

'Dichtbij Vermeer' -which is Dutch for 'Close to Vermeer'- is the name of a project started in the autumn of 2014.

This project is still in preparation!

Johannes Vermeer used special techniques to bring his paintings to life.

The images seem to come out of a movie!

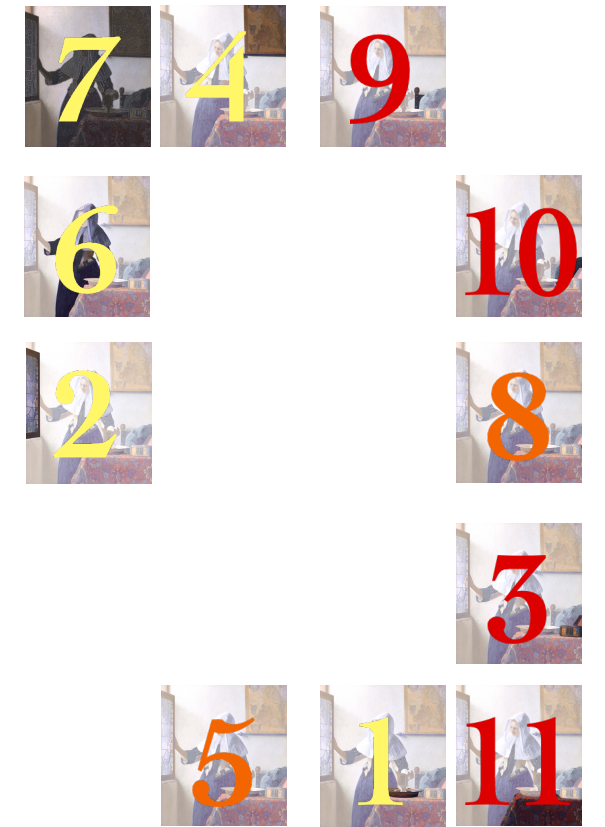
Could I reach the opposite?

Can I rebuild a corresponding mise en scène based on his work?

And then catch the unique light of Vermeer in a photographic image?

For this project, the painting 'Woman with a Water Jug' appealed to me tremendously.

To bring this image to life, 11 essential matters are needed of which:



- 1 Basin:** Wim Nys, consultant team responsible for collection and analysis of the Silver Museum Province of Antwerp already gave advice on the silverware occurring in the Vermeer painting on which I base my project. Georges Cuyvers, a well-known Belgian goldsmith and jewelry designer, commits to making a similar silver scale.
 - 2 Stained glass:** For a replica of the typical stained glass I could count on the cooperation of the Royal Academy for Fine Arts - part time art education in Antwerp. The teacher Sophie Troch and her student Herman Op de Beeck were immediately enthusiastic. The stained glass is now completely finished and Herman has done a fantastic job!
 - 3 Jewellery box:** The jewellery box with pearl necklace is also an important aspect in the painting 'Woman with water jug' but I still have not found a suitable yellow / brown jewelry box with pale red felt. Vera Teunen, a traditional and modern woodworker, gave this extensive information: "It is clear that the closure is half concealed. One of the twisted pilasters is folded away with the lid covering the keyhole. The hole is positioned asymmetrical because there are four pilasters in dense condition, it seems that veneered panels have been used in frames of a darker type of wood. It is possible that maple veneer is used because it looks yellow, it is common that there are distortions during growth and because of this it looks a bit like the folds of silk, this effect is also called moiré or watered maple. "
 - 4 Wall map:** I now own a replica of the wall map with the identical colors and the identical dimensions! Thanks to Anneke Beekhof from the Special Collections department of the University Libraries Leiden, for the help in the search for and the delivery of the identical card as in the painting by Johannes Vermeer! This map of the Seventeen Provinces of the Netherlands was published by the Dutch cartographer Huyck Allart. The only known example of Allart's card, which contains the date of 1671, is kept in the University Library in Leiden. Although Allart's map is identical in terms of geographical content, a few decorative cartouches were seen on Vermeer's version.
 - 5 Jug:** For the silver water jug, Wim Nys, advisor-team responsible collection and research of the Silver Museum Province of Antwerp, gave me advice. I found a very similar can-by coincidence-in the far USA, this can be further adapted ...
 - 6 Clothes:** For a replica of the clothes of the Woman with the water jug, I can count on the cooperation of Hilde Van Bellingen of 'De Juiste Maat' from Temse and the advice of Hilde Van Snick, teacher of 'Textile Arts' at the Stedelijk Academie voor Schone Art (SASK) of Sint-Niklaas. Thanks Marion, you were my first model for this project. Thanks to a tip from Hilde I can count on Stephanie as a better matching model.
 - 7 Location:** For the location of the recordings of this project I get help from the beautiful 'Maagdenhuismuseum' in Antwerp, a city near Brussels, Belgium. Here, everyone can view the art collection of OCMW Antwerp. It is the smallest museum in Antwerp, located between other historic buildings in the middle of a trendy shopping area in the city center. In addition to utensils, it offers a surprisingly rich collection of paintings and sculptures. The small museum houses no less than 150 works of art including paintings by Antwerp masters from the 15th to the 17th century: Pieter Paul Rubens, Jacob Jordaens, Antoon Van Dyck and 'smaller' masters are represented: Pieter Aertsen, Otto Van Veen, Simon De Vos, Maarten Pepijn. You will also find sculptures from the 16th to the 18th century by, among others, Huibrecht Van den Eynde, Walter Pompe and interesting temporary exhibitions are offered every year.
 - 8 Pearl necklace:** I now have a pearl necklace, although they are probably not real pearls.
 - 9 Chair:** I still haven't found an exact Spanish chair. "The problem of the variations we encounter in our research time and time again: the leather chairs with lion spiders are decorated with a pattern of yellow diamonds on all early paintings, and then, starting with "Reading Woman in Blue ", the chairs seem new cover in the light blue velvet, was that really a change? I would have thought that if it were not the case the windows would appear again on the 'Writing girl in yellow' or the 'Writing lady', which painting in general is dated 3 or 4 years later than the 'Reading woman in blue'. "
- (source: John Michael Mondigs - Vermeer and his environment, translated by Hans Bronkhorst)*
- 10 Fabric:** I still do not have any blue fabric, as in the painting.
 - 11 Rug:** I do not have a carpet similar to the painting in my possession. Christian Vrouyr, a specialist in this matter, told me this "It is not known how carpets ended up with painters, and even less where they came from. At that time there was little carpet trade. Merchants from Genoa and Venice went to the Middle East at the time, but stayed along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. They bought spices, fabrics, silk, but the purchase of carpets happened sporadically and was not part of a major import. There had been an 'Oosterlinghenhuys' in Bruges since the 14th century, a sort of trading office where eastern traders could sell their goods. The history of the Eastern carpet is based on a very limited number of documents. From many historical pieces in museums (late Middle Ages and early renaissance) the origin can no longer be determined. To give no wrong origin, they were given the name of painters: certain painters have very often the same type of carpet depicted on their works. So we speak of Lotto, Holbein, Memling, Ghirlandaio (etc etc) carpets. That refers to the drawing. Most common in Northern Europe were the productions from Anatolia but also some Persian carpets were on the market under the Safavids dynasty. The knotted carpet on this image seems to me more of Persian origin "