

University of Groningen

The Anatomy Lesson of Willem Roell, painted in 1728

Ijpma, Frank; van Gulik, Thomas M.

Published in:
British Journal of Surgery

DOI:
[10.1002/bjs.10730](https://doi.org/10.1002/bjs.10730)

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:
2018

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Ijpma, F., & van Gulik, T. M. (2018). The Anatomy Lesson of Willem Roell, painted in 1728. *British Journal of Surgery*, 105(10), 1273-1273. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bjs.10730>

Copyright

Other than for strictly personal use, it is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

The publication may also be distributed here under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license. More information can be found on the University of Groningen website: <https://www.rug.nl/library/open-access/self-archiving-pure/taverne-amendment>.

Take-down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Downloaded from the University of Groningen/UMCG research database (Pure): <http://www.rug.nl/research/portal>. For technical reasons the number of authors shown on this cover page is limited to 10 maximum.

The Anatomy Lesson of Willem Röell, painted in 1728



F. F. A. Ijpma and T. M. van Gulik, Departments of Surgery, ¹University Medical Centre Groningen, Groningen, and ²Academic Medical Centre, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Published online in Wiley Online Library (www.bjs.co.uk). DOI: 10.1002/bjs.10730

The Anatomy Lesson of Willem Röell, painted by Cornelis Troost in 1728, should be considered a group portrait of the Amsterdam Guild of Surgeons. Professor Röell, praelector anatomiae (lecturer in anatomy) of the Surgeons' Guild, was portrayed while performing an anatomical dissection of the knee joint in the corpse of an elderly man. The three surgeons in the painting, dressed in fashionable suits, held important positions as governors of the Guild. The Guild assistant, holding a box containing surgical instruments, is standing in the background (left corner).

This painting did not record a real anatomical demonstration, as held in the Guild's anatomy theatre, but served as a group portrait. Every person in the painting had to pay a fee to the artist for the privilege of posing in this masterpiece. In the 18th century, the painting was on display on the wall of the boardroom of the Surgeons' Guild in the Waag (weigh house) at the Nieuwmarkt in Amsterdam, among other group portraits that had been painted for the Guild in the 17th and 18th centuries. These works of art were painted to commemorate the praelector anatomiae, governors and surgeons of the Guild. Today, this painting is on display in the Amsterdam Museum in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Read more about the stories behind this masterpiece in an essay online.