

## REMBRANDT AND THE PASSION



PETER BLACK  
WITH ERMA HERMENS

REMBRANDT  
AND THE PASSION

PRESTEL  
MUNICH · LONDON · NEW YORK

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Front cover: cat. 1

Frontispiece: cat. 3 (detail)

Back cover: cat. 26 (detail)

**Prestel, a member of Verlagsgruppe Random House GmbH**

**Prestel Verlag**

Neumarkter Str. 28  
81673 Munich  
Tel. +49 (0)89 4136-0  
Fax +49 (0)89 4136-2335  
www.prestel.de

**Prestel Publishing Ltd.**

4 Bloomsbury Place  
London WC1A 2QA  
Tel. +44 (0)20 7323-5004  
Fax +44 (0)20 7636-8004

Prestel Publishing  
900 Broadway, Suite 603  
New York, NY 10003  
Tel. +1 (212) 995-2720  
Fax +1 (212) 995-2733  
www.prestel.com

Exhibition

15 September – 2 December 2012

Library of Congress Control Number:  
2012939411

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data: a catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek holds a record of this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographical data can be found under:  
<http://dnb.d-nb.de>

Prestel books are available worldwide. Please contact your nearest bookseller or one of the above addresses for information concerning your local distributor.

Editorial direction: Ali Gitlow  
Editorial assistance: Supriya Malik, Francesca Dunnett and Katie Balcombe  
Copy-edited and proofread by: Sarah Kane  
Production: Friederike Schirge  
Design and layout: Robert Dalrymple  
Origination: Reproline Mediateam, Munich  
Printing and binding: Firmengruppe Appl, Wemding



Printed in Germany  
Verlagsgruppe Random House  
FSC-DEU-0100  
The FSC®-certified paper  
Profisilk was supplied by  
Igepa, Germany

ISBN 978-3-7913-4736-3

# CONTENTS

Foreword 6

Support for Research and Publication 8

Lenders 9

Acknowledgements 10

1 Rembrandt's *Entombment Sketch*: An Introduction 19

2 Rembrandt's Passion Subjects 43

3 Rembrandt's *Kunst Caemer*, or Museum 73

4 The Passion in Paint: A Technical Investigation 101  
*Erma Hermens*

5 Technical Glossary 131

6 Catalogue 135

Chronology 147

Bibliography 151

Notes and References 155

Photographic Credits 158

Index of Names and Works 159

## FOREWORD

Rembrandt's *Entombment Sketch* is one of the jewels of the collection formed by our founder William Hunter (1718–1783). It is a real delight to have a painting by Rembrandt which has always been regarded as authentic. When it has gone away to exhibitions, the work has often met with gasps of delight when people see it, partly because it is such a moving image of the Entombment of Christ, but also because it is so wonderfully well preserved. It is a puzzling object, however, because although it is a painting on panel, it is also a sketch. In the Rembrandt literature it has been explained as one of a group of sketches for Passion subject etchings that the artist made in the mid-1630s. We had our doubts about this when the painting went to a wonderful exhibition called *Rembrandt's Journey* in Boston and Chicago in 2003–4. There it was exhibited with the group of oil sketches related to the artist's etchings to which our painting was said to belong.

The present exhibition came about in order to put paid to these doubts and has been organised around the relationships between our painting and other works. These include works by Rembrandt but also paintings and drawings that were in his magnificent collection. We have been extremely fortunate in the support we have received, especially from a number of institutions. It was the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston that set us thinking about making this exhibition, and it was thanks to the Scientific Department of the National Gallery, London that new data and imagery has been made available for analysis in this publication and for presentation in the exhibition. I would like to thank especially Ashok Roy, Head of the Scientific Department, for facilitating the work on our painting in London in June 2011. A number of grants have helped with research for the development of the exhibition, and these are acknowledged on page 10.

A crucial role in both exhibition and publication has been played by our colleague, Dr Erma Hermens. Her expertise in technical art history had a decisive influence on the research from the very beginning. Her analysis of the scientific data produced by the collaboration with the Scientific Department of the National Gallery in London has changed the way we look at this painting, which is unique in the artist's oeuvre. I am extremely grateful to Erma for enlightening our approach to Rembrandt.

Putting together the art-historical and technical arguments about the history and making of our painting means bringing to Glasgow a dozen great works of art by Rembrandt. I would like to thank all of our colleagues in the museums, galleries and libraries who kindly agreed to lend works. These works are extremely precious and we are grateful to the Government Indemnity Scheme, and to Olivia Basterfield of the Arts Council, for providing indemnity cover while the works are on loan to us. We have been very fortunate in the generous support we have received from the Fondation Banco Santander and the Cosman Keller Art and Music Trust. I would like to pay special tribute to the main supporters of the exhibition, Mr Vincent Kas, Head of Commercial, UK & Ireland Air France/KLM, and to the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. It has been very fortunate for us that the exhibition came to the attention of Mr Jan van Weijen, Head of Public Diplomacy, Press and Culture, who has been a keen supporter. His advice and help have been invaluable.

PROFESSOR DAVID GAIMSTER

*Director of The Hunterian*

# SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION

Travel for research in Amsterdam, Haarlem, Rotterdam and Munich in 2010 was funded by a grant from the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland. In March 2011 research in the National Gallery, London and in the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (RKD) and Mauritshuis in The Hague by Peter Black and Erma Hermens was made possible by a grant from the National Gallery's Subject Specialist network; we are very grateful to Mary Hersov, the National Gallery's National Programmes Manager, for all her help.

The costs of preparing the catalogue were generously supported by the Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust. We would like to thank the Trust, and especially Claire Armstrong, for their support.



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Brighton & Hove City Council

Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh

Teylers Museum, Haarlem

University of Edinburgh,  
Centre for Research Collections

University of Glasgow Library,  
Special Collections Department

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No amount of rethinking our view of Rembrandt's *Entombment Sketch* would have been worthwhile without the support of a number of scientists, especially colleagues in the National Gallery in London to whom we are extremely grateful. We offer our thanks to Marjorie E. Wieseman, Curator of Dutch Paintings, and to staff in the Library for help with our research; to Larry Keith, Paintings Conservator, but especially to the staff of the Scientific Department, Ashok Roy, Helen Howard, Rachel Billinge, David Peggie and Joseph Padfield. They made us welcome, gave us the benefit of their knowledge and experience, and made the new X-ray, infrared and other images that have been essential for the direction of our research.

As well as the team from the National Gallery mentioned above, we would also like to thank Peter Chung, Geographical and Earth Sciences, University of Glasgow, for providing SEM-EDX analyses, Dr Kirk Martinez and Dr Philip Basford of Southampton University for providing us, while the painting was in the National Gallery, with a polynomial texture map for use in the exhibition. Our research in The Hague was greatly helped by Michiel Franken at the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, and Petria Noble, Head of Conservation at the Mauritshuis. The dendro-chronological survey of the panel was done for us by Dr Aoife Daly, Marie Curie Fellow at University College Dublin. We are very grateful to Aoife for coming to Glasgow and not just for dating the panel but for demonstrating to an MLitt class the technique of measuring its growth rings.

We would like to thank the following for reading and commenting on the texts in draft form: Michael Black, Andrew Greg, Pamela Robertson, Gary Schwartz, Christian T. Seifert, Senior Curator of Netherlandish Painting at the Scottish National Gallery, as well as Ashok Roy and colleagues at the National Gallery Scientific Department. Exhibitions require a great deal of extra energy and we would like to acknowledge the good work by all of our colleagues at The Hunterian, especially in design, conservation, publicity and photography. Special thanks to Elizabeth Jacklin, who has worked for 12 months as our Museums Galleries Scotland intern. Elizabeth has compiled the chronology and bibliography, and obtained the imagery with great efficiency.

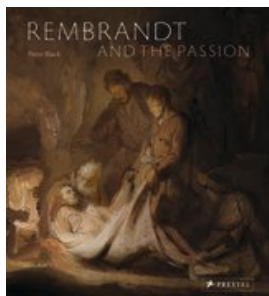
With thanks also to: Marina Aarts; Stijn Altsteens; Ronni Baer; Christopher Baker; Matthew Barr; Cathy Bell; Jantien Black; Julia Blanks; Bob van den Boogert; Hannah Brocklehurst; Janet Brough; Christopher Brown; Edwin Buijsen; Quentin Buvelot; An van Camp; Caroline Campbell; Andrew Cherniavsky; Jane Clark, Michael Clarke; David Collins; Marcus Dekiert; Julie Gardham; Antony Griffiths; Johnny van Haften; Claire Hallinan; Craig Hartley; Elspeth Hector; Julian Hogg; David Jaffé; Christophe Janet; Luis Juste; Friso Lammertse; Celeste Lange-dijk; Jenny Lund; Joseph Marshall; Gregory Martin; Ellen McAdam; Fiona McKellar; Peter Morris; Joanne Orr; Claire Pace; Cassia Pennington; Michiel Plomp; William W. Robinson; Maartje Romme; Martin Royalton-Kisch; Marijn Schapelhouman; David Scrase; Desmond Shawe-Taylor; Michael Simpson; Jan Six; Sandra Tatsakis; Jaap van der Veen; Jørgen Wadum; Arie Wallert; Arthur K. Wheelock Jnr; Christopher Wintle.

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## **Rembrandt and the Passion**

Gebundenes Buch mit Schutzumschlag, 160 Seiten, 23x25.5  
100 farbige Abbildungen  
ISBN: 978-3-7913-4736-3

Prestel

Erscheinungstermin: August 2012



**Der Titel im Katalog**