

ART HISTORY 2 : 2018

Our main study programme for 2018 was **The Golden Age of Dutch Art** which began with a viewing of some very useful background information on a BBC DVD. Following this, we had presentations on the following artists *Frans Hals* (1582-1666); *Willem Claeszoon Heda* (1594-1682); *Pieter de Hooch* (1629-1684); *Gerrit Dou* (1613-1675) and *Jan Steen* (1626-1679). Then came *Nicolaes Maes* (1634- 1693), *Frans van Mieris the Elder* (1635-1681) and the only female artist studied: *Judith Leyster* (1609-1660) Next came Carel Fabritius (1652 -1684), whose life was cut short by an explosion in Delft. The study programme ended in July by looking at the landscapes of *Jacob van Ruisdael* (1629- 1681) and the paintings of *Johannes Vermeer* (1632-1675).

The film chosen for Film Month was, appropriately 'Girl with a Pearl Earring' (2003).

In March, we received an educational grant to visit the Royal Academy where we saw the wonderful exhibition, Charles I: King and Collector, which reunited 150 works of art from the king's extensive collection - amongst them many wonderful Dutch and Flemish masterpieces - sold off by Cromwell after Charles' execution in 1649 and never brought together again under one roof until this once-in- a-lifetime exhibition. More than eighty of the works in the exhibition were loaned by the Queen, but others are today owned by major galleries around the world and by private collectors, so it was thrilling to see them all at the Royal Academy.

Some of us went on after the RA exhibition to The Queen's Gallery to see the Charles II: Art and Power exhibition, in which other works from Charles I's collection were on display. These had been reclaimed by Charles II after the Restoration and he also added to the collection. Today these works are amongst the current Royal Collection of HM the Queen. (No photographs this year!)

We chose **American Artists in the 19th Century** for our 2018 autumn study programme, looking at the work of six artists: George Catlin (1796-1872), Albert Bierstadt (1830 – 1902), Thomas Cole (1801-1848), Winslow Homer (1836-1910), Thomas Eakins (1844-1916) and Thomas Sully (1783 -1872).

We ended the year with our usual Christmas Lunch and Quiz in December.