

PREPARATTION FOR THE TASK

Each of you needs to make a medieval collar for yourself.
Think about how you could make it.



GIVNIG LIFE TO
MASTERPIECE OF ART

TRAINER: IGOR FUČKAR

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

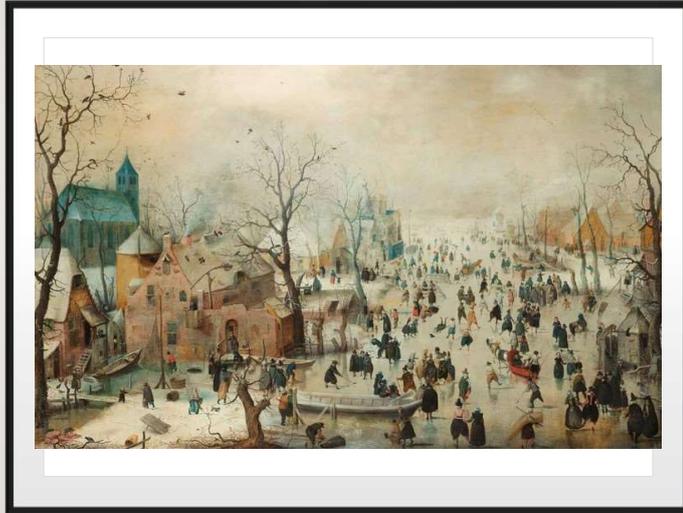
- You are going to be participating in a drama workshop.
- It will be set in Amsterdam in 1632.
- You will be working partly in role as people from that time and partly as yourselves.

HENDRICK AVERKAMP: WINTER LANDSCAPE WITH SKATERS

(CA. 1608) (BELONGS TO
AMSTERDAMSE RIJKSMUSEUM)



- Look at all the people on the frozen canals.
- This is in the beginning of 1600 in Amsterdam.
- What are they doing, what details can be seen?
- If we think of people from this time, what do you think they knew about the human body?



THE MEANING OF THE FOLLOWING CONCEPTS

- **Dissection** - special surgical technique that allows the study of individual areas of the body
- **Surgeon** – medicine specialist for surgery
- **Anatomy** - the science of the structure of the human body
- **Guild** – a medieval association of craftsmen, an association of people doing the same job or trade

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST MEETING

„Dear members of the Amsterdam Guild of Surgeons. Welcome to our first meeting of the New Year – 1632. Let it be a good year for the Guild and for our city and our prosperous Dutch Republic! I have to inform you that our Praelector Anatomiae is not able to lead today's meeting himself, since he has been called to Mayor Bicker's house for an emergency. However I have promised Dr Tulp to lead the meeting with great care and precision. First of all everyone must put on their collars.”

SPECIAL EVENT IN AMSTERDAM IN 1632

„We are all proud members of the Guild of Surgeons. Only a few years ago there was no proper research on the human body. Now we know that our bodies are like magnificent machines that need to be researched in all possible ways so that we can understand all its detail for the benefit of all men – so that we can be able to repair what will be damaged. We already understand the function of the heart; we know the complexity of our muscles; we have all studied the open stomach! We are building our new society on knowledge, equality and freedom of belief. Let God help us in our important work and let us all speak our guild motto together: Vivat Anatomiae!”

„It is already the 12th of January – it is still freezing cold – which is a good thing for our yearly dissection, but we have nobody – NO body – waiting for us. We are faced with the problem of selection – a difficult task. I hope you can work together in groups to come up with some concrete advice as to this problem.

Another matter: How many spectators will there be room for in our new anatomical theatre at Waaggebouw?

We need a proclamation ready that the official dissection will take place any evening from 6 o'clock.

What should the price of the tickets be on the different rows and seats?

And who will be selected to stand in the front row by the table this year? We will have to do some sketches and calculations.

Can you now move into groups of three or four guild members, please?”

TASK I

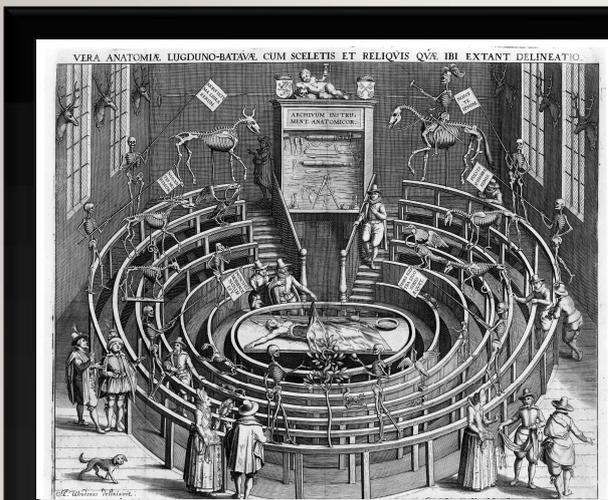
LOOK AT THESE MEN.
THEY ALL LIVE HERE IN AMSTERDAM.
AS SURGEONS WE KNOW VERY WELL
THAT NOBODY IN OUR SOCIETY
WANTS HIS OR HER BODY TO BE
DISSECTED AFTER DEATH, PUT ON
THE TABLE, CUT UP AND EXAMINED.
EVERYBODY HOPES FOR A DIGNIFIED
DEATH AND A FUNERAL ACCORDING
TO OUR TRADITIONS. BUT AS
SURGEONS WE KNOW THAT WE
NEED CORPSES SO THAT WE CAN
STUDY THE HUMAN BODY
THOROUGHLY.



DISCUSS WHICH ETHICAL RULES WE NEED FOR THE SELECTION OF CORPSES, SO THAT IT WILL MAKE AS LITTLE HARM AS POSSIBLE FOR OUR SOCIETY.

GIVE THE GUILD AN **EVALUATION** OF WHAT USE (OR NOT) EACH OF THESE NINE PERSONS HAS TO OUR SOCIETY.

IF ALL OF THEM WERE TO DIE ON THE SAME DAY AND WE NEEDED A CORPSE FOR DISSECTION, WHICH ONE OF THEM SHOULD OUR GUILD SELECT?



THE FIRST ANATOMICAL THEATRE IN THE REPUBLIC BUILT IN LEIDEN 1596

TASK 2

Decide:

- how many spectators there will be room for in the anatomical theatre (study the illustration)
- the price of the tickets on the different rows and seats
- who will be selected to stand in the front row by the table this year.

Make a proclamation (poster) for the official dissection. Prepare your presentations for the Guild.

DISCUSSION

- What do we know so far about the members of the Amsterdam Guild of Surgeons?
- Who are they?
- What are their interests?
- In what way do they deepen and expand their medical knowledge?
- What is their priority in their work: ethics, humanity, religiosity, financial gain or something else?
- What kind of view of the world do they have?

THE LETTER

That same night Dr Tulp, lit his lamp, dipped his quill in ink and wrote a letter. It was difficult, since he was not used to writing his letters himself, so he started many times over. Should it be Dear Sir, Dear Mr., Honorable... or what?

Finally it was done – he read it back to himself. He nodded. Took an envelope, wrote the name on it, sealed it and sent it off with a messenger.

Amsterdam the 12th January Anno 1632

Mister Hendrick van Uylenburgh

It has come to my knowledge that you, as an Art Dealer in Amsterdam, have the best overviews of competent painters in our republic. In a few days time the yearly dissection at the Amsterdam Guild of Surgeons will take place. It is in this connection I want my professional portrait to be painted. I will need a good artist. As you will know I am a man of great influence both in the Guild and within the political arena in Amsterdam. I need you to select the very best painter before tomorrow's vesper.

Sincerely

Dr. Nicolaes Tulp

THE PAINTING

The assignment was given to a 26 year-old painter called Rembrandt van Rijn. Have you heard about him before?

Rembrandt van Rijn was born at Leyden in 1606 and died in Amsterdam in 1669. His father was a miller. He sent his son to the University to study law, but Rembrandt made up his mind to devote himself to painting. His father accepted this, and Rembrandt went into the studio of a local painter. He was about sixteen years old, and was already so clever that his parents soon sent him to Amsterdam. He knew more than all his masters there, so he returned home after some time, and started painting on his own account. By 1631, Rembrandt had established such a good reputation that he received several assignments for portraits from Amsterdam. He moved to Amsterdam into the house of an art dealer, Hendrick van Uylenburgh. (Rembrandt was later married to the art dealer's niece, Saskia.) In January 1632 he got a special assignment through van Uylenburgh.

REMBRANDT VAN
RHIJN:
DR NICOLAES TULP'S
ANATOMY LECTURE
(1632)



a) Study the painting closely and talk about what you can actually see (denotative analysis) – and after that how you interpret the painting (connotative analysis).



TASK 3

REMBRANDT VAN
RHIJN:
DR NICOLAES TULP'S
ANATOMY LECTURE
(1632)



b) Frozen frames (tableau):

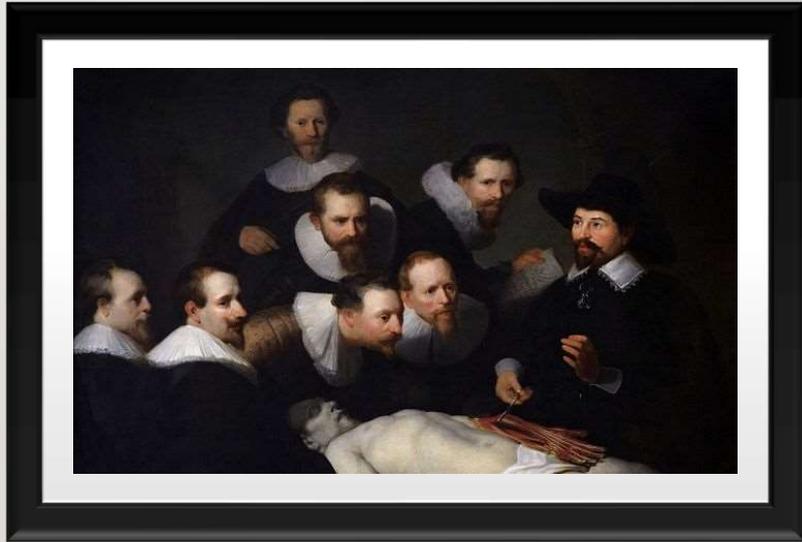
Make your own version of the painting with your bodies.

For each character one spectator can check the thoughts by putting her/his hand on the shoulder of the character and their thoughts will be heard (thought-tracking).



TASK 3

REMBRANDT VAN
RHIJN:
DR NICOLAES TULP'S
ANATOMY LECTURE
(1632)



c) Living picture (tableau vivant):

Bring your frozen frames to life by starting an improvised dissection/lecture in slow motion.

(music: Ricercare I: da Milano)

TASK 3

REMBRANDT VAN
RHIJN:
DR NICOLAES TULP'S
ANATOMY LECTURE
(1632)



WHO WAS THE MAN ON THE TABLE?

„The dead body belonged to 41-year-old Aris Kindt (his proper name was Adriaan Adriaansz), who had been hanged earlier that day for armed robbery.

We know the following...

The canals were frozen and people were skating. Aris Kindt was freezing. He walked to keep warm, but he had nowhere to walk; he stood still, but then he moved on. He watched a man who fell on the ice. Aris Kindt helped him on his feet – they exchanged some words and walked away in different directions. Aris Kindt turned and followed the man, robbed him and stole his jacket. The punishment was hanging, which was a normal punishment for armed robbery. But who was Aris Kindt?"

TASK 4

EACH GROUP WILL PREPARE DIFFERENT MOMENTS IN THE LAST DAY IN ARIS KINDT'S LIFE THAT CAN SHED SOME LIGHT ON WHO HE WAS.

1. At seven in the morning – what is he doing – are there other people around?

2. At eleven, his stomach is screaming with hunger – where is he? What does he do?

3. At one, he walks the canals.

4. At half past two, he sees a man fall on the ice.

5. Ten minutes to two, he steals the man's coat. What kind of weapon did he have in his hand?

6. Half past three, two policemen find him. Where? What happens?

7. Quarter to three, Dr Nicholaes Tulp sees a man taken away by two policemen. He asks somebody what has happened.

8. Two minutes past four; Aris Kindt's conviction is executed.

9. Six o'clock in the evening of the 16th January 1632, the anatomical theatre in Amsterdam is filled with spectators.

10. Half past six, Dr Tulp examines the hand of a dead thief.

II. AT 9 THE SAME EVENING,
THERE IS A BANQUET FOR THE
AMSTERDAM GUILD OF
SURGEONS.

Task for the whole class together

ANALYSIS

How did the dissection go tonight?

Where were you?

Who was Aris Kindt?

What have you been eating tonight?

Did you say your prayer before the dissection?

Have you seen him earlier?

What kind of coat did he steal?

Did you watch the hanging today?

TASK 5

Write a letter to someone (in the role)

TODAY I WITNESSED...

It is late at night, 16th January 1632. Decide from which perspective you will write and take the role of a citizen in Amsterdam that cold day when all this happened.

• **The roles can be:**

- a spectator
- a policeman
- the man who was robbed
- a member of the guild
- Dr Nicolaes Tulp
- people who knew Aris
- anyone that had met him the last day
- the judge
- or the 26- year-old Rembrandt

SOME QUESTIONS MUST BE ASKED



Which of the citizens of Amsterdam of 1632 you would like to interview if you had the opportunity?

SUMMING UP

• What does it mean to be human?

• What do you think these people from the 17th century have in common with us today?

• What have you learnt and experienced through this work?

WHAT WE WERE EXPLORING? (OBJECTIVE/LEARNING AREAS/OUTCOMES)

- THE UNDERLYING THEME IS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HUMAN?
- We moved back in time into another historical epoch to investigate how human beings are regarded and treated.
- What were the dominant values four centuries ago?
- How do knowledge and the traditions in a given culture affect living conditions?
- Can another historical period inform our understanding of our own lives and our own time?
- Who are at the bottom of the social hierarchy today?
- Through this workshop the students investigate a particular aspect of the historical epoch; a special event that happened in Amsterdam in January 1632.
- The students express themselves through role work and writing, they create stories and work on dilemmas – and are reflecting on the content of the work they do collectively.

PREPARING FOR THE NEXT LESSON

- take 4 self-portraits with your mobile phones
- let each self-portrait (neck and face) occupy most of the frame
- let each of the self-portraits show you in a different mood
- show moods with different facial expressions
- send all 4 self-portraits by e-mail to:
igor.vtc@gmail.com

