

# IMAGINING BEYOND THE FRAME



## Fiction Stories About ARTISTS & THEIR MASTERPIECES

•The Northern European Artist Edition•



compiled by: *Monica Williams*  
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Chevalier, Tracy. *Girl with Pearl Earring.*

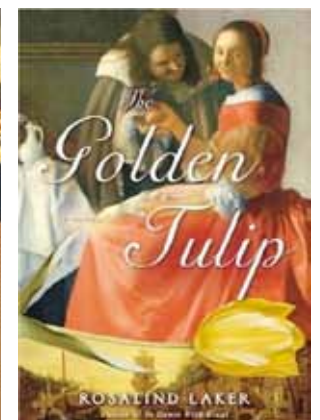
Griet, a sixteen year old girl, goes to work as servant in the house of Jan Vermeer. Catherina, Vermeer's ever pregnant and jealous wife, resents her. Vermeer secretly makes Griet his painting assistant and eventually the model for the painting of the title. Griet falls in love with her kind master, but both are conscious of their respective positions, and their relationship remains unconsummated. A fascinating story that brings Vermeer's 17th century Delft and his artworks to life.

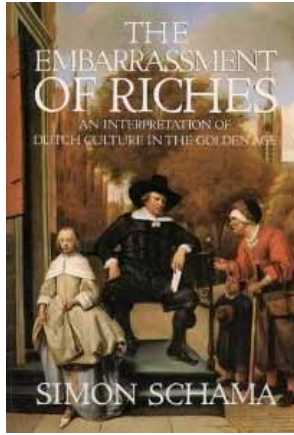
Kernan, Michael. *The Lost Diaries of Frans Hals.*

Peter Van Overloop is a Dutch speaking Columbia graduate student. He is hired by a Manhattan art dealer to translate a document that may be Frans Hals' diary. The story is told in alternating sections of Hals' diary entries and Peter's present day narration. Hals' and Peter's situation dovetail in an interesting way. The author brings Hals' life and 17th century Holland to life brilliantly.

Laker, Rosalind. *The Golden Tulip.*

Set in seventeenth Century Holland during the time of Vermeer and Rembrandt, the story focuses on Francesca Visser. She is the daughter of Hendrik Visser, a talented painter. Upon the death of her mother she must take charge of the household and tries to balance her home life against her apprenticeship with a yet unknown Vermeer.





**Matton, Sylvie.** *Rembrandt's Whore.*

Hendrickje Stoffels started as Rembrandt's model and then became his mistress. A jealous rival for Rembrandt's affection sees that she is labeled a whore by the church. She becomes his caretaker, protecting him from the machinations of politicians who would exploit his talents and from the creditors who try to take everything from him. The story offers an intimate view into a complex man and his life.

**Moggach, Deborah.** *Tulip Fever.*

Sophia is married to an older wealthy merchant, Cornelis Sandvoort. Sandvoort decides he wants their portrait painted and hires Jan Van Loos. Van Loos was a real painter in 17th century Amsterdam. Van Loos and Sophia become lovers. They concoct a plot that will allow Sophia to escape from her husband. Set against the back drop of the Tulip Fever, where the price of single bulb could make or break a person, it is a story of passion and greed.

**Rucker, Rudy.** *As Above So Below.*

Rudy Rucker creates an imaginative fictional biography of the artist Peter Brugel. Each chapter begins with a particular painting and imagines the circumstances under which it painted. Brugel, his friends, and family play prominent roles as do his paintings. While little is known about Brugel's life, his paintings provide a glimpse of a man who found humor and dignity in the humblest places.

**Schama, Simon.** *The Embarrassment of Riches.*  
While not a fiction title, Simon Schama's text explores the world depicted in 17th century Dutch paintings. He discusses how the Dutch created a culture that celebrated classification and made the family the center of their world. Much of Dutch art reflects Dutch ideological and social commitments, and Schama includes many reproductions within the text.

**Vreeland, Susan.** *Girl in Hyacinth Blue.*  
Behind every great man there is a great woman. Leonardo da Vinci's mother, Caterina, is the daughter of an apothecary. She falls in love with Piero da Vinci, an older man and becomes pregnant with his child. Piero's family forbids the marriage, but takes young Leonardo in as their ward. Leonardo is able to see his mother. His artistic leanings are only strengthened by his exposure to his grandfather's stock of pigments.



The Protestant Reformation was greatly influential in creating a new kind of artistic culture based in Northern Europe. Artworks reflected a new sensibility with less emphasis placed on religious art, but the works still at times had a complex moral code to be deciphered. The stories featuring Dutch artists and their world provide insights into their unique visions.

