

1. *Jonathan* – **Lisette den Boon**

<https://paintingoftheyear.com/painting/painting-2023/1696087583-jonathan>

A bit of an "uncomfortable" portrait that is alienating in a good way. This little painting continued to haunt the jury throughout the session, so to speak, and did not let us go. On the one hand it is a very sweet portrait, but on the other hand it is also a bit alienating because it is so detached and thus all the attention is drawn to the little face itself. This cut-out form gives the painting something conceptual. Actually it has become a flat sculpture, with a lot of depth in the painting. The very technically painted eyes look intrusively and almost reproachfully at you and haunt you through space. The painting transitions from a sweet but very penetrating little portrait to a powerful spatial sculpture. It makes you think on the one hand about what exactly a portrait is, but on the other hand also about the portrayed child itself. Who is that sweetheart? Is everything all right with him or her? How can I help him or her? A work of art that is as simple as it is penetrating, grabbing the viewer and not letting go. The deserved winner of the title Painting of the Year 2023.

2. *Kas in de nacht* – **Suzanne van AnDEL**

<https://paintingoftheyear.com/painting/painting-2023/1696081394-kas-in-de-nacht>

A very different and anomalous work within the top 10. The two striking fluorescent color sections immediately draw attention from a distance. They are very powerful and not only hold the whole composition together but also evoke a typical mysterious atmosphere that makes the painting so special. The choice of subject, a seemingly simple, abandoned greenhouse, is also special and daring.

Some parts are painted very tightly and graphically and these contrast nicely with the atmospheric and smoothly painted parts. The dark areas around have a vignette effect that sucks you into the painting and the accompanying story or film as a viewer.

3. *At peace and fully aware* – **Ellen Valk**

<https://paintingoftheyear.com/painting/painting-2023/1695370771-at-peace-and-fully-aware>

The title describes well the feeling this portrait conveys. This is mainly because the pose of the model is very well struck. The painting radiates a lot of tranquility. It almost makes you feel calm yourself. This is also because of the soft and warm colors. In addition, the painting is enormously loose and freely painted in which the unfinished aspect contributes to the power of the canvas. All the essentials are depicted and the artist stopped just at the right moment. Clearly someone has been at work here who knows how to paint. This can also be seen in the smooth but crisp touches. The skin is also particularly aptly rendered. Some parts of the canvas look like individual, abstract works of art up close.

4. *Veiled* – **Cecile Welten**

<https://paintingoftheyear.com/painting/painting-2023/1695229778-veiled>

A familiar name, the winner of Painting of the Year 2022. Again, an incredibly handsome and technically almost perfect watercolor. The vibrancy in the looks is very cleverly executed. The emotions are almost tangible.

Also, the fairly small painting has a very exciting and intricate composition that makes the viewer constantly ponder what exactly you are seeing. Are the arms intertwined? What are they doing?

Also, the composition is very powerful in form and color. The very detailed center piece with the figures is firmly sandwiched between the almost abstract dark background on the one hand and the white area in the foreground with few details that is painted very smoothly and fluidly.

5. *Anne 25 (Bodyscapes)* - **Jack Willems**

<https://paintingoftheyear.com/painting/painting-2023/1696000090-anne-25-bodyscapes>

This canvas shows us an exciting combination of realistic, figurative elements on the one hand and highly abstract color planes and graphic elements on the other. Despite these opposites, the painting remains nicely balanced without slipping to either side, which can be called an achievement in itself. The color areas in the background form their own composition in both the foreground and background. By stopping adding elements in time, the tension in the composition has been maintained.

It is also a very sexy and erotic canvas, not only because of the bodies but also in the lines. The only flaw - if you can find this at all - is the presence of the realistically elaborated "thong." For one viewer, this distracts too much attention from the overall composition and makes the whole too anecdotal. For another, this contrast is precisely another strong element.

6. *Duality embraced* – **Francien Krieg**

<https://paintingoftheyear.com/painting/painting-2023/1686822729-duality-embraced>

A particularly sensitive and atmospheric double portrait. The lighting effect in this painting is particularly strong and striking. The alternation between warm and cold colors is very special and touching. The background also plays an important role in the canvas: it is painted very minimalist yet interacts with the portrait by pushing the two figures forward, as it were. From a distance the portrait appears to be very realistic and finely painted, but in close up the figures appear to be much coarser and almost impressionistically set up. From afar the colors are very atmospheric and seem to flow into each other while up close they are almost detached "over the top" patches of color. An intriguingly clever portrait that depicts the duality of man on several levels.

7. *The sleepy watchman* – **Rinie Hoogendoorn**

<https://paintingoftheyear.com/painting/painting-2023/1690538173-the-sleepy-watchman>

A bold and daring painting. Very loose and swinging, yet also very rakishly painted, revealing the painter's technical skills. He puts on the paint with a wild touch and very limited color palette where there are only a few racy, bright color accents in this fairly small canvas. The oval mirror shape, a classic touch, may be a bit distracting in this regard. The pose of the model is very interesting, there is tremendous tension and beautiful dynamics in the depiction. All in all, it is a work of power with "balls." Perhaps a better canvas and frame would have given the work even more power.

8. *Opera* – **Michelle Faaij**

<https://paintingoftheyear.com/painting/painting-2023/1694607866-opera>

A very handsome and large double portrait. The paint skin of this canvas is beautiful. The shadows and fabric expression clearly show the painter's technical ability. From a distance, the painting only gets better and more vivid.

The tone-on-tone color scheme gives the painting a classic look. But that color also contributes to the painting's somewhat alienating and distant atmosphere. The persons portrayed do not let the viewer in, as it were. The relationship between the two persons also has something mysterious.

9. *uit de opgeheven praktijk van mijn tandarts* – **Kees van Burg**

<https://paintingoftheyear.com/painting/painting-2023/1695992583-uit-de-opgeheven-praktijk-van-mijn-tandarts>

A particularly subtle and atmospheric small painting with an almost abstract composition that stands out in part because of its unusual choice of subjects. We see an exciting play of everyday objects that are very cleverly rendered, with minimal means and use of very little color and some striking light touches against an equally minimalist yet very weathered painted background.

Perhaps the painting would have been more exciting if the objects were depicted a little less "literally" (e.g. in scale ratio), the judges mused.

10. *Desolaat* – **Louis van der Linden**

<https://paintingoftheyear.com/painting/painting-2023/1695568219-desolaat>

At first sight, a sober painting with a very strict perspective and only a few accents of color. In this work there is a very special tension between the large and almost abstract planes in the foreground on the one hand that give a lot of tranquility to the work and the very realistic and detailed parts in the distance or background of the painting on the other hand. This contrast gives the work an intriguing dynamic that sucks the viewer into the scene. It also contributes to the somewhat mysterious atmosphere the painting exudes. Where has everyone gone? What happened? Even the shadows seem to have disappeared. All in all, a very moody and technically cleverly constructed and painted work.