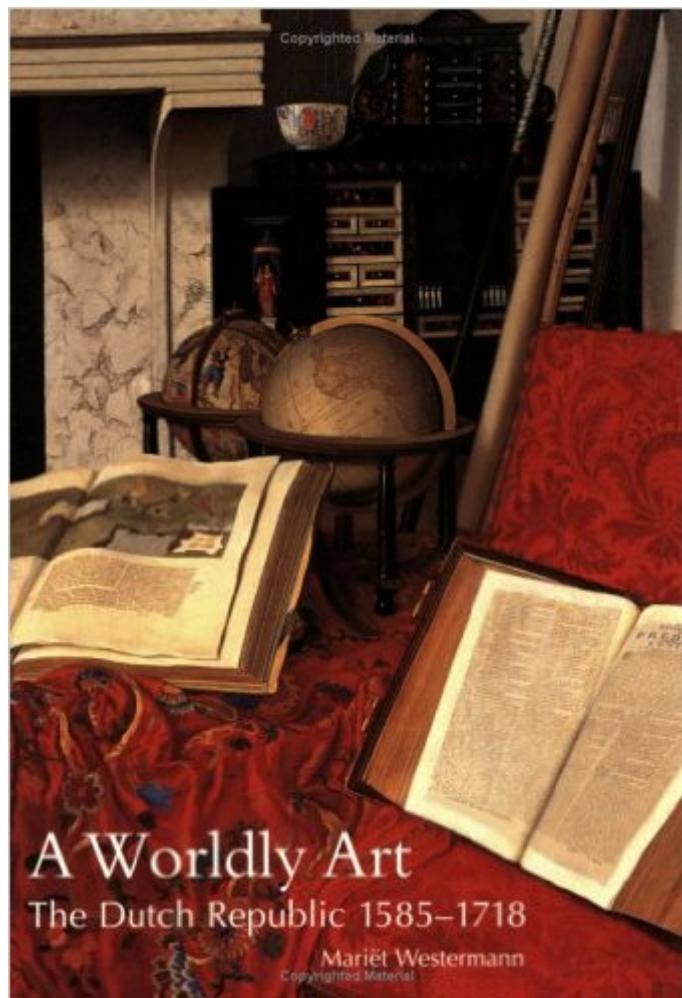


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A Worldly Art: The Dutch Republic, 1585-1718



Synopsis

Newly independent in 1585, the increasingly prosperous and politically powerful Dutch Republic experienced a tremendous rise in the production of artwork that was unparalleled in quantity, variety, and beauty. Now back in print, this classic book (originally published in 1996) examines the country's rich artistic culture in the seventeenth century, providing a full account of Dutch artists and patrons; artistic themes and techniques; and the political and social world in which artists worked. Distinguished art historian Mariët Westermann examines the "worldly art" of this time in the context of the unique society that produced it, analyzing artists' choices and demonstrating how their pictures tell particular stories about the Dutch Republic, its people, and its past. More than 100 color illustrations complement this engaging discussion of an extraordinary moment in the history of art.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Mariët Westermann is a Dutch-American art historian who earned a Ph.D. from the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University with a dissertation on Jan Steen and who has gathered extensive experience as an academic researcher, curator, and arts administrator. She has also written a dossier on Vermeer for the Rijksmuseum and contributed a fine book on Rembrandt, as well as various entries in exhibition catalogues. She has presented here --despite the contorted title of the American edition (the British edition calls it what it is, "The Art of the Dutch Republic, 1585-1718")--a well articulated and straightforward introduction to its subject. There are many more lavishly illustrated and detailed books devoted to this topic, but in terms of compactness, accessibility, and

balance between illustration and text, this is probably the most useful one we currently have. The temporal parameters are those traditionally set for the period, 1585 being the year that Antwerp was recaptured for the Spanish Netherlands and of the exodus of Protestant population to the North, and 1718 seeing the publication of the first volume of Arnold Houbraken's retrospective collection of biographies of the Netherlandish artists. Sandwiched between those years was the celebrated "Gouden Eeuw," the golden age of Dutch art, and all the major themes that arise in connection with the artistic world of the young Republic are touched on in summary form in this lively and quickly moving book. Her first chapter deals with making and marketing art and discusses such topics as how the restructuring of the old guild system created a hierarchy of art workers to explore and exploit new genres and techniques.

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