

The Works of Johannes Vermeer

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Learning





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Introduction

Johannes Vermeer was a Dutch artist. Like Rembrandt, he was a Golden Age painter. Vermeer is known as the master of light. His paintings have beautiful light and vivid colors.

↪ Dutch people are from the Netherlands.



Lady Writing a Letter with Her Maid by Vermeer (c. 1670)

Allegory of the Catholic Faith by Vermeer (c. 1670-1672)



*Jesus at the Home of
Martha and Mary by
Vermeer (c. 1654)*



Vermeer started painting in the early 1650s. At first, he painted stories from the Bible or from myths. Later, he began painting everyday life. These became his most famous works. *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is one of these.



↗ *Girl with a Pearl Earring*
by Vermeer (1665)



Audio

Early Life and Training

Johannes Vermeer was born in 1632 in Delft, the Netherlands. Delft was a growing town with many artists and artisans. Johannes's father was a weaver.

A weaver
makes cloth.



An artisan skillfully
makes things by hand.





You can eat dinner and stay the night in an inn.

The Vermeer family had a lot of money. As well as selling cloth, they owned an inn. They also sold art. In 1652, Vermeer's father died. Johannes inherited the family businesses.

Selling art was one of the family businesses.

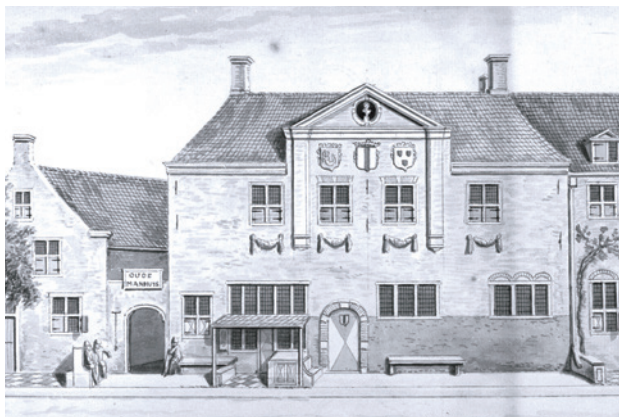




Delft, the Netherlands

However, Vermeer didn't just work at the family businesses. He became a painter, too. In 1653, he registered as a master painter in Delft.

Painters had to register with the Guild of Saint Luke in Delft.



↪ *Becoming a Painter* by Jean-Baptiste van Eycken (1825-1827)—Beginning artists had to train with masters.

Little is known about Vermeer's early art training. At that time, artists trained for four to six years to be masters. However, there is no art information about Vermeer before 1653.



Usually, beginning artists registered the name of their masters.



It is possible Vermeer studied art in another country.
It's also possible he trained in a different Dutch city.
Vermeer might have gone to the Utrecht School. Artists
from Utrecht had a vivid
and real way of painting.

Many Dutch artists
traveled to Italy or
France to train. ➔

*Officer with a Laughing
Girl by Vermeer (c. 1657)* ➔

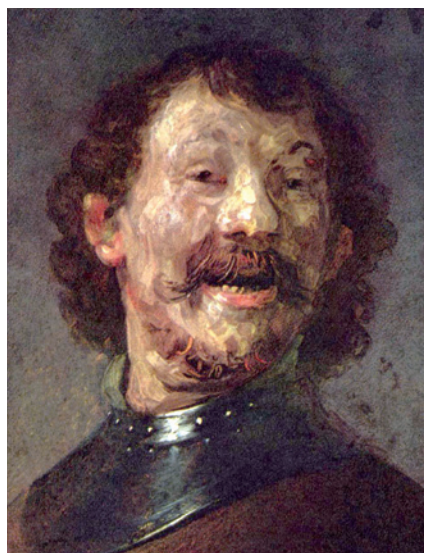




Emotions are how
people feel.

In Amsterdam, Vermeer probably saw Rembrandt's work. Rembrandt's paintings showed a lot of emotions. Rembrandt also had a special way of painting light.

The Laughing Soldier by Rembrandt (c. 1629-1630) clearly shows the emotion of happiness.





Diana and Her Companions
by Vermeer (c. 1654)

You can see both of these styles in Vermeer's early works. We don't know where Vermeer trained. However, people think artists from the Utrecht School inspired Vermeer.

The Lute Player by Dirck van Baburen (1622)—a painter from the Utrecht School

