



*Volume 14, Issue 1 (Winter 2022)*

## EDITORS' GREETING

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“So much Luxury . . . at what cost?” This question, posed on a wall in the exhibition *Asia in Amsterdam: The Culture of Luxury in the Golden Age*, challenged visitors to the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, to contemplate the unseen costs in human lives and human dignity of the production, marketing, and acquisition of luxury goods and works of art in the early modern Netherlands. Long unacknowledged, exploitative labor practices and the fortunes derived from the trade in enslaved people are increasingly recognized as undergirding the remarkable creative and artistic flowering of the “golden age” in the Netherlands, a term that has been criticized in recent years.

The essays presented here similarly challenge the reader to think in new ways and to reconsider longstanding assumptions. With this issue we introduce *JHNA Perspectives*, essays that will range from assessments of the state of research to critical responses to pressing questions. In the first of these, **J. Vanessa Lyon** and **Caroline Fowler** advance the importance of Black feminist and critical race theory in reconceptualizing the fields of Dutch and Flemish art. Taking on the problem of how to approach an artwork that has lost its single-author attribution and hence its canonical status, **Bernhard Ridderbos** shifts the discussion of the artistic character of the Mérode Altarpiece from questions of attribution to new insights into its production, content, and function. And, looking at the overlooked, **Shelley Perlove** draws on historical knowledge to create several speculative biographies of the anonymous model for the African maidservant who signals Christianity’s global reach in Rembrandt’s *The Visitation*.

This issue also presents our second *JHNA Conversation*, a discussion among curators and other stewards of cultural heritage. Within the framework of a roundtable moderated by **Yao-Fen You** of Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, Indonesian heritage consultant **Tamalia Alisjahbana** and exhibition curators **Karina H. Corrigan** and **Femke Diercks** explore successes and challenges in the presentation of *Asia in Amsterdam* in Salem and Amsterdam in 2015–2016.

Above all, they consider, at a more than five-year remove, how the exhibition might have better addressed the question, “So much luxury . . . at what cost?”

A great deal of behind-the-scenes work is entailed in producing an issue of *JHNA*. We would like to acknowledge the contribution of the **anonymous peer reviewers** who provide essential advice to the authors of every article, conversation, and state-of-field essay published in *JHNA*. We, and the authors, owe enormous thanks to Managing Editor **Jennifer Henel** for her expert transformation of Word documents and jpgs into visually stunning online articles. We are also grateful to **Jessica Skwire Routhier** for her magnificently thoughtful and attentive copyediting. We encourage you to consider *JHNA* for your own publications. With your help, *JHNA* will remain one of the leading journals of the early modern art of the Netherlands and its region. *JHNA* reviews submissions on a rolling basis. Please consult our [Submission Guidelines](#).

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