

**Isabel and Alfred Bader Lecture in European Art**  
**“Out of the shadow and into the light: Black figures in the art of Rembrandt’s time”**

**Transcript**

**SPEAKERS** Dr Elmer Kolfin, Dr Suzanne van de Meerendonk, Dr Isabel Bader, Dr Dan Bader, Charlotte Gagnier

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk:** So, welcome to today's program, the Isabel and Alfred Bader lecture in European art, given this year by Dr Elmer Kolfin. We're grateful for the continued support of Bader Philanthropies for making this program possible. My name is Suzanne van de Meerendonk and I'm the Bader curator of European art at the Agnes Etherington Art Center at Queen's University.

We wish to take a moment, as we begin this conversation to acknowledge the land on which we work, study and live. Since this conversation is being held online, a singular land acknowledgment does not capture the richness of our distribution across many locations in Canada and beyond. I am myself speaking from Katarokwi/Kingston in Ontario Canada, which is where Queen's University is also located.

Queen's University is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory. To acknowledge this traditional territory is to recognize its longer history, one predating the establishment of the earliest European colonies. It is also to acknowledge this territory's significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived and continue to live upon it—people whose practices and spirituality were tied to the lands and continue to develop in relationship to the territory and its other inhabitants today.

The Kingston indigenous community continues to reflect the area's Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee roots. There's also a significant Métis community and there are First Peoples from other Nations across Turtle Island present here today.

I am myself a recent settler of Indonesian-Dutch heritage coming here from the Netherlands, by way of what is now the United States. And it is not lost on me that this parallels the path of arrival of Dutch and other European settlers during the same period that we will bring our focus to today. As we do so, I reflect on the opportunities afforded to me, as a result of violent colonial histories and realities and the privilege I have to work and build a new life on these lands, about which I am still learning. And I would like to encourage participants joining from other locations to consider their own position with regards to the land where they find themselves, and we will post a link in the chat that may be helpful for that.

So welcome again, I am now giving over the mic, so to speak, to program assistant Charlotte Gagnier who will go over some of our housekeeping rules.

**Charlotte Gagnier:** Hi everyone, I wanted to just briefly mention a few features of the Zoom webinar. There are two ways for you to communicate with us during the webinar; in the chat box like Suzanne mentioned and also the Q&A. So you can access both of these functions in the bottom toolbar. We encourage you to add any comments or chat with other participants in the chat box. Please put any questions in the Q&A box, if you add these to the chat there is a chance we may miss them. Backstage there's a team of us who will be answering what we can during the presentation and also selecting some questions for the Q&A portion of today's event.

Today, we also have live transcription available, you can turn this on by clicking the live transcript button on the bottom toolbar and selecting show subtitle. You can also access a full transcript here. We also have two individuals providing ASL interpretation today. And finally, when share screening, if you would like to make the videos of the presenter or the interpreters larger or smaller, you can do this by sliding the bar to the left of their videos side to side. I'll pass it back to Suzanne now, thank you.

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk:** Thank you, Charlotte and everyone also feel free to let everyone know where you're from today. So, before I introduce our esteemed speaker, I also want to give the virtual floor to Drs Daniel and Isabel Bader who can join us today. And so they will briefly say a few words to us in honour of the late Dr Alfred Bader as well as Bader Philanthropies, without whom we would not have been able to gather tonight so without further ado, I will now give the floor to Dan and then to Isabel.

**Dan Bader:** Thank you Suzanne and thank you, everybody for joining us today. I want to first extend my thanks to the Agnes for organizing this year's Isabel and Alfred Bader lecture in European art. We're very excited to be participating in this lecture and to be here with you today.

Some of you may know that I grew up in a house filled with old master Dutch and Italian paintings from the seventeenth century. The paintings were beautiful for sure, but often I did not understand everything that was going on in the paintings. And as a young boy two things always stuck out to me. One was the partially naked women, and then also the Black men and boys in the background. We'll leave the women to another day, but today I'm excited to talk about the Black figures. I always wondered, who are they? Were they servants, were they slaves? I always wondered that but I was always afraid to ask. So I'm excited now in the time of racial openness in the world, we can talk about things that we didn't talk about before. It's time to have these discussions, it's time to talk about things that we've always wondered about. It's time to talk about them openly. In fact, if my father Alfred Bader was here today, he would be in the front row listening intently. Dad was always sensitive about racial issues. He grew up being treated unfairly because he was Jewish and he never wanted anyone to be treated unfairly because of their religion, race or sexual orientation. So I look forward to hearing the true explanation of what is being depicted in the old masters paintings that my father loved so much and I grew up with. It's now my pleasure to turn the floor over to Isabel.

**Isabel Bader:** I'm delighted that this is going forward. It's a wonderful tribute to Alfred Bader, my husband. I am also intrigued by the paintings, because although I had listened to and studied the old master paintings before, particularly because my interest was in the costumes. I learned a great deal, all of a sudden about paintings and that was Alfred's life with the chemistry. He traveled around for chemistry and in spare moments, lunchtime, which we often missed, he would be wanting to look at museums and paintings that he might possibly want to acquire. So it's a wonderful thing for this lecture to be going forward, and I want to congratulate Suzanne for setting it up and all those who have helped her. And to welcome Dr Kolfin whom Alfred did meet, I guess in Utrecht, and possibly also in Amsterdam. My very best wishes to all of you, thank you so much for joining us. Thank you, Dr Kolfin.

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk:** Thank you, Dan and Isabel for your thoughtful words and I am now absolutely thrilled to introduce our speaker Dr Elmer Kolfin.

Elmer Kolfin received his PhD from the University of Leiden in 2002 and has been teaching in the Art History department at the University of Amsterdam since 2004. He has published on a wide variety of topics in Dutch art of the seventeenth century, including the 2005 book *The Young Gentry at Play*, focusing on so called merry company scenes. He has also authored several publications focusing on artworks that originated in more explicitly political contexts, such as the decoration programs for the Orange Hall in Palace Huis ten Bosch and the seventeenth century Amsterdam town hall, along with books and articles within the realm of drawings and print culture.

So in addition to this already impressive range of scholarly activity, tonight's lecture will draw on Dr Kolfin's decades- long inquiry into the representation of Black figures in European art, which he has examined across different media and from the early modern period into the present. His scholarship has, for instance, made irrevocably clear the direct connection between the racist blackface figure Black Pete or Zwarte Piet, and depictions of enslaved Black servants in European art of the seventeenth century.

Dr Kolfin also recently co-curated the acclaimed exhibition *HERE: Black in Rembrandt's Time* at the Rembrandt House in Amsterdam in 2020, which called attention to both the depicted and real presence of African men and women in seventeenth century Amsterdam. As such highlighting a continued Black presence, that significantly spoke to the contemporary Afro-Dutch community. It is important to make such connections across time explicit and, I believe, Dr Kolfin's work shows that a critical analysis of longstanding visual traditions such as these play an important role in the understanding of complex issues of race and class in the present. So please join me in giving a very warm welcome to Dr Elmer Kolfin. Elmer the floor is yours.

**Elmer Kolfin:** Thank you again Suzanne for those very kind words that make me blush. Before I start sharing screen, just a few words.

Thank you everyone for being here at either lunch hour or dinner time for most of you, I think. And before anything else I'd like to thank Suzanne and Emelie Chhangur for inviting me to give this year's Isabel and Alfred Bader lecture in European art.

I'm truly honoured and I have warm memories of meeting Dr. Bader in Utrecht when I was still a PhD student. He had catalogues and magnificent reproductions for all of us that I still cherish and I still consult. We talked about Rembrandt, we talked about not-Rembrandt, we talked about matters of attribution. And for him the search for the right name was one of the great joys of art history. And I remember, Dr Bader as someone who took great pleasure in carefully exploring the unknown. And I sincerely hope that my searching talk will do honour to his memory.

Before I start, something else, I will not talk about attribution but, as you know by now about representations of Black people in the art of Rembrandt and his colleagues. And in the process, I will address earlier art historical literature written at a time when the vocabulary was different from ours. Some quotes contain the n-word. Because they are historical, I have left them unaltered precisely because I believe it is our job to deal with language and images that explicitly or implicitly express views from the past that are no longer ours. In fact, I even hope to demonstrate how these conflicting views are actually influencing art historical practice. So let me start share screen now.

I trust you can see my screen. Okay.

Art history of the past three decades has taken Black figures in Dutch seventeenth century art out of the shadow and into the light. Only recently, have we come to realize that all major Dutch collections have paintings representing Black figures and the Bader collection at the Agnes is no exception. No less than seven paintings show Black figures and Dan already mentioned them. Seven paintings on a total of 200 in the Bader collection is 3.5%. For various reasons it's difficult to calculate how many paintings with Black figures were made in the 17th century, but we can make a rough estimate.

Bob Haak's *The Dutch Golden Age: Painting of the seventeenth century*, is one of the most complete handbooks. Of the thousand paintings reproduced in it, 30 include one or more Black figures and that's 3%. In reality the percentage is probably a little lower.

The genre with most Black figures by far is history painting. And this high frequency is confirmed by browsing Eric Jan Sluijter's magnificent broad survey of history painting in early seventeenth century Amsterdam. No less than 8.5% of the paintings show a Black figure, mostly hidden in the dark background of the scene, but there nonetheless.

So although unnoticed for a long time, and indeed sometimes difficult to discover, Black presence in Dutch art is an important topic, not only because of the recent developments in society, but also from a historical perspective.

One of the issues in the study of Black presence, as I hope to show, is indeed the tension between the historical and the current significance. If Black figures occur frequently in Dutch art, especially in history painting, it's no surprise that we find them in Rembrandt's work as well. He included them in at least twelve paintings, eight etchings and eight drawings. Most of these are history scenes but the absolute high point is not; *The Two African Men*, dated 1661, but painted probably slightly earlier. The painting was acquired by the famous Rembrandt scholar Abraham Bredius in London in 1902, and has been on display in the Mauritshuis since 1903. Usually together with other Rembrandts from the early 1660's: *Homer and Saul and David*.

Ever since its presentation, it has been a favourite of the museum visitors and it's interesting to see why. For most of the twentieth century, the painting was praised as a fine example of the deeply human figures of Rembrandt and of the master's unsurpassed technique. For example, in the Rembrandt-year 1956, the authoritative Dutch art critic Conrad Kickert, lyrically drew attention to the painting's pictorial qualities, which was typical for that time:

"I had the audacity to speak of rough brushwork" he says, "but then look at the two Negroes in the Mauritshuis: The incredible refinement of every nuance that dissolves into an endearing tenderness. Painted with almost nothing; some blacks, some greys blown onto it with a lightness of thin, fluid paint."

In the same year, two other authors offers praised the painting's pictorial qualities:

"More than in any other work by Rembrandt, in the *Two Negroes* one feels a painter in rapture for the purely pictorial. The painting's timeless beauty lies in the white shawl of the standing Negro, that, contrasting with a dark skin colour, lights up brightly. It is also present in the limited use of colours, devoid of all sensationalism, and we find it in the typical structure of the heads, that fascinated Rembrandt as a scholar of humanity in all its appearances".

The addition "in all its appearances" is revealing. It obviously refers to what was perceived as the painting's exceptional subject; African rather than European men. The same authors also suggested that Rembrandt was able to see beyond the surface, relate to what he beheld, and bring that into the light, for an audience who could do none of those things.

"Rembrandt needs no outward appearance to express the exotic nature of these two Negroes, but he was able to relate to their spirit entirely."

Underlying these words is the unspoken idea that Africans deviated from the European norm, and that Rembrandt had the exceptional gift to cross that gap. I hope to demonstrate that this notion of some kind of special gift from Rembrandt has been formative in Black representation studies, including some of my own work, but actually merits questioning.

The little known Dutch photographer Nico Jesse followed in Rembrandt's footsteps when he photographed these two men on the Zeedijk in the early 1950s in Amsterdam. The Zeedijk was famous for its jazz scene and the Afro-Surinamese musicians who performed in the clubs.

I've not been able to identify the man on the right, but the one on the left seems to be Arthur Parisius.

Born in 1911, Parisius arrived in the city in 1928 as a stowaway on a ship from Suriname, to become one of the city's most famous jazz musicians, under the name of Kid Dynamite.

In the photo, which is completely unknown, but really quite beautiful, Jesse, managed to capture the self-evident intimacy of the men that Rembrandt expressed in his paintings.

There is the same combination of outward self-assurance of the man on the right and inward contemplation of his companion on the left. Jesse also followed the balance between attention for the faces and the dress. He even varied on the way the bare arm works in the composition. Although the arm in Rembrandt's hand is actually gloved. The excellent printing in tones of grey further enhances the kinship between the two works.

Currently, the focus is on the identity of these men and Dan you already asked, who are they—that's what you wanted to know, and now is actually, as you reminded us, the time that everyone asks these questions. So in 2019 founder of Miss Black Hair Nederland Ashaki Leito wondered: "Why don't we know their names? Why haven't their stories been recorded, was their voice irrelevant?"

One year later historian Mark Ponte published a possible answer. Based on the remarkable, almost brotherly intimacy between the men and given the fact that two Black brothers appeared in Amsterdam before a notary in 1656, he cautiously suggested Rembrandt's two men could be Bastiaan and Manuel Fernando, free Black sailors from the island of Sao Tomé. The idea immediately caught on.

Photographer Jouk Oosterhof playfully used Rembrandt's composition for a photo of the white lawyers and twin brothers Hans and Wim Anker here at the centre. Calling them Bastiaan and Manuel, Cigdem Yüksel portrayed Afro-Dutch celebrity Humberto Tan and singer Jeangu Macrooy in a reenactment of Rembrandt's work, here on the right. The latter example testifies to a desire in the Black community to recognize themselves in paintings from the national past and to identify themselves with the sitters.

The feeling of being represented and the suggestion of being anchored in time and space gives great existential satisfaction to any museum visitor, but as you all know, is far easier to experience for whites than for Black people.

Underlying the admiration for the painting is the idea that Rembrandt was able to see and represent the humanity of people no one else cared for at the time. In his handbook and Dutch painting from 1996, the great Rembrandt scholar Seymour Slive wrote that:

"During his mature phase Rembrandt stresses what lies behind man's exterior activity and emphasizes the more contemplative side of life, which is the domain of the spirit. This side, which is less conditioned by any social standard, is not always apparent, but men and women of every rank and station may possess it. Extremely revealing in this connection is the magnificent picture of *Two Black Men*."

It's the same expression of Rembrandt as a visionary, who noticed things no one else did. The idea is as old as Rembrandt himself, and has taken many shapes over the centuries. However, in connection to Black representation studies it also prompts the question whether Rembrandt's representation of Black figures is exceptional or not, and what the answer means for our understanding of Rembrandt's view on people of colour in the seventeenth century.

The awareness of Black presence in Dutch art has always been very much connected to social issues. This becomes immediately clear if we look at Professor Allison Blakely's pioneering *Blacks in the Dutch World*, published in 1993. Blakely seeks to combat racial bias by tracing the earliest origin possible and to study its development in folklore, art, literature and religion.

Primarily a historian, Blakely is not so much interested in art itself, but in the perception of, and social attitudes towards Black people it reflects.

15 years later, an exhibition with the awkward title *Black is Beautiful*—an idea of the PR-department that went against the will of the organizers and the advice committee—and I always say this whenever I refer to this exhibition with this horrible title, opened in Amsterdam's Nieuwe Kerk.

The exhibition's focus on spectacular and often exceptional images that presented the dignity and beauty of Black models followed from social engagement. The hope was that the focus on positive role models would expand our perception of how people of African origin have been conceptualized.

Important for us today, is that this choice also very much relied on the romantic notion of artists as social visionaries: exceptional images express exceptional social views—which I now believe, need not be the case, or at least cannot be proven to be true.

In 2011 Jean Michel Massing published his monumental study on the European perception and visual construction of Africa and Africans in the sixteenth and seventeenth century in the unrivalled series *The Image of the Black in Western Art*. This series that was founded in the times of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, also started from social engagement.

Like *Black is Beautiful*, it aims to counter implicitly the legion of the all too familiar stereotypical images of Black people in American and popular art by unveiling the fact that for centuries, Western artists had included Black figures in positive, sometimes realistic and often celebratory ways.

Social engagement also lay at the foundation of the most recent exhibition on Black presence that Suzanne kindly reminded us of at the start, *Black in Rembrandt's Time*, that opened in the Rembrandt House Museum in 2020 and that was curated by Stephanie Archangel, Epcó Runia and myself.

It was a direct call for more inclusivity in museums, and Rembrandt served as a source for inspiration.

"For years I have been searching for my Curacao background in paintings and other artworks for Black people in which I could recognize myself. In Rembrandt's work I finally found them" says co-curator and my dear friend Stephanie Archangel.

The studies and exhibitions mentioned so far share three features.

The first is that they tend to foreground the most spectacular and exceptional works at the expense of the more common ones. I believe this is directly related to the second feature: the socially inspired motivation of Black representation studies. This has naturally resulted in a focus on representations in which Black figures are most visible, and were treated with great artistic care. This focus fed what I think is the third feature: the unarticulated belief that some artists, usually those of the more exceptional works, like Rembrandt and Rubens, but also here Dou and Jan van den Hoecke, were visionaries of a kind, able to see beyond the social conventions of their time and to uncover a deeper and more general sense of humanity in Black figures.

We already saw how this notion imbued the reception of Rembrandt's *Two African Men*, since the 1950s, but is it true? Can it be true for the seventeenth century? Is it not something that we would like to see, that our society even needs to see, to enable us to grapple with our own issues and their historical origins?

Does our view not shift when we direct our attention to other images, where Africans are less visible, as in many of the Bader paintings, and also, in many works by Rembrandt? And what happens when we understand Rembrandt's works in that pictorial tradition? It seems a helpful way to discover if and how Rembrandt's images of Africans were exceptional.

In what follows, I invite you to think about Rembrandt's *Baptism of the Eunuch*, his *Adoration of the Magi*,

*Samson Threatening His Father-in-Law* and the etching of a Black Woman before we return to the *Two African Men*.



The many different versions of the Baptism of the Eunuch demonstrate how Rembrandt kept on experimenting with compositions. The earliest surviving example, in which he emulates his teacher Peter Lastman, is from 1626.

Bringing the figures to the foreground and moving the carriage to the background, Rembrandt improved on his master by putting all the emphasis on Philip the Ethiopian Chamberlain of the Queen of Candace, who, according to the Acts of the Apostles, had expressed the desire to be baptized.

Gary Schwartz recently convincingly argued that the eunuch's unconventional white cloak is a sheepskin mantle. Rembrandt took this meaningful detail from Erasmus' Paraphrases that state that the eunuch would be dressed in "the snow white fleece of the immaculate lamb" as an obvious reference to his conversion to Christianity.

It also serves to contrast the eunuch's opulence to Phillips simplicity more clearly than in Lastman's work.

The expression on the eunuch's face suggests the gravity of the moment. But the tension comes from the bystanders. The servants on the right and the two men in the carriage express amazement at their mighty master's sudden humbleness. The standing boy holding what must be the Old Testament as the book that set all action in motion, appears hesitant. He is literally and figuratively taking middle ground.

The eunuch is Rembrandt's earliest known depiction of an African. He does not seem to be based on a live model. Rembrandt use the same scheme for all three Black figures ingeniously varying on that scheme. The eunuch's features are repeated in the dark servant who holds the turban, and in the lighter one with the book here at the center and on the right.

Rembrandt may have worked after a sculpted bust of a Black man. There is an unnoticed, but striking similarity to a drawing of Jacques de Gheyn III, especially in the shape of the eyes and nose and mouth. De Gheyn's drawing is commonly believed to have been based on a bust that he inherited from his father Jacques de Gheyn II. Possibly Rembrandt has studied it, as De Gheyn II lived in nearby The Hague, and had close connections to Leiden, in fact he also lived in Leiden, but that was earlier.

*The Baptism of the Eunuch* evolved into one of the most popular scenes from the New Testament in Dutch art. Rembrandt himself kept returning to it until the 1650's. This drawing which is now in Canada's National Gallery, is the opposite of the painting in everything. The eunuch is seen from the back, without any indication of his African identity. All previous contrast between exotic opulence and righteous simplicity is gone. Disrobed, the eunuch humbly kneels in the water. The single servant keeps his distance at the far right. The viewer has to imagine all emotion for himself, aided only by the quiet body language of the eunuch

and Philip, and the quiet dignity of the scene. In this drawing, Rembrandt expresses no particular interest in the African identity of the eunuch.

Other artists stayed closer to one of Rembrandt's earlier inventions that was well known via prints. Hardly paying attention to the emotions, they continued to rely on the contrast between wealth and humbleness and Black and white. The servants in Albert Cuyp's painting seem bored and anxious to move on, rather than surprised.

Another example was acquired by Alfred Bader in 1979 as Jacob Adriaensz Backer and donated by him to the Agnes, where it is now attributed to the Haarlem artist Reyer Jacobsz van Blommendael. In this highly decorative painting, with on the right probably a portrait of the white donor, we see the same contrast between Black and white, sumptuousness and simplicity, and lack of interest in the expression of emotions. The umbrella that became part of the iconography via prints after Rembrandt but that ultimately goes back to Lastman, indicates the scene takes place in a warm and sunny land.

The Bible is specific this is Gaza, in the Middle East, but less informed viewers may have thought of Ethiopia, in Africa. For artists other than Rembrandt, the African identity of the eunuch clearly remained the central issue.

Rembrandt's depictions of *The Baptism of the Eunuch* were exceptional. First, because he found a formula to foreground the event of the baptism, with a focus on the contrast between opulence and humility, and initially, with a focus on the eunuch's face, which was entirely new.

Exceptional also is that Rembrandt eventually abandoned the specific interest in the African character of the eunuch to suggest a more universal experience.

The other famous African in history painting was the Black Magus. The notion that one of the Magi was Black dates from the sixth century, but it was only in the eleventh century that the magi were linked to the three continents known at the time, Africa, Asia and Europe.

The earliest Dutch examples date from the fifteenth century, and it was this tradition that Rembrandt followed in a *brunaille* from 1632.

There is some debate about the authenticity and the painting is not very well known now, but maybe also because it's in St. Petersburg and not often seen in the West but old copies and variants testify to its early popularity.

The adoration of the magi expresses the idea of Christianity as a universal religion that eventually would be adopted by all nations. Joseph Koerner has shown that the Black Magus represented those who are yet to receive the message of the gospel. This is not that different from the Baptism of the Eunuch, which expresses the next stage of evangelization.

Interestingly, in Rembrandt's oil sketch, it's not entirely clear who is the African Magus. Traditionally, he's identified with the turbaned man on the left. However, his face and beard do not conform to the usual representation of Africans. He looks more like the North African that Rubens sometimes employed as a Black Magus, for example in this print from 1621 that Rembrandt certainly knew.

If Rubens used him to represent the Black Magus, Rembrandt may have done so too, but...there's always a but in Rembrandt studies. The two men behind him are European (one is dark because he's in the shadow), while the figures behind the Magus at the center are clearly all African. One of them holds up an umbrella that traditionally belong to the iconography of Africa. However, the impressive Magus himself looks even less African.

He seems to be based on the same European model as Rembrandt's Scholar in his study from 1634. So who is the African Magus? For Rembrandt's colleague and contemporary Salomon Koninck, the answer must have been very clear.

In this variant on Rembrandt's work here at the left, he unambiguously interpreted the central figure under the sunscreen as the Black Magus and accordingly placed him far away from Christ, as the pictorial convention dictates.

In another variant painted in the late 1650s in Rembrandt's immediate circle, and maybe even in his workshop, an anonymous artist followed the same interpretation here on the right.

However, the painters of closer copies opted for the man on the left as a North African Magus, but with two European followers and turned the Black retinue of the central Magus unambiguously into a white one.

Why Rembrandt was so hesitant about the African identity of the Magus remains a mystery. Would he have known that the Black Magus was considered an apocryphal element by some theologians of the late sixteenth century as Koenraad Jonckheere has shown in a publication of 2014? If he did, and followed the idea, he was certainly unique.

All other painters simply followed the pictorial tradition of the Black Magus. A good example is this work by Jan Lievens that Alfred Bader donated to the Agnes in 1991. So far it has gone unnoticed that Lievens varied on the central group in Rembrandt's design of the same subject. To see the borrowing, we must reverse Lieven's composition.

Mirroring was a common but efficient trick to cover up such borrowings. The position of Joseph on the right of the old King with his turban on the ground beside him, and of the servant behind him, and even of the dog on the left, are too similar to be accidental. Where Rembrandt painted a circle of light in the foreground, Lievens suggested a circular deepening in the soil.

Moving Rembrandt's imposing frontal magus from the center to the left and changing him into the Black Magus, Lievens retained the sunscreen.

The Magus himself appears to be based on the print by Vorsterman after Rubens that previously inspired Rembrandt as well. The two Magi have similar positions and also share the same striking detail of the contrapposto.

In the Protestant North, the Adoration of the Magi never reached the popularity it had in the Catholic South, and was treated much more experimentally. Preceding Rembrandt, the painter Jan Pynas for example, showed the Black Magus dismounting, in a work from 1617 currently in Hartford.

In Delft around the same time when Rembrandt made his oil sketch, the idiosyncratic painter Leonard Bramer created an Adoration of the Magi, now in Detroit.

True to his bizarre imagination and his very own way of handling light and dark, Bramer employed all his power to express what Rembrandt's former pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten called the "oogenblikkelijke beweging", sudden motion and emotion: while Mary and Joseph are frantically gesturing in response to the apparently suddenly illuminating Christ, the African and Asian Magus shield their eyes, blinded by his light. It is the most graphic expression of the spiritual darkness of the non-European Magi I have ever seen.

Closer to the late fifteenth century traditions, and with all the quiet majesty befitting Magi, are Cornelis van Poelenburg's paintings from the 1640s. And one of the versions was acquired by Alfred Bader and is now in the Agnes.

Rembrandt's decision to paint an Adoration of the Magi is unusual. Uncommon also is the fact that it was a *brunaille*, a brown sketch, suggesting it may have been a design for a print, this will also explain the many copies. The painting remained in Rembrandt's studio. A print was never made, maybe because the collaboration with this printmaker Johannes van Vliet came to an end, around that time in 1635/1636.

In any case, the painting is also quite unconventional in that it does not unambiguously identify the Black Magus. As with the Eunuch in Canada's National Gallery, it seems Rembrandt was not particularly interested in expressing a Black African identity or humanity.

That Black figures in biblical scenes serve to refer to mankind as they did in the *Baptism of the Eunuch* and the *Adoration of the Magi*, but also in the *Preaching of St. John* and the prints *Ecce Homo* and *Christ now on screen*, Christ preaching, does not automatically mean Rembrandt also perceived them as equally human. For that, other proof would be needed than these works themselves, that it should be remembered, are about Europe and Christianity, not about Africa or Africans.

Most Africans in Dutch history painting are merely props, whether they take center stage, such as in the *Adoration of the Magi* or function as side figures, as in *Samson Threatening His Father-In-Law* and Rembrandt probably threatened his father-in-law as well every once in a while.

Hardly visible in the dark shadow of the lower left corner in this slide, but also in the real work it's hardly visible, are two Black servants to the mighty and angry Samson, who came to offer a kid as a wedding gift for a Philistine girl, but was refused by her father.

The canvas retains its original size, so Rembrandt must have consciously planned them there. Apparently, he was caught between a clear identification of the story and the expression of anger. As so often, the lack of a real decision did the end result no good. And I sometimes wonder if the Black figures here were really added by Rembrandt himself. Unfortunately, this section of the painting is too damaged for definitive conclusions.

In a workshop variant that is sometimes given to Govert Flinck, the painter improved on Rembrandt's composition by showing the servants and the kid in full light. This clarified the story, but it came at a cost, as it distracts from what must have been Rembrandt's main concern: Samson's explosion of powerless anger.

As the theme was virtually unique in Dutch art, Rembrandt had no tradition to fall back on. The Bible nor Flavius Josephus' History of the Jewish People mentioned the presence of servants, Black or white. Likely, they are the result from Rembrandt's imagination, fed by his combined and challenging ambition for variety, historical accuracy and the unexpected.

After all, he would have known that the Bible and Josephus frequently made mention of Black figures in Palestine. Also, he would have been aware of Italian images of white lords and ladies with Black servants. And finally, he may have even seen such pairs on the streets of Amsterdam, where Portuguese Jews from Antwerp had recently settled with their Black servants.

Although Rembrandt was not the first to include Black servants in biblical scenes, he does seem to have been one of the early adopters of what eventually grew into a firm convention, as testified by the four Bader paintings and many, many others, the four Bader paintings that I already showed and many, many others.

Much is still unclear about these side figures. The focus on the more spectacular paintings of Black figures has left us completely in the dark about their history. How and why did such a conventionally inconspicuous motif become so ubiquitous and what does that mean for the perception of Black people in the Dutch seventeenth century? Much work remains to be done here, especially because this is the kind of image that expresses and confirms the hierarchical relation between Black and white that is still among us today.

In this respect, Rembrandt's work is not different from that of other artists of his time.

Endearing as she may be, standing on tiptoe to lift the travel mantle off of Mary's head and shoulders, the Black girl remains the servant, not of the humble Mary but of Elizabeth and Zacharias whom Mary visits.

For Rembrandt and his contemporaries, and for many people, to this day, this relation between Black and white is the norm. In this respect, Rembrandt's use of Black side-figures was entirely conventional.

What did differ from many contemporaries is the naturalism he invested in most of them. But, as you all know, this is not limited to his depiction of Africans. Therefore, from a historical perspective, it cannot be taken to express some special socially inspired interest or view, tempting as this may be—especially in the light of our current preoccupations and needs.

But what about tronies and character studies, do they inform us of how Rembrandt saw Black people? The genre was quite popular, notably among Rembrandt and his followers.

Rembrandt himself etched and painted tronies from the start of his career and the Agnes has fine early and late examples.

His tronie of an African woman dates from 16—that's this print—dates from circa 1630. As the first known independent print of a Black woman, it is highly exceptional.

By this time in printmaking the dark skin of Black figures was conventionally indicated with hatching but Rembrandt followed an old tradition, by relying on outline alone.

This has lead David DeWitt recently to speculate about the sculpture, or a drawing as the possible model. Although entirely plausible, it does not explain one of the print's most awkward features.

To depict a Black person with outlines alone was a sixteenth century practice and had become old fashioned in Rembrandt's time. Therefore, it must have been a conscious decision to employ it. In fact, Rembrandt's pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten refers to it in his theoretical treatise *Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst*, that is generally assumed to reflect topics that were discussed in Rembrandt's studio.

Van Hoogstraten talks about how a good artist can draw an image that compels the engaged viewer to finish it with his own imagination, causing him to experience the depicted scene more lifelike. This certainly refers to Rembrandt's highly suggestive drawings and also to many of his etchings.

Next, Van Hoogstraten gives the example of a drawing of a Black figure, in a passage that, I have to warn you, is very unpleasant.

"Such that a moor, even if drawn in white on a dark piece of paper, will appear Black because of his flat nose, short hair, fat cheeks and a certain stupidity of the eyes, all of which easily express to the knowledgeable viewer that this is a Black person"

Despite its highly offensive nature, it does describe Rembrandt's print surprisingly accurately, including the "certain stupidity in the eyes" that result from the piercing iris of the woman's right, eye and the upturned left eye.

Of course Rembrandt was perfectly able to etch the eyes differently if he chose so. The fact that he did not do that suggests his view on Africans was not particularly different from that of the majority of his contemporaries. Even if he did have a live model with eyes like this, and we can't exclude the option, he did not feel compelled to change that in order to suggest a different expression kinder to African people.

If he did have a live model, his artistic credo to follow nature seems to have prevailed over any possible wish to idealize the woman and make it easier for his viewers to understand her humanity. That, it seems was not Rembrandt's goal.

The second tronie is Rembrandt's *African Men* that I began my talk with. Indicating the low wall in the lower left corner only summarily, and rendering the pseudo-Roman dress sketchily, Rembrandt directs all our attention to the faces of the men.

The painting has the typical unfinished appearance of a late Rembrandt, but Mauritshuis conservator and my dear friend Carol Pottasch has discovered a very careful build-up of paint layers.

Although sketchily painted it is a finished work of art; "finished if the master has achieved his goal" as Rembrandt himself put it, according to an early 18th century biographer Arnold Houbraken.

The painting is exceptional in many ways. In the genre of tronies, artists normally depict only a single figure. As in this early painting by Dou. But Rembrandt painted two. While other painters followed the popular notion of the then proverbial smooth Black skin and plum facial physiognomy, Rembrandt's men are angular, with an uneven rough skin. And where other painters centered on the exotic character with pearl earrings, large turbans and luxurious mantles or seashells, Rembrandt focused on facial expression to suggest an inner life that is absent in most other Black figures, who tend to remain types.

The speaking man on the right, with a dimple in his cheek draws himself up rather theatrically and clearly has a very different character from his more passive companion on the left, who leans despondently over his shoulder.

Their exact relation and feelings, although certainly intimate, remains for us to guess.

In a way, this makes Rembrandt's *Two African Men* not that different from the equally magnificent *Isaak and Rebecca*, painted as a portrait historié only a few years later. And it would be truly spectacular to see those two works, side by side.

The end result of Rembrandt's decision is that he put the individual characters of these two men center stage. This may be unique in the genre but it's typical for Rembrandt. It's typical for him to reconsider everything he paints draws or engraves. Not to fall back on automatism or conventions, but to rely on observations, experience, manual dexterity and, most importantly, imagination instead.

This applies equally to the white figures in *Isaak and Rebecca* and the two Black sitters in the *Two African Men*.

I hope that we can now answer the question with which I began: was Rembrandt's representation of Black figures exceptional and if so, in what ways? And what does that mean for our understanding of Rembrandt's view on people of colour in the seventeenth century?

The difficult but nuanced answer is, I believe that Rembrandt's Black figures are both exceptional and not.

They often are from an artistic perspective, but this does not automatically mean they also convey an exceptional view on Black people. The special qualities of Rembrandt's Black figures say nothing about his human or inhuman view on Africans, but everything about his unique approach to art. For me, this does not diminish the value of his work at all—on the contrary. They have a remarkable quality to rise above themselves, but it takes a viewer to start that process.

They have a unique capacity to become a mirror that brightly reflects our own concerns, helping us to deal with them, and that is invaluable. But we should also continue to realize that the way these paintings speak to us now, differs from how they spoke to Rembrandt's contemporaries. It's a simple conclusion I took almost 50 minutes to reach it—I'm sorry—but one that we often tend to pass by, especially when the stakes are high.

Paintings carry many truths. We should be as careful as we can about the ones we put forward, and as clear as we can, about our motivations for doing so.

For me, the biggest difficulty in studying seventeenth century paintings, prints and drawings with Black figures has been that the values and norms that inspired their creation are almost diametrically opposed to today's and to my own. Also, when it comes to giants such as Rembrandt and Rubens, whom I did not discuss today, how to integrate that different historical reality fruitfully with our current ideas about a better future and to do justice to both, is a question that is at the heart of Black representation studies and other art historical topics related to early modern Western colonization.

But we have only just begun, and already a new generation is taking up these issues with an enthusiasm and eagerness I have never seen before, so the future looks bright, very bright.

Thank you.



Should I stop sharing screen now? I probably should.

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk:** Yeah why don't you stop sharing screen for now, and if we want to turn it back on at any point we can do so. Thank you so much, Elmer, for this wonderful lecture and also for highlighting some of our paintings that are, as Stephanie Dickey also indicated, some of them are on view at Agnes when we do reopen so perhaps some of you who are attending today can see them when we do open again.

I think we already have quite a few questions in the Q&A so I'll just turn to those. And I wanted to start by combining potentially two questions which were posed by Quirijn Menken and Kathy Sage which revolve around the relationship of these artworks to the actual presence of Black people in the Dutch Republic, and so I was wondering if you could speak a little bit about the relationship between the historical presence and the depicted presence in these artworks and how those might relate also to the Dutch participation in the transatlantic slave trade, what relationship exists there.

**Elmer Kolfin:** I'm happy to do. So I'm going to refer to research of a wonderful and inspiring—research by Mark Ponte who is an Amsterdam historian, studied the archives, and who has found that there were many more free Black Africans in Amsterdam in the first half of the seventeenth century than we realized. And this is a group of people that were sort of a social cohesive group, more or less, that existed along another group of people that came to Amsterdam in the early seventeenth century via Antwerp and Bruges, with the Flemish merchants. And they were servants.

So there were these two groups of African people one was certainly free, the other were servants, which is sort of ambiguous status somewhere between half free and half slave.

And so that's one thing. The other thing is that at the start of the seventeenth century, we see a rise of Black figures in art, not only in Rembrandt's paintings, but in those of others as well. But maybe a little bit more in Rembrandt's than that of others. And so the idea is that probably because of this real live Black presence, painters suddenly had live models and this coincided with a tendency that was also new at the time to start working after life. So all of a sudden painters who aspired that, had the opportunity to work after live models and I think this is reflected in many of these early paintings. So they started looking for roles that they could give to these Black figures and these roles had to be significant—had to mean something for the white audience.

Now slavery, Black colonial slavery, was only emerging at that time, so it wasn't really in the consciousness of many people in the Netherlands. On the other hand, the Bible, the biblical world and biblical history, of course was. So it was sort of natural for these artists to start assigning these biblical roles to Black people. And not so much look at the other side of the world, Brazil and the Caribbean, where the slavery was, where colonial slavery was evolving. So

I think the relation to that colonial issue is more that the Dutch involvement in the transatlantic world caused Black people to arrive in the Netherlands, but often as free persons.

And that sort of spurred artists to start including Black people in art. But assigning them completely different roles of course, roles that would appeal and be meaningful to the white audience they were intended for.

I hope that is an answer to the question.

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk:** Thank you, and perhaps this is just very brief follow up because I do remember also from the exhibition *HERE: Black in Rembrandt's time*, that there was a shift at some point that occurred, where there was more of a you know, negative image that was becoming more common later in the seventeenth century. So that's a little after Rembrandt's time, but perhaps you could speak to that.

**Elmer Kolfin:** Exactly yes, yes, exactly.

Let's say after a relatively beautiful start, a literally beautiful start because many of these paintings are absolutely stunning, as you could see in some of the slides. But morally a relatively beautiful start, things started to get worse really very quickly. Also, and this is definitely related to the colonial engagement of the Netherlands. I'd say in the 1660s, 1670s, the Dutch slave trade reached sort of a high point. Everyone started to defend it, some people started asking questions as well, but it was by and large defended by most for economic profit, obviously.

And in this process it became necessary to show what the real relation between white and Black people was. And the real relation now of course, in the eyes of the whites, and that is a relation of complete power, that's completely an imbalance, an unharmonious power balance. With of course the whites having all the power and the Blacks having no power whatsoever.

And these later paintings consciously express that and that's when you start seeing for example let's say an Admiral or a Regent or someone big and tall, at the center of the scene and only a Black person tucked away in the corner in a sort of powerless and defenseless attitude. And that I think was the view that that many people had about the Black and white power relation from let's say the 1660, 1670s onwards.

And I think that was also the image that has stuck because of this situation, this colonial situation, which of course continued and only got worse and worse and worse throughout the eighteenth century and nineteenth century. So well when you see images often time and time again, you start believing they are true. And only now, well not literally now, but let's say only in the past decades, slowly starting in the second half of the twentieth century, we've really started questioning those relations and then also started questioning those images.

And it has taken us a while, but now we are at the stage where I deliver this talk and trying to answer this particular question, so there is some advance there but it's super and super slow. It's gonna—yeah.

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk:** Thank you for elaborating on that. I wanted to continue with a question by Shannon Lieberman, which has a bit of a gender aspect, and she asks: "You've included examples in which Black figures are women and girls. How common was this? Do male Black figures appear more frequently? And is there current work on how these images address race as well as gender?"

**Elmer Kolfin:** Thank you, yes I'm very pleased you asked that question because it's something we did not really address in the exhibition, and I feel I don't address it enough in you know, whenever I talk or give a presentation, or what. But it's a really very important question. Again I'm going to start with Mark Ponte's discoveries.

So Mark Ponte is the historian who discovered the existence of this small Black community in the early, first half of the seventeenth century in Amsterdam. And one of the things he noticed is that this community was sort of kept together and kept alive by the women because most of the men were sailors, so they came and they went back, whatever. But the women sort of stayed there in Amsterdam.

So there must have been—there were many women, and there must have been more women than we actually see on the paintings. There are a few paintings with Black women, some of them are, you know, they featured wonderful models, such as the Jan van den Hoecke painting that I showed or in Antwerp, Jordaens who painted Moses and his Ethiopian wife. And there are a few others. But there are actually not that many.

So most—so there is this unbalance. And this is another thing that you know we should not trust these images that looks so real, to represent actual reality because there must have been many more women than these paintings suggest. And actually, well I hope that is an answer, but I'm going to say a little bit more.

Because then you could say, okay so is there a bias towards men? And the answer is yes. There was a certain tendency to depict more men than women. But the majority, by far, that is depicted are children. So anywhere between let's say, six, seven and fifteen I'd say that age, that's what you see most often. So if you were to believe the paintings, most Black people in the Netherlands would be children. And I think that is probably not true. We don't know the relations between men, women and children in figures, but it's not likely that most of these Black people were actually children.

But children do make a great prop in a painting. They're endearing and they're attractive and everything. So I think here again, it's the choice of the painters with an eye towards their audience and what their audience might want and might like that actually decides to a great extent what is, or what makes it into the painting and what not. And you know the thing is,

these Dutch paintings they look so deceptively real, that we often forget that they are conscious artistic selections and manipulations of a reality.

Yeah so, that's what I would like to say about this great question yeah.

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk:** Thank you. I'll move on to another question from Stephanie Dickey who asks: What can you say about the costumes in the Mauritshuis painting? Costume of the figure on the right seems to suggest ancient Rome.

**Elmer Kolfin:** Yeah the answer is in the question I think Stephanie.

I do not know, I just don't know. I think it's sort of pseudo-Roman dress. And that's, all I can say. At one point I suggested that you know at least the figure on the right, may be based on a bust, on a Roman bust with sort of pseudo-Roman or real Roman, perceived Roman dress. So that's certainly an option.

And then the glove on his hand, maybe that suggests that he is a rider yeah so a horse rider or something like that. And there are there are some Rembrandt drawings with Black people riding horseback and playing the drums at the same time. So maybe, maybe that is what it connotes.

But I'm not sure. I wouldn't go further than sort of pseudo-Roman dress. Which is another, which I take as another sign that, in this case, Rembrandt places Black people sort of almost automatically in the Mediterranean world. But it would be great if a costume historian or someone with thorough knowledge of classical dress or maybe classical soldier dress or something, had a close look at Rembrandt's painting.

And in fact I think, looking at it a bit more broadly, one of the steps that we could take and maybe should take now is to look carefully at costumes of Black persons in general. Because they're often dressed in historical, or what was perceived at the time as historical dress. But they're also dressed in contemporary dress, especially the servants with these page costumes, these flashy colorful, page costumes. And from one French source, I know from the early eighteenth century says that a page boy was forced to wear these colorful shiny clothes was actually really very sad and grieved that he had to wear this sort of monkey suit because he was mocked on the street by other people. And people tried to you know, throw stones at him and tried to throw mud at him and soil and dirt and dirty his suit and then of course, he would get punishment.

So I think it's next to finding out if these were—some of these models were real people, finding their names which is very difficult. I think that's one thing we need to do, the other thing is have a close look at the costumes.

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk:** Thank you. I'd—there's another question here from Jason Cyrus which asks you to speak a bit more about maybe your personal experiences as someone

researching this topic, and you know brought up this sort of—the role of looking at this from the present and how this topic reverberates especially over the last few years. And so he's asking if you could speak of your experience sharing this intersectional research with more conservative Dutch academic circles. The world is now open to hearing such findings, but I wonder what his experience was like before this recent rise in awareness.

**Elmer Kolfin:** Yeah that's another good question. When I..., okay, let me think how to answer this.

When I was a master student, I saw an exhibition with—so that was 1991 or 1992 or 1993 something like that, I saw an exhibition in Amsterdam with a painting of almost nude Black figures dancing in a forest. And I found that a very intriguing painting. I thought, why did someone paint that? And it turned out to be Valkenburg's painting of Dancing Slaves or Dancing Enslaved People, made in 1707. And from—that painting intrigued me so much that I started wondering about the representation of slavery in art and then in Dutch art. So that's how I got involved. So I was intrigued by this uncommon painting.

So I continued working on it and I wrote a book on the depiction of colonial slavery in Suriname. And there was not much interest in that, at the time. And I tried to interest some people in an exhibition and they wouldn't. And they said, "well you know this is such a dark gloomy topic, no one's going to go—no one's going to be interested in this. That's not why people want to go to the museum."

And, I you know I sort of left it and did other things. And then at some point Esther Schreuder asked me to sort of advice on the exhibition *Black is Beautiful* and to edit the catalogue and to write essays for the catalogue and I picked it up.

And that's when interest sort of slowly started to rise. But, at the time that exhibition was you know, really very surprising to many people. But from then on, also because Black people in the Netherlands started to let the Dutch society know that they were actually there and they had a voice and they had a meaning. They had a voice and an opinion and—and wanted to sort of reconsider the position they're in. And that has sort of helped an awareness, creating an awareness about this topic.

And then we started to think about, well can we do another exhibition because there was always a lot of attention to these negative and stereotypical images and you cannot ignore them. But there's also this other side, so how does that relate? And by that time the topic had become, well had stopped being obscure. Not yet mainstream, but more people were interested in it, especially in the US and in the UK. And so we started working on this exhibition and then of course Black Lives Matter happened and now it's on everyone's mind.

So I had this strange experience of you know, working on—really in a niche and all of a sudden, you find yourself in the limelight, which is, it's not always pleasant, especially with this, because it's such a difficult topic to discuss and to find the right tone of voice. But I think I'm very happy

that it now is as important as it is. And it should be and it's something that I've sort of worked for, for a long time and actually had almost given up hope that it would ever happen.

But now it's here, and then maybe four or five years ago it was sort of like, okay it's here but it's not going to stay. But now I definitely know that it's here and it's not going away. It's only going to become bigger and it's going to become part of the mainstream art history. And then the more conservative art historians and art historians are actually also picking up on this. So I think that you know they're actually quite open, especially if you start as I like to do, because you know I'm not, I'm also partly conservative I'd say, especially if you start to work and think, from the objects themselves. Which is to me, always you know the starting point for anything you say about a work of art, whether it is with a Black figure or not. The object itself is the starting point for the research and the questions. And these more conservative art historians, I think, are now also—I wouldn't say jump on the bandwagon, but they're more sympathetic to the topic and the way it's being discussed right now. And that's another sign of, you know it's a small sign of a slight progress. But at least there is some progress.

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk:** Yeah, thank you for sharing your, you know, your personal thoughts on this. And let's see, we have I think time for one more question. Someone asked, Rose Conlin asks: "Some research has been produced on drawings of the Khoikhoi people of the Cape of Good Hope including Andrew Smith and Julie Berger Hochstrasser and the careful representation of their day to day lives and activities—which many observed do not fit the representational norms for Black figures. How do images of Black people like these, not produced for public view and consumption, fit within this conversation?"

**Elmer Kolfin:** Yes, I mean all these questions are great. It just shows that what I just said, that this topic is here to stay and this is only going to become bigger and better and more of us are going to work on this. These questions only demonstrate that, so thanks for that question.

The answer—my answer to this question is not that uplifting, I think. Because, indeed, there are these—these wonderful drawings of artists at Cape of Good Hope drawing these Khoi people and their daily lives, although we would have to have a careful look at what was selected from that daily life, because it's not everything that they drew.

But what I would like to highlight here is that when these drawings and other drawings were made into prints for the general public, they are—they change, the image changes.

Where in these drawings, you have lots of context and you know different features of daily life, in the book illustrations that they turn into, or are turned into, the Khoi are presented as the lowest of the lowest and the images sort of reflect that idea. So, and that's why I said my view on this is actually not that uplifting. Because that's exactly what you see.

So you have someone who is present and sees real people, doing real things and then there's someone in Amsterdam, who has never set foot in Africa and he has a completely different frame of reference and he turns these images into what he thinks the European audience

expects. And you know he does that, by bringing in all the negative and also traditional stereotypes of Africans and Khoi people into these prints. So I think they're actually almost two separate worlds I'd say.

And these drawings, they remained very private, I think hardly anyone saw them at the time. But these prints, with a completely different view, they go out into the world. And they sort of confirm the image that people expect and maybe like to see. And like to sort of shiver at home, "these horrible Khoi people". You know, "eating each other", which is not true. They were eating, they had and ate animal intestines and not human intestines, but that's what is told in these prints. So let's say these prints offer an alternative truth already in the seventeenth century.

So there's this big difference between the more private drawings and the more public engravings sadly.

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk:** Thank you so much Elmer. I know that there's still a few questions that we weren't able to get to. Thanks everyone so much for their attention and for their interest. And as Elmer mentioned, it's just wonderful to see so many different informed questions on this topic and I think we share your enthusiasm and your somewhat uplifted endnote that you know we seem to be entering into a time where also a new generation is really eager to take up this topic.

So thank you very much Elmer once again for agreeing to be our esteemed speaker today and everyone I hope everyone has a wonderful day and we will make this recording available online soon.