In his *Observations upon the United Provinces* (1672), the English traveler Sir William Temple (1628-1699) remarked that ‘in general, all appetites and passions seem to run lower and cooler here, than in other Countrys where I have conversed.’ He found that the Dutch seldom quarreled, except when drunk, and were rarely jealous or vengeful. ‘Their Tempers’, he went on, ‘are not airy enough for Joy, or any unusual strains of pleasant Humour; nor warm enough for Love.’ He speculated that ‘the dulness of their Air’ rendered them ‘less susceptible of more refined Passions, or that they are diverted from it by the general intention every man has upon his business’ – indeed, the only strong emotion he perceived in this entrepreneurial society was avarice.\(^1\)

Temple was neither the first nor the last observer to comment on what he saw as a striking lack of passion among the Dutch. Similar views were still expressed in the twentieth century, for instance by the sociologist Max Weber and the historian Johan Huizinga. Writing about the Dutch Golden Age, they both stressed the sober and hard-working character of the Dutch burgher, though they certainly disagreed on the impact of Calvinism on Dutch culture.\(^2\) But did the Dutch ‘appetites and passions’ really run so ‘low’ and ‘cool’? Were their tempers truly deprived of ‘Joy’, ‘pleasant Humour’ and ‘love’?

Historians of philosophy and natural science have devoted substantial attention to investigating how early modern thinkers understood the relationship of mind, body, and spirit, and how the nature and effects of the passions were described in the writings of thinkers such as René Descartes (1596-1650) and Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), who developed elaborate and often conflicting theories about the causes and effects of these states of physical and mental agitation.\(^3\) However, to date, few cultural historians have addressed the Dutch and their emotions, and the rare studies available are more concerned with the eighteenth century (especially the age of sentimentalism) than the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries.\(^4\) Literary historians have been more attentive, investigating the strong emotions interpreted on the seventeenth-century stage.\(^5\) Similarly, art historians have become increasingly concerned with the emotional expressiveness of Netherlandish painting, its cultural context, and its relationship to theories of artistic practice and reception. Not surprisingly, critical attention has focused on the works of the two Netherlandish artists

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**Introduction: the motions of the mind**

Stephanie S. Dickey and Herman Roodenburg
best known for their engagement with the passions: the Dutch master Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) and his Flemish counterpart Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640). In previous publications and in their essays here, Eric Jan Sluijter and Thijs Weststeijn clarify the emotional dimensions of Rembrandt’s art, describing the painter as the ‘pathopoios’ (the ‘maker of emotions’) par excellence of his time and situating his interest in ‘pathopoeia’ within the climate of ideas expressed by such art theorists as Karel van Mander (1548-1606), Franciscus Junius (1591-1677), Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678) and Willem Goeree (1635-1711). Ulrich Heinen and other scholars, inspired by the latest discoveries in neuroscience, have analyzed Rubens’ depiction of ‘barocke Leidenschaften’. The present volume reflects these developments while also presenting a broader spectrum of current research. The concept for the volume arose in November 2006 when the art historians Franziska Gottwald, David de Witt and Stephanie Dickey organized a conference at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, entitled The Motions of the Mind: Representing the Passions in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands. While most of the essays assembled here were first presented on that occasion, we asked for additional contributions in order to reflect the variety of new developments in the study of the ‘affects’ and ‘passions’ in Netherlandish art.

For Dutch art theorists such as Van Mander, Junius or Van Hoogstraten, the representation of emotion constituted a consummate skill for the painter as well as an essential component of the morally uplifting subject matter through which painting gained its legitimacy as a liberal art. When these theorists advocated close observation of nature as the best training for representing the passions, they did so in the belief that the ‘motions of the mind’ are inevitably reflected in the motions of the body – exactly as Leonbattista Alberti (1404-1472) already argued in his treatise On painting (1435). Their writings participate in an international discourse traced among authors such as Alberti, Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519), Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo (1538-1592), Roger de Piles (1635-1709) and Charles Le Brun (1619-1690). Aspects of that discourse are addressed throughout this volume. Jan Muylle examines the literary context of expressive works by Quentin Massys (1466-1530) and Pieter Bruegel (c. 1525-1569), employing the ancient concept of ‘ethos’ (the physiognomy of stable traits) and that of ‘pathos’ (the physiognomy of transient passions). Similarly, Thijs Weststeijn illuminates Van Hoogstraten’s ideas on the affective impact of painting by exploring the artist’s dialogue with Franciscus Junius.

Painters, like playwrights, were expected to make manifest not only the actions of their characters but also the inner motivations that prompted them. As the seventeenth century progressed, the symbolic language of allegory and attribute declined in favor of a more ‘naturalistic’ emphasis on body language and facial expression. The highly legible poses and expressions deployed in large-scale history paintings such as Rembrandt’s The blinding of Samson (Sluijter, fig. 9) compare well with the physical traces of strong emotion described in texts such as Seneca’s De Ira (cited here by Jane Kromm). Yet, if not handled judiciously, such