

WHAT TO WATCH Today

OYSTER BAY TOWN

NO LANDMARK VOTE.

The Oyster Bay Town Board meets today at 10 a.m. at Town Hall (54 Audrey Ave.) to consider a variety of resolutions. Landmark status for the 222-year-old Maine Maid Inn in Jericho is not on the agenda. Check Bill Bleyer's **Twitter updates** [@BillBleyer](#).

HEMPSTEAD TOWN

WATER HEARING. The state Public Service Commission will hold two hearings today on Long Island American Water's new bid for a 7.6 percent rate hike. The hearings will be at 3 and 7 p.m. in the Nathan L.H. Bennett Pavilion, adjacent to Hempstead Town Hall (1 Washington St., Hempstead). Check Aisha Al-Muslim's **Twitter updates** [@AishaAlMuslim](#).

BROOKHAVEN TOWN

TOWN BOARD. The Brookhaven Town Board will meet today at 5 p.m. at Town Hall (1 Independence Hill, Farmingville). Check Patrick Whittle's **Twitter updates** [@pxwhittle](#).

NOW ONLINE
Catch up with these stories today at [newsday.com/towns](#)

TOPtweet

 Listen, I like football, but I infuriate my friends, because I have no team loyalty. I root for NY first, Jets or Giants. I love them both. **@Lin_Manuel**

UPTON

They have art down to a science

Brookhaven Lab helps unmask Rembrandt as creator of mystery painting

BY SOPHIA CHANG
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After 400 years, the artist behind a mysterious Dutch portrait has been revealed — in part because of the advanced, high-tech work of Brookhaven National Laboratory.

Through X-ray work done at the Upton facility, experts determined that a small oil painting called "Old Man With a Beard" was painted by none other than Rembrandt, the Dutch master.

After analyzing the technical stylistic similarities of the artwork to Rembrandt's paintings dating from about 1630, officials presented the findings Dec. 2 at the Rembrandt House Museum in Amsterdam, where the painting is on loan.

Physicist D. Peter Siddons, who heads the detector development group at Brookhaven National Laboratory, said the lab did its part in 2009, after the unnamed owner of the painting contacted officials there about using its high-powered X-ray detector, named Maia.

The lab had scanned paintings before, including debunking a supposed Edward Hopper piece in 2008, and this one was originally thought to have been the work of one of Rembrandt's students.

"If you tried to do an image of this painting with the previous detector, it would have taken months," said Siddons, who examined the painting. "This took eight hours."

The lab worked with Dutch art historian Ernst van de Wetering, University of Delft materials scientist Joris Dik, art restorer Martin Bijl, and University of Antwerp chemist Koen



Rembrandt's 1630 painting "Old Man with Beard" is in Amsterdam.

Janssens to verify the painting. Initial X-rays were conducted at the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility in France.

Maia wasn't built to analyze artwork, Siddons said, "but for scientific samples, such as rocks and catalysts — complicated structures."

This time, the X-rays found hidden paint layers, essential to determining the work's authenticity.

"We scanned it overnight, and there it was," Siddons said.

"We were jumping up and down."

They had found — under the painting of an austere, bearded man — traces of a previous painting.

Maia showed contour lines of a "beardless, seemingly younger male figure wearing a collar and beret, characteristic of Rembrandt's early self-portraits," Brookhaven officials said in a news release. "It appears that Rembrandt started a self-portrait, left the painting

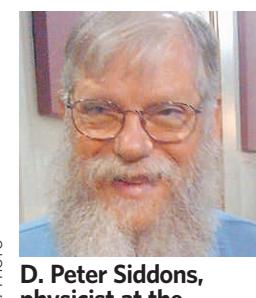
HOW THE LAB HELPED

1 To scan the painting, the Maia detector focused a tiny but powerful X-ray beam onto a sample of the painting. Each element in the sample has a unique makeup that scientists can examine and identify.

2 As the sample was scanned, the elemental components were mapped.

3 Maia, made up of 384 individual detectors and advanced analysis software, imaged the entire Rembrandt painting in about eight hours, a job that would take about 30 days with older technology.

SOURCE: BROOKHAVEN NATIONAL LABORATORY



D. Peter Siddons, physicist at the Brookhaven lab

unfinished, and later painted over the earlier work."

The value of the 6-by-8-inch painting was not clear last week, but some Rembrandts have sold for tens of millions of dollars.

Siddons said he was intrigued by the challenges of authenticating artwork, but he doesn't plan to change careers.

"If people bring us samples, we'll try to run them," he said, adding, "That's not my prime job. My job is science."