

## The Museo del Prado presents the exhibition 'The Art of Clara Peeters'

Автор: artnovini.com

Понеделник, 31 Октомври 2016г. 20:52ч. - Последна промяна Понеделник, 21 Ноември 2016г. 08:57ч.

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The artist was a pioneer in the genre of the still life and one of the few women active as a professional painter in early modern Europe.

**MADRID.** Having previously been seen in Antwerp, the **Museo del Prado** is now showing the **The Art of Clara Peeters**

(  
until 19 February 2017

in  
**Room D**

)  
, an exhibition on this female painter who formed part of the first generation of European artists to specialise in still-life painting and was among the very few women to devote her professional activities to painting in early modern Europe

,  
announced

[museodelprado.e](http://museodelprado.e)

[s](#)

The presence at the **Prado** of this group of **15** major works by **Clara Peeters** (1588-90-1657?)

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will emphasise the achievements of this highly gifted and exquisite artist, whose known surviving oeuvre numbers barely

### **40 paintings**

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Both the exhibition and its accompanying catalogue reflect the most recent scholarship on the artist's life and work, locating **Clara Peeters** in the cultural and artistic context of Antwerp and also drawing attention to the situation of women artists on the threshold of the modern era when their opportunities were hindered by widespread prejudices.

### **The exhibition**

**Clara Peeters** devoted her activities to still-life painting, deploying a style that emphasised the real appearance of things. These two factors reflect firstly an entrepreneurial spirit and forward-looking mentality, given that when the artist first began to work in this genre in the first decade of the 17th century only a few works of this type were to be found in collections in the Southern Netherlands. Secondly, realism was seen as an alternative to the idealism of the Renaissance tradition.

The still lifes in the exhibition, painted **between 1611 and 1612**, come from **private collections (six)** ; **northern**

**European museums (three)**

;

**the UK (one)**

;

**the USA (one)**

;

**and the Prado itself (four)**

. These fifteen paintings depict fish and fowl ready to be cooked; already cooked food displayed on the table; and serving vessels, cutlery and other objects, most of them costly, luxury items and all painted with painstaking detail in the description of the forms and textures, using an elegant contrast between brightly lit objects and dark backgrounds which contributes to creating an overall sensation of sobriety.



These paintings by **Peeters** reveal the tastes and habits of the most prosperous classes at the outset of the modern age and include imported goods and foodstuffs such as sweetmeats, wine, fruit and fish (

**Peeters** was the first artist to make the latter the principal subject of some of her still lifes), as in

***Still life with fish, candle, artichokes, crabs and prawns***

; hawks or falcons next to dead fowl (representing the first still lifes on the subject of the hunt, an activity associated with the aristocracy), as we see in

***Still life with peregrine falcon and its prey***

; and shells, which were highly prized for their exotic origins and unique beauty, as in

***Still life with pastry, silver tazza with sweetmeats, porcelain, shells and oysters***

.

**Peeters'** paintings include numerous other types of objects that can be associated with wealth, good taste, education and culture such as pieces of porcelain, silver-gilt goblets and cups, blown glass objects and silver salt cellars.

Another element that the artist often included in her still lifes was her own self-portrait reflected on the surface of vases and goblets. These almost invisible details are to be found in at least eight of her works, of which six are in the present exhibition. In *Still life with flowers*, a silver-gilt goblet, almonds, driedfruit, sweetmeats, bread sticks, wine and a pewter jug **Peeters** is reflected on the silver-gilt goblet and the pewter jug, wearing a headdress, ruff and high dress with raised shoulders. Other examples, including *Still life with fish, candle, artichokes, crabs and prawns*, *Still life with herring, cherries, artichoke, jug and porcelain plate with butter*, *Still life with cheeses, almonds and bread rolls*, and

***Still life with cheeses, prawns and river crabs***

include just the artist's head reflected on the lids of the jugs. On the surface of the goblet on the right in

***Still life with flowers, gilt goblets, coins and shells***

we see at least

**six self-portraits**

of

**Peeters**

, holding her brushes and palette and upholding her status as a woman painter, encouraging the viewer to acknowledge her existence. These self-portraits also reveal the level of

**Peeters**

' artistic skills in her ability to depict herself on such a minute scale.

**The Art of Clara Peeters** is an exhibition co-organised with the **Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten**

in

Antwerp in collaboration with the

**Government of Flanders**

and sponsored by

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Curator Alejandro Vera, Chief Curator of Flemish and Northern School Painting, Museo del Prado



Clara Peeters, 'Still Life with Bread and Cheese', 1632

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Book cover and still life painting by Clara Peeters, edited by the exhibition's curator, José Manuel...