



# What Great Paintings Say: Old Masters in Detail (Examining Paintings)

*Rose-Marie Hagen, Rainer Hagen*

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Did the Greek gods play tennis? What is the ambassador from the land of Alchemy telling us? What secrets are being told on the shores of the Island of Venus? And what is the monk doing on the Ship of Fools? These and other questions are asked about famous works of art in this book from the successful "Examining Paintings"-series. Suddenly the pictures come alive and relate previously untold stories. In their own language they recall earlier fashions and opinions, trends and intrigues, and tell of love, sin and lifestyles from the past. Powerful men and their mistresses, painters and models all come together in this illustrated history of culture. They cease to be two-dimensional figures of art and become flesh and blood before our eyes. This is thanks to the forensic sixth sense with which the two authors expose the secrets of the paintings under scrutiny. They spotlight each individual section of the painting, analyse them, and then put them back together again like a huge jigsaw puzzle, revealing the history of art as a lively panorama of forgotten worlds. For once, works of art are not to be enjoyed simply as art for art's sake, but as a living testimony of bygone times.

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