

WHAT THE DUTCH LIKE

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издательство «арка»



ПОСВЯЩАЕТСЯ УЧИТЕЛЬНИЦЕ
ТАТЬЯНЕ БОРИСОВНЕ ЖУКОВОЙ

ADAPTED FOR UNA AND EVA

Nika Dubrovsky

WHAT THE DUTCH LIKE

A DRAWING BOOK ABOUT DUTCH PAINTING

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WITH PAINTINGS FROM THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM,
SAINT-PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

Adapted by
Eugene Ostashevsky

PAINTINGS

YOU SEE 'EM
IN A MUSEUM
BUT



ARE YOU ALLOWED TO PLAY WITH
PAINTINGS? DRAW ON THEM? DRAW
IN THEM? DRAW YOURSELF IN THEM?
DRAW YOURSELF INTO THEM? ARE YOU
ALLOWED TO PLAY WITH THE PEOPLE
IN THE PAINTINGS? TO DANCE, MAKE
FACES, AND THROW SNOWBALLS AT THEM?
IN THIS BOOK YOU ARE!

On weekends my mother took me to
the Hermitage, a vast museum in the
Russian city of Saint-Petersburg,
that once was a palace for princes
and princesses. I especially liked to
see little paintings of people doing
things I understood — dancing,
skating, playing games. They came
from Holland, a country where Dutch
people live.

I also was little back then. That is
why, to me, the paintings were large,
the galleries went on and on, and the

whole palace looked endless, like two
mirrors set face to face. Much later,
when I too had turned into a mother
and an artist, I thought up this book.
It's a book that answers the question
I anxiously asked as a child — “Am
I allowed?” — with an “Of course
you are!”

My book will show you parts of
Dutch paintings in the Hermitage.
I also drew and I wrote in it — but
I left lots and lots of blank space for
you. Draw in it! Write in it! Paint it!
Color it! Now it's your book, and it's up
to you to make it a unique work of art.

The end of this book tells you what
painters and paintings I included.

THIS BOOK DRAWS YOU INTO THE
VAST WORLD THAT THE DUTCH
DISCOVERED FOR US. IT IS THE
WORLD AS OBSERVED NOT BY
A GOD OR A KING, BUT BY AN
ORDINARY PERSON — THE SAME
AS YOU AND ME.

Nika Dubrovsky





I MADE A FACE. NOT MY OWN FACE.
I MADE THE FACE OF SOMEBODY ELSE.
I DREW SOMEBODY MAKING A FACE.
CAN YOU DRAW SOMEBODY MAKING A FACE?

THEY LIKED TO MAKE FACES,

ESPECIALLY IN PICTURES!

They were the aces of faces. Silly faces, scary faces, sad faces, smiley faces. They knew how to face themselves, alright! They faced themselves in pictures.

“Who am I, really?”



THEY LIKED TO DANCE

ON HOLIDAYS OR OFF.

If the day was no holiday, they would just party without a cause. And on a day with no parties (such days were rare), someone might start dancing in the middle of the street... and, soon enough, the whole town was getting down! “When in Holland, make holidays,” said the people of Holland.



AND WHAT ARE YOUR DANCERS DOING?
ARE THEY PRANCING, ARE THEY FLYING, ARE THEY
FALLING, ARE THEY SPINNING IN THE AIR,



ARE THEY STOMPING ON THE GROUND,
ARE THEY HUFFING, ARE THEY CLAPPING,
ARE THEY MAKING NO SOUND?

THEY LIKED TO GROW FLOWERS,

ESPECIALLY TULIPS.

The Dutch took to growing tulips because tulips are beautiful. They took to selling tulips because they were poor. Tulips became expensive. Then they took to buying and selling tulips because tulips were becoming even more expensive. The Dutch became rich. But then they stopped buying tulips, because why would you buy something just because it is expensive? Duh! The Dutch became poor again.

DRAW SOMETHING THAT YOU LIKE
MORE THAN MONEY.



THEY LIKED FIGHTS

IN TIGHTS!

I don't know if they fought all the time or if they just thought fights look good in paintings, the way we think they look good in movies. Dutch people in paintings pull other Dutch people in paintings by the hair, hit other Dutch people in paintings with fists, and even try to poke them with knives.



DRAW DUTCH PEOPLE
SEPARATING DUTCH PEOPLE
WHO ARE FIGHTING
DUTCH PEOPLE...



BUT FAILING AND STARTING
TO FIGHT DUTCH PEOPLE.

THEY LIKED FISH,

ESPECIALLY HERRING.

How they loved herring! They loved herring a lot. They even held an Annual Herring Test where people stuck fish in their ear and said they were “heart” of herring.



I HATE HERRING. WHAT I “HEART” IS CAKE.

I ESPECIALLY “HEART” MAGIC CAKE.
IT'S MAGIC BECAUSE WHEN YOU CUT A SLICE OFF IT, IT GROWS
RIGHT BACK AGAIN. DRAW MY CAKE ALL OVER THE PAGE!
PUT ICE CREAM ALL OVER IT, AND CHOCOLATE, AND BERRIES, AND...
MAYBE HERRING?



THEY LIKED HOLLAND.

**THEY CALLED IT “THE CITY ON THE HILL”
EVEN THOUGH IT WAS FLAT.**

The Dutch thought they were much more normal than other people. They thought the people around them were just weird. Like, why weren't they Dutch?

DRAW BEST FRIENDS WHO ARE NOT
LIKE EACH OTHER.



I DREW PEOPLE WHO DON'T LOOK LIKE OTHER PEOPLE.
THEY TURNED OUT TO LOOK A LITTLE LIKE ALIENS.
BUT WHY CAN'T YOU BE FRIENDS WITH ALIENS?





THEY LIKED ICE-SKATING

ON ICE OR IN PICTURES.

Holland is cold in winter and, at the time when Dutch people loved painting, there were no televisions or computers (which is why they loved painting), so in winter everyone who wasn't a painter went ice-skating and everyone who was a painter painted people ice-skating.



I THINK THE LINES AND CURLS SKATES LEAVE
ON ICE ARE A KIND OF WRITING IN A LANGUAGE
I DON'T KNOW. WRITE SOMETHING
IN A LANGUAGE YOU DON'T KNOW.





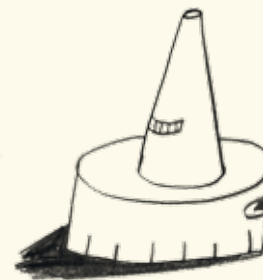
I DREW OBJECTS OF THE KIND
A MAGICIAN MIGHT OWN.



THEY LIKED SIMPLE THINGS

AND PUT THEM IN PICTURES CALLED STILL LIVES.

A still life could show food, flowers, musical instruments, books, clocks, candles, and so on. Food eventually gets eaten, flowers wilt, musical instruments play music, book outlive their authors, clocks count the hours, candles go out. A still life is a picture of time.



DRAW SIMPLE OBJECTS THAT ARE SECRETLY MAGICAL.

THEY LIKED TO BE WITH FAMILY

AND EVERYBODY IN IT.

They loved all their relatives,
even ones they didn't like.



DRAW YOUR FAMILY.
INCLUDE RELATIVES THAT DON'T EXIST.

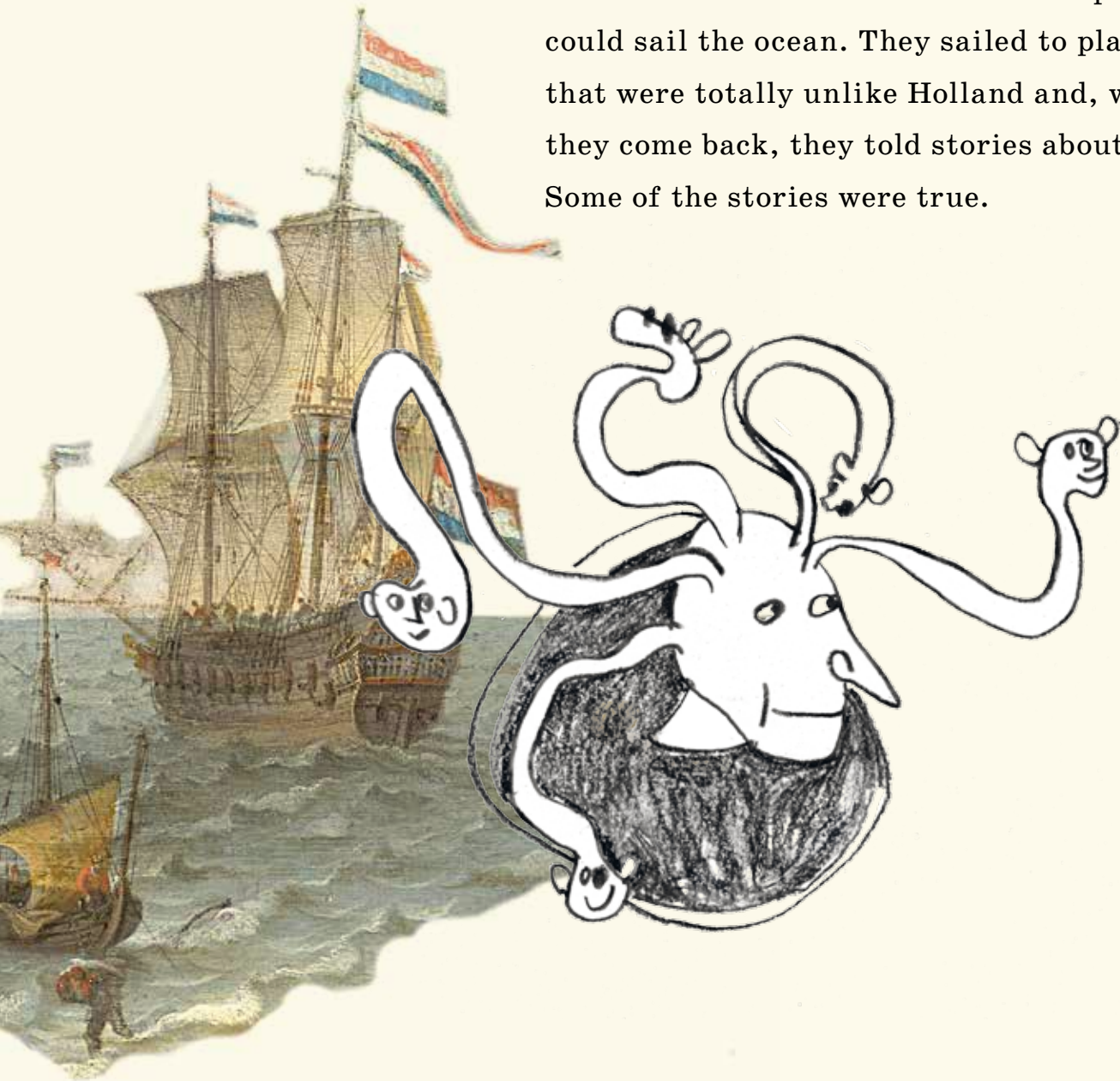


LIKE YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER,
YOUR THIRD AUNT THREE TIMES REMOVED, AND YOUR FIVE
INCREDIBLY ANNOYING YOUNGER BROTHERS.

THEY LIKED TO SAIL

AND TO TELL TALL TALES.

The Dutch knew how to build tall ships that could sail the ocean. They sailed to places that were totally unlike Holland and, when they come back, they told stories about them. Some of the stories were true.



I DREW A HEAD COVERED IN TAILS.
YOU CAN ASK IT WHAT HAPPENS ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF THE OCEAN. JUST DON'T COMB IT.



DRAW FANTASTIC CREATURES THAT YOU WOULD LIKE
TO ENCOUNTER IN YOUR TRAVELS.

THEY LIKED REFUGEES.

THEY LET THEM COME TO HOLLAND.

Back then, people used religious difference as an excuse to steal. If you didn't have the same religion as your neighbors, they could take your belongings, chase you from your home, and even kill you. The Dutch thought that was dumb. "Come live with us!" they said. "People should believe whatever they want, as long as they work."



I WOULD LIKE TO WORK ON A RUBBER BOAT,
WHERE I HELPED DRAW PEOPLE OUT OF WATER.

DRAW THE STRANGEST CREATURES
YOU WOULD WANT TO LIVE WITH.



THEY LIKED BOARD GAMES

AND LANGUAGE GAMES.

Just look at them: sometimes they sing,
sometimes they dance, and sometimes they
even play board games. Other people in
other countries had other hobbies: pillaging,
plowing, praying, and other things starting
with P or other letters.



DRAW A BOARD GAME
THAT DOES NOT MAKE YOU BORED.

AND WHO'S PULLING YOUR SLED



THEY LIKED RIDING

THROUGH THE SNOW.

When I was a Russian child riding over the winter snow in a sled pulled by my mama or papa, I imagined I was being taken somewhere by an untalkative kalamazebra or a flock of minuscule flying bears.



THEY LIKED BEING TOGETHER

A LOT.

Dutch people who liked to dance also liked to hug and kiss each other — even when dirty, sweaty, and stinky. The worse your friends smelled, the more love you expressed by hugging and kissing them.



ME AND MY FRIENDS ARE TOO OLD
TO HAVE PILLOW FIGHTS OR TO RUN AROUND
LIKE CRAZY. WE HAVE TO MAKE DO
WITH TALKING WHILE EATING.

DRAW YOUR FRIENDS
AND WHAT YOU LIKE TO DO TOGETHER.



I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH A CAT WHO WAS ALSO HUMAN,
AND AN ORANGUTAN WHO WAS PART KANGAROO AND PART PARROT.
DRAW THE ANIMALS YOU WOULD WANT AS FRIENDS.

THEY LIKED ANIMALS.



THEY MADE FRIENDS WITH CATS AND DOGS.

Most Dutch people were farmers. Raising cows and sheep was their job. But they preferred to pose for pictures with cats and dogs. Cats and dogs are better at being friends. They can be house-trained, which is a great advantage in friendship!





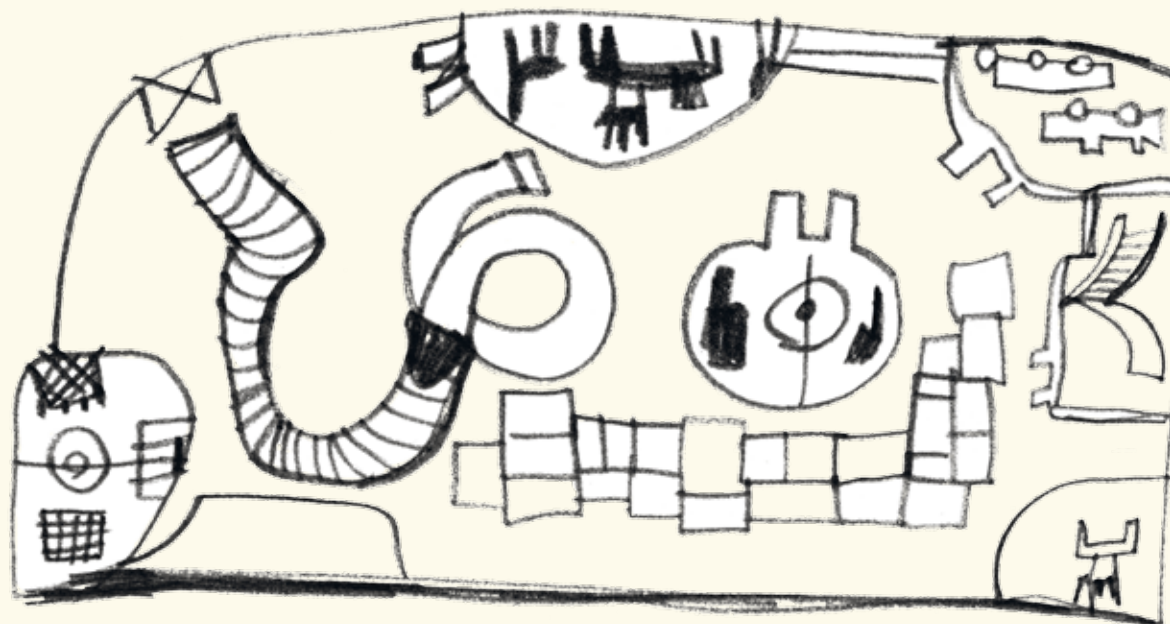
THEY LIKED CITY LIVING.

IT TURNED THEM INTO CITIZENS.

In the middle of the city was the main square with a market, a church, and a city hall surrounded by houses and workshops. A river ran through it for fun and profit.

MY DREAM CITY LOOKS LIKE THIS. IN THE MIDDLE OF IT THERE'S A PLAYGROUND
WHERE EVERYONE GOES TO PLAY. FOOD GROWS ON TREES.
IT'S NOT YUCKY. NO ONE HAS TO WORK.

WHAT DOES YOUR DREAM CITY LOOK LIKE?



I LOVE TO READ. THAT'S WHY I WROTE THIS BOOK.
I LOVE TO SHARE WHAT I LOVE.

THEY LIKED TO READ

ANYTHING WITH LETTERS.

The pictures show all kinds of Dutch people reading: children, women, poor people, old people. They read alone or in company. Sometimes they even think about what they read. It is interesting to look at the face of a person thinking.



DRAW SOMEBODY YOU HAVE READ A BOOK ABOUT.
OR WILL READ A BOOK ABOUT, ONE DAY.

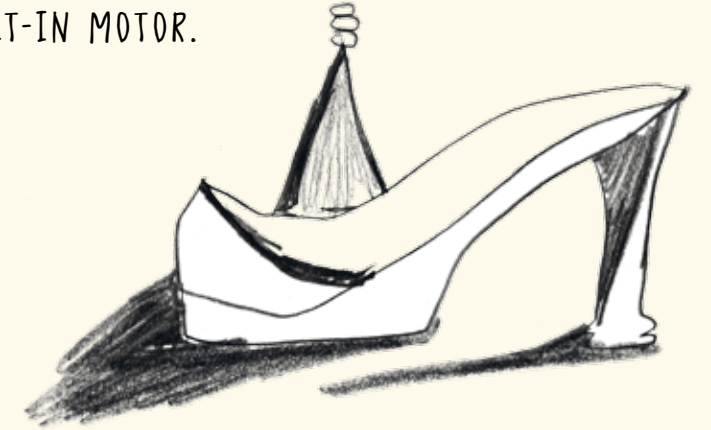
THEY LIKED TO CLEAN.

IMAGINE THAT.

“God made the world beautiful. It’s up to men and women to keep it that way.” That was the opinion of Dutch people. “Tidy your room. Wash your hands. Change out of your street shoes when you get inside.” Only a clean house feels like a home.



I DREW MYSELF
SLIPPERS. THEY FLY.
THEY RUN. THEY HAVE
A BUILT-IN MOTOR.



DRAW YOURSELF SLIPPERS. UNREAL SLIPPERS.

THEY LIKED TO SHOP

BECAUSE... WHO DOESN'T?!

And that's why painters painted shops and markets where people bought and sold food, books, jewelry, and lots of other stuff. Some people even bought paintings of their favorite places to shop so that they can look at them when not shopping.



I ALSO LOVE TO BUY STUFF... FOOD! BOOKS! GIFTS!
SOME FOR ME AND SOME FOR MY FRIENDS.



DRAW WHAT YOU WANT TO BUY RIGHT NOW.

THEY LIKED THEIR LAND

AND THEY WORKED HARD TO PROTECT IT.

Holland lies flat and low at the mouths of huge rivers on the edge of a stormy sea. Its soil is unsteady. The Dutch have always been afraid of floods. They built dikes and levees to defend their land. They frightened children with tales of towns submerged by waves.



WHEN I WAS LITTLE I WAS AFRAID OF WAR. IN SCHOOL THEY TOLD US TO HIDE UNDER DESKS IN CASE OF ATTACK BY SOME UNNAMED ENEMY.



DRAW FEAR.

THEY LIKED TO MAKE MONEY.

THEY COULD NOT GET ENOUGH OF IT.

“When people work hard, God helps them make money,” thought the Dutch. “How much money you have shows how much God loves you.” And you can never get enough love.



IF I HAD ENOUGH MONEY, I WOULD
SPEND IT ON A TRIP AROUND THE WORLD
WITH MY FRIENDS.



DRAW WHAT YOU WOULD BUY IF SOMEBODY
GAVE YOU AN ENTIRE BAG OF COINS.

THEY LIKED MUSIC.

THEY AMUSED THEMSELVES WITH IT OFTEN.

If you were in Holland you'd hear music everywhere: in houses and taverns, at markets and fairs, in the street or the countryside — anywhere!



EVEN DUTCH COWS LOVED MUSIC. THEY ALWAYS WANTED TO SING ALONG BUT THEIR MOUTHS WERE SHAPED WRONG. "MUSIC IS SO MOVING," THE DUTCH COWS KEPT TRYING TO SAY.

DO YOU LIKE MUSIC? DRAW IT!



THEY LIKED SCIENCE

AND SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS.

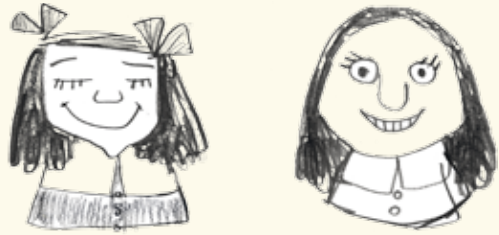
The Dutch built windmills, dams, telescopes, and microscopes. The philosopher Spinoza, son of Jewish refugees, earned money by cutting lenses from glass. Lenses let you see things that are far away as if they were up close, and things that are small as if they were big — or the other way around!



I WOULD LIKE TO INVENT A LENS THAT MAKES ME CHANGE SIZE.
THEN I CAN BE BIG WHEN I WANT AND SMALL WHEN I WANT.

DRAW A SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENT
OF YOUR OWN INVENTION.





I LIKE TO DRAW PORTRAITS.

THEY LIKED PAINTINGS:

PAINTING THEM, BUYING THEM, OWNING THEM, OR JUST LOOKING AT THEM.

They painted many paintings — millions of them, in fact! It used to be that you saw paintings only in churches or castles, but in Holland they thought paintings were so cool, everybody should have them!



FILL THIS PAGE WITH PICTURES OF PEOPLE YOU KNOW AND PEOPLE YOU DON'T.

COMMENTARY

THEY LIKED TO MAKE FACES

The Dutch were fascinated by what the face of a person tells us about the person, and how faces are transformed by emotion and thought. Artists like Adriaen van Ostade painted common people making funny faces. Rembrandt, on other hand, painted his own face to understand who he was. It is not easy to know who you are.

THEY LIKED TO DANCE

Dutch dances were the dances of ordinary people. They loved dancing on Sundays after church, or at festivals and fairs, called the Kermess. The American poet William Carlos Williams wrote a poem called “The Dance” about another painting of a Kermess: Find it online! Can you hear how the rhythms of the poem repeat the rhythms of awkward but spirited dancing?

THEY LIKED TO GROW FLOWERS

Tulips came to Holland from Turkey in the sixteenth century. By the seventeenth century, the entire country was neck-deep in tulipomania. The passion for these flowers led to formation of the first financial bubble in Europe. The Dutch bought and sold bulbs with the demand, and consequently the prices, ever on the rise. At one point a rare bulb cost as much as a small house. Tulip prices became wholly independent of any use one might put the flower to, except the financial. Then suddenly the tulip market collapsed. The first investors became very rich, while the last ones went bust, just as it always is in a financial bubble.

THEY LIKED FIGHTS

City-dwellers, who thought they were better than poorer country folk, enjoyed pictures of peasants engaged in fighting, drinking, and similar crude activities.

THEY LIKED HERRING

One Dutch sailor found a way to make herring taste less bitter. He took out the gills and then packed and salted the fish in barrels. Herring became a staple. The Dutch sold it all over the world. They even honored it with a special holiday, Herring Day. Unfortunately, after you pull out somebody’s gills and then pack and salt them in barrels, they may no longer feel like celebrating.

THEY LIKED HOLLAND

Holland, once owned by Spanish kings, fought a bloody war of independence from the 1560s to the 1640s. It started because the Spanish, who were Catholic, tried to impose their religion on the Protestant Dutch. The Dutch did not like other people telling them how to think.

THEY LIKED ICE-SKATING

The Dutch invented ice-skates with metal blades inserted into a wooden base. They also played a kind of golf on ice that became the prototype of hockey.

THEY LIKED SIMPLE THINGS

The Dutch loved all the things that made home, home — especially household goods and food. They admired the way different surfaces reflected light. They were mesmerized by textures, colors, and consistencies. They thought about the promise of taste in look and smell. They wanted painting to scrupulously record everything they liked, because nothing lasts forever.

THEY LIKED TO BE WITH FAMILY

Dutch women taught their children how to read and count. The family was thought of as sacred, almost like a church. It was to be a place of love, care, and respect, rather than that of control and coercion.

Dutch Protestants treated children with greater liberality than Catholics did. The freedoms enjoyed by Dutch women and girls surprised tourists.

THEY LIKED TO SAIL

Lying on the North Sea, Holland had skilled coastal sailors who helped it win freedom from Spanish rule. In the seventeenth century, the Dutch had colonies and trading settlements in the Americas (including what are now New York and Brazil), Asia (including what are now parts of Indonesia), and even South Africa. They were also the only European nation allowed to trade with Japan. The grandsons of herring fishermen sailed tall ships laden with spices across the Indian ocean and around the Cape of Good Hope! By 1669 the Dutch fleet consisted of about 600 ships serviced by somewhere near 50,000 sailors.

THEY LIKED REFUGEES

By the end of the seventeenth century, foreigners and their descendants made up a significant portion of the population of Holland. Many had fled from persecution on religious grounds. Others came for intellectual freedom. The French philosopher René Descartes moved to Holland to work uncensored. The Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza came from the Jewish community: his ancestors had escaped from Portugal. The Dutch provided refugees with guarantees of asylum. They had the right to choose their city and region of settlement. There were no ghettos in Holland.

THEY LIKED BOARD GAMES

Gambling was taxed and sometimes banned, but the Dutch kept playing. One game they liked was a kind of backgammon, which Jan Steen shows in his painting. Players roll dice to move checkers on the

board. Another work by Jan Steen — it hangs in a museum in Berlin, where I now live — shows people played backgammon in taverns for money.

THEY LIKED RIDING THROUGH THE SNOW

In winter the rivers, canals, and lakes in Holland were coated with thick ice. Children and grownups went sledding to get from place to place or just to have fun.

THEY LIKED BEING CLOSE TO EACH OTHER

Dutch society was democratic, at least in comparison with the rest of Europe. Power came from the community, not from royalty. This is why artists often portrayed communal activities that brought the Dutch together and made them interact.

THEY LIKED ANIMALS

Many people lived in the countryside and practiced animal farming. The Dutch exported animal products to their colonies, and Dutch cheese was especially famous. But — let’s face it — cows and sheep are not as entertaining up close as they are from far away. Most of the time they just chew and poop. Cats and dogs are more fun. Cats and dogs know how to play.

THEY LIKED CITY LIVING

Holland was more urban than any other European country. Cities were guarded by police in daytime and by men of the watch at night. At first, as in Rembrandt’s great painting *The Night Watch*, the watch consisted of fellow citizens but, later, professionals took over. Patrols walked vulnerable passers-by home, apprehended criminals, and picked up single women and drunks.

THEY LIKED TO READ

The Dutch were more literate than other Europeans. Many engaged in business, so they had to know how to read, write, and calculate. Being Protestant, they were also

expected to read the Bible by themselves. Apart from the Bible they also read travel stories, early novels, poems, and books about religion, science, and philosophy.

THEY LIKED TO CLEAN

Dutch women kept the windows and floors of their houses very clean. Household manuals advised that linen be changed regularly, that dishes be washed after every meal, and that people coming into the house put on slippers. Dutch farmers even sponged their cows! Envious Europeans wanted to call them “spongers” but it did not stick.

THEY LIKED TO SHOP

The Dutch empire was a capitalist one, an empire of trade. Dutch towns were full of shops and markets. The shops stocked goods that were local, but they also carried products from all over the world. Dutch love of commodities is evident from the level of detail and the effort accorded them in paintings.

THEY LIKED THEIR LAND

A fourth of the land of Holland is located below sea level. This is why Holland is also called the Low Countries or the Netherlands. The Dutch fought against water for each handful of soil. They learned how to turn wetlands into fertile fields. A Dutch proverb says, “God made the sea, but we made the land.”

THEY LIKED TO MAKE MONEY

The Dutch thought of thrift as a moral virtue. They watched over their investments. They tried to spend less than they made. The Dutch word “schuld” means “debt,” “fault,” and “guilt.” It is related to the English verb “should”: you *should* pay what you owe! People who could not pay debts went to prison. The Dutch thought God wanted it that way.

THEY LIKED MUSIC

The Dutch did not just listen to other people play music. They liked to play it

themselves. They made music to interact and spend time with each other. Their favorite instruments were the violin, the flute, the lute, and, for those better-off, the harpsichord. Schools and music courses taught how to play. Rich people took private lessons.

THEY LIKED SCIENCE

Foreign students flocked to Dutch universities to study new approaches to astronomy, chemistry, botany, and Middle Eastern languages. Religion had relatively little influence on academic activity. Some professors were foreign scholars and scientists who fled political or religious persecution at home. Dutch scientists invented many instruments for observation and measuring: the microscope, the refracting telescope, the mercury thermometer, the pendulum clock.

THEY LIKED PAINTINGS

Approximately two thousand painters lived and worked in Holland in the seventeenth century! The Dutch did not worship artists as prophets or heroes, but they did treat them with respect. It was the same respect a jeweler, shoemaker, or a shipbuilder met with: the respect due to a person who is good at doing something hard. Yet Holland had no permanent public places for viewing art. Museums had not been invented yet, and Protestantism prohibited putting images into churches. Ironically, that prohibition encouraged Dutch artists to paint what they knew best — everyday life! It was by painting the world around them that they learned to see it.

PAINTINGS



P. 2-3
Pieter Brueghel the Younger
Fair with a Theatrical Performance
Before 1638



P. 4
Adriaen van Ostade
Sense of Hearing
1635



P. 6-7
Pieter Brueghel the Younger
Fair with a Theatrical Performance
Before 1638



P. 8-9
Georg Flegel
Still Life with Flowers and Snacks
1630-1635



P. 10
Adriaen van Ostade
The Brawl
1638



P. 11
Pieter Brueghel the Younger
Fair with a Theatrical Performance
Before 1638



P. 12
Gerrit Dou
The Herring Seller
1670-1675



P.14-15
Joost Corneliszoon Droochsloot
Winter in a Dutch Town
1620-1650



P. 16-17
Jan Brueghel the Elder
Winter Landscape
1611



P. 18
Jan Steen
Revelers
1660



P. 20-21
Jacob Ochtervelt
Buying Grapes
1669



P. 22
Willem Ormea and possibly Abraham Willaerts
Fish on a Sea Shore
1640s



P. 25
Jan Brueghel the Elder
Forest Landscape (Rest on the Flight to Egypt)
1607



P. 26
Jan Steen
Tric-Trac Players
1667



P. 28
Isaac van Ostade
Frozen Lake
1648



P. 29
Jan van Goyen
View of The Hague in Winter
1645



P. 31
Pieter Brueghel the Younger
Fair with a Theatrical Performance
Before 1638



P. 32
David Ryckaert III
Peasant Woman with a Cat
1640s



P. 33
Jan Steen
Marriage Contract
Circa 1668



P. 34
Jan Abrahamszoon Beerstraten
Winter View of Leyden
1660



P. 36
Gerrit Dou
Old Woman Reading a Book
1670-1675



P. 38
Pieter Janssens Elinga
Room in a Dutch House
Circa 1670



P. 39
Jan Steen
Revelers
1660



P. 40
Frans Snyders and Jan Wildens
Fruit Stall
1618-1621



P. 42-43
Jacob van Ruisdael
Rivulet in a Forest
1660s



P. 44
Marinus van Reymerswaele
The Tax Collectors
1533-1545



P. 46
Adriaen van Ostade
Wandering Musician
1648



P. 49
Salomon Koninck
An Old Scholar
1630s-1656



P. 50
Catharina van Hemessen
Self-Portrait
1548.

WHAT THE DUTCH LIKE

Concept, drawings, texts

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Отпечатано в



THIS BOOK IS A DRAWING BOOK, A COLORING BOOK, AND A NOTEBOOK. IT SHOWS PARTS OF DUTCH PAINTINGS FROM THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM IN SAINT-PETERSBURG, RUSSIA. I ALSO DREW AND WROTE IN IT, BUT I LEFT LOTS AND LOTS OF BLANK SPACE FOR YOU. DRAW IN IT! WRITE IN IT! PAINT IT! COLOR IT! NOW IT'S YOUR BOOK, AND IT'S UP TO YOU TO MAKE IT A UNIQUE WORK OF ART... COME INTO THE VAST WORLD THAT THE DUTCH DISCOVERED FOR US. IT IS THE WORLD AS OBSERVED NOT BY A GOD OR A KING, BUT BY AN ORDINARY PERSON — THE SAME AS YOU AND ME.

