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Masterpieces of Dutch Golden Age depict famous sea and naval events

Toledo, Ohio—

In the Dutch Golden Age, 1600-1700, supreme achievements in painting paralleled the Netherlands becoming the richest and most powerful nation in Europe. The country's wealth came primarily from its great maritime power, global discoveries and exploration, and creation of an overseas empire.

Landscape painting was born in Holland in this century, and one of its most remarkable branches was depiction of sea, shipping and famous naval events.

Mirror of Empire: Dutch Marine Art of the Seventeenth Century is the first major exhibition to survey the rise of marine art as a separate category of painting, reflecting the historical, political and cultural values and aspirations of the Netherlands as the greatest maritime power of that century. The Toledo Museum of Art plays hosts to the exhibit Jan. 27-April 28.

The exhibition features approximately 140 masterpieces from more than 40 collections in 11 countries with works of art, including paintings, drawings, prints, as well as a cartographic section of maps, globes and navigational charts.



MIRROR OF EMPIRE— 'Ships in a Stormy Sea' by Willem van de Velde the Younger is one of 140 works of Dutch marine art on exhibit at the Toledo Museum of Art, Jan. 27-April 28.

The work of 24 preeminent artists of the time including Ludolph Backhuysen, Jan van de Cappelle, Jan Porcellis, Jacob van Ruysdael, Willem van de Velde the Elder and Younger, Simon de Vlieger and Hendrick Vroom illustrate the development of Dutch marine art. These artists essentially shaped a new category of art, and the artistic style that the Dutch initiated in the 17th century had continuing ramifications in Europe and the United States throughout the 18th and 19th centuries.

The exhibition traces the development of Dutch marine art from its meticulously detailed, rather topographical beginnings through phases paralleling the great general developments of painting and graphic arts in Holland. Thus, the subdued tonal phase of the 1620s to 1640s evolved to the brilliantly colored, magisterial climax of Dutch marine art from the 1650s to 1680s.

Many of the paintings are extraordinary for their combination of size, brilliant color, vivid detail and dramatic action. Several panoramic drawings by Willem van de Velde the Elder were actually drawn on the spot during furious battles between Dutch and English naval forces.

Van de Velde risked his life sailing between the fleets as they maneuvered for tactical advantage during these contests for maritime supremacy. Van de Velde also executed remarkable large "ink paintings" executed with pen on canvas. His son, Willem the Younger, became one of the great marine specialists, and the exhibition includes outstanding paintings by him, including 'The Toledo Museum of Arts famous

Ships in a Stormy Sea, about 1672.

The exhibition catalogue is the first scholarly survey of Dutch marine art in any language. In addition to texts on each work, it includes a historical survey of the subject, essays on the political and economic context, on the place of marine painting in contemporary Dutch life, and on Dutch marine cartography. Fully illustrated in black and white and color, it has been published in association with Cambridge University Press. The softbound catalogue is available in The Museum Store for \$49.95 or can be ordered by telephone, 419-255-8000.

The museum will also stage a complementary exhibition, *Dutch Prints in the Age of Rembrandt* from The Toledo Museum of Art Collection, Feb. 9-June 2. This exhibition features landscapes, seascapes, portraits and genre scenes. The admission-free exhibition will be shown in the museum graphic arts galleries.

The Dutch marine art exhibition will be open during regular museum hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, 1-5 p.m.; closed Mondays. There is an exhibition admission charge every day except Wednesday, which is a free day. Timed tickets are necessary for admission but may be purchased prior to viewing the exhibition. Call 419-255-8000 for ticket and tour information.

The Toledo Museum of Art is located at 2445 Monroe St. at Scottwood Avenue, just west of the downtown business district and directly off Interstate 75 with exit designations posted.

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