

## DLD College - World Art Day – My Favourite Work of Art

Sam – Year 13 Student



**‘Self Portrait at the Age of 63’–Oil on Canvas (1669) by Rembrandt Van Rijn (1606-1669)**

Rembrandt Van Rijn was one of the most famous of the Dutch Golden Age painters of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. His oil paintings and especially self-portraits demonstrate a mastery of the use of light and shadow to create movement in his paintings and draw the viewer into the scene. He would often use very dark browns or black colours in the background and contrast this with patches of impasto white paint on the highlights of the face and clothes. This really makes the figure in the piece jump out at you as if the people in Rembrandt’s work are emerging from the darkness. There is something poetic about this. Rembrandt was inspired by the Italian Renaissance artists such as Caravaggio and Titian, this can be seen in some of his self-portraits where he poses in the same positions seen in the paintings of Titian. This means his paintings emulated or perhaps built upon the realism and accuracy of forms that became popularised and perfected during the Renaissance era. I have been inspired by Rembrandt’s ability to convey mood and emotion through his use of colour, light and expressive, yet truthful, brushstrokes - as if the painting has real atmosphere and air in it. I think his use of darkness in the backgrounds of his paintings relates well to my theme ‘Isolated Incidents’; when I look at a painting by Rembrandt it gives me a sense that the scene in the picture is the only one that is occurring at that time, it is a moment in time, an incident. It shines a small light in on an otherwise dark, cold and lonely world. In terms of the content of the art, I have been inspired to paint self-portraits partly by Rembrandt’s extensive series of self-portraits, painted throughout his lifetime, that really encapsulates where he is in his life at the time he painted each portrait.