

Dutch Double

REMBRANDT

THIS PAINTING WAS THOUGHT TO BE A 'WORKSHOP COPY' OF A REMBRANDT. NOW, ONE SCHOLAR POINTED OUT THAT IT IS, INDEED, THE REAL DEAL

Last fall, the Art Institute of Chicago displayed a workshop copy of Rembrandt van Rijn's *Old Man With a Gold Chain* next to the original panel for the first time.

The description on the wall stated that the re-creation, which is slightly smaller, was painted by an unidentified artist, according to the Art Newspaper's Ruth Lopez. However, now, Rembrandt scholar Gary Schwartz has made a bold claim - both artworks were painted by the Dutch artist himself.

Most experts agree that Rembrandt created the larger painting on oak panel sometime in the early 1630s. The smaller piece, painted on canvas, dates to around the same period. Both artworks depict a gray-haired man with a gold medallion around his neck and a feather in his hat. The subject's identity is unconfirmed, but experts have speculated it could be Rembrandt's father.

More than a century ago, the smaller version was thought to be the original. But when the panel surfaced in 1912, German art historian Wilhelm Bode assessed them both and determined the larger panel to be an authentic Rembrandt, while tracing the canvas copy to his workshop.

During Rembrandt's lifetime, artists commonly made multiple versions of pieces for cus-



tomers, but the work of re-creating them sometimes fell to their students. Bode labelled the canvas as a copy by an unknown pupil, though he admitted it was 'a clever reproduction'.

The Art Institute of Chicago acquired the panel in the 1920s, while the smaller canvas painting ended up in the private collection of Francis Newman. The British entrepreneur recently loaned the painting to the Chicago museum, opening up new opportunities for research into its origins.

Revising the 'Old Man'

According to an analysis by the Art Institute of Chicago's Jacquelyn N Coutré and Gerrit Albertson, Bode's initial assessment was at least partially correct. The pigments used in the two works are a match, suggesting the copy did indeed come from Rembrandt's workshop. But X-rays and infrared imaging showed that Rembrandt was revising details in *Old Man With a Gold Chain* as he worked. No such evidence was found on the canvas copy, suggesting that its author was not thinking through the composition but instead copying what had already been determined, as per the museum.

Schwartz claims these facts alone aren't enough to discount the Dutch master as the artist. He tells the Guardian's Dalya Alberge, "If Rembrandt had a customer for a replica of his attractive 'Old Man', what would be the most effective and efficient way of making it? Assigning it to a pupil, whose work would have to be corrected, and the Newman painting shows no sign of corrections or re-enacting the steps he had just taken, when they were still fresh in mind and hand? Surely the latter makes more sense."

He points to the high quality of the copy and the similarities between the two works as evidence that Rembrandt painted the second version himself. The Art Institute of Chicago experts identified other differences between the two - such as the original's more economical brushstrokes depicting the reflection in the pearl earring. Still, Schwartz argues that these "small differences in execution" don't disprove that Rembrandt created the smaller painting, per Vittoria Benzine of Artnet. "They are more likely to be freedoms that the master could allow himself and that a pupil copyist would not."

Collaboration with pupils

Old Man With a Gold Chain isn't the only painting associated with Rembrandt that experts have recently reassessed. Earlier this year, the Rijksmuseum announced that the Dutch artist was the true hand behind a version of *Vision of Zacharias in the Temple* attributed to his workshop. The large body of copies of Rembrandt's work, along with his collaborations with talented pupils, has led to a long history of disputed attributions.

The experts at the Art Institute of Chicago think that "the painting on canvas was made in close proximity to the painting on panel but by a different hand." At the same time, they acknowledged that "the conversation about the purpose and authorship of these copies continues to evolve."

Those who want to judge for themselves can head to the Art Institute of Chicago and assess the two paintings side by side in person.

"Double Dutch: A Rembrandt and a Workshop Copy" is on display at the Art Institute of Chicago through June 16. (courtesy: smithsonianmag.com)



ICAI - Muscat (Oman) Chapter Conferred Silver Shield - Best Overseas Chapter Award at ICAI Annual Awards Function in World Forum of Accountants, WOFA 2.0

The ICAI - Muscat (Oman) Chapter, functioning under the sponsorship of the College of Banking and Financial Studies (CBFS), has been conferred the prestigious Silver Shield - Best Overseas Chapter Award 2025 at the ICAI Annual Function held in Greater Noida, India, during the World Forum of Accountants (WOFA 2.0). This marks a significant milestone and reaffirms the Chapter's commitment to professional excellence and engagement, impactful knowledge initiatives, institutional collaboration, and sustained organisational excellence among ICAI's overseas chapters worldwide.

The Silver Shield was presented by Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Law & Justice, Government of India, in the august presence of the senior leadership of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), including CA Charanjit Singh Nanda, President, ICAI, and Shri K. Sanjay Murthy, Controller and Auditor General of India. The award was received on behalf of the ICAI - Muscat (Oman) Chapter by CA Umesh Bhome, Chairman, and CA Gaurav Kapoor, Immediate Past Chairman, along with the Managing Committee Members of the Chapter. Notably, this recognition marks the 11th consecutive year that the ICAI - Muscat (Oman) Chapter has been honored under the Best Overseas Chapter category, reflecting its sustained excellence and consistent leadership among global ICAI chapters.

Besides the Managing Committee of the ICAI -



Muscat (Oman) Chapter, the delegation to WOFA 2.0 included senior representatives from the following key institutions:

- College of Banking and Financial Studies (CBFS) (Sponsor of ICAI - Muscat (Oman) Chapter)
 - Dr. Zahran Salim Al Salti, Dean
 - Dr. Ahmed Al-Abdali, Assistant Dean - Training & Continuing Education
 - Dr. K. Rajesh Nayak, Director - Center for Training

- Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry (OCCI)
 - Dr. Abdullah Al Harthi, Board Member
 - Mr. Mustafa Salman, Board Member
 - Mr. Hussein Marzouq Alharassi, Deputy Director - Entrepreneurship Department

- Oman Association of Chartered Public Accountants (OACPA)
 - Ms. Fahyia bint Saloom Al Maskari, Board Member

Further, the Chapter proudly celebrated this remarkable achievement in Oman during a special gathering held in the esteemed presence of CA Aniket Suri Talati, Past President of ICAI, and H. E. Godavarthi Venkata Srinivas, Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman, who graced the occasion as distinguished guests and speakers. Addressing the gathering, the dignitaries commended the ICAI - Muscat (Oman) Chapter

for its consistent efforts in fostering professional excellence, strengthening bilateral professional ties, and contributing meaningfully to the financial and business ecosystem of Oman. The recognition at WOFA 2.0 was celebrated as a moment of pride not only for the Chapter but also for the wider ICAI fraternity in the GCC region.

Established in 2008 under a Memorandum of Understanding with CBFS, the ICAI - Muscat (Oman) Chapter serves as a professional platform for Chartered Accountants and finance professionals in Oman. The Chapter promotes continuous professional education, ethical standards, and constructive engagement with academic, regulatory, and industry bodies.