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## The National Gallery of Art to Launch NGA Online Editions, an Interactive Way to Explore Its Collection



NGA Online Editions

Washington, DC—On April 24th, the National Gallery of Art will debut an innovative digital initiative with the launch of Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.'s Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century. This first release in NGA Online Editions is part of an ongoing effort to digitize and provide open access to the Gallery's permanent collection catalogs and will eventually document more than 5,000 paintings, sculptures, and decorative arts. Users will be able to access the web-based, interactive book at <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/research/online-editions.html>.

"We set out on this initiative knowing that there is no one way of presenting scholarly content online," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "As a public institution, our response was to create an online environment that is fully integrated with our website and will allow specialists and art lovers from all over the world to skim, swim, or dive into rich areas of our permanent collection. This first release welcomes a world of scholars, students, and those serious about art to study and enjoy the nation's Dutch painting collection."

Additional releases on other areas of the Gallery's collection are in process, among them *Italian Paintings of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, *American Modernism*, *Italian Paintings of the Sixteenth Century*, *Renaissance Plaquettes*, and *French Paintings of the Nineteenth Century*.

The creation of NGA Online Editions was made possible by a generous grant from the Getty Foundation. As part of the Getty's Online Scholarly Catalogue Initiative (OSCI), the Gallery and eight other museums were tasked with finding new ways to provide authoritative information in fully accessible, user-friendly online settings.

The other participating institutions include the Art Institute of Chicago; the Arthur M. Sackler and Freer Gallery of Art; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Seattle Art Museum; Tate Gallery; the Walker Art Center; and the J. Paul Getty Museum. In launching its Getty-funded project, the Gallery aligns itself with a set of entirely new models for art historical research and education.

Find out more about the Getty Foundation's Online Scholarly Catalog Initiative (OSCI) here: <https://www.getty.edu/foundation/initiatives/current/osci/index.html>

### About the Project

*Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century* by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., curator of northern baroque paintings at the National Gallery of Art, had its first life as a traditional hardcover book in 1995. In the years that followed, the collection of Dutch paintings expanded through important acquisitions; new research was conducted on many of the paintings; still others underwent

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conservation treatment.

By the time the book went out of print in 2004, Wheelock and his colleagues in the Gallery's publishing office were already thinking about new, 21st-century ways of updating, enhancing, and presenting this ever-broadening collection to scholars and the public alike. After receiving the grant in 2009, a team of curators, editors, technical leads, web producers, conservators, photographers, and archivists further developed these ideas into a catalogue that would be fully embedded in the Gallery's website and, at the same time, serve as a platform for an entire online series devoted to the permanent collection.

"At first this digital adventure was as unfamiliar to me as, I suspect, the 17th-century Netherlands can be for the general public," said Wheelock. "I am enormously grateful to the Getty Foundation for allowing us to share ideas with our OSCI colleagues, while honing tools and experiences that uniquely suit our collection and institution."

### Key Details and Features

All NGA Online Editions will provide free and open access to featured collections and include an introductions by curators, illustrated scholarly entries (each preceded by a short overview), biographies of the artists, technical summaries, a complement of related essays, and rich media—in this case a series of video tours of the Dutch paintings galleries led by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. Other important features of the site include:

- **A customized reading environment:** An adjustable split-screen "reader mode" allows users to view scholarly text alongside images, notes, and comparative figures or to view them in line with the text.
- **Compare and explore images:** An image-comparison tool enables users to view primary and comparative images side by side or to explore technical images via overlay and cross-fading techniques.
- **Ease of research:** The NGA Online Editions toolbar provides pre-formatted citations for an object or biography, easy export, and quick access to archived pages.
- **Archived versions and permanent URLs:** Immediate access to PDFs of earlier versions and the assurance of permanent web addresses are a convenience to students and scholars alike.
- **Enhanced search capabilities:** An interactive search index is driven by an evolving list of terms particular to each area of the collection.

NGA Online Editions presents the same authoritative, peer-reviewed scholarship found within the Gallery's bound volumes but enriched with customized tools for a more dynamic research experience.

### General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Avenue NW, and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/Collection/modern-art-during-renovation.html>.

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's Web site at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov). Follow the Gallery on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt) and on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/ngadc](http://www.twitter.com/ngadc).

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items

that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

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