

Rembrandt, the Late Works: Thoughts on an Exhibition

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It is a daunting task to speak on Rembrandt before such respected colleagues, many of whom have devoted considerable time to thinking, looking, and writing about the man and his works. Many of you are also lenders to this great exhibition, and now have the experience of seeing your treasured paintings, drawings or prints in a very different context. *Rembrandt: the Late Works* presents a distinct view of one particular phase of Rembrandt's work: it excludes questions of attribution, chronology and biographically-led pathos to focus on some of the broader formal and iconographic currents that seem to guide Rembrandt's production between the early 1650s and his death in 1669. Interpreting this material for both the scholar and the wider public posed a number of challenges but also yielded great rewards. This talk will address the concepts underlying the exhibition's organization, the selection of works, the display and interpretive materials, and reflect on the success (or failure) of these strategies.

About Betsy Wieseman

Betsy Wieseman is curator of Dutch and Flemish Paintings 1600–1800 at the National Gallery. She received her doctorate from Columbia University with a dissertation on the 17th-century Dutch painter Caspar Netscher. She joined the National Gallery in 2006 from the Cincinnati Art Museum (Ohio), where she was Curator of European Painting and Sculpture. Previously, she held curatorial posts at the Allen Memorial Art Museum (Oberlin College, Ohio) and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. In addition to the exhibition *Rembrandt: the Late Works*, she has (co-) curated exhibitions on the oil sketches of Peter Paul Rubens, images of women in the art of Johannes Vermeer and his contemporaries, music in 17th-century Dutch genre paintings, and on the technical examination of paintings in the collection of the National Gallery. Betsy has contributed to numerous publications and exhibition catalogues in the field of Netherlandish painting, and is currently working on a study of Sir Robert Peel (1788–1850) as a collector.