A CORPUS OF
REMBRANDT PAINTINGS
Volume IV – Self-Portraits

Ernst van de Wetering with contributions by Karin Groen, Peter Klein, Jaap van der Veen, Marieke de Winkel
The Rembrandt Research Project

► The authoritative reference work for all Rembrandt’s self-portraits
► 650 Illustrations 250 in color!
After the publication of Volume III the approach of the first three volumes needed to be revised. It had become clear that the strictly chronological method employed in those books would not be effective for the final period, covering 1642 until 1669 (the year that Rembrandt died). The project group therefore chose for a method in which larger groups of pictorially interconnected works were studied, such as the self-portraits, portraits, history paintings etc. Rembrandt’s workshop practice was scrutinised more closely as well.

In Volume IV the focus lies on Rembrandt’s self-portraits. During this research it became obvious that matters of authenticity cannot be viewed separately from questions relating to the original function and meaning of these works. Rembrandt’s intriguing life-long practice of portraying himself in front of a mirror is examined in depth in this volume. As a result, not only has the group of approximately forty painted self-portraits gained transparency, but also new insights have been developed regarding Rembrandt’s drawn and etched self-portraits. The problems of authenticity relating to a substantial amount of self-portraits which in the past were attributed to Rembrandt in this volume receive an unexpected nuance: through a combination of technical and stylistic research it is demonstrated that some of Rembrandt’s self-portraits were in fact painted by others in his workshop.

Discusses problems of authenticity, function and technique of Rembrandt’s painted, etched and drawn self-portraits

In clear and accessible explanatory texts the different paintings are discussed. Among the many illustrations are life-size colour reproductions of the faces of the self-portraits under discussion. Details are shown where possible, as well as the results of modern day technical imaging like X-radiography.
The volume contains an – in several respects eye-opening – essay by the head of the Rembrandt Research Project, Ernst van de Wetering, on the problems of authenticity and function of Rembrandt’s self-portraits. In addition, the book includes groundbreaking contributions by Marieke de Winkel on the meaning of dress and costume in Rembrandt’s self-portraits, by Karin Groen on the use of grounds in Rembrandt’s workshop and in paintings by his contemporaries, and a study by Jaap van der Veen concerning 17th-century ideas about authenticity in art.

This work of art history and art research should be part of every serious art historical institute, university or museum. The enigma of Rembrandt’s self-portraits, one of the most compelling phenomena in art history has been unravelled by Ernst van de Wetering with unprecedented thoroughness.


► $1,200.00

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Contains eye-opening and groundbreaking insights into Rembrandt’s works made in front of the mirror

Figs. 23 and 24. Rembrandt, Self-portrait, 1669, canvas 86 x 70.3 cm. London, The National Gallery (IV 27). Detail and corresponding X-Ray. A lead white-containing underpainting shows up strongly.
A CORPUS OF REMBRANDT PAINTINGS

Since the second half of the last century art historians, realizing that the image of Rembrandt’s work had become blurred with time, have attempted to redefine the artist’s significance both as a source of inspiration to other artists and as a great artist in his own right. In order to carry on the work started by previous generations, a group of leading Dutch art historians from the academic and museum world joined forces in the late 1960s in order to study afresh the paintings usually ascribed to Rembrandt. The researchers came together in the Rembrandt Research Project which was established to provide the art world with a new standard reference work which would serve the community of art historians in both the near and distant future.

The Rembrandt Research Project has examined the originals of all works attributed to Rembrandt, taking full advantage of today’s sophisticated techniques including radiography, neutron activation autoradiography, dendrochronology and paint sample analysis – thereby gaining valuable insight into the genesis and condition of the paintings. The result of this meticulous research is laid down chronologically in the following volumes:

- **Volume I**, which deals with works from Rembrandt’s Leiden years (1625–1631), published in 1982.
- **Volume II**, covering his first years in Amsterdam (1631–1634), published in 1986.
- **Volume III**, published in 1989, covering the period from 1635 until 1642, the year in which the *Nightwatch* was finished.
- **Volume V**, (forthcoming) this last volume will deal with the ‘small scale’ history paintings and present an abridged survey of the remaining paintings.

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**Discusses the paintings in clear and accessible explanatory texts**
Sample Texts

As is particularly evident in the case of several of the early self-portraits discussed in this book, the study of signatures plays an increasingly greater role in our attempts to define Rembrandt’s autograph oeuvre.\(^\text{17}\)

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Once again, one cannot avoid noting the way that, in the world of Rembrandt research, the splitting of the oeuvre according to techniques — into paintings, etchings and drawings — and of scholarship into specialisms based on them hampers an integrated understanding of his work as a whole.\(^\text{16}\) The fact too that the drawn self-portraits are treated here in a separate section is a manifestation of this over-specialization according to medium.
Yes, please send me

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