

Mirrors of Skill and Renown: Women and Self-Fashioning in Early-Modern Dutch Art

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Martha Moffitt Peacock

Mirrors of Skill and Renown: Women and Self-Fashioning in Early-Modern Dutch Art

Abstract. Due to traditional biases that castigated women's vanity in association with mirror gazing, self-representation was problematic for the female artist. Nevertheless, several early-modern Dutch women artists were able to subvert these prejudices and proclaim for themselves a fame previously restricted to men.

Introduction

During the past two decades, the trend in early modern Dutch art historical studies has been to deny or ignore the influence of gendered autonomy in art produced by women. This is surprising considering that some of the earliest art historical interest in gender and the female gaze arose from studies in this field.¹ Increasingly, however, a type of scholarship began to be employed which rejected the notion that artistic vision was influenced by gender, and this perspective came to dominate approaches to spectatorship, patronage, and the making of art. Even though certain women artists have received significant attention, their gender, with few exceptions, has played little part in the analysis of their art. Nevertheless, a few feminist scholars in the field have continued to pursue an interest in the art-historical negotiations of gender.² In such a vein, this article will explore the nature of gendered autonomy through different strategies of female self-fashioning in Dutch art of the Golden Age. In this very deliberate creation of identity, women artists had to overcome social biases about the vanity of women in mirroring themselves, and they also had to breach gender boundaries by proclaiming for themselves a type of skill and fame previously restricted to men.

Autonomy Reconsidered

The assertion that women artists acted autonomously to overcome gender biases and create public reputations for themselves in a protofeminist manner will likely meet with skepticism.³ In studies of Netherlandish art, critiques of female autonomy reflect an assumption that only men were capable of individualistic behavior and free will in this society. This hyperbolized sense of male individualism and agency has led to an extremely slanted perspective in which men are frequently associated with genius in their innovative practices, but women are merely viewed as copyists. While it is granted, for example, that Rembrandt

would have had the power to self-fashion and self-promote in new and original ways in his art, it is presumed that women were not allowed, or perhaps even capable of, this same ability.⁴ There have been both implicit and explicit assertions that women artists left no evidence of their gender and merely painted and engraved after the models of their male contemporaries.⁵ Nevertheless, I will argue that women were also innovatively attempting to fashion public images for themselves that would promote women individually, but also the female sex generally. While these self-representations drew on the repertoire of imagistic options available, they are not without a gendered voice. This is not to suggest that this voice reflected a twenty-first-century feminist sensibility, only that it was influenced by enabled female experiences within the power structures and socio-cultural biases of that era.

The Western Tradition of Women, Mirrors, and Vanitas

Censuring the female sex had a long history in Western society dating back to Aristotle and Paul in antiquity and continuing in the Middle Ages with theologians such as Thomas Aquinas. These patriarchal biases regarding the innately weak and evil character of women were related to ancient biological discussions regarding the female mind and body that were still in vogue in seventeenth-century Europe.⁶ In brief, the first of these connect to the four humors that were governed by bodily fluids and which determined gender characteristics. Women were associated with the cold and wet humors and were thus made more changeable than men. If women unnaturally abandoned their passive role, there was a danger that they would join with the devil in order to gain power over men. Their cold and wet humors also made them susceptible to lust and to sexual advances of the devil.

Given such negative opinions regarding the female sex, women's beauty was considered to be one of their most dangerous characteristics. As a result, women were not only associated with the sin of lust or *luxuria*, they also came to symbolize *superbia* or the vice of pride and worldliness. Therefore, by the late middle ages, the woman gazing at her beauty in a mirror became the popular personification of *Superbia* or *Lady World*.⁷ This figure was an embodiment of all that was sinful and transitory. Her seductive charms led men away from a focus on eternal salvation. This concept of a dangerous preoccupation with the worldly and ephemeral was known as *vanitas*. A clear example of these multiple assignments with women is found in a detail from the *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins*, c. 1490, by Hieronymus Bosch (Fig. 1). The painted table depicts a large eye, and at the iris center is a figure of the resurrected Christ with the inscription *Cave Cave Deus Videt* (Beware, Beware, God sees). The eye is also a mirror that reflects the vices of humankind. Thus, in circular fashion around the eye are genre-like representations of ordinary people engaged in the mortal sins. *Superbia* is personified by a woman in a household gazing into a mirror held by a demon. She primps and adjusts her headdress, and in mimicking fashion the demon wears a similar adornment. Accusations against alluring women, vanity, and transient beauty are clearly invoked in this collaboration with the devil.

This tradition continued into the seventeenth century in scenes with *Lady World* such as a painting of 1633 by Jan Miense Molenaer (Fig. 2). In this scene, a fashionably dressed and bejeweled young woman is grooming before a mirror. The chained monkey is an allusion to individuals in voluntary servitude to sin.⁸ Furthermore, the thrusting of his paw into the woman's slipper is likely a crude metaphor for the planned sexual transaction to follow.⁹ The skull below the young woman's feet is an overt reminder of the brevity of life, as are the bubbles being blown by the young boy at the left (a traditional reference to *homo bulla* or "Man is like a bubble").¹⁰ This figure has been convincingly identified as *Lady World* via the globe on the map situated above her head.¹¹

Negative representations such as these associating worldly women and mirrors with vanity and alluring seduction thus problematized the implied mirror gazing necessary for women's self-portraiture. Strategies had to be developed that would allow women to self-promote in socially acceptable ways. The struggle for the female artist is exemplified in texts such as Cornelis de Bie's *Het Gulden Cabinet vande Edel Vry Schilder-Const* (The Golden Cabinet of the Noble Liberal Art of Painting, 1662) which contains the biographies of contemporary artists. De Bie devotes a section of his text to advice for the female artist.¹² Importantly, he encourages women to engage in manly artistic pursuits and admonishes them to leave behind what he considers the more vain and frivolous activities of women. Specifically, he chastises women for foolishly wasting time primping in front of the mirror, and instead he advises them to create art.¹³ But while a woman might be instructed to take up manly artistic endeavors, she could not easily self-promote in the manner of men. Therefore, women's self-portraiture began this pursuit in modest ways.

Marcia and the Mirror of Fame

While negative associations between women and mirrors predominated in Western society, there was a less prevalent connection that positively promoted this pairing and that encouraged a more sympathetic view of the struggle for women artists. The source for this supportive stance originated with the text *De mulieribus claris* (On Famous Women, 1374) by Giovanni Boccaccio. This enormously successful book had already been translated from the original Latin into German, French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, and English by the sixteenth century. The text is a collection of the biographies of ancient women gathered from classical and Christian authors. One of the included figures of renown is the artist Marcia. An important component of this biography is the narrative of how she created a self-portrait with the aid of a mirror.¹⁴ This became her most characteristic feature, and it is represented visually in numerous editions of the text (Fig. 3). In one version from a French edition, Marcia sits at a small table surrounded by artistic tools including: brushes, a palette, and paints in a variety of containers. Most importantly, she gazes at her reflection in a tiny mirror held with her left hand, and with her right, she paints the lips on the self-portrait in front of her. As Koerner points out, this influential late medieval imaging of Marcia is the origin of a critical tradition in which the skill of the artist is pronounced and made visible.¹⁵

Importantly, this begins with a female artist viewing herself in a mirror, even before Jan Van Eyck and Albrecht Dürer further exploited the self-promotional possibilities provoked by such associations in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The connection between mirroring and male boasting, specifically in Dutch portraiture, has been discussed at length by Adams. With this correlation in mind, she references a moralizing emblem from Roemer Visscher's *Sinnepoppen* text of 1614. It depicts a woman gazing at her reflection in a mirror with the title "*Ick geeft haer weder*" (I conjure her up). The verse continues with the advice to grandly construct oneself in the way one desires:

Worldly trade and behavior is not unlike the characteristic of the mirror because in the mirror is not a reflection, the thing that you there want to see you must bring before yourself: what role you will play in the world.¹⁶

In spite of the fact that Adams deals almost exclusively with male portraits, it is significant that Visscher chose to include the representation of a *woman* coming to know herself and constructing her identity, "in the world," rather than a man. Visscher was the father to three daughters, two of them, Anna and Maria Tesselschade, were celebrated members of a group of intellectual elites in the Republic. Both women were well educated and talented in various arts. Hence, it seems likely that the self-fashioning of these two cultural icons may well have inspired this emblem advocating knowing oneself and imagining one's glory. It is probable that this educated family would have delighted in such subversion of prevailing feminine *vanitas* mirror signifiers.¹⁷ Indeed, the self-portraiture of a number of women artists quickly began to take on this same challenge soon after the publication of Visscher's text.

The Self-Fashioning of Women Artists

In general maneuvers throughout the seventeenth century, women artists strategized ways of self-imaging in order to increase their fame and to establish recognition of their artistic abilities. As already mentioned, the difficulties for women achieving such public renown through the self-portrait were significant due to negative associations between mirroring oneself and vanity. Nevertheless, during the Golden Age, women were increasingly able to devise bold images of their artistry and fame.

Clara Peeters was one of the earliest women artists to restructure notions of women and mirroring from the outset of the Dutch Golden Age.¹⁸ Peeters' negotiations with self-portraiture were modest yet innovative in their ability to establish public visibility for the female artist. She dealt with the dilemma by turning to Netherlandish male precedents for representing oneself in art. As the renowned Van Eyck had done in the fifteenth century, Peeters painted her portraits on various reflective objects within her paintings. Brusati discusses how these mirrored portrayals were not only an assertion of Peeters herself as the artist of the work, they also demonstrated her skill in crafting the illusion of a three-dimensional object that distorts and multiplies her image in its reflective surface.¹⁹ While Peeters

resorted to a traditional and acceptable male precedent in order to promote her self-image, she also introduced a gendered negotiation to this problem.

In a *Vanitas* painting of the early seventeenth century, Peeters distinguishes between the negative and positive aspects of female mirroring in a manner not found among images by her male contemporaries (Fig. 4).²⁰ It pictures a young woman in revealing and costly dress holding a vial with fragile bubbles. She is surrounded by various costly objects symbolizing pride and vanity. The woman has been popularly proclaimed a self-portrait, thus ignoring the fact that she does not look at all like the dark-haired young woman reflected in her other self-portraits. Moreover, viewers have neglected the fact that there is already a self-portrait in the painting. Again, it is a reflected image of a dark-haired young woman found in the vessel at the far right of the painting. Thus, Peeters appears to be making a clear distinction between her own mirrored image and the *vanitas* figure. The young woman at the left wastes time in frivolous pursuits, such as blowing bubbles and adorning herself with expensive clothing and accessories. As a temptation to licentiousness with her low décolletage, she represents the traditional *vanitas* warning against the sin of lust associated with tempting women, while Peeters, the artist, represents the virtues of industry and skill. Moreover, the accomplished products of her artistic labor are not fleeting; they will outlive the ephemeral objects in the painting. While her pairing of self-portraiture and *vanitas* motifs was adopted from male prototypes, she provocatively manipulated this tradition.²¹ Indeed, she did precisely what De Bie later pled for women artists to do; she rejected traditional notions equating women with vain, self-beautifying mirror gazing and instead displayed her “manly” artistic skills.

Anna Maria van Schurman similarly attempted to subvert negative perceptions of the female character. She was, unarguably, the most internationally famous woman of the Dutch Golden Age, and she received a great deal of acclaim for her scholarly and artistic pursuits.²² Importantly, she devoted much of her artistic activity to the production of self-portraiture, and these images had a tremendous social impact. Such visual publicity helped create and spread the fame of Van Schurman who truly became an international celebrity. Her portraits also provided a lasting image of possibilities for female accomplishment and fame generally in the Dutch Republic. Due to her influence, a kind of protofeminist sisterhood developed with women supporting one another via their lauding art and poetry.²³

Van Schurman’s intellectual abilities allowed her to become the first female student at the University of Utrecht. In particular, her incredible language skills amazed the great intellectuals of her era. Yet, in spite of her fame, she also struggled with the dilemma of mirroring herself in a male-dominated artistic tradition that equated women with vanity. This is evident in a 1633 etched and engraved self-portrait (Fig. 5). She depicts herself in a half-length pose behind a large, decorative cartouche that contains her Latin inscription. This verse attempts to thwart traditional patriarchal notions of female narcissism:²⁴

Neither my mind’s arrogance, nor my physical beauty
 Has urged me to engrave my portrait in ever-lasting bronze.
 It was, rather, the impulse to not work on more powerful subjects on my first attempt,
 If perhaps this crude stylus (my novice as an artist) were forbidding better ones.

In spite of her modest deprecation of her artistic abilities, she also clearly intended the creation of this self-portrait to be the means of enhancing and spreading her fame. Actually, the inscription may well be understood as a means of controverting the frequent imaging of women as a vehicle for gazing at their beauty. Instead, it is her artistic striving that she wants to emphasize. This ability, and not her beauty, will help her to achieve the public approbation that she seeks. Her desires to acquire manly fame are evident in the format of the print with its ostentatious cartouche. It is reminiscent of glorifying male portraiture of the era as seen, for example, in an engraved portrait of 1593 depicting the artist Hans Bol by Hendrik Goltzius. In Goltzius' portrait, two putti figures allegorizing art are shown drawing, and one of them examines his features in a mirror to create a self-portrait. It is clear, therefore, that such mirror gazing and male glorification was perfectly acceptable in Dutch culture. And it was this gender discrimination that Van Schurman was trying to overcome in her own assertive, yet appropriately modest, self-imaging. The fact that she sent the portrait to a number of male elites illustrates her desire to proclaim her fame within the male-dominated arena of mutual congratulatory eulogizing. The later praise of these men and their poems regarding the image are indicative of Van Schurman's success in promoting herself amongst these men of letters.²⁵

Obviously, Van Schurman's early sense of self was heavily dependent on her interactions with males and the manner in which men glorified themselves and each other. While set apart, she was still meaningfully initiated into the public sphere of manly self-promotion and bravado. This type of identity construction is also found in one of her texts, *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica, prosaica et metrica*, 1648.²⁶ The text opens with an iconic image of Van Schurman after her self-portrait, which includes an inscription indicating that the full marvel of this woman will only be partially revealed in the text. Clearly, she understood that in order to compete in a man's world, she had to employ tactics similar to those of a man by publicly pronouncing and demonstrating her capabilities. Therefore, a portion of this text is completely devoted to acquaintances' praise of her abilities. In these verses, frequent comparisons are made between Van Schurman and Minerva; she is further designated as a heroine and an Amazon.²⁷

In discussing the public imaging of Van Schurman, it is important to note that many of her portraits occur in the print medium, meaning that her legend could be spread widely throughout Europe. The low cost and portability of prints made them effective tools of communication in reaching mass audiences. Numerous copies were made of her self-portraits and were inserted in her own texts, as well as in the writings of some of her male contemporaries. Furthermore, she frequently bestowed the gift of her self-portrait among her several acquaintances of the elites of Europe.²⁸ Thus, what began as modest self-portraiture soon became a form of eulogizing public discourse.

Her artistic accomplishments attracted so much attention that she continued to be lauded in collections of artist biographies for several decades, including the De Bie text mentioned above. He pointedly praises the glorious Van Schurman for engaging in the "male pursuit" of creating art and states that this manly endeavor has won her manly honor.²⁹ In his text, *De Grootte Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen* (The Great Theater

of Dutch Painters, 1718), the biographer Arnold Houbraken includes her portrait and compares her renown to that of a number of ancient famed women, including Sappho.³⁰

One of the most important images to indicate the kind of Schurmanic civic and Dutch pride described above is a much bolder self-portrait by Van Schurman done with the aid of a mirror and included in a dedication by the popular poet, moralist, and statesman Jacob Cats. The dedication appears at the outset of his text *'S Werelts Begin, Midden, Eynde, Besloten in den Trou-Ringh, Met den Proef-Steen van den Selven* (The World's Beginning, Middle and End, Comprised in the Wedding Ring, With the Touch Stone of the Same) (Fig. 6). Accompanying the image is an inscription proclaiming her fame and glory and also a page-long description of all her talents in learning, art, and music.³¹ A celebratory view of the Utrecht church out of the arched window and a glorifying cloth of honor have been added, recalling male heroic portraits.³² Significantly, Van Schurman's glorified self-portrait reappeared in multiple editions of Cats' text, thereby disseminating her powerful image throughout the Republic. The consequences of Van Schurman's remarkably successful public negotiations are evident not only in the extensive contemporary attention paid to her but also in the emulating representations created by later female artists.

Perhaps no female self-portrait has attracted more modern attention for its audacious fashioning of the woman artist than that of Judith Leyster, c. 1633 (Fig. 7).³³ It exudes confidence in her skill as an artist through its adoption of self-promotional signifiers. She is fashionably dressed but also in the midst of painting a male figure on a canvas with her many brushes and her palette with paints. It is possible that a similar sixteenth-century image by the Flemish artist Katarina van Hemessen may have influenced Leyster's composition.³⁴ Furthermore, it is likely that Van Hemessen's portrayal stemmed directly from illustrations of Marcia found in the many still-popular editions of Boccaccio's text.³⁵ Leyster's continuation of this tradition, however, becomes even more self-assured than either of these sources in its direct confrontation with the viewer and through its assertive presence.

As has been suggested, perhaps the boldness of this self-fashioning was a natural consequence for a woman who had her own studio and assistants.³⁶ Leyster had demonstrated her ability to compete in the world of men when admitted to Haarlem's Guild of St. Luke in 1633. Her powerful interventions into the male world of art making are also evidenced by her lawsuit against the painter Frans Hals for illicitly taking on one of her pupils. Her heroic contributions to the fame of Haarlem were memorialized by contemporaries such as Ampzing and Schrevelius. The latter specifically points out that there are not only male but also female artists in the city of Haarlem and states that these women should be included and praised with the men.³⁷

Van Schurman's and Leyster's methods for presenting the skill of the female artist to the viewing public would have important consequences for later women artists, including Gesina ter Borch. Unlike the women discussed thus far, she grew up in, and was influenced by, a family of artists. While her reputation was not as widespread as that of Van Schurman, she nevertheless acquired renown in her city of Zwolle. Her three-quarter length self-portrait of 1661, which was kept by her in a collection of family drawings, is particularly revealing of the manner in which she was trying to construct her own fame (Fig. 8). She is fashionably

dressed and stands before a sumptuous blue satin cloth of honor that has been pulled aside to reveal a view into the landscape. Since the compositional elements of the background are not to be found in the works of the other artists in her family, it can be assumed that these props were decided upon by Ter Borch. It seems likely that the portrait of Van Schurman, reproduced in numerous editions of Cats' collected works, provided the inspiration for this cloth of honor and landscape view. In a manner similar to this precedent, Ter Borch chose to include a eulogizing poem beneath her self-portrayal. It was written by a family friend, the schoolmaster Roldanus. The reference to Pallas Minerva is also reminiscent of the earlier praise of Van Schurman.³⁸

Here one sees represented a young lady, beautiful of being,
 Her virtues, honor and art can never be praised enough.
 And when one sees what she does with her brush,
 Who could possibly not be astonished?
 It seems that Pallas has so completely claimed her,
 That neither Venus nor her son may come close to her:
 She chooses to remain free, all her desire is directed to art,
 She lives thus according to her wish, alone in peace and quiet.

Such praise of a woman who prefers art to love is clearly reminiscent of the awe and admiration expressed over the goddess-like accomplishments of Van Schurman. Indeed, the entire scrapbook reminds one of her predecessor's famous *Opuscula*. In a vein similar to that popular text, Ter Borch included several poems in her own honor at the outset of this collection.³⁹ She, too, is labeled a Pallas and an Amazon. And in another poem by Roldanus, her manly accomplishment is lauded. He states that artistic talent is certainly to be praised in a man, but that this should be even more prized in a woman. Indeed, he claims that her talent supersedes that of many male artists. Then he significantly asks, "Why shouldn't a daughter learn to make art, so that her name will long stand in renown like her brother's?"⁴⁰ This assertion indicates that she had acquired a local level of notoriety, and that it was her desire to attain this celebrity status. Thus, like her famous predecessors, Ter Borch's abilities were acclaimed in Zwolle, and she became a source of pride through her artistic transgression of traditional gender roles.

Evidence that she did indeed intend her text as an *Opuscula*-like glorification of her own talents is particularly found in the title drawing to the manuscript, the *Triumph of Painting over Death*, 1660 (Fig. 9).⁴¹ In this image, Ter Borch has included two portrayals of herself – one as the personification of *Pictura*, or the art of painting, at her easel, and another in a portrait held aloft by the putti at the left. In both images she pays honor to her abilities as an artist with accompanying trumpets and a glorifying laurel wreath to indicate her celebrity. Personifications of Time and Death are trampled underfoot in the presence of her enduring art.⁴² Hence, the text truly becomes a tribute to her and her art in an attempt to claim manly fame like so many women artists of her time.

The artist Maria van Oosterwijck continued to redefine female identity via the self-portrait in the later seventeenth century. Her father Jacobus, a Dutch Reformed minister, must have encouraged her to receive artistic instruction at a young age. By the time she moved

to Utrecht in 1660, she was training with the still-life artist Jan Davidsz. de Heem. This training meant that, unlike some of these earlier painters, she could eventually claim a truly international artistic reputation. Houbraken writes that Louis XIV of France and Emperor Leopold both had her paintings in their collections.⁴³ In addition, William and Mary of England and Cosimo de Medici were her patrons. Huygens wrote a verse in praise of this internationally renowned artist in which he claims that no one compares to her.⁴⁴ She followed Peeters' model by depicting self-portraits on reflective surfaces in her still-lives. In a *Vanitas* still life of 1668, which was sold to the Emperor, Van Oosterwijck similarly differentiated the eternal quality of her artistic skill and fame from symbols of transience and worldliness (Fig. 10). The religious iconography of this painting has been discussed in detail including the presence of Cats' text *Self-Stryt* (first published in 1620) as a warning that earthly pleasures are to be avoided.⁴⁵ Moralizing against earthly temptations is further indicated by the large purse and coins at the left. Strewn throughout the painting are references to the transience of life including the biblical text from Job 14 in the foreground, the wilting flowers to the left, and the hourglass to the right. The large text with the title REKENINGH (reckoning) in the center literally references a tracking of one's deeds that are enumerated with the quill and inkpot to the right. In the background, a large celestial globe mapping out the constellations likely refers to the heavens as a reward to those who live a righteous life.

In addition to these *vanitas* signifiers, however, there lies a group of objects that indicate how Van Oosterwijck fashions her own place in the world and in the eternities. In the glass flask at the left she painted a mirrored self-portrait with palette and easel comparable to the strategy employed by Peeters. A scrap of paper is wound around the neck of the bottle with the words *Aqua vitae* as a reference to the fountain of living waters discussed in the scriptural text of Revelations. Thus, along with the nearby skull crowned with laurel and the ear of corn, these objects are symbolic of resurrection and the continuance of one's good name after death. In this manner, she associates herself and her art with notions of enduring value. Furthermore, she assimilates the many heroic qualities of her predecessors; she is an accomplished woman whose talents and name will continue to have consequence for the artistic women to follow – both through her art and through the celebration of her accomplishments in texts like Houbraken's.⁴⁶

The Success of Women's Self-Fashioning

The increasing abilities of women artists to build on one another's reputations and structure celebrated identities of skill and fame are perhaps best summed up by drawings meant to accompany a eulogizing autograph book, or *stamboek*, in honor of the turn-of-the-century paper-cutting artist Joanna Koerten.⁴⁷ For example, Jacob Houbraken overtly linked Koerten's fame to her predecessor in a drawing in which Van Schurman's portrait is paired with Koerten's and the two are accompanied by artistic and scholarly tools (Fig. 11). A sculpted figure of Minerva looks up in admiration toward these tremendously famous women.

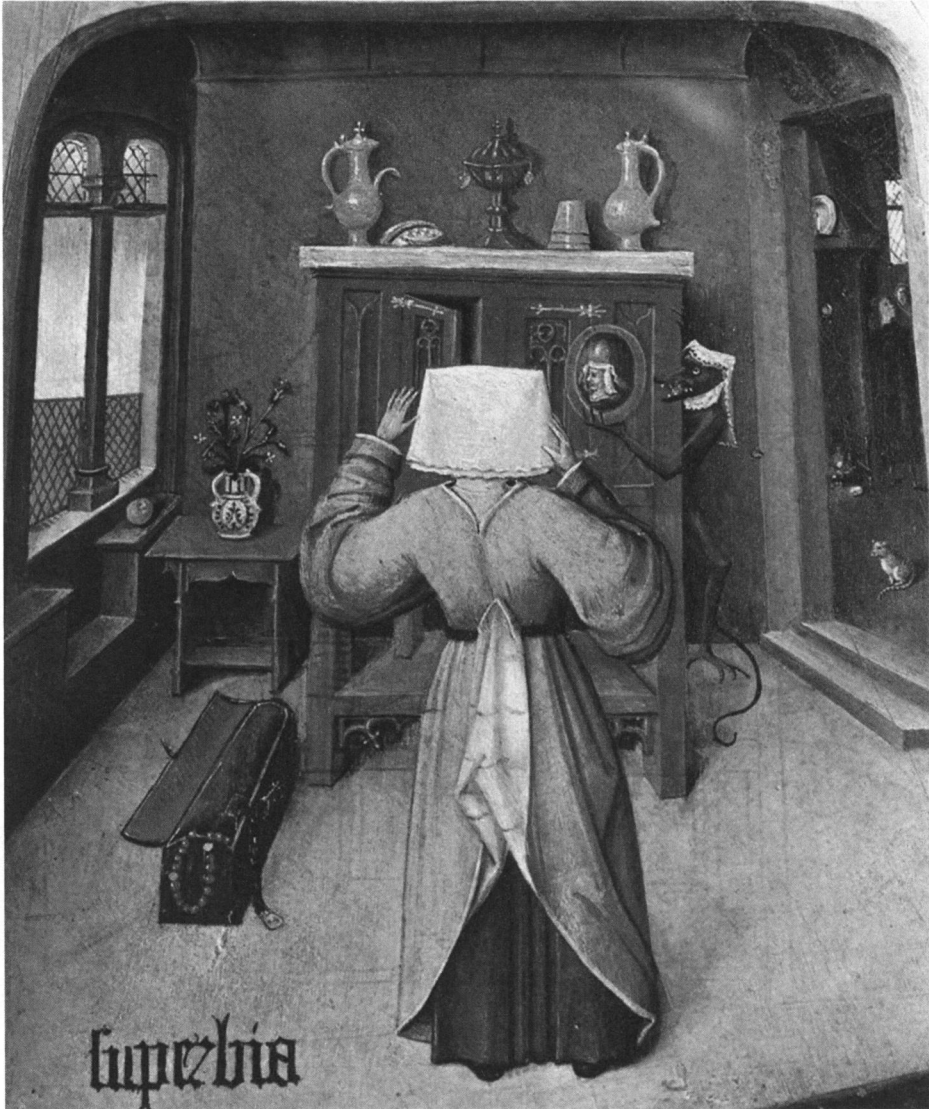
Minerva's inclusion reminds the viewer that both women were inheritors of the goddess' name as a meritorious appellation, indeed Koerten was known as the Scissors-Minerva.⁴⁸ And perhaps even more revealing is a drawing by Philip Tideman in which he praises Koerten by portraying her gazing into a mirror with Minerva standing nearby (Fig. 12). The accompanying inscription reads:

Joanna Koerten, your jewels are ways of Virtue and Art that accompany and adorn you.
Joanna does not wear pompous robes. She wears neither precious treasure
nor gold; but she displays virtue and artistic adornment that never age.⁴⁹

This complete subversion of traditional *vanitas* signifiers in connection with women and mirrors is an unquestionable indicator of women artists' successful negotiations in overthrowing patriarchal biases and in achieving celebrity status. None of this discussion, however, is to suggest that prejudices against the female character disappeared, or to imply that the situation was made equal for male and female artists, either in terms of training or in actual numbers of professionals. Yet, the resulting view that emerges suggests that the women who contributed to this artistic transformation were indeed capable of a degree of gendered autonomy and that they enjoyed some success in altering public perceptions of women's character and abilities. While it is obvious that certain social determinants, including visual tradition, cultural biases, and institutions of male power, influenced women artists' options, it is also clear that these women did have the capacity to visually imagine new roles for themselves as skilled and famous artists.

Illustrations

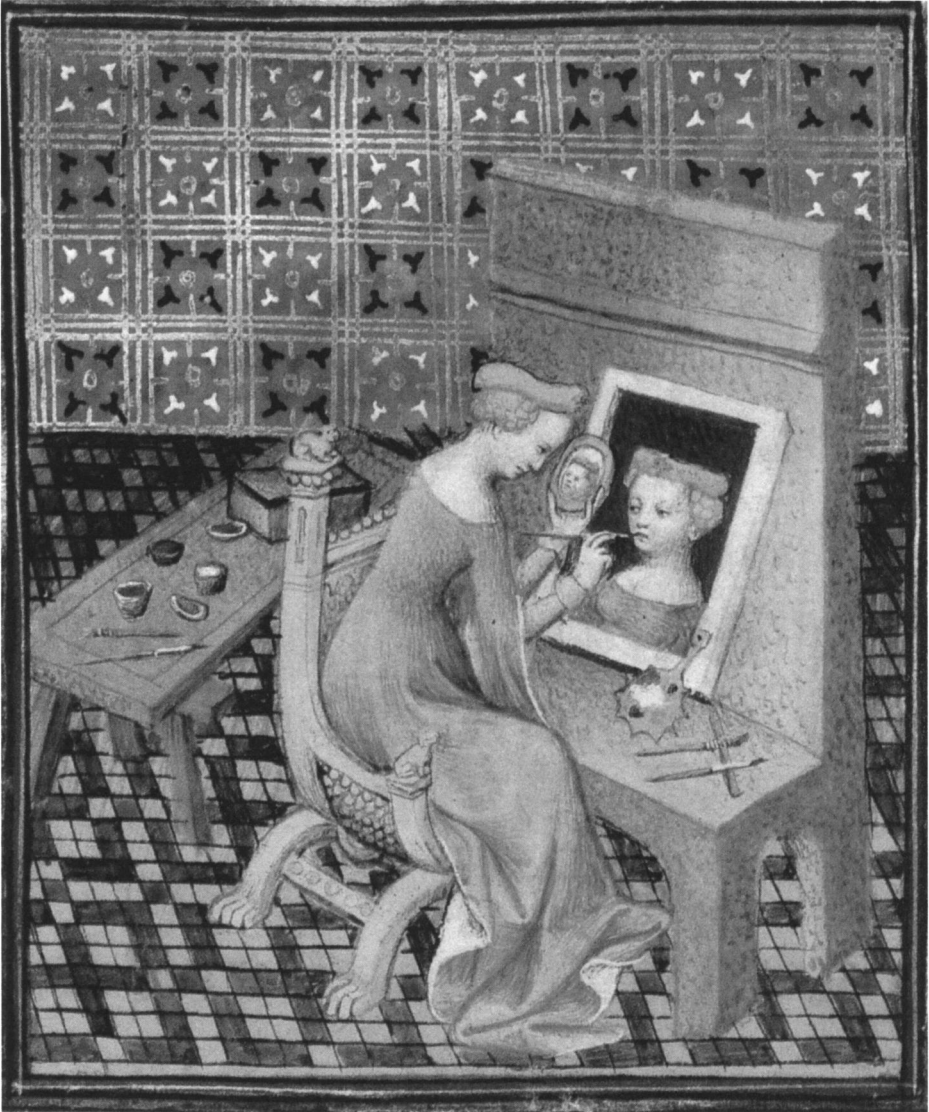
1. *Hieronymus Bosch, Superbia (detail from The Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins), c. 1490, panel, Madrid, Prado*



2. *Jan Miense Molenaer, Lady World, 1633, canvas, Toledo, Toledo Museum of Art*



3. *Coronation Master* (?), *Marcia Painting Her Self-Portrait*, 1403, *miniature from Des cleres et nobles femmes*, Paris, *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Fr. 12420, fol. 101



4. Clara Peeters, *Vanitas*, c. 1618, panel, London, Art Dealer



5. *Anna Maria van Schurman, Self-Portrait, 1633, engraving and etching, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum*



6. Anna Maria van Schurman (?), Self-Portrait, 1655 (original publication 1637) engraving from Jacob Cats, 'S Werelts Begin, Midden, Eynde, Besloten in den Trou-Ringh, Met den Proef-Steen van den Selven, The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek

*Hier siet ghy, goet-gunstige Leser, een af-beeldinge van
Jonck-vrouw Anna Maria Schurmans, naer het leven gedaen: onder
het welcke vry gesels hebben het veers dat ghy daer lesen meught.*



*Wie oyt dit aerdig beelt sult' komen aen te schouwen,
Hout vast, dat gy hier siet een roem voor alle vrouwen,
Van dat de werelt stont, tot heden op ten dagh,
Niet een die haer gelek of na bereycken magh.*

MAer niemant dencke dat wy hier (ghe- hebben gesproken. neen niet alsoo; maer
lijck wel somwijlen in lof-dicht's plagh ghy selts wort hier rechter gemaect om te
te geschieden) te ruym ende wijdt-mondigh oordeelen of dit mijn eer-dicht erdicht is, dan

* * * * *

2

7. *Judith Leyster, Self-Portrait, c. 1630, canvas, Washington D.C., The National Gallery*



8. Gesina ter Borch, Self-Portrait, 1661, drawing and watercolor, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



9. *Gesina ter Borch, The Triumph of Painting over Death, 1660, drawing and watercolor, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum*



10. *Maria van Oosterwijck, Vanitas Still Life, 1668, canvas, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum*



11. *Jacob Houbraken, Homage to Joanna Koerten and Anna Maria van Schurman, 1720s, drawing, Amsterdam, Private Collection*



12. Philip Tideman, Homage to Joanna Koerten, c. 1700, drawing, Amsterdam, Gemeente Stadsarchief



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Endnoten

- 1 See, for example, Frima Fox Hofrichter, "Judith Leyster's Proposition: Between Virtue and Vice," *The Feminist Art Journal* 4(3) (Fall 1975): pp. 22–26; and Svetlana Alpers, "Art History and its Exclusions," in *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany*, eds., Norma Broude and Mary Garrard (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), pp. 183–200.

- 2 Mariët Westermann discussed the limited effect of gender theory in her state of the research survey over studies of early modern Netherlandish art, and she proclaimed that such studies were unsustainable in “After Iconography and Iconoclasm: Current Research in Netherlandish Art, 1566–1700,” *The Art Bulletin*, 84(2) (2002): pp. 351–72. While this situation and judgment did little to encourage gender analysis and the female gaze in the field, a few scholars continued to pursue these discussions. See, for instance: various essays in Jane Carroll and Alison Stewart, eds., *Saints, Sinners, and Sisters. Gender and Northern Art in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003); Nanette Salomon, *Shifting Priorities: Gender and Genre in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004); Andrea G. Pearson, ed., *Women and Portraits in Early Modern Europe: Gender, Agency, Identity* (Aldershot, Hampshire, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008); Susan Broomhall and Jennifer Spinks, *Early Modern Women in the Low Countries: Feminizing Sources and Interpretations of the Past* (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011).
- 3 The term profeminism refers to the existence of seventeenth-century pro-female ideologies that foreshadowed actual “feminism” of the modern era. This term is used to describe the writings of Renaissance pro-female authors in Margaret L. King and Albert Rabil, Jr., “The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: Introduction to the Series,” in *The Worth of Women Wherein is Clearly Revealed Their Nobility and Their Superiority to Men* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). Gerda Lerner also traces the rise of a feminist voice in the early modern era in *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness: From the Middle Ages to Eighteen-Seventy* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
- 4 Rembrandt’s self-promotional self-portraiture is particularly discussed in H. Perry Chapman, “Rembrandt’s ‘Burgerlijk’ Self-Portraits,” *Nederlandse Portretten: Bijdragen over de Portretkunst in de Nederlanden uit de Zestiende, Zeventiende en Achttiende Eeuw*, ed. H. Blasse-Hege-man (The Hague: SDU, 1990): pp. 203–15.
- 5 For the controversy that occurred over the genderless character of the 1994 Judith Leyster exhibition and catalog, Pieter Biesboer and James A. Welu, eds., *Judith Leyster: Schilderes in een Mannenwereld*, (Zwolle: Waanders, 1993), see Nancy Stapen, “Who are the Women Old-Masters,” *Art News*, 93(3) (March 1994): pp. 87–94.
- 6 A history of biology and medicine concerning women is discussed in Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, originally published in 1993), pp. 34–39; Laurinda S. Dixon, *Perilous Chastity: Women and Illness in Pre-Enlightenment Art and Medicine* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); Carol Thomas Neely, *Distracted Subjects: Madness and Gender in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).
- 7 Several scholars have discussed the meaning of mirrors in art including: Gustav F. Hartlaub, *Zauber des Spiegels. Geschichte und Bedeutung des Spiegels in der Kunst* (Munich: R. Piper, 1951); Heinrich Schwarz, “The Mirror in Art,” *The Art Quarterly*, 15 (1952): pp. 97–118; Walter S. Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror of Man: The Authorship and Iconography of the Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins,” *Oud Holland*, 87(4) (1973): pp. 205–26; Jan Bialostocki, “Man and Mirror in Painting. Reality and Transience,” *Studies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Painting in Honour of Millard Meiss*, 1 (1977): pp. 61–72; Eric Jan Sluijter, *Seductress of Sight: Studies in Dutch Art of the Golden Age* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2000).
- 8 H.W. Janson, *Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1952), pp. 29–71, 145–62.
- 9 Jane Iandola Watkins, Peter C. Sutton, and Christopher Brown, eds., *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1984), pp. 262–63.

- 10 For further discussions of *homo bulla* see H.W. Janson, "The Putto with the Death's Head," *The Art Bulletin*, 19 (1937): pp. 423–30; W. Stechow, "Homo Bulla," *The Art Bulletin*, 20 (1938): pp. 227–28.
- 11 For a thorough analysis of *Vrouw Wereld* and her *vanitas* symbolism see E. De Jongh, "Vermommingen van *Vrouw Wereld* in de 17de eeuw," in *Album Amicorum J.G. van Gelder*, ed. J. Bruyn (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), pp. 198–206.
- 12 Cornelis de Bie, *Het Gulden Cabinet Vande Edele Vry Schilder-Const: Onstfloten door den lanck ghevvenshten Vrede tusschen de twee machtighe Croonen van Spaignien En Vrankryck, Waer-inne begrepen is den ontsterffelijcken loff vande vermaerste Constminnende Geesten Ende Schilders Van dese Eeuw . . .* (Antwerp: Montfort, 1662), pp. 557–60.
- 13 Van der Stighelen asserts that De Bie only encouraged women to be copyists because he includes women who engaged in this type of production in his list of women artists in *Katlijne van der Stighelen and Mirjam Westen, Elck zijn waerom: Vrouwelijke kunstenaars in België en Nederland 1500–1950* (Ghent: Ludion, 1999), p. 33. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that he primarily praises Van Schurman, who was not a copyist, and who portrayed herself several times.
- 14 Giovanni Boccaccio, *Famous Women*, ed. and trans. Virginia Brown (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 274–77.
- 15 Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997, originally published in 1993), pp. 110–11.
- 16 Ann Jensen Adams uses this emblem to assert the importance of looking and projecting the ideal self into the mirror or painting, see *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 42. The translation is hers: "Den wereldlijcken handel ende wandel is den aert van de Spiegel niet ongelijck: want in de Spiegel is niet dan een schijn, het dingh dat ghy daer in sien wildt, moet ghy selfs voor u brengen: wat personagie ghy in de Wereldt spelen wilt, moet ghy in u selfs vormen." The source is Roemer Visscher, *Zinne-poppen* (Amsterdam: W. Iansz., 1614), Part III, no. XXX, p. 154.
- 17 The mirror as a vehicle for self-knowledge in Dutch culture is also discussed in Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., ed., *Johannes Vermeer*, (Washington D.C.; The Hague; New Haven: National Gallery of Art; Mauritshuis; Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 140–45.
- 18 Even though Peeters is generally associated with Flanders, it appears that she began her artistic career and spent time in the Republic. Marie-Louise Hairs dismisses documents formerly thought to refer to Peeters' baptism and marriage in Antwerp in *Les peintres flamands de Fleurs au XVIIe Siècle*, (Paris; New York: Elsevier, 1955), p. 126; also see Peter Mitchell, *European Flower Painters* (London: A. and C. Black, 1973), p. 199. An early article on Peeters by Abraham Bredius states that documents indicate she had spent time in Amsterdam and The Hague, see "Clara Peeters (Pieters)," in Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Leipzig: E.A. Seeman, 1933), 27: 7. Pamela Hibbs Docoteau, accepts that Peeters was likely trained in the north, perhaps Middleburg, due to stylistic similarities with other still-life artists working there at the turn of the century, in *Clara Peeters: 1594-ca. 1640: And the Development of Still-life Painting in Northern Europe* (Lingen: Luca Verlag, 1992), p. 9. It is also indicative that two Dutch collectors owned her work. While her early years were likely spent in the north, an Antwerp Guild mark on one of her paintings indicates that she probably went to Antwerp at some point.
- 19 Celeste Brusati, "Stilled Lives: Self-Portraiture and Self-Reflection in Seventeenth-Century Netherlandish Still-Life Painting," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, 20(2/3) (1990–1991): pp. 168–82.

- 20 Although some have disagreed with a Peeters attribution for this painting, most experts consider it to be by her hand. For the details of this debate see rkd.nl/en/explore/images/195294. Decoteau considers it to be a work by Peeters in *Clara Peeters*, pp. 47–53. Other scholarship on Peeters includes: E. de Jongh, *Still-Life in the age of Rembrandt* (Auckland: Auckland City Art Gallery, 1982); Erika Gemar-Költzsch, *Holländische Stillebenmaler im 17. Jahrhundert* (Lingen: De Luca, 1995); Leen Huet and Jan Grieten, *Oude meesteressen. Vrouwelijke kunstenaars in de Nederlanden* (Leuven: Van Halewyck, 1998), pp. 121–33; Alan Chong and Wouter Kloek, *Het Nederlandse stilleven 1550–1720*, (Zwolle: Waanders, 1999); Van der Stighelen and Westen, *Elck zijn waerom*, pp. 141–43; Fred G. Meijer, *The collection of Dutch and Flemish still-life paintings bequeathed by Daisy Linda Ward* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2003).
- 21 For examples of male self-portraiture with *vanitas* symbols, see the engraving by Aegidius Sadelier II of the artist Bartholomeus Spranger and his wife Christina Muller, ca. 1600; or the 1685 self-portrait by Michiel van Musscher.
- 22 An enormous amount of scholarship documenting the life of Van Schurman has been published particularly since the 1970s. Perhaps the most thorough introduction to her life is found in Pieta van Beek, *The First Female University Student: Anna Maria van Schurman (1636)*, trans. Anna-Mart Bonthuys and Dineke Ehlers (Utrecht: Igitur, 2007, originally published in 2004). Other sources on her life and writings include: Anna Margaretha Hendrika Douma, *Anna Maria van Schurman en de studie der vrouw* (Amsterdam: H.J. Paris, 1924); Joyce L. Irwin, “Anna Maria van Schurman: the Star of Utrecht (1607–1678),” in *Female Scholars: A Tradition of Learned Women before 1800*, ed. Jean R. Brink (Montreal: Eden Press Women’s Publications, 1980), pp. 68–85; Mirjam de Baar, “‘En Onder het Hennerot het Haantje Zoekt te Blijven’: De Betrokkenheid van Vrouwen bij het Huisgezin van Jean de Labadie 1669–1732,” *Vrouwenlevens 1500–1800: Achste jaarboek voor vrouwengeschiedenis* (Nijmegen: SUN, 1987), pp. 11–43; Anne-Marie Korte, “Verandering en continuïteit. Over de ommekeer van Anna Maria van Schurman en Mary Daly,” *Mara. Tijdschrift voor feminisme en theologie* 1 (1987): pp. 35–44; Katlijne Van der Stighelen, *Anna Maria van Schurman of ‘Hoe hooge dat een maeght kan in de konsten stijgen’* (Leuven: Universitaire Pers, 1987); Joyce L. Irwin, “Learned Woman of Utrecht: Anna Maria van Schurman” in *Women Writers of the Seventeenth Century*, eds. Katharina M. Wilson and Frank J. Warnke (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989); Cornelia Niekus Moore, “Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678),” *Canadian Journal of Netherlandic Studies/ Revue Canadienne d’études néerlandaises* 11 (1990): pp. 25–32; Joyce L. Irwin, “Anna Maria van Schurman and Antoinette Bourignon: Contrasting Examples of Seventeenth-Century Pietism,” *Church History* 60(3) (1991): pp. 301–15; Barbara Bulckaert, “Vrouw en eruditie: het Problema Practicum van Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678),” in *Festschrift Miscellanea Jean-Pierre vanden Branden*, ed. M. Bastiaensen (Brussels: Archives et bibliothèques de Belgique, 1995), pp. 145–95; Mirjam de Baar, Machteld Löwensteyn, Marit Monteiro, and A. Agnes Sneller, eds., *Choosing the Better Part: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)* (Dordrecht; Boston; London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996); Jos Hiddes, “Kunstenaressen in de marge? Over knipkunst, calligrafie en roem,” in *Vrouwen en Kunst in de Republic*, eds., Els Kloek, Catherine Peters Sengers, and Esther Tobé (Hilversum: Verloren, 1998), pp. 107–18; Anna Maria van Schurman, *Whether a Christian Woman Should Be Educated and Other Writings from Her Intellectual Circle*, trans. and ed., Joyce L. Irwin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Van der Stighelen and Westen, *Elck zijn waerom*, pp. 156–57; Mirjam de Baar, “‘God has chosen you to be a crown of glory for all women!’: The international network of learned women surrounding Anna Maria van Schurman,” in “‘I have heard about you’: Foreign women’s writing crossing the Dutch border: from Sappho to Selma Lagerlöf,” eds., Suzan van Dijk, Petra Broomans, Janet F. van der Meulen, and Pim van Oostrum (Hilversum: Verloren, 2004), pp. 108–35; Jeannette Bloem, “The Shaping of a “Beautiful” Soul: The Critical Life of Anna Maria van Schurman,”

- in *Feminism and the Final Foucault*, eds., Dianna Taylor and Karen Vintges (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004), pp. 15–27; Bo Karen Lee, “‘I wish to be nothing’: The Role of Self-Denial in the Mystical Theology of Anna Maria van Schurman,” in *Women, Gender and Radical Religion in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Sylvia Brown (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), pp. 189–216; Barbara Bulckaert, “Self-Tuition and the Intellectual Achievement of Early Modern Women: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678),” in *Women, Education, and Agency, 1600–2000*, eds. Jean Spence, Sarah Jane Aiston, and Maureen M. Meikle (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 9–24; Martha Moffitt Peacock, “The Inner Cause and the Better Choice: Anna Maria van Schurman, Self-Fashioning, and the Attraction of the Lbadist Religion,” in *Mental Health, Spirituality, and Religion in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age*, ed. Albrecht Clas-sen (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2014), pp. 607–46.
- 23 Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies discuss the involvement of women in these social circles in *Dutch Culture in a European Perspective, volume 1, 1650: Hard-Won Unity*, trans. Myra Heerspink Scholz (Basingstoke; Assen: Palgrave Macmillan; Royal van Gorcum, 2004), pp. 217–19. Annelies de Jeu analyzes networks of female writers in the Republic in *‘t spoor der dichtersessen: Netwerken en publicatiemogelijkheden van schrijvende vrouwen in de Republiek (1600–1750)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000). Although she emphasizes that these women still needed men to publish and receive public notoriety, it is important to acknowledge the fact that, as these women published about each other, they did achieve societal recognition. Van Schurman’s networks outside of the Republic are discussed in De Baar, “The international network of learned women surrounding Anna Maria van Schurman.” Bulckaert also discusses Van Schurman’s networks in “Self-Tuition.”
- 24 I am grateful to Dr. Roger Macfarlane for his suggestions on the Latin translation.
Non animi fastus, nec formae gratia suasit
Vultus aeterno sculpere in aere meos:
Sed, si forte rudis stilus hic meliora negaret,
Tentarem prima ne potiora vice.
- 25 Van Beek, *First Female Student*, pp. 35–36.
- 26 This text was reprinted in 1650 and 1652.
- 27 Anna Maria van Schurman, *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica, prosaica et metrica* (Utrecht: Ex officina Johannis à Waesberge, 1652, originally published in 1648), pp. 319–64.
- 28 Van Beek’s text is particularly useful in tracing the many instances of Van Schurman distributing her self-portraits, *First Female Student*, pp. 161–63, 168, 173.
- 29 De Bie, *Gulden Cabinet*, pp. 557–60.
- 30 Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen, waar van ,er vele met hunne beeltenissen ten tooneel verschynen, en hun levensgedrag en konstwerken beschreven worden: zynde een vervolg op het Schilderboek van K. v. Mander*, 3 volumes (Amsterdam: published by the author, 1718–21), 1:313–16.
- 31 Jacob Cats, *Alle de Wercken, So ouden als nieuwe, van de Heer Jacob Cats, Ridder, oudt Raedt-pensionaris van Hollandt, &c.* (Amsterdam: Jan Jacobsz. Schipper, 1655), forward to ‘*S Werelts Begin, Midden, Eynde, Besloten in den Trou-Ringh, Met den Proef-Steen van den Selven* (originally published in 1637) (there are no page numbers, but it would be page 8 and verso). In his dedication, Cats states that the image is a self-portrait, but it is not known if Van Schurman engraved the work or whether it was simply done after her drawing. It is important to remember, however, that Van Schurman did other self-portrait engravings, so the print may be by her hand. Cats’ inscription reads, “Nu soo isset alsoo dat niet alleen de hooghe Schole van het Sticht van Utrecht, maer oock menigh geleert man in Hollant met volle reden van wetenschap kan getuygen, dat al het gene voren is verhaelt, gelijckelick is te vinden in den persoon van Jonck-vrou *Anna Maria Schuerrmans*: wiens beelt na ‘t leven by haer selfs uyt een spiegel kunstelick

- geteyckent wy den Leser hier in 't koper ghesneden gunstelick mede-deelen; als een wonder niet alleen van onse, maer oock van de voorige eeuwen. En daer op beslytende, segge ick: *O licht van unwen tijt, en Peerel van den douck! Ghy die ons Eeuwe çiert, verçiert oock desen Bouck.*
- 32 For an example of such glorifying imagery see the portrait of Prince Frederik Hendrik, 1619, by Willem Jacobsz. Delff (1580–1638) after Adriaen van de Venne (1589–1662).
- 33 The rediscovery of the artist Judith Leyster began with Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, "Judith Leyster," *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstmahlungen* 14 (1893): pp. 190–98; and Juliane Harms, "Judith Leyster, ihr Leben und ihr Werk," *Oud Holland* 44 (1927): pp. 88–96, 112–26, 145–54, 221–42, 275–79. In more recent times, the following studies have appeared, Frima Fox Hofrichter, *Judith Leyster. A woman Painter in Holland's Golden Age* (Doornspijk, The Netherlands: Davaco, 1989); Biesboer and Welu, *Judith Leyster*; Gemar-Költzsch, *Holländische Stillebenmaler*, pp. 135–45; Van der Stighelen and Westen, *Elck zijn waerom*, pp. 158–63; Anna Tummers, *Judith Leyster. De eerste vrouw die meesterschilder werd* (Haarlem: Frans Halsmuseum, 2009).
- 34 The debate over the sources that influenced Leyster's self-portrait are summarized in Welu and Biesboer, *Judith Leyster*, pp. 162–67. Although some have dismissed the influence of Van Hemessen's self-portrait, it should be noted that her father had moved to Haarlem c. 1550 when she was still unmarried – thus making it possible that she traveled with him to Haarlem, in which case it is likely that Leyster saw a version of the painting. There are two known copies of this painting.
- 35 Van der Stighelen and Westen, *Elck zijn waerom*, p. 135.
- 36 Biesboer and Welu, *Judith Leyster*, p. 162.
- 37 Samuel Ampzing, *Beschrijvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland: In Rijm bearbeyd: ende met veele oude ende nieuwe stucken buyten dicht uyt verscheyde kronijken/handvesten /brieven/memorien ofte geheugenisze/ende diergelijke schriften verklaerd/ende bevestigd* (Haarlem: Adriaen Rooma, 1628), p. 370; Theodorus Schrevelius, *Harlemias, ofte, om beter te seggen, de eerste stichtinghe der staet Haerlem, het toe-nemen en vergrootinghe der selfden, hare seltsame fortunyn en avontuer in vrede, in oorlogh, belegeringhe, harde beginselen van d'eerste Reformatie, politique raedtslagen, scheuringhe in de kercke, de tijden van Lycester, oude keuren, gunstige privilegien van graven, regeeringhe in de politie soo hooghe als leeghe, in 't kerckelijcke, militaire, scholastijcke, de oeffeninghe van de ingheseten, in alle wetenschap, kunst ende gheleertheydt, neeringhe en hanteringhe, en wat dies meer is* (Haarlem: Thomas Fonteyn, 1648), pp. 384–85.
- 38 Hier siet men afgebeelt, een Juffer schoon van wesen,
Haer Deuchden, eer en konst, wort nooyt genoegh gepresen:
En als men siet wat zy met haer pincelen doet,
Wie isser die sich dan niet seer verwond'ren moet?
Het schijnt dat Pallas, haer so vast heft aengenomen,
Dat Venus noch haer soon, niet eens by haer mach komen:
Sy kiest een vrye staet, tot konst streckt al haer lust,
Dies leeft zij na haer wensch, eensam in vreed' en rust.
The attribution of this work as a self-portrait due to its dissimilarity with the works of Gerard ter Borch and the English translation of Roldanus' verse are found in Alison McNeil Kettering, *Drawings from the Ter Borch Studio Estate*, 2 volumes (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1988), 2:624.
- 39 See folios 6–15 of the scrapbook.

- 40 “*Waerom en souden dochters niet, Gelijk men hier en elders siet, Tot const te leeren sijn bequaem? Dat haer maeckt een vermaerde name, Gelijk de name langh sal bestaen, Van haer, die dit werck heeft gedaen, Gelijk haar broeders wijt vermaert, Die oock sijn van deselve aert, Daer in de const oock is geplant.*”
- 41 This drawing was meant to accompany a play by Jordis, which is included at the end of the scrapbook.
- 42 The meaning of this motif is discussed in Ger Luijten, “De Triomf van de Schilderkunst: een titeltekening van Gesina ter Borch en een toneelstuk,” *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 36 (1988): pp. 283–314. For further reading on Gesina ter Borch see: J. Verbeek, “Tekeningen van de familie ter Borch,” *Antiek* 1 (1966): pp. 34–39; *Gerard Ter Borch. Zwolle 1617-Deventer 1681*, (The Hague: Mauritshuis, 1974), pp. 236–41; Alison McNeil Kettering, “Ter Borch’s Studio Estate,” *Apollo*, 117 (1983): pp. 443–51; Alison McNeil Kettering, *The Dutch Arcadia. Pastoral Art and its Audience in the Golden Age* (Totowa, NJ: Montclair, NJ: Allanheld and Schram; A. Schram, 1983), pp. 78–80; Bob Haak and Annemiek Overbeek, *Hollandse schilders in de Gouden Eeuw* (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff-Landshoff, 1984), pp. 395, 398; H. Luijten, “Swiren vol van leer, amblemsche wijs geduijt. Een opmerkelijk zeventiende-eeuws poëzie-album van Gesina ter Borch,” *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 36 (1988): pp. 315–42; Lydie van Dijk and Jean Streng, *Zwolle in de Gouden Eeuw. Cultuur en schilderkunst* (Zwolle: Stedelijk Museum, 1997); Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., *Gerard ter Borch* (Washington D.C.; New York; New Haven: National Gallery of Art; American Federation of the Arts; Yale University Press, 2004); Marjan Brouwer and Herma de Beer, *De Gouden Eeuw van Gesina ter Borch* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2010).
- 43 Houbraeken, *De Groote Schouburgh*, 2:214–18.
- 44 Constantijn Huygens, *De gedichten van Constantijn Huygens naar zijn handschrift uitgegeven*, ed. J.A. Worp, 9 volumes (Groningen: J.B. Wolters, 1892–99), 8:163.
- 45 Chong and Kloek deciphered the *vanitas* symbolism of this painting in *Het Nederlandse stilleven*, pp. 253–55.
- 46 Early attention to Van Oosterwijck appears in the following texts A. Bredius, “Archiefsprokkelingen. Een en ander over Maria van Oosterwijck, “vermaert konstschilderesse,”” *Oud-Holland* 52 (1935): pp. 180–82; Casper Spoor, *Kroniek van Nootdorp* (Nootdorp: Gemeente Nootdorp, 1966, originally published in 1990), pp. 94–104. She is placed in the broader context of still-life painting in Sam Segal, *Flowers and Nature: Netherlandish Flower Painting of Four Centuries* (The Hague: SDU, 1990), pp. 220–21; Paul Taylor, *Dutch Flower Painting 1600–1720* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Gemar-Költzsch, *Holländische Stillebenmaler*; Van der Stighelen and Westen, *Elck zijn waerom*, pp. 182–83.
- 47 This collection of admiring drawings and poems was kept even after her death by her husband and was published twice during the eighteenth century in *Het stamboek op de papiere snykunst van mejuffrouw Joanna Koerten*, (Amsterdam: Voor rekening van de Compagnie, 1735); and *Op de papiere snykunst van juffrouw Joanna Koerten*, (Amsterdam: Steven van Esveldt, 1736). For further scholarship on Koerten see J.D.C. van Dokkum, “Hanna de knipster en haar concurrenten. Een studie over Oud-Hollandsche schaar-kunst,” *Het Huis Oud en Nieuw* 13 (1915): pp. 335–58; Michiel Plomp, “De schaar-Minerve: Joanna Koerten (1650–1715),” *Teylers Museum Magazijn* 12 (Summer 1986): pp. 10–13; B. Bakker, E. Fleurbaay, A.W. Gerlagh, *De verzameling Van Eeghen: Amsterdamse tekeningen 1600–1950*, (Zwolle: Waanders, 1989); C.G. Bogaard, *De schaar-Minerva Johanna Koerten (1650–1715) en de waardering voor de ‘papieren snykunst’* (Ph.D. diss., Utrecht, 1989); Michiel Plomp, “De portretten uit het stamboek voor Joanna Koerten (1650–1715),” *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, 8 (1989): pp. 323–44; R.J.A. te Rijdt, “Jan Goeree, het stamboek van Joanna Koerten en de datering ervan,” *Delineavit et Sculpit*, 17 (1997): pp. 48–56; Hiddes, “Kunstenaresen in de marge?”; Henk van Ark ed., *Joanna Koerten; Nieuwsbrief van het Nederlands Museum van Knipkunst en de Stichting W.Tj.*

Lever 13 (2000): p. 4; M. Roscam Abbing, "Joanna Koerten (1650–1715) en David van Hoogstraten (1658–1724). Een bijzondere relatie tussen twee bekende Amsterdammers," *Maandblad Amstelodamum*, 94(2) (2007): pp. 14–29; J. Verhave en J.P. Verhave, *Geknipt! Geschiedenis van de papierknipkunst in Nederland* (Zutphen 2008), pp. 20–24; Martha Moffitt Peacock, "Paper as Power. Carving a Niche for the Female Artist in the Work of Joanna Koerten," *Nederlands Jaarboek voor Kunstgeschiedenis* 62 (2013): pp. 238–65; Kees Kaldenbach, *Tekeningen uit het album amicorum (Stamboek) van Joanna Koerten Blok: een overzicht met index* (Amsterdam: published by the author, 2014).

48 *Stamboek*, p. 75.

49 I am grateful to Dr. Nicolaas Unlandt for his suggestions on the Dutch translation.

Joanna Koerten, uw juweelen zijn manieren van Deugt en Konst die u versellen en versieren.

Joanna draegt geen praalgewaden. Zij draegt kleinodien noch gout. Maar pronkt met deugt en kunstsieraden. Waar van de luister noit verout.