

Fortunately for our great artist Rembrandt, the true representation and constitution of the picture did not disappear (except for the size), although covered up and almost unrecognizable as the original work buried underneath the rubbish. When the canvas was finally cleaned of the debris, the unquestionable intention of the artist was revealed. The story tells us that the *Night Watch* was systematically subjected to the arrogant ways of the decorators and restorers who cut and named and renamed the masterpiece. And so, at the end of these convoluted events, as we all know so well now, the painting “fit” into the old tradition of symmetrical space which is perfectly balanced on both ends, with the main characters smack in the middle and carrying a name which they preferred. In addition, with the bottom of the canvas having been cut off, there is no entry into the picture, and the viewer is left with a sense of unease since the figures seem about to fall out of the picture plane. End of story!

It is perhaps not a coincidence that the word “treatment” is also used in psychology and in medical science, as in art. Is this common use of the word an accident? One “treats” wood by drying it out, wetting it or applying a sealer to it. Antique restorers also resort to the word “treatment” when they use chemicals to remove the layers of wax, dirt and paint to reveal the original state of a piece of furniture. In the nineteenth century, picture restorers applied at least two layers of tinted varnish to Rembrandt’s paintings in order to preserve them, which was also a “treatment.” In the act of finally restoring Rembrandt’s paintings, a solvent was selected which was potent enough to dissolve the varnish without injuring the paint beneath. Using cotton swabs, it was applied to the canvas a centimeter at a time. Now comes the parallel between psychology and art. Do we wit-