



c. 1631–34

Oil on panel

23¼ x 32½ inches (59 x 82.5 cm)

WILLEM CLAESZ. HEDA

Dutch (active Haarlem),

1594–1680/82

LET'S LOOK

Describe the objects you see.

Describe the different colors and textures.

How did the artist make the objects look so real?

Which objects appear closest to you? Farthest away?

How did the artist show us that?

Where is light reflected?

Where are the shadows?

LET'S LOOK AGAIN

If this painting shows one scene in a story, what do you think happened before and after?

Why do you think the artist chose to show the meal half-eaten?

What could the message(s) be?

STILL LIFE WITH A HAM AND A ROEMER

This scene shows the remnants of an interrupted feast. Part of the large ham on the table has been eaten, and its bare bone hangs over the edge of the plate. A smaller plate with slices of ham sits on the table's edge. A lemon has also been carefully cut, with its top removed and its curly peel draping down. A knife, still in its holder, lies nearby, and an empty silver dish has tipped over. Several drinking glasses remain half full, and a small spoon sticks out of the brown mustard pot. At the right, shiny brown hazelnuts have been scattered on the table.

In this **still-life** painting, Dutch artist Willem Claesz. Heda (hay-DAH) carefully arranged the objects to capture our attention. Notice the variety of textures: the bumpy lemon rind, the smooth glass, and the gentle folds of the tablecloth. Heda excelled in painting reflections of light on shiny surfaces. Look closely and you'll even notice window panes reflected in the drinking glass, called a roemer, near the center.

Neutral gray and brown **hues** dominate the picture so that the bright yellow lemon, dark pink ham, and white highlights stand out.

People who lived in seventeenth-century Holland (also called the Netherlands) would have recognized this as a luxurious feast. They also would have known that mustard and lemons were expensive imported items made possible by recent global trade. Finally, contemporary viewers would have understood the special meaning of the bleached tablecloth, which was a famous product from Heda's hometown of Haarlem.

Philadelphia Museum of Art: John G. Johnson Collection, 1917, cat. 644