

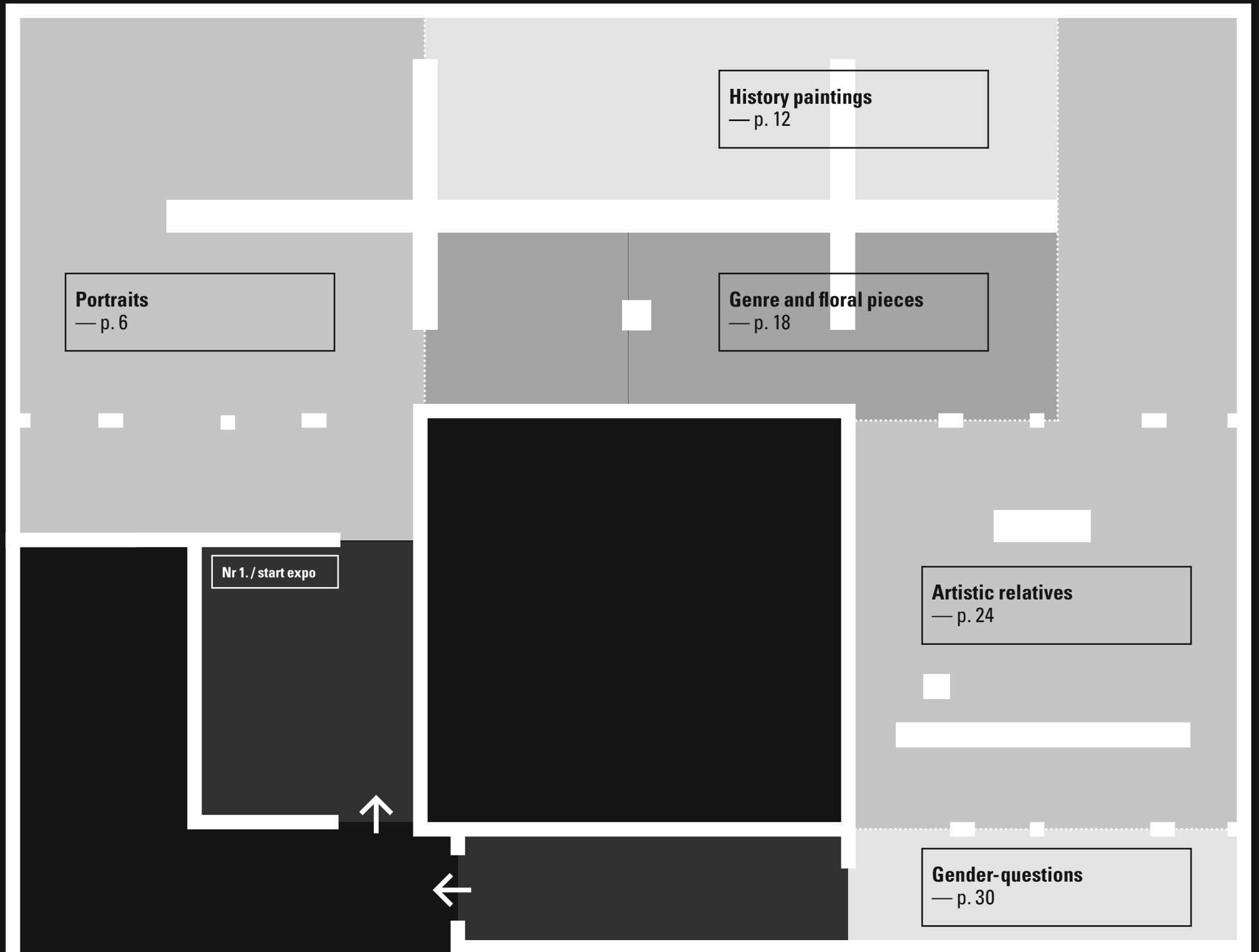
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Michaelina Baroque's Leading Lady

Michaelina

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Baroque's
Leading Lady



Michaelina

This is a world premier. The work of Michaelina Wautier is being shown for the first time, an important female artist of the 17th century. We still do not know everything about Michaelina's life and work. However, we know enough to finally cast the spotlight on her.

Michaelina Wautier was born in 1604 in Mons, the only daughter in a family of nine children. She came from a wealthy family. Her father died when she was thirteen. From about 1645 onward, Michaelina established herself as painter in Brussels. She lived there with her brother Charles, also a painter.

Michaelina's work is of exceptional quality. And, it is multifaceted: she painted portraits, still lifes, narrative works, tableaux from daily life... Some of her works are metres tall in size while others are small, colourful or monochrome, finely painted or with a broad brush.

Michaelina was primarily active between the ages of 39 and 55. We know nothing about her work before or after this period, except that she lived to be 85. Thus, there is still much to discover...

Portraits

Michaelina excelled in the genre of portraiture. She began her painting career with the portrait of commanding officer Andrea Cantelmo. Two portraits of generals in riding coats or armour show how deftly she varied this theme and she embraced experimenting.

In 1654, she paints the Italian Jesuit Martino Martini. With this work she transcends her boundaries for good. She portrays Martini, the first publisher of an atlas of China, in his Chinese attire and at the same time gives him the face of an Italian Renaissance prince.

Her self-portrait assumes a special place because every detail is closely considered. The brush technique is more careful, as if she did not wish to take any risks with this 'calling card'. In addition to individual portraits, she also paints studies from life. Therein she skilfully records men, women and children in natural situations. She can later still use these studies in religious and historical pieces.



1

Michaelina Wautier
**Portrait of Andrea Cantelmo
(Pettorano [Aquila], 1598 –
Alcubierre, 1645)**

Copper engraving of Paulus Pontius
after a (lost) painted portrait
Paper, 403 × 298 mm
Private collection

The oldest known

This portrait is known only from this copper engraving. The painting apparently has not survived. The print mentions '1643'. This is the oldest known work by Michaelina.

Cantelmo was an artillery general from Naples in the service of the Spanish King. He was famous for his strategic insight and bold behaviour, but he was also an art lover. We do not know how he came into contact with Michaelina. It is surprising that he chose an unknown female artist for his portrait.



Curator Katlijne Van der Stighelen discusses her fascination with the mysterious Michaelina.

2

Michaelina Wautier
Self-portrait

Oil on canvas, 120 × 102 cm
Private collection

Eye to eye with Michaelina

Michaelina looks us directly in the eye. In her left hand she holds a brush while her right hand holds her palette firmly. Her collar is casual and unbuttoned. On the tripod easel is a canvas with the vague form of a man's head. Michaelina didn't make a preliminary sketch. She works directly in paint.

On her shelf lies a valuable little clock on which dangles a ribbon with key. The timepiece refers to the passing of time and to life's vanity.

3

Michaelina Wautier
**Portrait of the Jesuit Martino
Martini, 1654**

Signed and dated upper left: 'Michaelina Wautier fecit 1654'
Upper right (from top to bottom):
'Wei Kuangguo' in three Chinese characters, along with a transcription in the Roman alphabet: 'Guei' [=wei], 'Quam' [=guang], 'Que' [=guo]
Oil on canvas, 69.5 × 59 cm
The Klesch Collection

Impressive

Michaelina's portrait of the Italian Jesuit Martino Martini mentions his name in Chinese characters. In 1655, he published his *Novus Atlas Sinensis*, the first atlas of China. He dedicated it to the Austrian Archduke Leopold Willem, Viceroy of the Netherlands. Martini was a brilliant, eloquent theologian and missionary.

Michaelina's portrait is the only one of this impressive personality. His dominating character is reflected in his imposing gaze and massive torso. The greying hair and the silk garments illustrate Michaelina's talent for portraying expressing materials.

4

Michaelina Wautier
**Portrait of a commanding officer
(Pierre Wautier?)**

Upper left is the coat of arms of the Wautier lineage.
Oil on canvas, 73 × 58.5 cm
Private collection

Brotherly portrait

The coat of arms of the Wautier family was discovered during the restoration of this portrait. The person portrayed is thus a Wautier.

Given that Michaelina's brother Pierre was a Cavalier Captain and this man is wearing armour, this is probably him. His body is rendered in profile and he looks at us over his shoulder with a hint of disdain. His face and his stray hairs are modelled with colourful touches. Nowhere else does Michaelina literally colour 'outside the lines' to such an extent.

5

Michaelina Wautier

Portrait of a commanding officer from the Spanish army, 1646

Signed and dated on the lower right:

'Michaelina Wautier 1646'

Oil on canvas, 63 × 56.5 cm

Brussels, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, inv. no. 297

Accurate

This portrait of a high-ranking Spanish commanding officer from 1646 is the earliest known painting by Michaelina. The man's severe expression is impressive. He is wearing a leather riding coat with an expensive lace collar. The rose-coloured sash indicates his elevated function in the Spanish army.

Already in this first portrait, Michaelina's smooth brush technique is apparent. The face is modelled with accurate touches. All the features of her later, more bravado portraits are already nicely present.

6

Michaelina Wautier

Study of a Young Man

Signed and dated on the upper right:

'Michaelina Wautier 1653'

Oil on canvas, 69 × 58 cm

Antwerp, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp, inv. no. 5149

From real life

This image, dated 1653, is not a proper portrait. The natural posture of the young man betrays that it is a study done from real life, in which Michaelina brings facets of reality into the picture. She would later use such studies in narrative paintings.

The man is portrayed on a dark background. The broad, thickly laid touches on his face and hair as well as the refined white enhancements of the rose-coloured mantle are striking. They contrast nicely against the dark folds.

7

Michaelina Wautier

Study of a Woman

Oil on canvas, 62.5 × 57.5 cm

Antwerp, The Phoebus Foundation

With incomplete plan

This painting of a young woman rendered in profile is more of a study than a portrait. She turns her head to the right, an expression of yearning visible. Such a rendering in profile is exceptional in Wautier's oeuvre. She depicted faces almost always in three-quarter profile.

The woman is wearing a simple, white shirt under a shawl that drapes down on her right shoulder. The execution is noticeably spontaneous. The composition is mostly finished, but the sketchy background makes the work appear incomplete.

History paintings

Religious and non-religious works are counted among Michaelina's history paintings. She paints lifelike character heads of saints such as Joachim and Joseph. Compositions with life-sized religious scenes are also preserved. And, her sole mythological work is a masterpiece.

In *The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* from 1649, Michaelina launches novel imagery. Her *Education of Mary* from 1656 and *Annunciation* from 1659 are impressive due to the previously unseen combination of stylistic elements: classic on the one hand but also make one think of the rebel Caravaggio. *Portrait of Two Girls as the Saints Agnes and Dorothy*, a public favourite, is moving and original.

Michaelina's sole mythological piece is viewed as her masterpiece. In *Triumph of Bacchus*, more than ten figures frolic about, mostly naked men of all ages and weights, chased by the wine god. In a time in which the rules of decency for women made it impossible to draw from a live model, Michaelina displays herself as a great master of the male anatomy.



Michaelina Wautier
Annunciation, 1659

Signed and dated lower right: 'Michaelina Wautier Fecit 1659'

Oil on canvas, 200 × 134 cm

Louveciennes, Musée-Promenade de Marly-le-Roi/Louveciennes, dépôt de la Ville de Marly-le-Roi, inv. no. 77.30.11

The Final Work?

Michaelina's *Annunciation* from 1659 is her last known work. Her signature was discovered in 1983. Before that, the painting had been attributed to the French court painter Pierre Bedeau (1645- after 1696).

Mary appears stylised, though her large hands are realistically rendered. In comparison with her frail physiognomy, she is tawny, a reference to Mary's humble origins. For the chiaroscuro and realistic accents--such as the oriental carpet--Michaelina was inspired by Caravaggio's followers.

Michaelina Wautier
Saint John the Baptist as a Boy

Oil on canvas, 68 × 61 cm

Madrid, Museo Lázaro Galdiano, inv. no. 2145 (as attributed to Juan Martín Cabezalero)

Holy shepherd boy

A boy with a bare torso turns himself around and looks out at something beyond the painting. A camel-hair skin is fastened diagonally over his chest. With his left hand he strokes the little lamb and in his right he holds the cross staff, the attribute of John the Baptist. He seldom appears as a shepherd boy.

In another painting by Michaelina (no. 17), a blonde youth appears, who resembles this saint. Perhaps this is the same young model?

Michaelina Wautier
Saint Joseph, ca. 1650–1656

Oil on canvas, 76 × 66 cm

(transformed into an oval in the 18th century and at an unknown date returned to a rectangular format).

Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. GG_376

Chaste Joseph

This is Saint Joseph. The white lilies, a symbol of virginity, refer to his chaste marriage with Mary. The saint has a character head, a speciality of Michaelina. As such, she can play with light and dark.

In 1659, this canvas makes up a part of the collection of Archduke Leopold Willem. He had a preference for chaste, male saints such as Joseph. Moreover, devotion to Joseph was in tandem with devotion to Mary, in whom the Archduke had a special interest.

Michaelina Wautier
Saint Joachim Reading a Book, ca. 1650–1656

Oil on canvas, 76 × 66 cm

(transformed into an oval in the 18th century and at an unknown date returned to a rectangular format).

Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. GG_375

Chaste Joachim

This pendant of *Saint Joseph* also from 1659 comes from the art collection of the Archduke Leopold Willem. He was particularly devoted to Mary and her family and to other chaste saints. Mary is transformed through divine intervention, rather than lust. Joachim, her father and Jesus's grandfather, is here the epitome of chastity.

The Latin passage in Joachim's book indicates his role as Christ's predecessor.

12

Michaelina Wautier **Saint John the Evangelist, ca. 1655**

Oil on canvas, 60.5 × 69 cm
Private collection, Italy

John and the chalice of poison

John the Evangelist, the youngest apostle, is considered the author of the Book of Revelations and the fourth evangelist. After Christ's ascension, he became a preacher and martyr, standing up against a pagan priest in Ephesus. As punishment, he receives a chalice of poison for this (depicted as a chalice for the mass) but makes the sign of the Cross above it and drinks the poison without harm.

John is a protecting saint of theologians, writers, book merchants and printers, among others. Whether his role as patron saint of virgins and widows appended to the unmarried Michaelina, we don't know.

13

Michaelina Wautier **The Education of Mary, 1656**

Signed and dated on the right: 'Michaelina Wautier, inuenit, et fecit 1656'
Oil on canvas, 144.7 × 119.38 cm
Private collection, Europe, via mediation of the Hoogsteder Museum Foundation, The Hague

Model family

Anne teaches her daughter Mary to read. Behind them, father Joachim gazes thankfully towards the heavens. According to legend, they had their daughter after years of infertility and thanks to divine intervention. That is called the Immaculate Conception.

The theme is in line with Early Modern attitudes towards marriage and family. Women run the households, support their husbands and educate their daughters.

The signature emphasises that Wautier made ('fecit') and conceived ('inuenit') the painting. The date offers a key link to help reconstruct her oeuvre.

14

Michaelina Wautier **Portrait of Two Girls as the Saints Agnes and Dorothy**

Oil on canvas, 89.7 × 122 cm
Antwerp, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp, inv. no. 599

Two girls

A girls stands by a basket with roses and apples, the classic attribute of Saint Dorothy. The other girl next to her strokes a little lamb, a symbol of the holy martyr Agnes: *agnus* means lamb. Their melancholic expressions make for an intimate scene.

The recognisable, individual facial features suggest that this is a *historicised portrait*, with real people portrayed as saints. A few costume pieces, such as Dorothy's cap and the string of pearls, could come from the wardrobe of a 17th-century girl.

15

Michaelina Wautier **The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine, 1649**

Signed and dated lower left: 'Michaelina Wautier invenit et fecit 1649'
Oil on canvas, 157 × 218 cm
Namur, Séminaire Diocésain de Namur

Resourceful

This painting from 1649 is Michaelina's oldest known history piece. Saint Catharine kneels and extends her hand for the Christ child to receive the ring. Behind Mary stands a female martyr. Joseph appears at far left.

Saint John the Baptist is portrayed next to Catharine. Because the female martyr looks emphatically at him, and he extends his hand to her and pushes his lamb towards her, we recognise here Saint Agnes: *agnus* means lamb. Michaelina thus resourcefully uses one attribute, the lamb, for two saints.

This work has been restored especially for the exhibition with financial support of the Inbev-Baillet Latour Fund.



Turn right at the corner for the continuation of the exhibition.

Genre and floral pieces

In Michaelina's oeuvre the boundary between portraits and genre paintings is vague. The primary players in her scenes of daily life don't seem to pose as such. Their faces appear totally lifelike.

The two soap bubble blowing boys are so lifelike that they must be portraits, just like the young man with the pipe and tobacco snuffer. All these figures are engaged in their own activities. Michaelina's keen ability for observation appears in the details: no crooked collar or open cuff escapes her attention.

Two still lifes from 1652 stand out a bit. The flower garlands make a perfect pair. Flowers also appear elsewhere in Michaelina's work sometimes, but here she shows herself to be a master in the genre. Observation of nature is again the point of departure. The composition with the flower wreath that is bound to oxen skulls harkens back to a relief at the Ara Pacis in Rome, the Roman emperor Augustus's monument to peace. It seems as if Michaelina observed everything and visited Rome, though that is not likely.



16

Copy of the blonde boy from 'Two bubble-blowing boys'

Oil paint on panel, 35 × 26.5 cm
Collection des Musées d'Amiens,
inv. no. M.P. Lav. 1894-87

This is an 18th-century copy of the right-hand bubble-blower in the painting from Seattle (no. 17). Although the pose of the boy and the floating soap bubble are nearly identical, this deals with another model. This boy is clearly younger.

17

Michaelina Wautier Two bubble-blowing boys

Oil on canvas, 90.5 × 121.3 cm
Seattle Art Museum, Gift of
Mr. Floyd Naramore, inv. no. 58.140

Vain soap bubbles

The two bubble-blowing boys seem to be taken from real life. On the table next to them stands a smouldering candle and hourglass, inter alia. These objects and the soap bubbles that shall soon burst symbolise the vanity of existence: everything passes away. As such, the painting has a didactic undertone.

Because the facial expressions of the boys are so individualised, it is quite possible that a double portrait lies hidden in this genre painting as well (no. 6).

18

Second version or contemporary copy Two bubble-blowing boys

Oil on canvas, 90.5 × 87 cm
Private Collection, Spain

This painting was recently discovered. It shows a second version of the genre piece from Seattle (no. 17), by Michaelina or someone close to her. The changed arrangement of the still life is worthy of note. The added skull intensifies the *vanitas* message.

19

Michaelina Wautier Young Man Smoking a Pipe, 1656

Signed and dated upper left: 'Michaelina Wautiers fecit 16(5)6'
Oil paint on canvas, 68.5 × 58.5 cm
Bijl-Van Urk B.V.

Sense of smell or warning

The young man in this painting day-dreams while he has a horn pipe between his lips, the smoke escaping out his mouth.

The painting is perhaps part of a series of the five senses. The pipe smoker stands for the sense of smell. As a self-contained presentation it can have a moralising meaning: the smoke reminds the young man – as well as us – about the limited duration of youth.

20

Michaelina Wautier
**Young Tobacco Snuffer,
ca. 1650–1655**

Oil on panel, 24.7 × 18.7 cm
Bijl-Van Urk B.V.

Healthy tobacco

A young boy sniffs a little piece of tobacco and fills a white, clay pipe. Although the boy seems very young, his use of tobacco was not so uncommon. In the middle of the 17th century, people believed that a moderate use of tobacco offered health benefits.

It is likely that this small panel belonged to a series of the five senses, as a presentation of the sense of smell. Michaelina probably painted two series of the five senses. We do not know where the works are now.

21

Michaelina Wautier
Study of a Young Man

Oil on canvas, 29.5 × 23.5 cm
Private collection

Model off the streets

This is a study. The boy wears only a white shirt. A red, flannel blanket over his shoulders provides the colour. Michaelina would use a figure such as this later in history paintings.

The blush on his cheeks perhaps suggests the boy's life outdoors. Again, we see confirmation that Michaelina picks models off the streets, in a manner of speaking.

22

Michaelina Wautier
**Floral wreath with
dragonfly, hanging
between two animal
skulls, 1652**

Signed and dated, upper left:
Michaelina Wautier / fecit.
1652'

Oil on panel, 41.1 × 57.4 cm
SØR Rusche Collection Oelde/
Berlin

Stylised Flowers

Many female artists painted exclusively still lifes. We know of only two floral garlands by Michaelina. One of them has gone missing, but there are photos of it. The two form a pair. Both display a floral garland between two oxen skulls, an architectural motif from antiquity. In one appears a dragonfly, in the other one a butterfly.

The many details remind one of Jan Brueghel the Elder (1568–1625). The certification mark on the backside indicates that Michaelina uses Antwerp panels. Did she purchase them during a trip to Antwerp to see her brother?

23a.

**Antinoüs, favourite of Emperor Hadrian,
with the attributes of Bacchus**

Plaster cast after a classical model from
the 2nd century AD.

23b.

Michaelina Wautier
Study from an antique bust

Signed on the backside: 'Michaelina Wautier fecit'
Black chalk enhanced with white and ochre-coloured
chalk on paper, 43 × 28.3 mm
Private collection, Belgium

Example from Antiquity

This drawing done after an antique bust, in black and white chalk, is the only one we know of by Michaelina. The signature agrees with the signatures on her paintings. The eyes are special. Antique busts normally have 'blind eyes'. Here, they are coloured, as if the 'model' is alive.

Drawings after antique sculptures or plaster casts have been part of an artist's education since the Renaissance. It is exceptional in this period to see a woman dedicating herself to this.



Now walk a little bit back to the left. Turn left beyond the wall. The continuation of the exhibition (Artistic relatives) can be found against the large, back wall.

Artistic relatives

Charles Wautier (1609–1703) was Michaelina's younger brother five years her junior. Painting was their shared passion. They both remained unmarried and lived together in the same house in Brussels, where they probably had a studio together. The Italian influence on their style suggests that they made a trip to Italy, although we cannot prove that. There is no doubt that they influenced each other. And, thanks to her brother, Michaelina probably received more chances as a female painter than she otherwise would have.

Michaelina's oeuvre is also closely related to the work of the Bruges artist Jacob Van Oost the Elder (1603–1671). Both displayed particular talent at depicting children. Whether the two ever met, we do not know. They surely saw each other's work.



Charles Wautier
Portrait of a Man, 1656

Signed and dated upper left:

'C. WAVTIER / 1656'

Oil on canvas, 72 × 59 cm

Brussels, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, inv. no. 4419

Portrait of a friend?

The identity of the person in the portrait is unknown. He appears sober, reserved even. His curly, red hair and white collar are the only touches of colour in the dark composition.

Charles portrayed aristocrats just like Michaelina, but this man appears to have simple origins. Was he a friend? A chance passer-by?

Charles Wautier
Jesus and the Pharisees

Oil on canvas, 166.5 × 249.5 cm

Michel Ceuterick bvba

A typical Wautier

Mary and Joseph find their twelve year-old son Jesus back in the temple, deep in discussion with the knowers of the Law.

We see stylistic traits typical of Charles Wautier's oeuvre. He plays with light and dark, broad and round pleats, rhythmic usage of warm and cold colours and so on. By presenting the young Jesus at left, rather than at centre, Wautier's composition adheres to the tradition of Caravaggio.

According to scientific research, the composition was originally smaller. To judge from the style, Michaelina may have contributed to the Christ figure.

Charles Wautier
Prophet (?), 1652

Signed and dated lower left on the edge of the open book: 'C. WAVTIER F / 1652'

Oil on canvas, 100 × 92 cm

Cambrai, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. no. 1991-P.1

Character head

His searching gaze, raised hand and intellectual activity suggests that this old man is a prophet from the Old Testament. Charles Wautier shares with his sister an interest in the rendering of character heads caught in moments of mystical rapture.

In this signed work he also shows how he, like his sister, is inspired by the work of Caravaggio and his followers. The simple background and the light-dark contrasts create a dramatic atmosphere. Such a play of light is visible in the face and the cloak.

Charles Wautier
Portrait of Abbot Jacques Neutre

Signed and dated lower right:

'C. WAVTIER / FECIT 1668'

Oil on canvas, 113 × 87 cm

Collection Artothèque - Ville de Mons, inv. Ms MBA 84

Abbot-diplomat

Jacques Neutre (1631–1679), Abbot of the Val-des-Écoliers in Mons, looks us in the eye. He holds a skull. This refers to the transitory nature of life and extols humility.

In the upper right, Charles Wautier adds a coat of arms, with Neutre's motto: *Via vitae eruditio* (*Knowledge is the way of life*). The mitre and cross indicate his function as abbot. Neutre was famous for his diplomatic talent, which often led him to travel to Brussels. Did Wautier paint him there?

Jacob van Oost the Elder

Two Boys in front of a Painter's Easel, ca. 1645

Oil on canvas, 56.5 × 58.7 cm

London, The National Gallery, Presented by Sir Henry Howorth through the Art Fund in memory of Lady Howorth, 1922, inv. no. NG3649

How do you become an artist?

Two boys are studying a sketch on a painter's easel, with an Old Testament story about Gideon, who gets help from God in a battle. Among other things, he must select soldiers by judging the way that they drink water.

Both boys display the importance of studying art and learning to draw. In the 17th-century, these were important values for developing artists and art connoisseurs.

Jacob van Oost the Elder

Portrait of an 11 year-old boy, possibly Jacob van Oost the Younger, 1650

Oil on canvas, 80.5 × 63 cm

London, The National Gallery. Bought, 1883, inv. no. NG1137

Painter's son with fur

Jacob van Oost the Elder (1603–1671) is a highly talented painter of materials and textures. This is most likely his 11 year-old second son.

The young boy wears a fur cap, a dark-grey jacket and a very white shirt with a simple collar. A fur muff warms his hands. This fashionable clothing style and his luxury accessories emphasise his wealthy origins.

His melancholic look shows Van Oost's stylistic relationship with Michaelina Wautier and with the Brussels artist Michael Sweerts, a contemporary of Michaelina.

Balthasar Herold (1625–1683)

Johan Philipp Barth (in 1657 presented as a goldsmith)

After Hiëronymus Duquesnoy the Younger (1602–1654)

Archduke Leopold Willem, 1657

Bronze, 64 cm

Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Kunstammer, inv. no. KK_8930

Archduke-art collector

The Archduke Leopold Willem looks at us with self-awareness. He is wearing an elegant cloak and armour. On his chest we see the Grandmaster's Cross of the German Order.

The Archduke is a passionate art collector and patron. He has an extensive art collection, with works by Frans Snijders and David Teniers among others, as well as by Michaelina Wautier. After his departure as Governor of the Southern Netherlands, Leopold Willem moved his collection to Vienna.

Michaelina Wautier

Triumph of Bacchus

Oil on canvas, 270 × 354 cm

Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. GG_3548

(Half) naked!

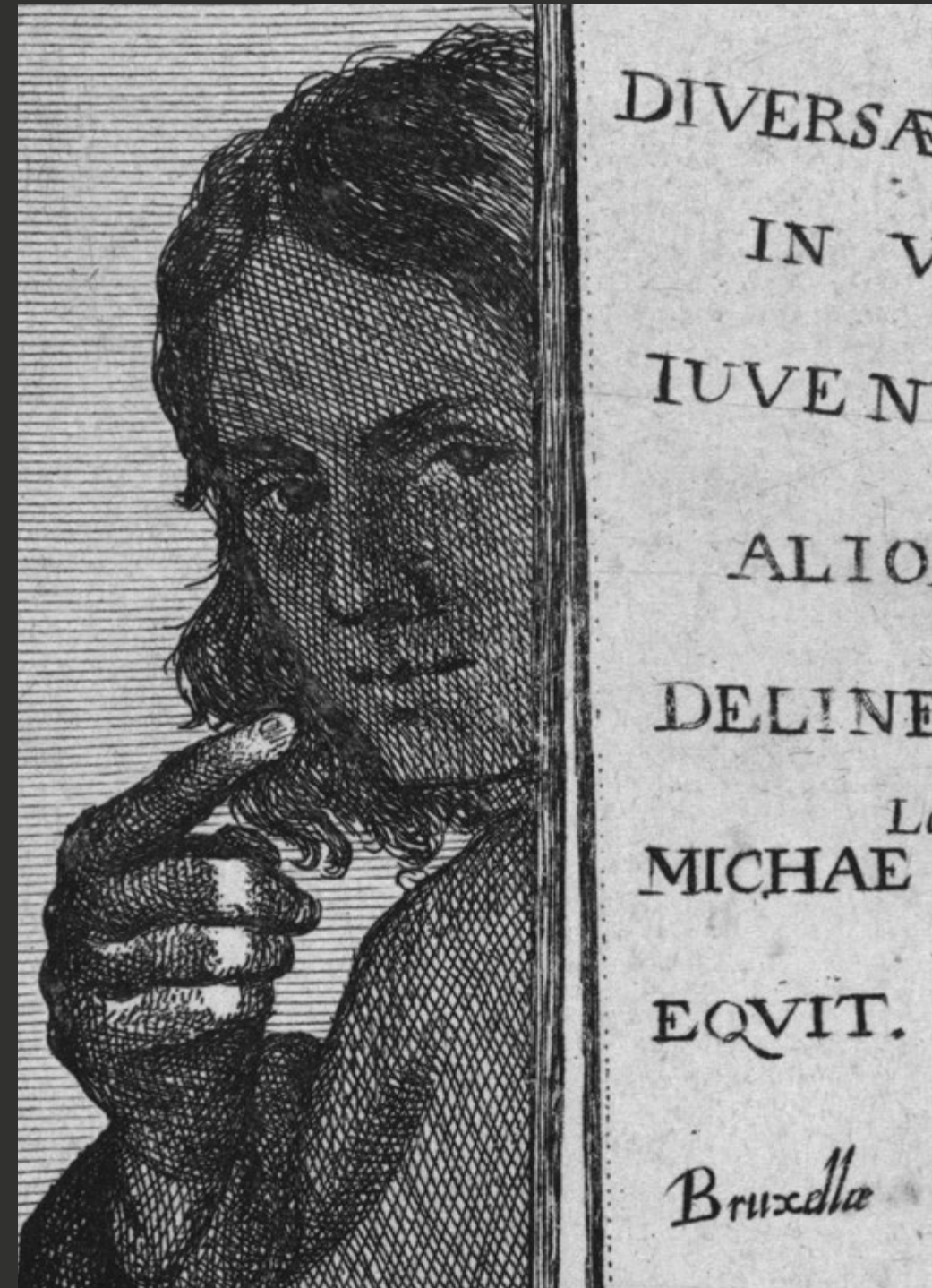
The iconography of this large painting is exceptional. We see the procession of the wine god Bacchus and his attendants. Archduke Leopold Willem presumably ordered it.

On the right, a half-naked woman looks us in the eye. The resemblance with the artist's self-portrait indicates that it is Michaelina herself. Mostly naked men surround her: that is unique. Thanks to the studio she shared with her brother Charles, she probably had the chance to draw from real life.

Gender-questions

In 1656 Michael Sweerts (1618–1664) established an academy in Brussels. It was geared towards the schooling of young painters. Did Michaelina or her brother Charles participate in the life-drawing lessons? We do not know. She surely knew Sweerts's sketches of facial expressions.

Apart from painting, in the mid-17th century we see women active in various disciplines. In literature, writers such as Marie de Gournay (1565–1645) and Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678) made pleas for a social position for women beyond the household. They strongly urged for women to be present in public fora, such as literature and the arts. Michaelina was perhaps familiar with various contradictory opinions about gender.



Cornelis Galle I
after Charles Wautier
**Clara Isabella de Ligne-Arenberg
(?) in a triumphal carriage pulled
by two putti**

Signed: 'Carolus Wautier delin. /
Carolus Galle sc.'
Engraving, 35 × 42.5 cm
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. RP-P-OB-6743

Pieter de Jode II
after Charles Wautier
**Portrait of Charles-Albert
de Longueval**

Signed: 'Charles Wautier pinxit. /
P. de Jode sculp.'
Engraving, 17 × 11.9 cm
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-
1937-843

Cornelis Meyssens
after Charles Wautier
Portrait of Eugène de Berghes

Signed: 'C. Woutier pinx. / C. Meyssens
sculp. / I. Meyssens excud.'
Engraving, 17.5 × 11.9 cm
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. RP-P-1906-725

Theodoor van Merlen II
after Charles Wautier
**Portrait of Don Antonio Pimentel
de Prado, 1650**

Signed and dated: 'C. Woutier pinxit. /
Th. Van Merlen exc. Antverpiæ. 1650'
Engraving, 16.3 × 11.6 cm
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. RP-P-1905-1197

Cornelis Meyssens
after Charles Wautier
**Portrait of Ferdinand-Gaston-
Lamoral de Croÿ**

Signed: 'Wautiers pinxit /
Ioan. Meyssens excudit'
Engraving, 17.5 × 12.1 cm
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. RP-P-1908-2480

Theodoor van Merlen II
after Charles Wautier
Portrait of Jacobus, Duke of York

Signed: 'C. Woutier pinxit. /
Th Van Merlen exc. Antverpiæ'
Engraving, 16.3 × 11.6 cm
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. RP-P-OB-23.552

Michael Sweerts
The Drawing Lesson, ca. 1655

Oil on canvas, 103.4 × 136.5 cm
Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum,
inv. no. os-I-317

Model drawings

Michael Sweerts shows a 17th-century drawing lesson. A group of students are busy with model drawing. At the time that he made this painting, Sweerts established his own academy in Brussels. As such, he offered beginning artists the chance to master the anatomy of the human body.

In her Bacchus procession, Michaelina demonstrates her craftsmanship in depicting the male torso. Did she participate in Sweerts's drawing lessons as an adult painter?

Amongst aristocrats

This series is based on portraits by Charles Wautier. The aristocrats depicted are from Henegouwen, the birthplace of the Wautiers. That they opted for the Brussels painter is no coincidence. The Wautier family also belonged to the wealthy milieu of Mons. Various family members held civic positions and two brothers of Michaelina and Charles achieved military successes.

The portraits also bear witness to the proximity of Leopold Willem's court. Most of them were connected to it in one way or another. The Archduke himself owned four works by Michaelina.

Michael Sweerts

Young Man behind Painter's Easel from *Diversae facies in vsvm iuvenvm et aliorvm dileneatae*, 1656

Etching, 90 × 81 mm
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. RP-P-1888-A-13821

Michael Sweerts

Bust of an Old Bearded Man from *Diversae facies in vsvm iuvenvm et aliorvm dileneatae*, 1656

Etching, 89 × 81 mm
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. RP-P-1889-A-14322

Michael Sweerts

Bust of a young man from *Diversae facies in vsvm iuvenvm et aliorvm dileneatae*, 1656

Etching, 88 × 78 mm
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. RP-P-1888-A-13822

Michael Sweerts

Bust of a Child with Cap from *Diversae facies in vsvm iuvenvm et aliorvm dileneatae*, 1656

Etching, 90 × 80 mm
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. RP-P-1895-A-18826

Faces of models

The title page of this series of twelve etchings shows a young man behind a painter's easel. He points towards a Latin inscription. Translation: *Various faces, etched for the use of young men and others*. The etchings each present a face, each displaying a different age, expression and social class. They served as models for students.

The pictorial relationship between contemporaries Sweerts and Michaelina suggests that Michaelina knew the series and was possibly inspired by it.

Adam-Pierre de la Grené

Arithmetic book of the Brussels dance master Adam-Pierre de la Grené, 1642–1693

Manuscript, 323 × 105 × 15 mm
Brussels, State Archives of Belgium,
Manuscript collection, inv. no. 1.088

Owner of a work by Michaelina

De la Grené (1625–1702) was the official dance master at the Brussels court since 1649. He gave lessons to the highest nobility from home and abroad. In 1650 he purchased a (now lost) image of Bacchus by Michaelina Wautier. In addition to Archduke Leopold Willem, he was the only 17th century owner of work by Michaelina, so far as we know.

Moreover, he owned a portrait and an image of Nicodemus as well. As to both of these (lost) works of art, it is not clear if Michaelina or her brother Charles had made them.

Anne Françoise de Bruyns (Anna Francisca de Bruyns, 1604–1656)

The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine

From: *Sketchbook of Anna Francisca de Bruyns*

Black ink with traces of under drawing in black chalk, 195 × 165 mm

Brussels, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, inv. no. 6507, fol.8

Role model?

This drawing is by Anna Francisca de Bruyns, who received an artistic education from her cousin, court architect Jacques Francart.

After her marriage in Mons in 1628, De Bruyns ceased painting for the most part. She still drew small-format religious and mythological scenes. As a mother of twelve, she made variations on the theme of 'mother and child' quite often. The same age as Wautier, she also spent time in Mons. Was De Bruyns a role model for Michaelina?

Marie le Jars de Gournay
Equality of Men and Women, 1622

Octavo, 16.5 × 10.2 × 0.5 cm
 Bibliothèque Nationale de France,
 inv. no. FRBNF30529273

Equality of man and woman

The Parisian writer Marie de Gournay studied Latin and Greek on her own. Her father died at a young age and her mother was not a proponent of schooling for women. The lack of education made Marie realise how seriously women were oppressed.

Despite financial problems, she remained unmarried and became a professional writer. She wrote two works about women's rights. One of them, the *Égalité des hommes et des femmes*, is a plea for the equality of men and women.

Anna Maria van Schurman
**Dissertatio, de ingenii muliebris
 ad doctrinam & meliores litteras
 aptitudine, 1641**

Book, 17 cm
 The Hague, Royal Library of
 the Netherlands, inv. no. KW 196 O 38

Plea for women's education

Anna Maria van Schurman was known in her time as one of Europe's most educated women. She mastered no less than fourteen languages.

In this *Dissertatio* she defends a modest, yet broader education for women, beyond maintaining the household. She argues that through schooling, women become more valuable members of society and above all do not devolve into idleness. Van Schurman's notoriety suggests that Michaelina must have been familiar with her ideas, although it is pure speculation as to whether she had read the book or not.

Johanna Hoobius
In Praise of Women, 1643

Book, 16 cm
 Middelburg, ZB / Planbureau en Bibliotheek
 van Zeeland / Bijzondere collectie,
 inv. no. 98190679

In praise of female virtue

In Praise of Women is the first book published in the Low Countries that contains exclusively poems by a woman. Johanna Hoobius, however, died in her thirtieth year, and thus never saw her own publication.

Poetry was usually a leisure activity that gave away to household duties after marriage. Here, however, the poetess portrays herself explicitly as a married woman. Moreover, her verses sing the praises of women.

Margaret Cavendish,
 Duchess of Newcastle
 Engraving by Pieter Clouwet,
 after Abraham van Diepenbeeck
**Natures pictures drawn by fancies
 pencil to the life, 1656**

Book, 27 cm
 University Library Leiden,
 inv. nr. 1407 C 20:4

Eccentric

Natures pictures is a collection of poetry and prose and non-fiction. Margaret Cavendish was a self-professed eccentric writer, which is also apparent from the book. It was unusual for a woman to write an autobiography that was not religious in nature.

Cavendish tells about her education and marriage, among other things. She concludes with the words that she does not write for her readers, but for her own good. Who else would be interested in her work?

credits

Concept

Katlijne Van der Stighelen / curator
Pierre-Yves Kairis, Hannelore Magnus
& Hans Vlieghe / advisory committee

Realization

Ben van Beneden & Marieke van Bommel / general management
Katrijn Van Bragt / exhibition coordinator
Veerle Allaert / secretarial office

Scenography & Execution

Henry De Leeuw / scenography
De Roo NV & SB/BOF/Werkhuizen / set building
Louis Prenen / lighting
Hizkia van Kralingen / art handling
Tommy Andries, Marina Christiaens, Marc Leenaerts
& Hanne Moris / conservation and management

Communication & Press

Claire Verstraeten & Ben Dillen / communication
Nadia De Vree / press

Public outreach

Cathy Pelgrims & Tammy Wille

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Antwerp Baroque 2018

Exhibition as part of the cultural city festival 'Antwerp Baroque 2018. Rubens inspires' which creates a dialogue between historic Baroque and the work of contemporary artists, with the city of Antwerp and the world as its décor.

www.antwerpbaroque2018.be

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