



PIETER DE HOOCH IN DELFT

FROM THE SHADOW OF VERMEER

MUSEUM
PRINSENHOF
DELFT

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DELFT'S INFLUENCE ON PIETER DE HOOCH GREATER THAN THOUGHT

NEW INSIGHTS FROM MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH ASSOCIATED WITH THE EXHIBITION

The painter Pieter de Hooch was considerably more 'Delft' than had been thought. New research initiated by the Museum Prinsenhof Delft has revealed that the artistic climate of Delft, where De Hooch lived and worked from 1652, made it possible for the artist to undergo his unique development and become an innovator in painting. Between 1655 and 1658, he rapidly translated the achievements of a number of Delft painters of church interiors in their treatment of light and perspective into a new type of painting: the Delft courtyard. In doing so, De Hooch made greater use of existing Delft architectural elements than was previously assumed. Research has revealed, moreover, that Pieter de Hooch had Delft roots. During the past two years, six researchers cooperated on a multidisciplinary project initiated in association with the coming exhibition *Pieter de Hooch in Delft: From the shadow of Vermeer* (11 October through 16 February 2020) at the Museum Prinsenhof Delft.

RESEARCH BY ANITA JANSEN

Without the benefit of Delft's extraordinary artistic atmosphere, Pieter de Hooch would probably never have been the artist we now know. Between approximately 1645 and 1660, the city of Delft emerged as one of the leading artistic centres of the Netherlands. In 1655, after De Hooch had established himself as an artist in the early 1650s, he turned his attention to new genres, revealing for the first time his fascination for perspective and light. 1655 is a crucial year in De Hooch's oeuvre: in that year, he began to work as an independent master in Delft's competitive art market and had to distinguish himself with a new type of painting. De Hooch did so with remarkable swiftness: by around 1656, he was painting his now famous courtyards and rooms with views through. Within a few years, he had perfected this new direction and in 1658, he created his most innovative and finest paintings, demonstrating his exemplary command of perspective and effects of light. The comparative research of Anita Jansen, senior conservator of the Museum Prinsenhof Delft, has produced the first convincing evidence De Hooch was already inspired by Delft masters like Anthonie Palamedesz and De Hooch's brother-in-law Hendrick van der Burch in his early Delft years. Church interiors by Gerard Houckgeest, and particularly those by Hendrick van Vliet, are likely to have contributed to the radical change in De Hooch's oeuvre.

RESEARCH BY FRANS GRIJZENHOUT

For this project, the Museum Prinsenhof Delft asked Professor Frans Grijzenhout to study an important transitional moment in Pieter de Hooch's career: his period of flourishing in Delft, his move to Amsterdam in 1660 and his initial years there.

In his essay, Grijzenhout argues convincingly that Pieter de Hooch made use of – in his phrase – ‘a personal topography,’ first in Delft and a few years later in Amsterdam. De Hooch developed this new artistic strategy in Delft after 1655 and brought it with him to Amsterdam. Starting in 1655, he chose subjects in his immediate surroundings as a basis for his paintings. In Delft, those were simple bourgeois homes and courtyards, found in the neighbourhood of his probable residence on the north side of the Binnenwatersloot, between the Oude Delft and the city rampart. As a result, the same Delft motifs recur. Once in Amsterdam, he also employed this artistic strategy. At first, he lived just outside the city walls of Amsterdam and from that moment on the painter found inspiration for his genre scenes in his new environment. In these new paintings, we see a number of recurring parts of the interior of a small, simple house with a low ceiling. The Delft motifs were gone for good.

RESEARCH BY WIM WEVE

In his paintings, Pieter de Hooch reproduced certain Delft buildings with exceptional accuracy, including the Oude Kerk, the spires of the Nieuwe Kerk and the city hall. Architectural historian Wim Weve concluded in his research De Hooch made greater use of Delft architecture of the period to create his (more or less fictitious) cityscapes than was hitherto assumed. Weve was the first to seek out the exact locations of the viewpoints chosen by De Hooch for his 'cityscapes,' so we can now place these locations more readily. It appears that the painter often chose as his viewpoint the grounds of the former Sint Hiëronymusklooster (monastery of St Hieronymus), and in particular the part that could be reached from the south Sint Hiëronymuspoort (gate of St Hieronymus). He represented several buildings in the city from that vantage point. He may have positioned himself on a storey of a house on the St Hieronymus grounds, to depict the spires of the Nieuwe Kerk or the city hall as seen from that point. An interesting discovery in Weve's research is, finally, the identification of a house painted four times by the artist, which he must have observed from an outbuilding (no longer existing) of Oude Delft 153 or the property behind it.

RESEARCH BY JAAP VAN DER VEEN

Our limited knowledge of Pieter de Hooch and his relatives has been supplemented by archival research in Rotterdam, Delft, Leiden and Amsterdam. Research has revealed, then, his mother, Anneken Pietersdochter, was originally from Delft and Justus de la Grange, his most important source of commissions around 1650, was a distant relative. De Hooch's origins are less 'straightforward' than has been assumed. After his productive years in Delft, De Hooch was no less successful in Amsterdam. In the 1660s, he worked for distinguished clients, for whom he produced group portraits and interiors of the city hall, among other things. Documents reveal the social environment in which De Hooch and his wife moved in Amsterdam. The latest evidence he was alive dates from 1679. The date of his death has not yet been found. The Museum Prinsenhof Delft will now identify the year of his death as 'in or after 1679.'

RESEARCH BY DAVID DE HAAN

David de Haan studied the history of the appreciation on Pieter de Hooch's and the collection of his work. An important conclusion is that early on – from the second half of the 18th century – works from the period of De Hooch's flourishing in Delft were well liked and appear in Amsterdam collections. A distinction in monetary valuation was also soon evident between, on the one hand, Delft and early Amsterdam work and on the other hand, 'kortegaartjes' or 'guardroom scenes' (derived from corps de garde: paintings of soldiers and officers gambling, smoking and drinking) and work of the late Amsterdam period. The distinction we make today has its antecedents in history.

RESEARCH BY ANNA KREKELER

Anna Krekeler, paintings conservator at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, carried out extensive research on the materials and techniques of De Hooch's oeuvre. In this context, Krekeler investigated, among other things, ten of the painter's works with the advanced, non-invasive imaging technique MA-XRF (macro X-ray fluorescence) and assembled technical information about a total of 27 paintings. This research has resulted in new insights on De Hooch's painting techniques and use of materials that are both wide-ranging and in-depth. The results of this research will be presented during the press conference at the opening of the exhibition *Pieter de Hooch in Delft: From the shadow of Vermeer* (Wednesday, 9 October 2019).

MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

During the past two years, six researchers cooperated on a multidisciplinary project initiated in association with the coming exhibition on the work of Pieter de Hooch at the Museum Prinsenhof Delft. Art historians, an architectural historian and a historian cooperated on the research, together with the Rijksmuseum and the Delft University of Technology. The results will be published in the catalogue accompanying with the exhibition *Pieter de Hooch in Delft*.

RESEARCHERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO RESEARCH

Frans Grijzenhout Professor of Art History of the Early Modern Period, University of Amsterdam

Pieter de Hooch's Personal Topography: Delft and Amsterdam

David de Haan Curator, Museum Prinsenhof Delft

Pieter de Hooch and his Collectors (1650-2000)

Anita Jansen Senior curator, Museum Prinsenhof Delft

Pieter de Hooch's Early Oeuvre in the Context of his Contemporaries Reception, Inspiration, and Influence in the Period 1650-1660

Anna Krekeler Paintings conservator, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Pieter de Hooch's Painting Technique

Jaap van der Veen Historian

Profile of a Painter in Rotterdam, Delft, and Amsterdam

Wim Weve Former building archaeologist, Monumentenzorg Delft

De Hooch and Delft Topography

NATIONAL EXHIBITION PRICE

In 2017, the Museum Prinsenhof Delft received the Turing Foundation Art Award I for the best Dutch museum exhibition plan for 2018-2020. The Turing Foundation is the main benefactor of the exhibition.

BENEFICIARIES

The exhibition Pieter de Hooch in Delft is further made possible with support from the Municipality of Delft, the Dutch Government (an indemnity grant has been provided by the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands on behalf of the Minister of Education, Culture and Science), Mondriaan Fonds, Fonds 21, Fonds 1818, Rabobank, Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, Stichting Zabawas, DSM, De Laatste Eer, Best Western Museumhotels Delft, the Friends of Museum Prinsenhof Delft, Werkse!, Members of the Williams College Class of 1965, AAme Adviseurs, Gravin van Bylandt Stichting, Frans Mortelmans Stichting, Stichting Dorodarte, dr. Hendrik Mullerfonds, Stichting Stalpaert van der Wiele, Stichting voor Hulp aan Delftse Jongeren, mr. Th.J.H. Dröge notaris BV and Mecanoo Architecten.

Ticket sales for the exhibition *Pieter de Hooch in Delft: From the shadow of Vermeer* have started: www.pieterdehoochindelft.com

PRESS INFORMATION

http://bit.ly/PieterdeHooch_press

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