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978-0-521-44455-2 - Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community

Ann Jensen Adams

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### PUBLIC FACES AND PRIVATE IDENTITIES IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY HOLLAND

During the seventeenth century, Dutch portraits were actively commissioned by corporate groups and by individuals from a range of economic and social classes. They became among the most important genres of painting. Not merely mimetic representations of their subjects, many of these works create a new dialogic relationship with the viewer. In this study, Ann Jensen Adams examines four portrait genres – individuals, family, history portraits, and civic guards. She analyzes these works in relation to inherited visual traditions; contemporary art theory; changing cultural beliefs about the body, sight, and the image itself; and current events. Adams argues that as individuals became unmoored from traditional sources of identity, such as familial lineage, birthplace, and social class, portraits helped them to find security in a self-aware subjectivity and the new social structures that made possible the “economic miracle” that has come to be known as the Dutch Golden Age.

Ann Jensen Adams is associate professor of art history at the University of California, Santa Barbara. A scholar of Dutch painting, she curated the exhibition *Dutch Paintings from New York Private Collections* (1988) and edited *Rembrandt's "Bathsheba Reading David's Letter"* (1998). She has contributed essays to numerous exhibition catalogues and essay collections including *Leselust. Niederländische Malerei von Rembrandt bis Vermeer* (1993), *Landscape and Power* (1994), *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting: Realism Reconsidered* (1997), *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday* (1999), and *Love Letters: A Theme in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting* (2003) and published articles in *The Art Bulletin* and the *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*. She has received fellowships from The Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation; Ministry of Education and Science, The Hague, The Netherlands; The J. Paul Getty Trust; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Getty Research Institute; and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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PORTRAITURE AND THE PRODUCTION  
OF COMMUNITY



**ANN JENSEN ADAMS**

*University of California, Santa Barbara*



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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## CONTENTS

*List of Illustrations* ❧ vii

*Acknowledgments* ❧ xi

1. The Cultural Power of Portraits: The Market, Interpersonal Experience, and Subjectivity ❧ 1
2. Portraits of the Individual: Physiognomy, Demeanor, and the Representation of Character ❧ 59
3. Family Portraits: The Private Sphere and the Social Order ❧ 113
4. The History Portrait: Comprehending Self through Historical Narrative ❧ 158
5. Civic Guard Portraits: Personal Friendships and the Public Sphere ❧ 211
6. Portraits and the Production of Identity: Transitional Objects and Potential Spaces ❧ 259

*Notes* ❧ 273

*Bibliography* ❧ 341

*Index* ❧ 375

Cambridge University Press

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Ann Jensen Adams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Adriaen van Ostade, <i>Self Portrait with the de Goyer Family</i> , 1650–55   | 3  |
| 2. Crispijn van de Passe, frontispiece to <i>Le Miroir des plus Belles Courtisannes de ce Temps</i> , 1630, engraving  | 5  |
| 3. Attributed to Rembrandt van Rijn or a member of his immediate circle, <i>A Man in a Gorget and Plumed Cap</i> , ca. 1630–31   | 7  |
| 4. Johan Philip Koelman, watercolor copy after Bartholomeus van der Helst, <i>Portrait of Rijckloff van Goens, Gouverneur-generaal of the Nederlands Oost-Indië, with His Wife Jacobine Bartolomeuse and Their Two Sons Volckert and Rijckloff, and a Servant</i> , 1656 (copy 1858)           | 17 |
| 5. Dirck Jacobsz., <i>Portrait of Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostanen Painting a Portrait of His Wife Anna</i> , ca. 1550, detail of face of wife showing damage   | 33 |
| 6. Pieter de Jode after Adriaen van de Venne, illustration to poem “Zeeusche Mey-Clacht. ofte Schyn-Kycker” (Zeeland May-Plaint, or Looker-at-Appearances), 1612, engraved by Willem de Passe, published in Adriaen van de Venne, <i>Zeeusche Nachtegael, ende, Des selfs dryderley gesang</i> | 39 |
| 7. Roemer Visscher, “Ick geeft haer weder” in <i>Zinne-poppen</i> , Amsterdam, 1669 edition of 1614 original   | 43 |
| 8. Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>Posthumous Portrait of Jan Cornelisz. Sylvius, Preacher, Arm Outstretched</i> , 1646, etching, drypoint, and burin   | 45 |
| 9. Frans Hals, <i>Regents of the Old Men’s Alms House</i> , 1664   | 47 |
| 10. Theodor Galle after Johannes Stradanus, <i>Color Olivi</i> , in Johannes Stradanus, <i>Nova Reperta</i> , 1584, engraving  | 51 |
| 11. After Adriaen van de Venne, <i>Young Bride, the Painter and Her Admirer</i> in Jacob Cats, “Bruyt,” <i>Houwelick, dat is de gansche gelegentbeert des echten-staets</i> , 1628   | 53 |
| 12. Jan Lievens, <i>Portrait of Constantijn Huygens</i> , 1628   | 65 |
| 13. Thomas de Keyser, <i>Portrait of Constantijn Huygens</i> , 1627  | 69 |
| 14. Constantijn Huygens, <i>Self-Portrait</i> , 1622   | 71 |
| 15. Willem Jacobsz. Delff after Daniel Mijtens, <i>Portrait of Charles I</i> , 1628, engraving   | 72 |

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-44455-2 - Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community

Ann Jensen Adams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

16. After Adriaen van de Venne, <i>Aged Helen of Troy</i> in Jacob Cats, “Moeder,” <i>Hovwelyck, Dat is, De gansche gelegtheydt des echten staets</i> , 1625	73
17. Frans Hals, <i>Portrait of a Woman</i> , 1640	77
18. Thomas de Keyser, <i>Portrait of Frans van Limborch</i> , 1632	80
19. Thomas de Keyser, <i>Portrait of Geertruyd Bisschop</i> , ca. 1632	81
20. Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>Portrait of a Man</i> (possibly the poet Jan Harmensz. Krul), 1633	83
21. Diego Rodriguez Velázquez, <i>Portrait of Philip IV of Spain</i> , mid-1630s	89
22. Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>Portrait of Jan Six</i> , 1654	95
23. Thomas de Keyser, <i>Portrait of a Man Holding a Cittern, with a Young Girl</i> , 1629	99
24. Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp</i> , 1632	100
25. Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>Portrait of a Man Rising from His Chair</i> , 1633	102
26. Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>Portrait of a Young Woman with a Fan</i> , ca. 1633	103
27. Bartholomeus van der Helst, <i>Portrait of a Preacher</i> , 1638	105
28. Portrait Gallery, Palace Het Loo, The Netherlands	114
29. Unknown artist, <i>Memorial Board of the Family Lineage of the Lords van Swieten</i> , 1552 copy of 1455 original	115
30. Dirck Dircksz. Santvoort, <i>Family of Dirck Jacobsz. Bas</i> , ca. 1637	116
31. Willem de Passe, <i>Frederik V and Elizabeth Stuart, King and Queen of Bohemia, with Their Seven Children, James I and Queen Anne, Charles I, and Charles's Three Other Siblings</i> [“Triumphus Jacobis Regis”], ca. 1624	117
32. “Elizabeth and the Four Virtues,” title page to <i>The holi bible</i> , 1569	121
33. Simon de Passe, “James I, King of England, enthroned,” frontispiece to <i>Serenissimi et potentissimi Principis Iacobi, Dei gratia, Magnae Britanniae, Franciae, et Hiberniae Regis, fidei defensoris, opera, edita ab Iacobo Montacuto, Wintoniensi Episcopo, &amp; sacelli regij decano</i> , 1619 [i.e., 1620]	123
34. Willem Jacobsz. Delff after Michiel van Miereveld, <i>Frederik V, Elector Palatine, King of Bohemia</i> , 1622, engraving	129
35. Willem Jacobsz. Delff after Michiel van Miereveld, <i>Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia</i> , 1623, engraving	129
36. Crispijn van de Passe the Elder, frontispiece to Thomas Scott, <i>Vox Regis</i> , 1624	133
37. Willem de Passe, <i>Frederik V and Elizabeth Stuart, King and Queen of Bohemia, with Their Ten Children, James I, Queen Anne, Charles I and Henrietta Maria, and Charles's Three Other Siblings</i> [“Triumphus Jacobis Regis”], n.d., engraving	139
38. Jurriaen Jacobson, <i>Portrait of the Family of Vice Admiral Michiel de Ruyter</i> , 1662	143
39. Bartholomeus van der Helst, <i>Family Portrait in a Landscape</i> , 1647	145
40. Artist unknown, formerly attributed to Jurriaen Jacobson, <i>Willem van der Zaen</i> (1621–69) and <i>His Fiancée Aegje van der Eyck</i> (1633–1703)	149

Cambridge University Press

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Ann Jensen Adams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

41. Hendrick Berckman, <i>Vice-Admiral Michiel Adriaensz de Ruyter</i> , 1660	151
42. Hendrick Berckman, <i>Anna van Gelder</i> , 1660	151
43. Werner van den Valckert, <i>Christ Blessing the Children with the Family of Michiel Poppen</i> , 1620	162
44. Hendrick de Keyser, "De Suyder Kerck, Amsterdam," from Cornelis Danckerts, <i>Architectura Moderna ofte Bouwinge van onsen tot . . . geden by den zeer-varmaerden vernuftten Mr. Hendrick de Keyser</i> , 1631	163
45. Geertgen tot Sint Jans, <i>Lamentation</i> , ca. 1470–75	165
46. Johannes Horstok, <i>Woman Admonishing a Young Boy</i> , late 1700s	172
47. Werner van den Valckert, <i>Self-Portrait</i> , 1612, etching and drypoint	173
48. Sebastiano Serlio, "Vander Perspectiven," <i>Het eerste [-vijfde] boeck van de architecturen Sebastiani Serlij</i> , 1616	179
49. Jan de Bray, <i>Christ Blessing the Children with Pieter Braems and His Family</i> , 1667	181
50. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, <i>The Continenence of Scipio: Wouter Willemsz. Oortboorn and His Wife Christina van Dien</i> , 1658	183
51. Adam van Vianen, <i>Silver Beaker</i> , 1614	184
52. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, <i>The Continenence of Scipio</i> , n.d.	185
53. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, <i>The Continenence of Scipio</i> , 1659	186
54. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, <i>The Continenence of Scipio</i> , 1669	187
55. Lucas van Valckenborch, <i>Archduke Matthias as Scipio</i> , 1580	189
56. Karel van Mander, <i>The Continenence of Scipio</i> , 1600	193
57. Anthony van Dyck, <i>The Continenence of Scipio</i> , ca. 1620–21	195
58. Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>Historical Scene</i> , 1626	199
59. Gerard de Lairesse, <i>The Continenence of Scipio</i> , 1668	201
60. Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>Company of Captain Frans Banning Cocq and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburch (The Nightwatch)</i> , 1642	213
61. Thomas de Keyser, <i>Officers and Men of the Company of Captain Allaert Cloeck and Lieutenant Lucas Jacobsz Rotgans</i> , 1632	219
62. Cornelis Ketel, <i>Company of Captain Dirck Rosencrans and Lieutenant Pauw</i> , 1588	221
63. Attributed to Thomas de Keyser, <i>Drawing for the Company of Captain Allaert Cloeck and Lieutenant Lucas Jacobsz Rotgans</i> , ca. 1630, pen and wash drawing	223
64. Attributed to Thomas de Keyser, <i>Drawing for the Company of Captain Allaert Cloeck and Lieutenant Lucas Jacobsz Rotgans</i> , 1630, pen and wash drawing	223
65. Attributed to Isaac Claes van Swanenburg, <i>Study for a Militia Company of Thirty-eight Men</i> , ca. 1600, pen and wash drawing	225
66. Dirck Jacobsz., <i>Rot of Amsterdam Kloveniers</i> , 1529 (central panel), and 1552 (side panels)	227
67. <i>Plundering of the house of Rem Bisschop, on the Single, to the north of the Bergstraat</i> , n.d.	234
68. <i>Plundering of a Remonstrant Church on the Oude Schans</i> , 1626, n.d.	235
69. Jan Tengnagel, <i>Company of Captain Gerrit Dircksz. van Beuningen</i> , 1613	239

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-44455-2 - Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community

Ann Jensen Adams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

---

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 70. Jacob Lyon, <i>Company of Captain Jacob Pietersz. Hoogkamer and Lieutenant Pieter Jacobsz. van Rijn</i> , 1628    | 244 |
| 71. Nicolaes Eliasz. Pickenoy, <i>Officers of the Company of Jan van Vlooswijk and Lieutenant Gerrit Hudde</i> , 1642 | 245 |
| 72. Groundplan of the Groote Sael of the Kloveniersdoelen with the location of the paintings                          | 246 |
| 73. Govert Flinck, <i>Four Governors of the Kloveniersdoelen</i> , 1642   | 247 |



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-44455-2 - Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community

Ann Jensen Adams

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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