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# KUNST HISTORISCHES MUSEUM

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## *Michaelina Wautier, Painter*

**Forgotten, erased, celebrated: the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna is showing the largest-ever exhibition on Michaelina Wautier – one of the most exciting rediscoveries in recent art history.**

**Tickets to the exhibition are now available at the museum or [online](#)**

From 30 September 2025 to 22 February 2026, the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna is dedicating its major autumn exhibition to the Flemish Baroque painter Michaelina Wautier (1614/18-1689). This comprehensive survey of her oeuvre includes paintings never before on show to the public.

The exhibition is a collaboration between the Kunsthistorisches Museum and the Royal Academy of Arts in London.

*„Michaelina Wautier is one of the most exciting art-historical rediscoveries in recent decades. The Kunsthistorisches Museum will show the works of a great baroque artist who for centuries was overlooked and her paintings attributed to male contemporaries”,* says Jonathan Fine, Director General of the Kunsthistorisches Museum.

### **A Woman who Painted History – and then Disappeared from it**

Michaelina Wautier was a truly exceptional seventeenth-century artist. But for centuries her paintings were ignored, overlooked or attributed to male artists. Her works – history paintings, portraits, altarpieces, allegories – upended contemporary perceptions of female artists, and are characterized by innovation, a fine sense of humour, and psychological depth.

Her monumental *Triumph of Bacchus*, for instance, was until the 1960s erroneously attributed to a pupil of Rubens or even Luca Giordano – considered too large, too powerful, with too many male nudes to be the work of a female artist. Today, the painting is regarded as an iconic work and one of the highlights of the Picture Gallery of the Kunsthistorisches Museum.

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## **See the Largest-Ever Show of her Works in Vienna**

The exhibition at the Kunsthistorisches Museum is the largest-ever show of her works comprising 29 paintings, one signed drawing, and a print after one of her lost compositions – including her celebrated cycle *The Five Senses*, the first time the whole series will be seen in Europe since it was painted. In total, the Kunsthistorisches Museum is showing 80 artworks, both works from its own holdings and international loans.

Many of Michaelina Wautiers paintings are in private collections in Europe and the US, which is why they are rarely seen – but they have been assembled for this spectacular show. In Vienna, Wautier's paintings will be placed in a dialogue with works from classical antiquity, Rubens, van Dyck and other contemporaries.

## **Art History as a Journey of Discovery**

There is much we (still) do not know about the life of Michaelina Wautier. The exact date of her birth and the place where she trained as an artist remain uncertain. She presumably shared a studio in Brussels with her elder brother Charles. Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, regent of the Spanish Netherlands and the period's leading art collector, owned works by her. However, no contemporary comments on her art have survived. We have neither letters nor personal testimonials – only her paintings. These, however, reveal an intelligent, cultivated, courageous, confident and highly-original woman, who proudly signed her works “*invenit et fecit*”, “*invented and executed by me*”.

*“We have almost no biographical data, documents or letters, but we have her paintings. That's enough to reveal one of the period's strongest female artists”,* says Gerlinde Gruber, curator of the exhibition.

Following the exhibition's premiere in Vienna, an adapted version of the exhibition will move to the Royal Academy of Arts in London in 2026.

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna  
The Royal Academy of Arts, London

30 September 2025 to 22 February 2026  
27 March to 21 June 2026

## **Tickets available now**

Tickets for the top-class exhibition can be purchased [online](#) from 4 July. A ticket with a timeslot must be booked to visit the exhibition. The timeslot regulates the time of access to the special exhibition; visitors can stay in the exhibition itself for an unlimited period of time.

Book online tickets and save money: If you book your exhibition ticket online, you save compared to buying it on site.

All online tickets and further information at: [shop.khm.at/wautier](https://shop.khm.at/wautier)

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## PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

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Michaelina Wautier  
***The Triumph of Bacchus***  
c. 1655–59  
Oil on canvas, 271.5 × 355.5 cm  
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Picture Gallery  
© KHM-Museumsverband



Michaelina Wautier  
***Self-portrait***  
c. 1650  
Oil on canvas, 120 × 102 cm  
Private collection  
Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



Michaelina Wautier  
***Two Girls as Saints Agnes and Dorothy***  
c. 1655  
Oil on canvas, 89.7 × 122 cm  
Photographer: Rik Klein Gotink  
Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp –  
Flemish Community  
Photograph: under public domain



Michaelina Wautier  
***Two Boys Blowing Bubbles***  
c. 1650–55  
Oil on canvas, 90.5 × 121.3 cm  
Seattle Art Museum, Gift of Mr. Floyd Naramore  
© Seattle Art Museum

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Michaelina Wautier  
*The Five Senses (Taste)*  
1650  
Oil on canvas, 69.5 × 61 cm  
Rose-Marie and Eijk Van Otterloo Collection, Boston  
Photograph © 2025 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



Michaelina Wautier  
*Portrait of Martino Martini*  
1654  
Oil on canvas, 69.5 × 59 cm  
The Klesch Collection, London  
© Courtesy of The Klesch Collection



Michaelina Wautier  
*The Education of the Virgin*  
1656  
Oil on canvas, 144.7 × 119.4 cm  
Mauritshuis, The Hague, on loan from a private collection,  
by courtesy of Hoogsteder Museum Foundation,  
The Hague  
Photograph: Public Domain

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