



Institute of World Culture

Spinoza: The Radical in the Tulip Patch

The Blossoming of the Dutch Golden Age



**Saturday,
June 27, 2026,
2– 4 pm
Presenter:
John Powers**

*In person and livestream**
*Concord Hall, 1407 Chapala St.,
Santa Barbara, CA*

This talk explores the Dutch Golden Age as a singular,

concurrent blossoming: where the "heroic ordinary" of Dutch Realist art and the radical philosophy of Benedict Spinoza emerged as two sides of the same coin. We will delve into how Spinoza, who made his living as a lens-grinder while also quietly polishing away the fog of the Middle Ages, moved beyond a distant, judgmental deity to find a "God-infused" nature—a radical Unity where the Infinite is found in the very grain of a wooden tabletop or the glow of a painted sky. By merging the clarity of the artist's vision with the precision of the philosopher's lens, we'll discover how a culture of commercial greed inadvertently provided the conditions for a vision of human freedom that still perplexes and inspires us today.



John Powers graduated from UC Santa Barbara with a degree in Philosophy, and philosophy has remained a subject of life-long learning for him. He is a founding member of the IWC.

Livestream: <https://www.youtube.com/@iwcinsantabarbara/streams>

For more information: <http://www.worldculture.org>