Rembrandt’s Art as Gift

by

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Wednesday, December 4, 2013
6:00—7:00pm
The Department of Art and Art History
11 Talbot Ave.
Seminar Room

Michael Zell explores Rembrandt’s art in relation to gift exchange, a pervasive form of negotiating social relations in early modern Europe. While sometimes considered outdated in the nascent capitalist economy of seventeenth-century Holland, gift giving was embedded in Dutch culture as a potent instrument for nurturing social bonds. Gift exchange also served as an important alternate regime of value in the Dutch Republic’s increasingly market-oriented economy, including its market for art. Seen from this perspective, Rembrandt’s presentation of his art in the form of gifts offers significant insight into his mode of conducting relations with favored patrons, collectors, and intimates.