

# Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn (July 15, 1606–October 4, 1669)

Rembrandt was born in the Dutch Republic, now the Netherlands. He attended Latin school and studied at the University of Leiden, followed by a three year apprenticeship with history painter Jacob van Swanenburg, and six months in Amsterdam with painter Peter Lastman. In 1624/25, Rembrandt opened his first studio in Leiden with fellow artist Jan Lievens. Two years later, Rembrandt took on his first of many students. Within twenty years he had taught all of the most important Dutch painters who in turn passed on his knowledge to their own students. His influence is still widely felt today.

Researchers believe that Rembrandt completed around 300 paintings in his lifetime, and nearly as many prints. Some famous works believed to have been by Rembrandt have been found to be by followers or apprentices from his studio, further demonstrating the strength of his influence.

Dutch Statesman Constantijn Huygens discovered Rembrandt's studio work and in 1629 introduced him to the royal court of The Hague. For the next seventeen years, Rembrandt painted portraits and other subjects for Prince Frederik Hendrik and other important members of the Dutch ruling class.

Though he made a good living early in his career, Rembrandt lived beyond his means and his personal life was marked by tragedy and hardship. By 1656, he had to auction off his collections of art and antiquities to avoid bankruptcy. By 1660, he was forced to also sell his house and his printing press. Through the financial support of friends, Rembrandt was able to continue his work.