

The definitive overview of Rembrandt's drawings, published to coincide with the 'Year of Rembrandt', which marks 350 years since his death

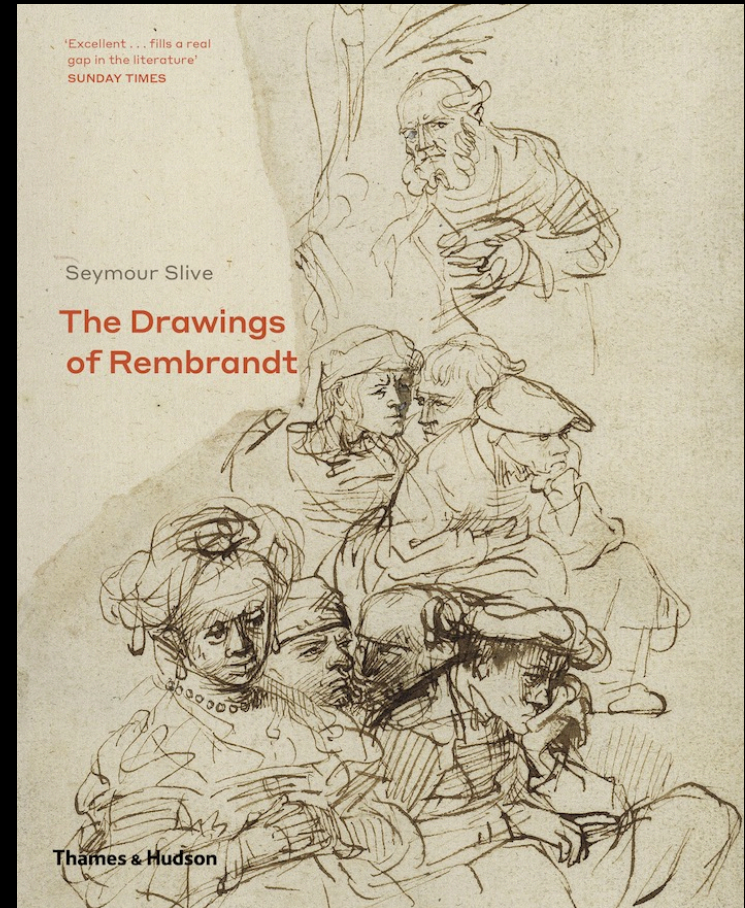
# The Drawings of Rembrandt

*A New Study*  
Seymour Slive

267 illustrations  
20.3 x 25.4cm  
264pp  
ISBN 978 0 500 295359  
Paperback  
**£29.95**  
October 2019

A4

Book



## Praise for *The Drawings of Rembrandt* (978 0 500 238677)

‘Excellent ... fills a real gap in the literature’

*Sunday Times*

‘Slive’s commentary is subtle, erudite and sympathetic’

*Sunday Telegraph*

‘A very readable account by a distinguished scholar’

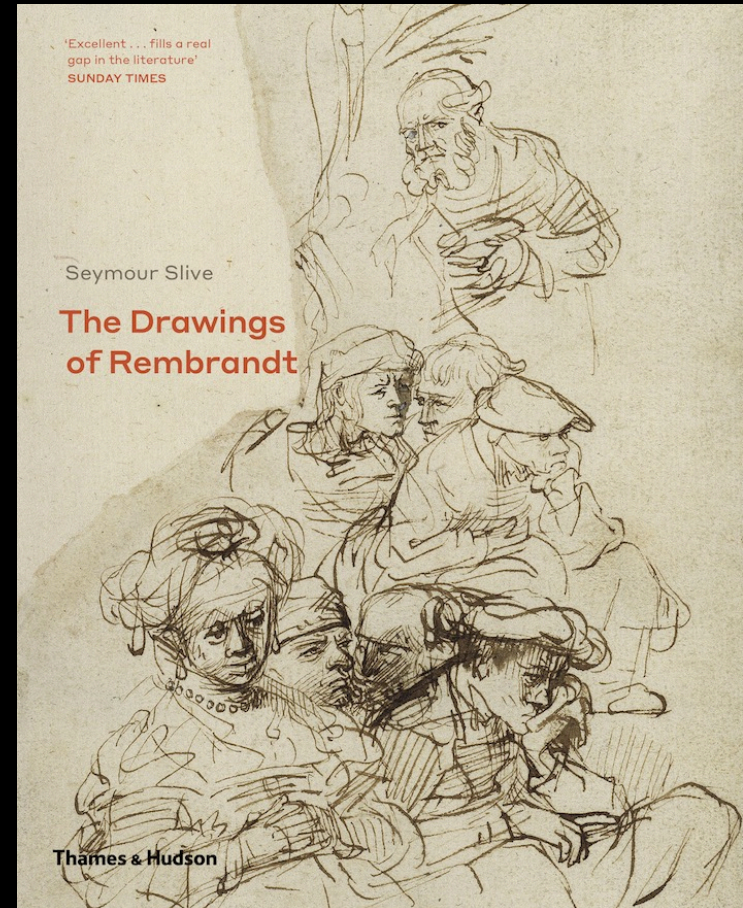
*The Art Newspaper*

‘An eloquent introduction to Rembrandt’s genius as a draughtsman ... here is virtuosity and humanity together, on every page’

*Financial Times*

‘Beautiful ... the definitive study of an enduring subject’

*The Wall Street Journal*



## Key Sales Points

- 2019 sees the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rembrandt's death, and will be marked by special exhibitions and presentations throughout the Netherlands and surrounding countries, including 'Rembrandt's Light' at the Dulwich Picture Gallery and 'Young Rembrandt' at the Ashmolean, Oxford
- The drawings are organized by subject into sixteen chapters
- Comparative figures illustrate Rembrandt's own painting and etchings, for which sketches discussed in the text served as first thoughts on preliminary or finished preparatory studies



amendment that dates the touched-up impressions to 1633 or 1634.

The serious, almost pained expression Rembrandt gives himself in his pen-and-wash *Self-portrait* in Berlin<sup>2</sup> (fig. 1.7), datable about 1636, is akin to the one he offers in his familiar etched *Self-portrait with Saskia* of 1636 (fig. 1.8). The Berlin drawing is more intimate, however. Rembrandt is hatless, and his open shirt reveals his bare chest, a feature that gives a foretaste of Goya's open shirt in his intense painted *Self-portrait* now at the Prado, done in 1815 when he was about seventy.

Equally serious is the face Rembrandt shows in his red-chalk *Self-portrait Wearing a Cap* at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (fig. 1.9). As in a few other early self-portraits, a long lovelock hangs down one shoulder. His carefully drawn beret has a small visor that shades his eyes.

A similar beret with a visor is seen in an untraceable painted self-portrait in which he depicted himself holding a sketchbook, a quill pen, and an ink pot. Jacob Gole's mezzotint gives a good idea of the original, the artist's only

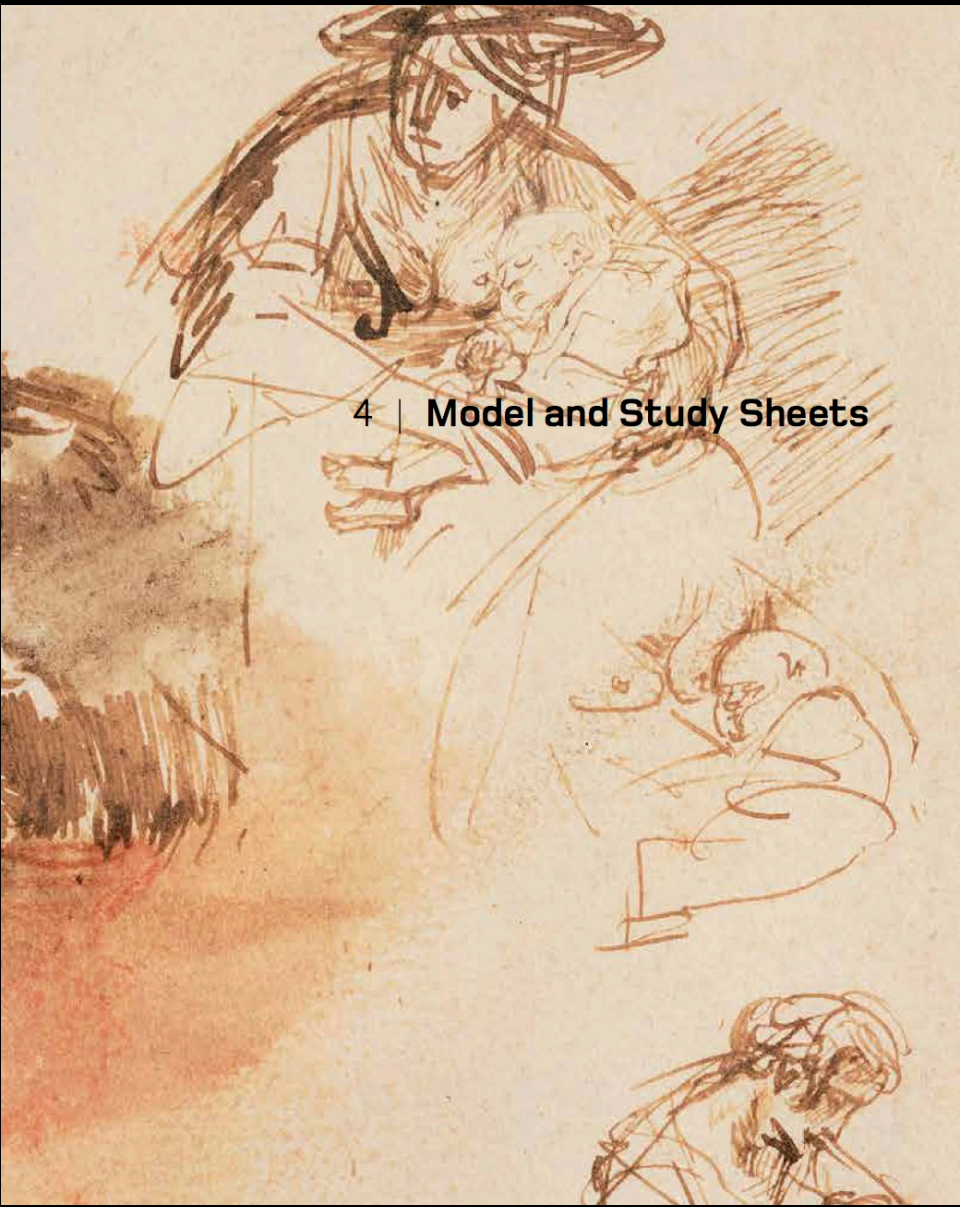
1.6 | *Self-portrait in a Soft Hat and Patterned Cloak*, signed; datable 1631–ca. 1633. Etching; 14.8 x 13 cm (5<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.). The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, inv. RvR 8. Photo © The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.



1.7 | *Self-portrait in an Open Shirt*, ca. 1636. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, corrected with white, a few later touches in pen and black ink; 12.6 x 13.7 cm (5 x 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.). Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, inv. KdZ 1553. Photo: Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/Art Resource, N.Y. Photographer: Jörg P. Anders.

1.8 | *Self-portrait with Saskia*, third state, signed and dated 1636. Etching; 10.4 x 9.5 cm (4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.). The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, inv. (P)1949.5. Photo © The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. Photographer: Joseph Zehavi, 2005.







5.1 | *Old Man Seated with a Book*, ca. 1627–28. Black and red chalk, pencil, on paper prepared with pale yellow wash; 29.5 x 21 cm (11 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.). Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, inv. KdZ 5284. Photo: Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/Art Resource, N.Y.



5.2 | *Two Old Men Disputing*, monogrammed and dated 1628. Oil on panel; 72.4 x 59.7 cm (28 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.). National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Felton Bequest, 1936 (349/4).



8.10 | *Sketches of an Old Man with a Child*, ca. 1640. Pen and brown ink, touches of brown wash, on paper prepared with pale brown wash; 18.9 x 15.7 cm (7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.). The British Museum, London, inv. 1910,0212.185. Photo © The Trustees of The British Museum/Art Resource, N.Y.

8.11 | *The Star of the Kings*, signed, ca. 1645. Pen and brown ink, brown wash; 20.4 x 32.3 cm (8 x 12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.). The British Museum, London, inv. PD1910,0212.189. Photo © The Trustees of The British Museum/Art Resource, N.Y.



nocturnal effect. The artist must have been satisfied with his effort. It is one of the rare genre drawings that bears an original signature that proclaims he made it: "Rembrandt f."

The site of a genre scene in a sketch at the Louvre, datable about 1650, showing a young draftsman at a table, can be determined thanks to the view visible through the open window of the River IJ as seen from one of the taverns in the bend of the Diemerdijk, which stretched eastward from Amsterdam (fig. 8.12). Across the water is the village of Schellingwoude. Rembrandt made landscape drawings at the same site (see pp. 137–38 and fig. 11.11). A boy standing outside looks through the window to watch the youth draw. It has been proposed that the draftsman is Jan Six and that Rembrandt made his sketch when staying with his friend at the latter's country house in the area. This nice story must be rejected. Six did not own a property in the area until after Rembrandt's death.

In the Louvre drawing wash is used generously to suggest gradations of light and shadow. All appears effortless, until we notice the artist had a bit of a struggle depicting the perspective of the right side of the table. He corrected his first attempt by painting over it with white opaque watercolor, a practice not uncommon in his drawings. In this instance, the white he used has virtually disappeared. It failed to pass the test of time. No matter. A view of the correction offers a precious glimpse of the mature master's mind at work.

8.12 | *Interior of an Inn with a Draftsman at a Window and a View over the River IJ*, ca. 1649–50. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, corrected with white opaque watercolor; 13.5 x 19.7 cm (5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.). Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. RF11476. Photo © RMN—Grand Palais/Art Resource, N.Y. Photographer: Jean-Gilles Berizzi.





11.6 | *Cottage with a White Paling among Trees*, ca. 1648. Pen and brush and brown ink, brown and pale purple wash, white gouache, on paper; 17.1 x 25.5 cm (6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 10 in.). Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. RP-T-1981-1.

11.7 | *Cottage with a White Paling among Trees*, signed and dated 1648. Etching and drypoint; 12.9 x 16 cm (5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.). The British Museum, London, inv. 1895,0915.430. Photo © The Trustees of The British Museum/Art Resource, N.Y.

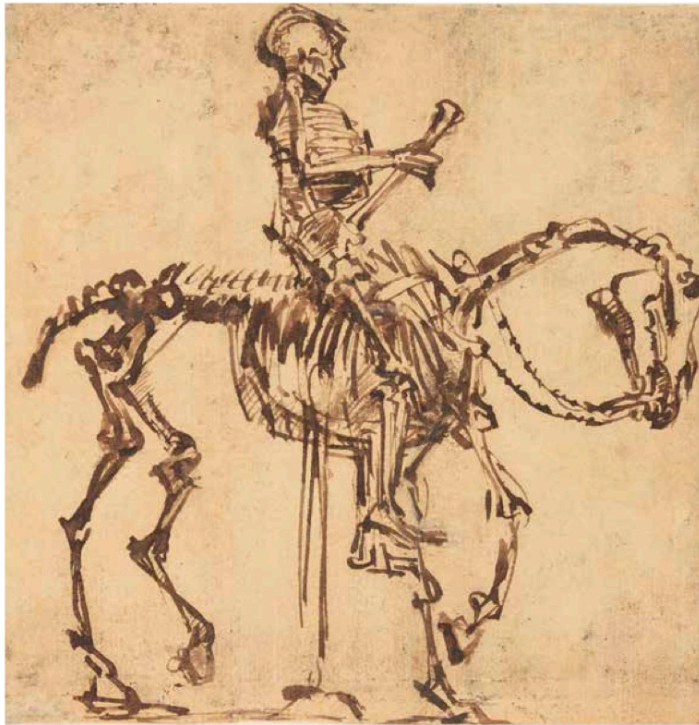


11.8 | *The Windmill on the Bastion "Het Blauw hoofd,"* ca. 1645. Pen and brown ink, brown and gray-brown wash; 11.6 x 19.8 cm (4<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.). Fondation Custodia, Collection Frits Lugt, Paris, inv. 5174.

11.9 | *The Amstel River Seen from the Bulwark beside the "Blauwbrug,"* ca. 1645–49. Pen and brown ink with brown wash; 8.9 x 18.5 cm (3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.). National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection, Washington, D.C., inv. 1954.12.114. Photo courtesy of the Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art.

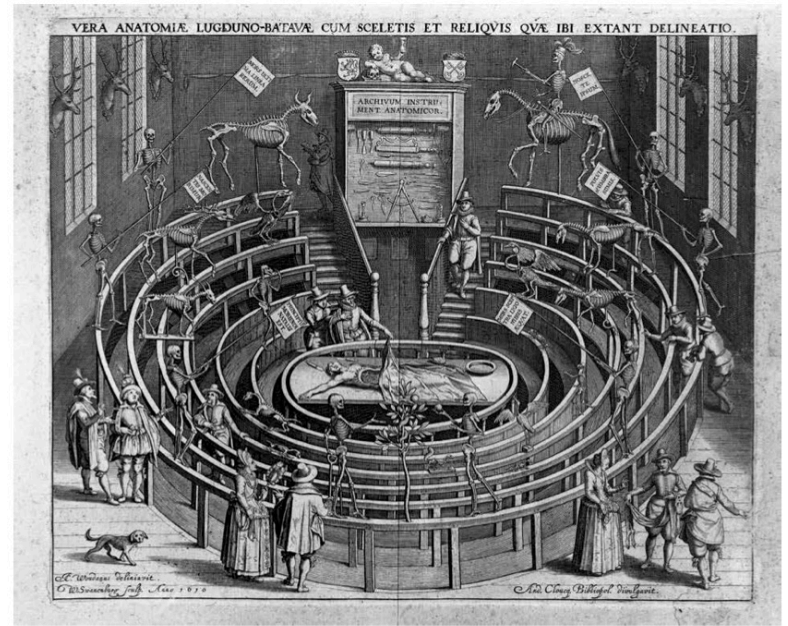
The artist made frequent trips along Amsterdam's city walls to sketch its bastions, which in many places were surmounted by windmills. Among the best results of this endeavor is his pen-and-wash drawing at the Fondation Custodia, Paris (fig. 11.8), of the bulwark popularly called *Het Blauw hoofd* (the Blue Headland), upon which were situated a few sentry boxes, cottages, and a post mill (a type whose entire body could be turned into the wind) affectionately named *De Bok* (the Billy Goat). The slender mill and its beautifully drawn vanes dominate the scene. Details of the landscape can be recounted: Cottages with tall chimneys are huddled to the left of the mill, and beyond them three cannons of the city's fortification. A clump of shadowed trees is seen at the bottom of an incline on the right. Extraordinary is the impression of vast space beyond the bulwark created by light washes.





16.8 | *Skeleton Rider Mounted on the Skeleton of a Horse*, ca. 1655. Pen and brown ink; 15.7 x 15.4 cm (6 1/8 x 6 in.). Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt, inv. AE-670. Photographer: Wolfgang Fuhrmannek.

16.9 | Willem van Swanenburgh (Dutch, 1581–1612), after Jan Cornelisz Woudanus (ca. 1570–1615), *The Anatomy Theater, Leiden*, in 1610. Engraving. Academisch Historisch Museum, Leiden.



the vehicle throws its side in shadow not devoid of reflected light. The sketch's nervous pen strokes could hardly be more suggestive, and touches of wash are beautifully integrated with its fine and bold pen lines. The artist's matchless touch with both pen and brush is seen in the way the coach's slightly askew front wheels are rendered. Though the coach is perfectly static, if Umberto Boccioni had been given a chance to see the drawing of the coach's rear wheel, he would have applauded the artist as a forerunner of the futurists who claimed that light as well as motion destroys the substance of objects. It is noteworthy that Rembrandt found no need to indicate the coach's fourth wheel. Neither do I.

The drawing has been connected to Rembrandt's imposing life-size *Portrait of Frederik Rihel on Horseback*, presumably dated 1663, at the National Gallery, London—a painting that is also unique: it is the artist's only commissioned

The definitive overview of Rembrandt's drawings, published to coincide with the 'Year of Rembrandt', which marks 350 years since his death

# The Drawings of Rembrandt

*A New Study*  
Seymour Slive

267 illustrations  
20.3 x 25.4cm  
264pp  
ISBN 978 0 500 295359  
Paperback  
**£29.95**  
October 2019

A4

Book

