tried to sell in 1867. There was a thriving market for nocturnal views: between 1860 and 1880 approximately fifty were sold in Paris. See Paris 1983, cat. 118, esp. pp. 311–12; and Philadelphia 2003, p. 2.

77. Boudin copied Dutch art in 1849 in Paris and Belgium; Jongkind published etchings of *Six Views of Holland,* 1862; see Bakker 1986, pp. 25–26.

78. See Bakker 1986, pp. 22, 35 n. 29; and Huussen 1986, pp. 41–42, figs. 26, 27.

79. Bürger admired the "opulent painting" that had been finished in four days and predicted that it would confer immortality on its model, Camille. He described the *Road in Fontainebleau Forest* as "a superb sketch . . . effect of evening with the sun illuminating the great trees. A true painter can do just what he wants;" (une ébauche superbe . . . effet de soir, avec le soleil illuminant les grands arbres. Quand on est vraiment peintre on fait tout ce qu'on veut). Thoré-Bürger 1870, pp. 325, 285–86.

80. Christiane Hertel interestingly associates these with Havard's complex evocation of a Venetian-like colorfulness of contemporary Netherlands, later evolving into the innate, vigorous colorism of the Golden Age of Dutch art. Hertel 1996, pp. 88–92. See also Pickvance, in Amsterdam 1986, p. 135, cat. 19, who points out that the small vertical canvas *Footbridge* (Musée municipal des Ursulines, Macon) is dedicated to Henry Havard and caters to his friend's taste for traditional seventeenth-century Dutch painting.

81. "Il est des tableaux ou M. Monet arrive à contenter tout le monde, sauf lui-même peut-être; ce sont ceux qui ont été peints sous un jour discret, tamisé par un ciel chargé de vapeurs, interceptant en grande partie les radiations violettes: telles, cette *Vue prise à Rouen,* au ciel ambre, fondu, profond, qui semble détaché d'un tableau de Cuyp." Lostalot 1883, p. 346 (see drawing by artist on p. 345). Cuyp was much admired; see, for example, Mantz 1874, p. 294, on the impressive Cuyp landscapes exhibited at the Palais Bourbon.

82. See London 1992, pp. 94, 120, 162; and Lloyd 1981, p. 44.

83. However, there are some specific comparisons: De Heem's sumptuous *Still Life with Fruit* (fig. 84) is specifically cited in connection with Cézanne's still lifes of the 1880s and 1890s (see Shackelford 2001, p. 27), and Dutch still-life vocabulary is frequently incorporated by Manet in genre or portraiture. On the comparable rendering of material texture and shine in seventeenth-century Dutch art, see Pryzyblyski 2001, p. 31.

84. "[N]ous ne savons, jusqu'ici, comment la remplacer par un terme qui comprenne à la fois le gibier mort, animaux et oiseau, le poisson, . . . les fleurs et bouquets, les fruits, les vases et ustensiles, armes et instruments de musique, bijoux et ornaments divers, draperies et costumes, et les milles objets qu'on peut grouper pour en faire le prétexte d'une représentation colorée, amusante, sous le coup de la lumière. Nature morte est absurde. Est-ce que les fleurs ne vivent pas? Elles ont leur respiration et leur santé; elles sont gaies et brillantes, ou tristes et ternes; elles s'agitent sans cesse, quoi que presque imperceptiblement, se tournent vers la lumière, s'écartent pour laisser passer des branches perfides, s'infléchissent sous l'influence de la sécheresse, se gonflent et s'épanouissent sous la caresse d'un rayon. Les fleurs ne sont pas de la nature morte! Il n'y a point de nature morte." Bürger, *Musées* 1860, pp. 317–18. The notion of the unity of all things is derived from Pierre Leroux's philosophy *l'Humanité* (not from Franciscan thought, as improbably suggested in Baltimore 2000, p. 37).

85. Such as Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson* (Mauritshuis, The Hague) and Joos van Craesbeeck's *Smoker* (Musée du Louvre, then attributed to Adriaen Brouwer); see Chu 1974, pp. 42–43, figs. 71, 72.

86. See Krauss 1967; Paris 1983, no. 19; and Fried 1996, p. 147.

87. The painting, now in the Petit Palais, Paris, was then in a private collection in Rouen.

88. One example being the still life at the side of *Luncheon in the Studio* (fig. 30).

89. Suggested in Ottawa 1997, cat. 26.

90. Chu 1974, p. 60. On Degas's early copies of Rembrandt, see ibid., pp. 76–77; and Reff, "Copies" 1964, p. 251. It has also been suggested that the sense of momentary interruption in Degas's *Sulking: The Banker* (1869–71; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) may have been inspired by Rembrandt's *Syndics;* see Reff, *The Artist's Mind* 1976, p. 118. Paul Poujard later recalled Degas's comment, "In our beginnings, Fantin, Whistler and I we were all on the same road, the road from Holland"; see Degas 1947, p. 236.

91. Herbert 1988, pp. 66–69.

92. Havard 1882, pp. 191–92. Since the La Caze bequest (1869) the Louvre possessed four works by Van Goyen, and his works were increasingly sought after by collectors. On Van Goyen's rising reputation during the 1870s, see Mantz 1875, pp. 138–43.

93. "Wynants was the first, or one of the first to realize that any landscape, come across by chance, could inspire the painter, especially when it is a bit of his own country" (Wynants fut le premier ou un des premiers à s'apercevoir qu'une campagne quelconque, parcourue au hazard, peut inspirer le peintre, surtout quand cette campagne est une portion de sa patrie." Blanc 1869, p. 119; see also Havard 1882, pp. 197–98.

94. "Je n'ai pas eu le temps de t'écrire ce que j'ai éprouvé en voyant les chefs d'oeuvre de Rembrandt: c'est admirable, et a réflexion qui m'est venue après avoir vu non seulement les Rembrandt, mais les Frans Hals, les Van der Meer, et tant d'autres grands artistes, c'est que nous, modernes, nous avons raison de chercher, ou plutôt de sentir autrement, puisque nous somme autres et que et que du reste c'est un art tellement particulier d'une époque que c'est absurde d'essayer de marcher dans cette voie. Aussi, comme je te l'ai dit souvent, je me méfie des peintres adroits qui savant pasticher les vieux maîtres, je n'ai certainement pas la meme en ne faisant pas de chefs-d'oeuvre, regardent avec leurs yeux à eux. Comment te décrire les portraits de Rembrandt, les Hals et ce *Canal* de Van der Meer, chef d'oeuvre qui se rapproche des impressionistes; je suis revenue de Hollande plus que jamais admirateur des Monet, Degas, Renoir, Sisley. . . . Heureux les artistes qui voient et aiment la nature!" Pissarro 1989, p. 520.