

# The Frick Collection: Detail Report

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## Woman Writing a Letter with Her Maid

Johannes Vermeer (Dutch, 1632–1675)

**Date** ca. 1670

**Medium** Oil on canvas

**Dimensions** 28 × 23 13/16 in. (71.1 × 60.5 cm)

**Credit Line** National Gallery of Ireland, Presented, Sir Alfred and Lady Beit, 1987 (Beit Collection)

**Exhibitions** Vermeer's Love Letters

**Accession Number** 2025.15.74

Currently On View

First Floor, Ronald S. Lauder Exhibition Galleries

**Commentary** A green curtain is pulled aside to show two women absorbed in their respective activities, one writing and the other, a servant, looking dreamily out the window. The status of the seated woman as the lady of the household is conveyed by her attire, which includes large pearl earrings. Similar jewelry appears in all three paintings. (They may be imitation gems since pearls this size would have been astronomically costly). On the ground lie a red seal, a stick of sealing wax, and paper, perhaps a letter-writing manual. The painting hanging on the wall depicts the Finding of Moses—a biblical episode that involves a princess, her servant, and an abandoned baby raised in secret. As with many of Vermeer's scenes, the imagery inspires many interpretations.