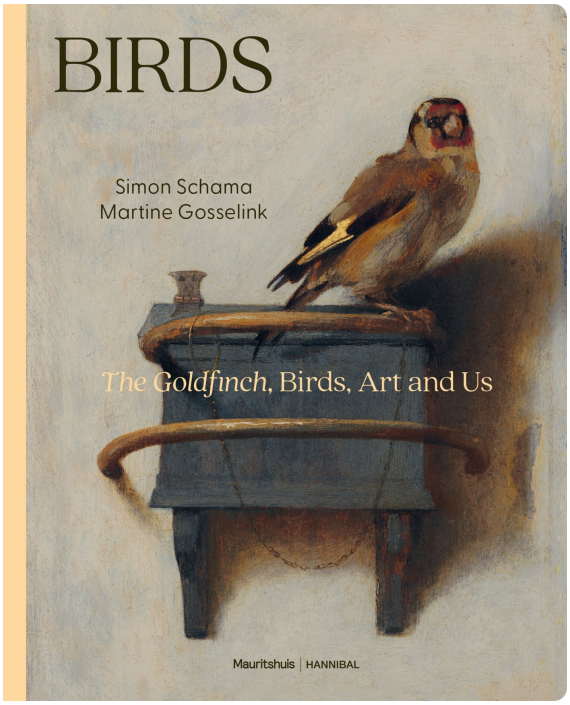
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Birds

The Goldfinch, Birds, Art, and Us

Simon Schama

ISBN	9789493416512
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- Curated by Historian Simon Schama: Featuring insightful writing and curation by one of today's most celebrated cultural historians, lending the book both intellectual depth and wide appeal
- A Unique Exploration of Birds in Art and Culture: Goes beyond a traditional exhibition catalogue to explore the symbolic, sensual, and emotional roles birds have played in human history, art, and imagination
- Lavishly Illustrated & Perfect for a Broad Audience: Visually stunning and thematically rich, the book will appeal to art lovers, nature enthusiasts, cultural historians, and general readers alike

Simon Schama explores our enduring fascination with birds in a visually stunning art book

'No other creatures have fixed themselves so obsessively and ubiquitously in our restless, earth-stuck imagination as birds… the fixation painted, imprinted, sculpted, filmed in our art.' – Simon Schama

From Icarus to Peter Pan, who hasn't dreamt of flying? Birds are the embodiment of our desires, fears and fantasies. In this publication internationally renowned (art) historian Simon Schama and Mauritshuis director Martine Gosselink explore the fascinating relationship between humans and birds through art, literature and cultural history.

Carel Fabritius's world-famous Goldfinch, Picasso's Dove, Brancusi's Bird in Space, an Egyptian falcon mummy, a feather dress by Iris van Herpen: this book is a visual and literary journey through centuries of bird imagery. The icing on the cake is a wonderful anthology of bird stories from, among other works, The Epic of Gilgameshand One Thousand and One Nights, as well as bird poems by such writers as Rabindranath Tagore, Ted Hughes, Bob Marley and Rūmī.

With contributions by Simon Schama, Martine Gosselink, Laura Cumming, Stefan Hertmans, Philip Hoare, Eva Meijer and Adrienne Quarles van Ufford.

This book is published on the occasion of the exhibition BIRDS – Curated by The Goldfinch & Simon Schamain Mauritshuis, The Hague from 12 February to 7 June 2026.

Sir Simon Schama is a University Professor of Art History and History. His courses have addressed the British Empire, English and French art and politics, the Gothic Revival in England, Ruskin, and Victorian culture. His award-winning 15-part television series, *A History of Britain*, was broadcast on the BBC and the History Channel from 2000 to 2002, and a new series, *The Power of Art*, on PBS and BBC in 2006 and 2007. He served as Vice President of PEN American Center from 1994 to 1996, and from 1995 to 1998 he was art critic of *The New Yorker* magazine, for which he continues to write. In 2019, he was awarded a knighthood for services to history at Buckingham Palace.

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