



DE WIND IS OP!

Climate, Culture and Innovation in Dutch Maritime Painting

The New Bedford Whaling Museum stewards one of the most important maritime Dutch and Flemish paintings and prints collections outside of the Netherlands. Many of these pieces straddle or were produced at the height of the Golden Age during the 17th century, in an extraordinary time of unprecedented wealth in Northern Europe.

Dutch artists arguably invented seascape painting, and were the first to specialize in this genre. As works of art shifted from the religious to the secular, and towards celebrating national and mercantile achievements rather than royalty, accessibility of subject themes to a broader audience within the Republic was a characteristic of Dutch painting during this period. One in ten men was at sea at any given time, while others reclaimed land from its grasp in an agricultural landscape largely below sea level with complex dams, drainage, and windmill systems. The ocean was an essential part of Dutch life and the key to its economic and cultural wealth, its greatest asset and its greatest challenge.

From 1481-1579, most of what is now the Kingdom of the Netherlands was ruled under the Holy Roman Empire, governed by the Habsburg kings. Under the particularly harsh rule of Habsburg King Philip II of Spain, the provinces declared independence in 1579, although rebellions had been underway since the start of the “Eighty Years War” in 1568. During the Twelve Years Truce with Spain starting in 1609, the Dutch were extraordinarily prosperous, and the formation of what would become the Dutch Republic, a collaboration of provinces with their own representatives and stakeholders, was well underway.

The sea and seafaring shaped the Dutch collective identity. They were a political entity without precedence, and the art world followed the new cultural and societal models unique to the newly formed Dutch Republic. The Dutch were a dominant superpower in all things maritime, including worldwide trade, military strength, and whaling.

“[Dutch] pictures painted from the 1620s onward have long been celebrated for their verisimilitude, so much so that for most of the last 150 years the exact renderings of clouds and moist temperature, of waves and foam, and of the complexity of vessels and their tactics has been regarded as the primary content of the images.” Lawrence Goedde

Co-curated by Dr. Christina Connett Brophy, the Douglas and Cynthia Crocker Endowed Chair for the Chief Curator; and Dr. Roger Mandel, Co-Founder of Design Art Technology Massachusetts (DATMA), Former Deputy Director and Chief Curator of the National Gallery of Art, and former President of the Rhode Island School of Design

Project Partners include:

Design Art Technology Massachusetts (DATMA)

The Center for Netherlandish Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Harvard Art Museums



THE LITTLE ICE AGE

A period of well-documented dramatic climate variations, now known as the Little Ice Age, coincided perfectly with the Dutch Golden Age, with the greatest impact on Europe occurring between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. Amongst other factors, massive volcanic eruptions during this period may have caused widespread cooling of the earth's surface, while slight orbital shifts may have contributed to global cooling. Sunspots and solar flares were greatly reduced in number during this period, indications of low solar activity. These factors, in turn, had monumental effects on ocean currents and ice distribution. Overall in the coldest stretches of the Little Ice Age, the temperatures fluctuated up to .5 degrees Celsius in the Northern Hemisphere.

The impact on human history was most dramatic from 1560 to 1720, during the Grindelwald Fluctuation (1560-1628), and the Maunder Minimum (1645-1720), when weather was its most unpredictable and Europe experienced its harshest winters. The resulting fluctuations of weather and ocean currents had impacts not only on Europe but globally, with varying degrees of significance.

For the Dutch, this shift in climate created some interesting advantages, as they were well equipped and geographically well positioned to exploit the changes, much unlike other European societies. The Dutch, being more reliant on industry and commerce than local agriculture, were already at an advantage. Other areas of the world already vulnerable from overpopulation, unstable governments, and lack of infrastructure suffered drought, famine, pestilence, and social and political chaos during dramatic changing weather patterns, raging storms, drought, and temperature swings. There are records of the harshest of winters ever remembered, of people freezing in their homes overnight, and birds falling frozen from the sky.

The Dutch had access to the Baltic farmlands as reserves for the more difficult winters, and were able to capitalize not only on the production of cash crops

to sell to their less fortunate consumer market, but they also benefitted from the changes in sea currents, which shortened their trade routes to Asia and America. They were innovative in their solutions to changing weather patterns from using land and ice yachts to transport goods over frozen waterways and beaches, to using their nimble and shallow draft ships to access whales in the rich icebound Arctic whaling grounds off of Svalbard and Jan Mayen islands, where, for a time, they dominated the industry. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, cool, wet weather helped the Dutch stave off offensives in the Low Countries by the Spanish, who were seeking to recapture the rebellious Dutch provinces. Later in the seventeenth century, shifting patterns of atmospheric circulation increased the frequency of winds from the east (easterly winds) in the North Sea, giving tactical advantages to Dutch fleets fighting with English and French flotillas for maritime supremacy.

Recent scholarship in this field has added a fascinating new layer of context through which to consider painting, industry, economy, and culture of the Golden Age. Dutch openness to innovation and their unique precocity allowed them to manipulate their own watery landscapes with dams, dikes, and wind power. Additionally, they designed ship modifications that maximized successful access to the Northern whaling grounds and lucrative global trade routes during the fluctuating climate of the Little Ice Age.

While there are, of course, many other factors to consider, there is no question that the climate fluctuations of the time perfectly coincided with one of the most culturally and economically lucrative eras in Dutch history.

Many thanks to Dr. Dagomar Degroot, author of *The Frigid Golden Age: Climate Change, the Little Ice Age, and the Dutch Republic, 1560-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) for his significant contributions to the text in this panel and others in the exhibition.



Cornelisz Verbeeck (circa 1590 – 1633)

Ships with a Whale in a Rough Sea, c. 1600 – 1625

Oil on copper

19 x 40.6 cm (7 ½ x 16 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4478



Cornelisz Verbeeck (circa 1590 – 1633)

Ships in a Squall, with a Spouting Whale, c. 1600 – 1625

Oil on wooden panel

28 x 55.2 cm (11 x 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4470



Jan Mooy (1776 – 1847)

Whaleships Frankendaal, Groenlandia, De Jaeger, and Others on the Greenland Whaling Grounds, 1843

Watercolor on paper

43.5 x 62.5 cm (17 1/8 x 24 5/8 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4314



A. van Salm (fl. circa 1670 – 1720)

Ship Hollandia, Whaling in Company on the Arctic Grounds c. 1670 – 1720

Penschilderij (pen-painting) or grisaille (gray painting) on panel

67.3 x 106 cm (26 ½ x 41 ¾ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4474



Pieter Lofvers (1710 – 1788)

Ship Groningen Whaling in Company on the Arctic Grounds, 1775

Oil on panel

28 x 47.6 cm (11 x 18 ³/₄ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4490



Pieter Lofvers (1710 – 1788)

Ship Wilhelm Whaling in Company on the Arctic Grounds, 1775

Oil on panel

28 x 47.6 cm (11 x 18 ³/₄ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4491



Pieter Lofvers (1710 – 1788)

Ship Europa Whaling in Company on the Arctic Grounds, 1775

Oil on panel

28 x 47.6 cm (11 x 18 ³/₄ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4492



Pieter Lofvers (1710 – 1788)

Ship het Lam at the Wharf of a Dutch Oil Refinery (Tryworks), 1775

Oil on panel

28 x 47.6 cm (11 x 18 ³/₄ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4493



Albert van Beest (1820 – 1860)

Dutch Boats, 1855

Oil on canvas

30.5 x 50.8 cm (12 x 20 in.)

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Samuel M. Genensky, 1977.54



Johanes de Blaauw (1712 – 1778)

Whaleship D’Vergulde Walvis (“The Golden Whale”) passing the tollhouse at Buiksloot on the IJ River, north of Amsterdam, 1759

Oil on canvas

55 ¼ x 68 cm (21 ¾ x 26 ¾ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4604



Dutch Fluyt (fluyt whaleship), c. 1640 – 1660

Wood, string, cloth, and metal

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.44



Adolf van der Laan

...A Greenland man, and the haven of Rotterdam, 1720 – 1730

Etching on paper

21.1 x 34 cm (8 5/16 x 13 3/8 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.7105



Reinier Nooms

Armed Dutch Ships at Sea, c.1650

Engraving on paper

Approx. 7 ½ x 12 in.

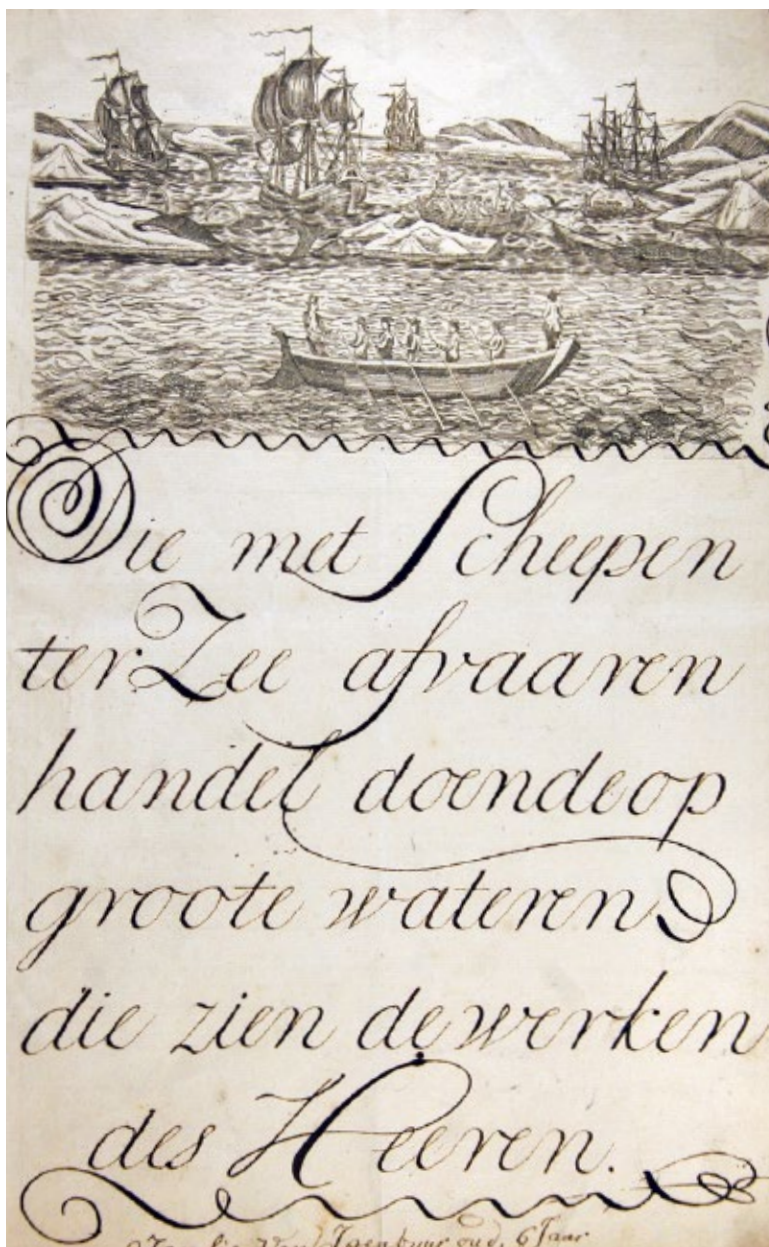
New Bedford Whaling Museum, 00.60.97



Arent Roggeveen

Pascaert van Nieu Nederland Van Hendrick Christiaens Eyland tot Staten hoeck of Cabo Cod, 1675

Print on paper
Approx. 20 ¼ x 23 in.
L2019.17



Janse van Ipenduur

Die met Scheepen ter Zee afvaaren handel doende op groote wateren die zien de werken des Heeren [Those who go to sea with ships to trade on the great seas are those who see the works of the Lord]

Engraving with ink

32.4 x 21 cm (12 ³/₄ x 8 ¹/₄ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.7784



Crispijn van de Passe I (1564 – 1637) after Marten de Vos (1532 – 1603)

En Deus vstor adest, Jona, 1584 – 1585

Engraving on paper

20.3 x 17.1 cm (8 x 6 ¾ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.8248



The PdP Monogrammist (c. 1566 – 1640)

Ships and Whales in a Tempest, c. 1595

Oil on wooden panel

36.2 x 59 cm (14 ¼ x 23 ¼ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4469



Heerman Witmont (1605 – after 1692)

Ships with Whales

Sepia grisaille (*penschildern*) on panel

36.2 x 46.4 (14 ¼ x 18 ¼ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4468



Theodoor Galle (1571 – 1633) after Joos de Momper (1564 – 1635)

Shipwreck in a Storm, late 16th or early 17th century

Engraving on paper

33.7 x 45.4 cm (13 ¼ x 17 7/8 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.5836



Johannes Becx (fl. c. 1658 – 1692)

A Fleet of Dutch Whalers Under Sail in the North, c. 1669

Oil on panel

57.8 x 83.8 cm (22 ¾ x 33 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4334



Zacharias Chatelain

Algemeene Kaart der Vereenigde Nederlanden, c.1720

Engraving on paper

45 x 50 cm (17 ¾ x 19 11/16 in.)

New Bedford Whaling Museum, 00.222.79



Adam Willaerts

Whale Stranded on the Dutch North Sea Coast, c.1600 – 1625

Oil on panel

45 x 86.4 cm (17 ¾ x 34 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4472



Abraham Matthuys (1581 – 1649)

Ships in Convoy, c. 1620

Oil on canvas

107.3 x 148.6 cm (42 ¼ x 58 ½ in)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4486



Circle of Gerrit Knip
(circa 1715 – after 1800).

Long-case clock with ship automation,
c.1750 – 60

Walnut and brass
2.74 m high (9 feet)
Kendall Whaling Museum Collection,
2001.100.2513





Jan Jansson after Jan Pietersz Saenredam

Stranded Whale Near Beverwyck, 1618

Engraving on paper

38.6 x 58.6 cm (15 3/16 x 23 1/6 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.6107



Hendrik Kobell (1751 – 1779)

De Walvischvangst [The Whale Fishery], 1778

Watercolor on paper

22.2 x 36.8 cm (8 ¾ x 14 ½ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4315



Frederick De Wit (c.1630 – 1706)

Poli Arctici, et Circumjacentium Terrarum Descriptio Novissima, 1695

Hand-colored engraving

49.5 x 43.5 cm (19 ½ x 17 1/8 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.5987



A. van Salm (fl. circa 1670 – 1720)

Ship De Vogel Fenice Whaling in Company on the Arctic Grounds

Oil on canvas

76.2 x 114.3 cm (30 x 45 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4411



Pieter van den Velde (1634 – after 1687)

Dutch Bay Whaling in the Arctic, c. 1660

Oil on canvas

54.7 x 58.4 cm (18 x 23 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4417



Anonymous, after Sieuwart van der Meulen and Adolf van der Laan
Greenland Whale Fishery, c. the 3rd-4th quarter of the 18th century

Ensemble of 72 monochrome blueware tiles.

76.8 x 153.7 cm (30 ¼ x 60 ½ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4808



Bench, 1697

Oak

118.1 x 188 x 47 cm (46 ½ x 74 x 18 ½ in.)

Gift of the Norfolk Charitable Trust, 2012.67



A. van Salm (fl. circa 1670 – 1720)

Whaling in the Northern Ice Sea

Oil on canvas

58.4 x 74.9 cm (23 x 29 ½ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4421

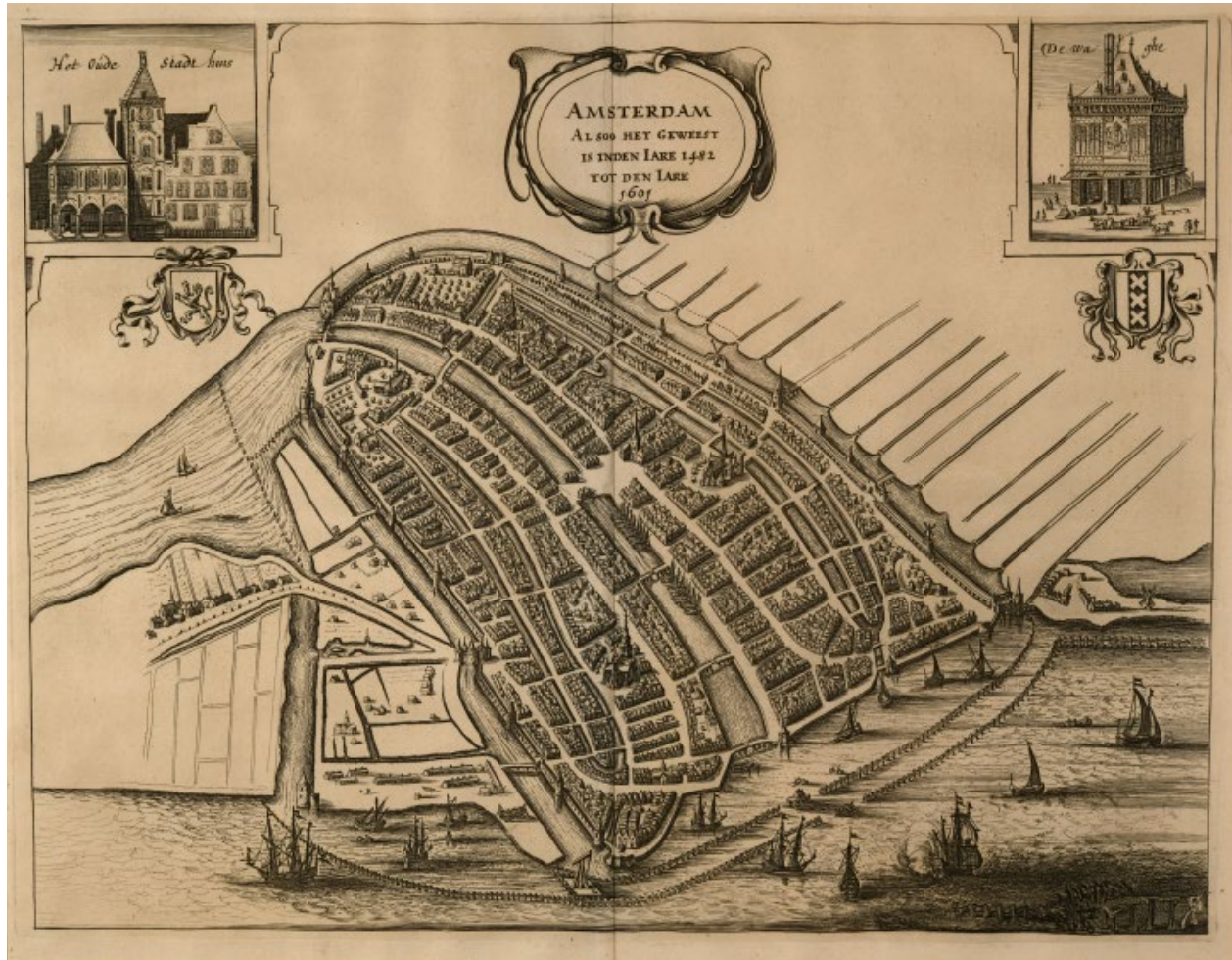


Bonaventura Peeters (1614 – 1652), Attributed
Amsterdam Whaleships at Jan Mayen, c. 1630 – 40s

Oil on canvas

119.3 x 186.7 cm (47 x 73.5 in.)

ODHS Purchase, 2017.107



Van Waesberge and Schouten

Map of Amsterdam, 1748

Engraving

27.9 x 36.4 cm (11 x 14 5/16 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.8650



Salomon Savery (Dutch, 1594 – 1665) after Simon de Vlieger

Maria de Medici's visit to Amsterdam, 1638

Engraved illustration from *Medicea hospes, sive Descriptio publicæ gratulationis: qua Serenissimam, Augustissimamque reginam, Mariam de Medicis, exceptit Senatus populusque Amstelodamensis*

29.8 x 65.6 cm (11 ¾ x 25 13/16 in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.7276



Attributed to Catherina Peeters (1615 – 1676)

Ship with a Whale after a Tempest, c. 1660s

Oil on panel

36.8 x 54.6 cm (14 ½ x 21 ½ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4572



Joghem de Vries (fl. 1750 – 1788)

Extreme Despoire: Whaling in Company on Greenland, c. 1772

Oil on canvas

74.9 x 92.7 cm (29 ½ x 36 ½ in.)

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4433



A Whaleship of Amsterdam on the Arctic Grounds, c. the 3rd-4th quarter of the 18th century

Ensemble of 16 monochrome blueware tiles
Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4590



Ludolf Backhuysen (1631 – 1708)

Whaling in the Polar Sea, c. 1700

Oil on panel

Kendall Whaling Museum Collection, 2001.100.4435



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