

Transcript for Exploring Rembrandt's Circle

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>> Thanks for joining us this evening. I'm Charlotte Gagnier. I'm the Program Assistant at Agnes Etherington Art Centre. I'd like to begin by acknowledging that Queens University and Agnes Etherington Art Centre are situated on the traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory. This is also where I'm joining me from this evening. So, to acknowledge this territory is to recognize its longer history one predating establishment of the earliest European colonies. It's also to acknowledge the territory's significance of indigenous peoples who lived and continue to live upon it. A peoples whose practices and spiritualities were tied to the land and continue to develop in relationship to the territory and its other inhabitants today. The Kingston indigenous community continues to reflect the area's Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee roots and is also a significant MÈtis community. And their first peoples from other nations across Turtle Island present here today. I'm moved to think about my positionality and the privileges that have led me to be able to live and work here. And I welcome you to all spend some time researching and reflecting on the land that you're coming from and to consider how you can contribute to the work of decolonizing institutions, communities, and minds. So welcome to Exploring Rembrandt's Circle. This evening, Dr. Maxime Valsamas and Danuta Siershuis will be sharing a behind the scenes look at the research and development of Rembrandt's Circle, an online interactive network visualization of artists in The Bader Collection and their ties to Rembrandt van Rjin. Following this conversation, there'll be time for a question and answer period. So please save your questions until the end. I'd like to mention that the session is being recorded, and it's being recorded in speaker mode. So only those of you who speak will be recorded. If you'd like to ask a question at the end, but don't feel comfortable being in the recording, you're welcome to submit your question in the Chat Box and we'll read it out loud. And finally, I ask that you keep your microphones muted, unless you're asking a question. So without further ado, I'd like to introduce this evening's speakers. Maxime Valsamas received his PhD in Art History from Washington University in St. Louis in May 2020. His dissertation was on 19th century French caricatures and political Works entitled Sustaining the Republic, The Power of Political Prints by HonourÈ Daumier, ...douard Manet, AndrÈ Gill, and Alfred Le Petit. He has delivered a variety of talks related to 18th and 19th century printmakers, including William Hogarth, Francisco Goya, HonourÈ Daumier and at museums in Canada and the United States. Since joining Agnes in June 2019 as the Curatorial Assistant European Art, he's contributed to the launching of the exhibition, Leiden circa 1630, Rembrandt Emerges. He served as a copy editor for the accompanying catalogue publication and organized the Rembrandt and Leiden: New Perspective Symposium. He's also curated the exhibition From Tutor to Hannover: British Portraits, 1590 to 1800. Currently, he's researching the Dutch and Flemish artworks in The

Bader Collection to enhance the collections online presence. And he's preparing an exhibition titled Humour Me. A show highlighting caricatures from Agnes's permanent holdings scheduled to open in spring 2021. Danuta Siershuis is the digital development coordinator at Agnes and has been with the museum since December 2018. She's responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of Agnes's digital programs in gallery and online, opening expanded multimodal access to collections, exhibitions, and research. Her aim is to use digital tools to tell inspiring stories through art in new ways and reduce access barriers to artworks and information about them. Most recently, she was project lead for the development of Agnes's first digital strategy, a refreshed website design for the museum and the creation of digital Agnes. She holds an M.A. in Art History with specialization in Digital Humanities from Carleton University, a diploma in Interactive Media Management from Algonquin College and has obtained a suite of relevant curatorial and digital project management experiences in art galleries and archives over the last decade. She's a practising fibre artist and also serves as Co-chair for the Board of Directors at Modern Fuel Artists-Run Centre. So, welcome Max and Danuta.

>> Thank you. I'm not sure --

>> How are you guys? Yes. I think we want to start this discussion this evening. First, just if you could share what is Rembrandt's Circle and give us a little demonstration of it.

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>> Well, first of all, the Rembrandt's Circle is a interactive network map of different artists and their relationship to Rembrandt's van Rjin. And I think Max will take us through a little bit of a demo. Do you want to share your --

>> Yeah. So this interactive allows us to look at over 100 paintings within The Bader Collection and also an additional 20 works on paper or so. And we just wanted to quickly go through the network and show you how -- yes, all right. So, basically, we have the map in the middle here and we have Rembrandt very much at the centre. And from him, we can see emanating a variety of artists, who all have their own nodes as well. And we see their initials on them. And basically, if you're viewing this on a desktop, then you can hover over with your mouse and actually get to see what the names of the artists actually are. And you will also notice that we have, from the circle in the middle, basically three layers of rings. And that's to denote three different forms of relationship that these other artists had to Rembrandt's. Closest ones had a direct tie to him. The ones in the middle possibly had ties to him. And then actually, at the end, they did not have direct interaction with Rembrandt, but nevertheless, through their art, they actually had ties. Now on the right hand side, we have the different types of connections that you can use as filters. And they're all colour coded. And those same colours reappear on the rings as you can see within the smaller nodes. And basically these are all clickable. And so you can rearrange basically the map

based on those separate connections. And we'll get into that a bit more later on as well. We also have city ties by which you can explore the different artists represented in the collection as well. And basically, once you get closer into a specific artist, you can click on him. And basically we will have a variety of information provided. And you can see how, basically, the cities that the artists worked in, the specific connections they have to Rembrandts are represented there again. When we were capable, we would also highlight a self-portrait of the artist or portrait made of that specific figure. Lower down, we will have then the biography. And these are fairly short. So they're more of an intro level that we wanted to be able to showcase here. And then the really exciting part comes afterwards, where by scrolling further down, all of the artworks by the said artist will be represented. And we can click on each of these images. And by doing so, we often then will have comparative image specifically to the artwork, which we also have in The Bader Collection. And so basically, that's a quick overview. And once you get further down actually, as well, we can also see how there is a discover section. And on each profile, we actually have four other artists that will be basically highlighted in the form of these flashcards. And those are also each clickable. And so should you choose to explore their network in that sense, you can also do so rather than necessarily through the map. So hopefully that provides a bit of an idea for those that haven't had a chance to look at the map on their own just yet.

>> And I'll just add that you can also explore the artists by List View, which Max if you wanted to just show that. Yeah, so you get the same artists in the map. But now kind of at a glance, you can see their full names and things. And this is also how we show it on mobile. It's a bit more of an easier user experience once you're there.

>> Could you speak to how you came up with the idea for Rembrandt's Circle?

>> [Chuckles]. It was a bit of a funny story, I think. It was one of those moments where we were in the office. We share an office, Max and I along with two of our other colleagues and kind of turned around one day and we started just brainstorming ideas about how to show the breadth of The Bader Collection through digital means.

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And we had originally planned for this to be an in-gallery moment with digital technologies. But obviously COVID-19 put a pin in that. And it became an online only project. But this is also part of a larger digital development project to expand and enhance the online presence of The Bader Collection and at Agnes. So we, kind of -- and Max, feel free to jump in -- to kind of really highlight the strength of the collection too. So, what do you have to say on that one, Max? I know we, kind of, tossed a lot of ideas around on that and how, from your end, did we come to it?

>> Yeah, well, we also happen to come across a publication that was put out by the Rembrandthuis Museum in Amsterdam. And it was a publication related to an exhibition on Rembrandt's social network. And so it wasn't too dissimilar of an idea as to what we were trying

to do here. And what we realized in that publication is that they actually also had a map. It was static in their case. So there was really no visual component to it. And they were not trying to produce it either as a digital tool. So, we kind of, used that a bit as a jumping point as well to then explore artists in our own unique way as they refer and are represented within The Bader Collection specifically. So I think that also contributed to our thought process. And of course, 2019 was also a big anniversary year, so to speak, celebrating Rembrandt's career really internationally. 2019 marked the 350th anniversary of his passing. And so, since there are so many great resources and educational tools out there, I think we also wanted The Agnes to be able to contribute to that once again in its own unique way as well.

>> And I think this also, kind of, fills a gap in some of the messaging around how we have talked about The Bader Collection. For a long time, we've talked about how, like, Agnes is so well known for this collection and for being, kind of, the centre for 16th and 17th Century Dutch and Flemish Art. But that really hasn't, like, tangibly been represented beyond the two catalogues that David de Witt wrote yet. So, this, kind of, like really drives home, like, how the collection has really centred around Rembrandt, at least for me, and the, kind of, discernment that Alfred Bader also had in collecting. Like, you really start to notice how, through the research that Max is done, and the design of the map, how, really like well thought through the collection was and how Alfred Bader also, kind of, came to decide on which artists he might want to collect and things like that. Like not being a European specialist myself, like, I hope that this project, kind of, conveys that to others as well. So that was just one thing that I thought of, after the fact. But I think it kind of came through while Max and I were talking to you.

>> Yeah, no, I think that's a great point to point out. And just to simply quickly add to that, as you mentioned, towards the end here, I think it's really only been in the last, sort of, 40 years or so that artists surrounding Rembrandt have really come to the fore a bit more in scholarly discussions. And so I think this is it. Dr. Bader was very much, kind of, ahead of his curve in terms of when he started collecting these works for really focussing in on, sort of, the larger Rembrandt Circle that we're able to highlight here as well. So, conceptually that did play a factor in what we wanted to say and, sort of, showcase as well.

>> And this research of Rembrandt's contemporaries and mentors and et cetera is obviously such a large component, this interactive -- Max, could you speak to how you researched this content?

>> Absolutely. So, of course, we made use of an enormous amount of information and resources out there. And I really only want to highlight one in particular. And that is the RKD database, which is the Netherlands Institute for Art History in The Hague, in the Netherlands. That is available, of course, on internet. So basically, it offered a lot of the information that we also wanted to contribute to this project from our end, meaning things like where an artist

worked, who they may have been connected to, in terms of other artists, if they themselves were an apprentice to someone, if they learnt or if they taught someone as well. These types of connections, as well as the types of artworks that they were most emphasizing and highlighting throughout their career. And so that really, sort of, set the base platform for how we wanted to go about this project. But of course, we also wanted to make it very much, sort of, Agnes and Bader Collection specific content. And so, every single biography will cover, kind of, two elements, which are specific to the collection. And that is basically the idea of very much how the artists in question is related to Rembrandt. And so in the part I've highlighted here, on Benjamin Cuyp's biography, first couple of sentences there very much discuss basically the potential way that he may have been connected to Rembrandt. And then the second part is even more revealing, I think, to the collection specifically. And that is we always wanted to make mention of at least one of the artworks that are part of The Bader Collection within the oeuvre of that artist. And so we do happen to have Cuyp's The Circumcision and basically point to the fact that the setting recalls Rembrandt's Simeon's Song of Praise. And if we do go lower down in the Artworks section, then that connection can be pulled out right here as you see. So, those are the types of things that we were really wanting to bring to the fore in the biographies. Of course, we also wanted to focus very much on the connection types. And so we came up with categories that are very much part of the art historical literature. So the idea of a student or a follower, or a competitor, these are terms that can apply to Rembrandt specifically of course, but to a large variety of artists as well. And so, as long as we felt comfortable that we could populate those fields, that we thought that it would be quite a successful way to be able to explore. So we felt that within reason, having several categories in a, sort of, way a bit that more is better. Because even though the numbers could be somewhat smaller, as we sort of have it in decreasing order here, they would still reveal a specific connection that could be really interesting to explore for art enthusiasts and sort of research scholars as well. So quickly, if we just look at, sort of, the one family member who happens to be Karel van der Pluym, an interesting fact is that really, outside of Titus, who happened to be Rembrandt's own son, there would not really be any other individual who could operate as an artist in relation to Rembrandt in his family that could have basically formed part of this category. So, I think that it's actually quite impressive, and a nudge to Dr. Bader, that he was actually able to acquire work by him. And so, I see it as a real plus actually to highlight. Now, of course, we have Cities as well and I already briefly went through those. But this time around, what I wanted to highlight is this No City component. And we didn't want to be basically limited by geographical location.

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Meaning that Rembrandt famously only lived in Amsterdam and Leiden throughout really his entire career and didn't even leave the Dutch Republic. But we have artists such as Adam Elsheimer, who is a German

born artist working primarily in Italy. And through Rembrandt's own teachers who had travelled to Italy, Rembrandt got to know about Elsheimer's work and was impacted by this foreigner. And so, since the Bader Collection does have representation of artwork by Elsheimer, for instance, we wanted to add these figures as well into the full [inaudible], of course. So I really do believe that it offers many different options to, sort of, focus in on smaller pockets of individuals. We also, of course, wanted to highlight a lot of different artworks. And so, we were able to acquire image rights to over 75 different comparative images, several of which are repeated a few times in the interactive based on subject matter. And we were also able to acquire roughly 20 additional portraits or self-portraits as well. And with these specific works, we, kind of, had two ideas in mind. And if we take a look at an example, again, if we look at Jacob de Wet the Younger, then we wanted to draw out connections between a subject matter that a pupil or a follower, in this case, may have been attracted to something that Rembrandt had done previously with the exact same subject. So, in this case, we're looking at The Angel of the Departing the Family of Tobias, which Rembrandt had created both as an etching and as a painting. And so, we can see different elements where de Wet probably looked at Rembrandt's work to gain some, sort of, perspective on how to depict the specific biblical subject. And the other example I wanted to quickly show you as well is in our collection, we have a beautiful Jacob Backer painting. And we also wanted to provide context to the actual artist's oeuvre within themselves. So in this case, we know of at least two other examples where Backer depicted the subject of Grenada and Daifilo. And so, here we have all of these at your disposal. And so, the idea of, you know, looking at a specific timeline within the artist's career can already come across more easily with these types of connections. Now, I also wanted to reveal a few other -- excuse me -- a few other revealing facts about the project that I thought are really worthwhile to share with everyone. And that is that, of course, Rembrandt was someone who was really invested in conveying human emotions, dramatic lighting effects and really demonstrate his storytelling skills through artworks. And so, here we have two examples that are not part of The Bader Collection, but do form part of the interactive as comparables. And all of those elements really come to the fore, of course, sort of this dark light but then having this beautiful glow on a few figures on the image here or of course, the emphasis on facial features and hand gestures on the work on the left. Really, those elements all come to the fore. And those are things that artists around Rembrandt also adopted to great effect, I think. And I think that, that is also an element that Dr. Bader once again, sort of, keyed in on when selecting what types of artworks to acquire. So, some of these examples you can see that here and then especially with the dark and symbolic lighting in these two works. And then, in this case, are strong emphasis on hand gestures and also on facial, sort of, appearances and expressions. So, even though Dr. Bader was not able to acquire religious subject matter as a painting by Rembrandt specifically, he

definitely was targeting artworks of religious topics by other artists. So out of the 100 or so paintings that we highlight in this project that are part of the collection, roughly speaking, 50 percent are biblical subjects. Another thing that the project really reveals is the loose and painterly technique for which Dr. Bader really acquired a taste. And so even though we have several artists who were very close to Rembrandt, such as Gerrit Dou, who happened to be Rembrandt's first pupil and probably the most successful even surpassing Rembrandt's fame in the 17th century. But because Gerrit Dou painted very much in a fine style, it's not someone that Dr. Bader chose to collect. So actually, we do not have a single autographed work by Dou, though he happens to be part of this feature project because of an unknown follower. And I think it's very much the subject of Saint Jerome in the Wilderness. So a Saint figure that attracted Dr. Bader to acquire that. Instead, on the flip side as I said, he chose to focus on, sort of, the rougher style that was very particular to Rembrandt in his late career. So, we do happen to have four paintings by an artist by the name of Arent de Gelder. And De Gelder essentially produced over a hundred works even after Rembrandt had passed away and very much continued his legacy into the 18th century. And I believe that even just by looking at this sample of works, Rembrandt's legacy lives on as well in The Bader Collection, so to speak, through this artist. And then lastly, I just wanted to also point out that, of course, Rembrandt was very well known and famous for having a passion for costumes. And he would often go down to the market in Amsterdam and buy clothing at the market and use them as props in his paintings. And those are elements that many of his students, followers, artists that were inspired by him also adapted in their paintings. So here, we can clearly see how that works out where the headgear, the scarf, and the earring of this figure, pretty much act as the protagonists, even more so than the figure himself. And that also can be said, of course, about once again, two works by Arent de Gelder here, where really by focussing on Old Testament themes very much like Rembrandt had done before him, Gelder had ample opportunities to depict such garbs. And he may have used exotic oriental costumes with the greatest consistency as a student of Rembrandt's throughout his career. So, you can really see the freedom with which he emphasized some of these really fantastic costumes in such works.

>> Thank you for sharing that. So rich seeing these comparatives. Again, really helps us understand where these artists are coming from and how they inspired Rembrandt. I'd like to talk a little bit about the design and development process, another mammoth task. And Danuta, if you could share, like, how do you go from concept to this finished product?

>> Through many, many steps, [laughter]. I'm just kidding. So, when we came up with the idea, obviously, we have to, kind of, flush out how did we want to approach it? So, we came up with the idea to possibly try to do a social network map. So while Max started doing the content research, I started to do a bit of research into what had been done

and like how we could, like, formally conceive of the project. So, we looked at social media. We looked at traditional social network graphs with the different nodes and the lines and, kind of, connecting them all together. And then I also looked at several museum projects that had also done social networks to see, kind of like, what worked what didn't work with those. So for example, the Connects Vermeer Project that the National Gallery of Ireland did a few years ago and the Inventing Abstraction network graph map that the Museum of Modern Art in New York did. And really, nobody had done this with Rembrandt's in a digital means like Max had mentioned earlier. I found one reference in a footnote of an article that said that there was a network graph done on Rembrandt's, kind of, social circle done in the early 2000s.

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But I couldn't find it anywhere online. So, it probably fell victim to technological obsolescence or had a limited time period on the internet. But for this project, we really wanted to make sure that it was a lasting experience for visitors and as a resource for knowledge on the European art collection. And that could be potentially put in the galleries at a later date perhaps. So, we had also done work on the Leiden Interactive Map from last year with the Leiden circa 1630, Rembrandt Emerges Exhibition. And we had worked with Jeff Hunt, who is a developer and designer out of Ottawa. And we decided to work again with him because we felt like there were a couple elements to this project that were, kind of, similar. And he helped us to, kind of, like actually flesh things out a little bit. But on this slide, you'll notice we have idea and concept. We go into research and content, build that kind of parallel. And then once we get into the design, we worked with Jeff to do low fidelity wireframe designs. So without any images, it's just, kind of like, playing around with boxes on a screen and loose text without any kind of fonts applications to it yet. And then we moved on to a high fidelity and then a beta. And then we did quality assurance and testing and launch. Then now we're, kind of, in the evaluation phase to see how it'll work long term. But I've included here some slides. So Max, if you don't mind advancing one. This is kind of what we were thinking about at that low fidelity. And then you can see it in the higher fidelity design. So initially, we had grouped, with Jeff, the nodes for each of the artists into these three, kind of, groups. And those were by city. However, for various reasons, we decided to that it was a bit more complicated. There was issues about the size of the nodes and legibility and accessibility, because originally, we had also decided to make the node size smaller to represent that outer ring of the map, where Max was describing. They never may have met Rembrandt but still had connection to him through their artwork. And then the larger the node size would mean that they had more of a connection. This was very complicated. And we had a lot of issues trying to figure out a way that was clear, that in the interface of the of the interactive -- I know we had a lot of back and forth about this over the summer months and actually went and talked to colleagues who weren't as close to the project to see if it made sense to them, because we were so ingrained in it. And

eventually, we clarified it, made it simpler and, kind of, got it to a point where it is today. So also about the project, which if you go at the bottom of the interactive, there's a little explanation of what the project is. And you'll actually get more information about some of the designs. And then here on this slide, we just have a different view of the map. So have the List View, for mobile in particular evolved. It originally was, kind of, a single column list, which is mostly like how you would see it on a mobile device. However, Jeff had -- our designer had the brilliant idea of creating these, kind of, flashcards, kind of like, collector cards, as if you're like a baseball collector. You have the image, the title. And then they're, kind of, like connection types with the colour coding and the text description. So we've made it quite semantic and clear to those of you who checked out the list. And we felt it was also important to include this as an alternative to the Map View. Because once you're on the map, it became -- like, we were trying to figure out ways to make the art and the artists, like, trying to navigate the map as clear as possible. So you had the hover option. But we also wanted an alternative, for mobile in particular, so which would have become a little bit more complicated trying to navigate the map with your finger on a screen. Like, you still have that option. But we wanted to provide another alternative as well to make it as usable as possible. So if I'll just go to the next one.

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That's it. Okay, yeah. And then here, also, we have the artist profile page and, kind of, how it evolved. So on the left hand side, you have the very first, kind of, wireframe design and kind of concept. And it evolved quite a lot. We went through a few different iterations of the design, where we shuffled things around. So it wasn't always in the order that you have today live on the on those sites. We shifted around the way that profile pictures are reflected on the page as well. And this was in part due to licensing. We had to make sure that the artwork wasn't cuts or cropped in some ways. And so we wanted to make sure that the experience was consistent. And also still maintained, kind of, a social platform. So for these profile pages, we did take inspiration from platforms like Facebook with the kind of cover banner image, the profile, with the name, and kind of your location and points of connection to -- like, if you were a visitor, you were coming to, like, a friend's page, like it'll say, like, you're friends with so and so. And you might know also these people. So that was something that we, kind of, wanted to incorporate into the design of the actual page and the profile. So related artists was, kind of, inspired by that, you might know so and so, kind of thing. And also just, kind of, we were hoping that once you're on a page and, kind of, scrolling through, it would provide you another avenue of discovering somebody else in the network that was either mentioned in the biographies that Max wrote or shared a similar connection type. And we organized the contents so that it would, kind of, give you a sense of who the person was, the artworks that were in the collection,

and then with our comparative images, and then kind of give you that other avenue to explore. And then here, we have the Artworks page. This didn't really change much [laughter]. We did, kind of, play around with colour to make sure that the artworks themselves were shining in their own right. We wanted to make sure that we chose a colour that didn't muddy or, kind of, clashed too much, I guess. We went through a couple different blues. And at one point we even went to a brown. But with works from this period, and with Rembrandt in particular, the colours can be quite earthy. So they almost ended up blending into the background a little bit. So we went back to this blue. It's not a solid colour. It's actually a little bit modulated, which kind of gives it a bit of a dynamic quality and also references, kind of, the background of the map itself, which has kind of like a muddled brown with like lighter colours. There's actually an artwork underneath there that the designer geniosly decided to do it that way.
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Max, correct me if I'm wrong, but it was one of the Eeckhouts maybe? I forgot which one. I don't know if you remember, but [multiple speakers] -- what's that?

>> No, I think it was actually a Ferdinand Bol painting.

>> Oh, yes. Yeah, it was. Yeah, sorry. [chuckles] Yeah. So there's artworks kind of hidden in places too. That's the only time that they're hidden. Everywhere else is at least discoverable. All right, so that's it on that one. Is there a next slide?

>> Yes.

>> Okay. Let go. Ah, yes. And then here, we also included the cover image of the interactive itself. And again, we, kind of, went through a couple of different iterations of this to. One of the design points that we wanted to bring here was that, kind of, circular networked bit. Like, that was the kind of core idea of the network map itself. So we brought in those, kind of, node, that node shape. We brought in some of the colours from the connection types that are reflected here. And again, you have that, kind of like, mottled colouring in the background from the painting. So then all you have to do is just click Explore, and then you're inside the map. And you can get in and explore from there. Yes, so the network map has been up for almost, I want to say, like two or three months now. And it's been doing quite well, I think. I'm really proud of it.

>> And it looks amazing. And we we're going to move to question and answer period in a second. But I wanted to end with asking you both, what are your hopes for this interactive? How do you want people to interact with it?

>> Well, I think one of our big hopes, of course, is that people can discover some of these very talented artists who do form part of the Bader collection that ultimately, although this is a project, of course, that has Rembrandt at the centre both as his name appears and of course, within the map itself, it's also very much about these other artists to shed light on them. So ultimately, for me, I see it equal about them as well. And I think that we, by now, are aware in, sort of, the literature and sort of scholarly debates that are going

around. More and more people are willing to accept, of course, that Rembrandt was not an isolated genius, that in fact, he was exactly surrounded by such great artists as well. So by being able to do a project like this, which incorporates once again, over 40 different artists, and that's only speaking within our own collection -- so if we really wanted to break this out into a larger approach, where we went beyond the Bader Collection, then we'd even have more artists included. So, I think that's one of my hopes for people to really be able to learn about these really talented artists but that have been more in the shadows of a Rembrandt, and not wrongfully so, because of course, Rembrandt is such a great art master. And then I also think that one of the things I'm, kind of, hoping that people are able to really gain from this is just a really dynamic way of exploring. So of course, I love books and physical publications are a key part of research. But I think there's an element that is, kind of, maybe not lost, but just is hindered a bit when trying to flip through a book and making some of the connections that, in this case, I believe are a bit easier to just, you know, by a click of the mouse to arrive to a connection or to basically read about an artist is an artist profile and then from there being like, "Okay, well I can go see him further down and then get a better understanding for their work pretty quickly once again." And then lastly, I would say that the sort of Bader Collection, of course, is so important to the Agnes. But we do want to raise the profile of it on a more national and international level as well. And so by, kind of, discovering who these artists are, and by maybe even understanding some of those, kind of, patterns of collecting that he was able to bring forth, and that I briefly mentioned a bit earlier, I think that, yeah, we just have a better understanding of collecting practices of a very key individual for the whole Queen's community and really a gem of a collection that we have here in the heart of Kingston. So that's, kind of, how I see people interacting in the hopes for this project.

>> Yeah, like, I don't have much to add on top of that. But, I think that this is a fantastic resource for scholars and also for digital humanity scholars within art history, or just for larger cultural studies. And also just as an interest for how -- like, as an entry point for the general public to, kind of, getting it more into European art at Agnes and the Bader Collection. I think my hope [laughter], at least on the digital side, is that this is going to be a really fantastic launch points for further digital engagements at The Agnes in European art. As we mentioned before, this has been part of a three-year project. And this isn't the end of it also. We're still working towards more exciting initiatives around European art, and also just art in general at Agnes through our digital programs through digital Agnes and online. And we're hoping to, yeah, like Mark said, raise the profile of the Bader Collection on the internet and provide new ways of accessing critical information about it. And digital is not static. So I see a lot of people in the chat kind of saying, "How are you going to expand this in years to come?" And the great thing about digital is that we can add to it as, let's say, new

works come in or new developments come in and the research, like, in future curatorial work. So, we are able to keep this a lively, not a static source, not like a print publication ever could. So yeah, that's my hope for it instead of --

>> Quickly, I think, if I can add to that, I would say going off of your point, Danuta, exactly that, we are hopeful, of course, that we will receive a few more artworks from the Baders. And we know already, once that happens that, of course, some of the artists by whom there are still artworks that the Agnes will be receiving totally fit into the Rembrandt Circle network. And so that is absolutely one way we can add to this as well. And then another feature, which maybe adds a layer of complexity, but I know that Danuta, you and I had spoken about this over the months, is of course, maybe creating a way where we can also explore the connections between these other artists, even more so as well. So in this case, it's sort of a direct path between them to Rembrandt, but maybe we could really explore, yeah, how to connect almost everyone here, if possible. And of course, not everyone would have a connection to bring forth. But perhaps that could even touch upon artists that are already represented by artworks in the Bader Collection but are not part of it here. So I think, yeah, we have fantastic options really, if we want to revisit this down the line.

>> Yeah. And we also have a stepping off point for other networks within the Agnes's collection too.

>> Well, I'd like to open the floor to any questions that we have from other people who are here to this evening. And I've been reading some really lovely comments in the Chat Box, which we really appreciate [chuckles]. But yeah, please do feel free to either ask a question Chat Box or unmute yourself and say your question.

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I did see one a while back, which we could start with. Carol asked, "Will the story of why and how Bader made his collection be included or made this collection be included someday?" And Max, you hinted at some Bader's motivation it stoked Carol's curiosity.

>> Yes. So Danuta not too long ago hinted at the idea that this is just one project that forms part of, kind of, a three-year idea that we have in place. And we are thinking very much about having, kind of, the biggest component almost, so to speak, and perhaps the last one being a focus on certain essays that would speak very much to the collection. And we were thinking of having one, of course, dedicated to Dr. Alfred Bader himself. And so we still have to figure out what ways we will get to that and exactly what we will cover. Because there are, of course, sources that the Agnes has also already published that touched a bit upon it. So if you are familiar with the Dutch and Flemish catalogue, that David De Witt had put together a few years back, it has a brief introduction. But it is really succinct in breaking down, basically, the overview of, basically, Dr. Alfred Bader as a collector and how he came to acquire a specific taste for some of these works. And that's, as part of the same three-year project,

Danuta has been able to make that very same catalogue available online. And so, I definitely encourage everyone to take a closer look at that. And then yes, I very much think that as we do research for that, some of these other patterns of collecting, and some of his sort of curatorial practices, even of data will come to the fore. And so, I do hope very much that we can share some of those neat discoveries with the general public in due time. I don't know if you have something to add to that, Danuta, or should we move on to another question?

>> No, you did. Nothing else said.

>> We have a question from Suzanne, who is the Agnes's new Bader curator for European art. And she asked, she's wondering if the observations you were able to make due to this type of data visualization and mapping led you to any new research questions that you're interested in exploring?

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>> Yeah, I mean, I think the collection is so rich that almost each artist, in and of themselves, kind of, offer basically research, sort of, questions and, sort of, different venues to explore. So certainly, I can't, kind of, exactly think of one necessarily right off the top of my head. But one thing that I've also noticed, that perhaps I guess maybe this is an answer, is that quite a few of the artists that happened to be students of Rembrandt came from the city of Dordrecht. And that was a pattern that was really interesting to me. And then, several of them also then went back to Dordrecht after studying with Rembrandt in Amsterdam. So, as far as I know, indicating that, of course, those artists are from there is part of the literature. But I can't seem to recall necessarily a very focussed or detailed, sort of, description of, kind of, Dordrecht, yeah, as a city, manufacturing some really talented artists at the time. So perhaps that could be one path to really sort of explore. And kind of along those lines, it is quite an interesting fact that very recently, so earlier this year, once again, David de Witt, who we've now mentioned a few times, actually published a monograph on Abraham van Dijck, which is one of the artists I quickly showcased earlier by showcasing his The widow of Zarephath and her Son image, if you can recall that. And so, yeah, I think essentially all artists provide very interesting venues for us to really explore both within the Bader Collection and at the Agnes. But then be part of a larger, kind of, international discussion with other scholars as well.

>> I wanted to highlight something that's going on in the comments, which is that Stephanie Dickey and Danuta were discussing that if you'd like to see the current exhibition on display in the Bader Gallery at Agnes, it features works by several of these artists that are in Rembrandt Circle. And for those of you who aren't in Kingston, we had a question from Gerald earlier, which was how much or how often do the works travel to other cities?

>> That's a really good question. Prior to the pandemic, of course, there would have been a higher take on that. The answer is really

dependant on the specific artwork, of course, unless we have put together an exhibition where many of these would feature. And as recently as last year, so as part of the 350th year anniversary of celebrating Rembrandt's passing away, the Agnes put together an exhibition, Leiden circa 1630, Rembrandt Emerges. And some of the very works that are featured here in this project form part of that exhibition. And that is an exhibition that, sort of, went around, and is about to go around again to a few other institutions in Canada, there's three other venues. And so that's a great example of how, if there is an exhibition, and we can share it with others, we are more than happy to do so. There's also an artwork by Nicolaes Maes. If I'm not mistaken definitely forms part of this project. And if I'm not mistaken, it is the most recent work that we have lent out and that went to the Mauritshuis in The Hague and then actually moved on to England as well as part of a retrospective show on Nicolaes Maes specifically. And so, when they're exhibitions across the world, really, for that matter where there is an interest for particular artwork that we have, I think The Agnes, you know, 99 percent of the times will be willing to share that work. Because of course it brings back as well, sort of, it raises the profile of the Agnes. So it's, kind of, dependant on subject of exhibitions.

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