

## **PROGRAM HNA Conference 2022**

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## KEY NOTE LECTURES

**Geert Janssen**, University of Amsterdam

### ***The Image of the Refugee***

Images of refugees have become disturbingly familiar in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For all their immediacy and topicality, representations of flight and displacement have a history too, which both clarifies and complicates common perceptions of refugees today. This lecture examines when, why, and how images of refugees first emerged in visual media (e.g. drawing, painting, print) and what their shifting iconography can tell us about their creators, audiences and stake holders. The early modern Low Countries provide some promising starting points in this regard. Revisiting golden age Antwerp and Amsterdam also reveals how the emergence of refugee imagery was linked to global expansion schemes and the rise of humanitarian cultures in Europe.

**Jan Blanc**, University of Geneva

### ***Dutch Seventeenth Century or Dutch Golden Age? Words, concepts and ideology***

Historians of seventeenth-century Dutch art have long been accustomed to studying not only works of art and artists, but also archives and textual sources. This essential work enables them to avoid developing anachronistic points of view by placing the ideological frameworks of their time in the past. For them, it is a question of reconstructing the categories, thanks to which and through which works of art were considered, conceived, produced and received during the seventeenth century. This reconstruction is obviously not entirely possible, because the historian, with his or her necessarily limited knowledge and often different methods, always stands between the past and the present. However, when it comes to developing a historical discourse on the past – other discourses are naturally possible and even legitimate – it is essential to strive towards this reconstruction, bearing in mind the words of the French historian Paul Veyne: “Les historiens racontent des événements vrais qui ont l’homme pour acteur; l’histoire est un roman vrai” (“Historians tell true events in which man is the actor; history is a true novel”).

Within these categories, the notion of “golden age” occupies, as we know and recent events have shown, a crucial place and, even today, a considerable performative power, whether taken in its positive senses (the apogee of a civilization) or negative senses (the favourable mask behind which less glorious realities are hidden). Our aim is not to re-discuss these questions for our time, but to contextualize them historically, by showing, in the wake of the research project *A Golden Age? Rethinking 17th-century Dutch painting (2017–2021)*, how and why the notion of the Golden Age is not a recent invention, but has slowly been shaped, since the sixteenth century, to become a model of explanation and action for the society of the United Provinces. The question remains, however, for art historians to account for the plurality and contradictions of this model, but also to ask whether it is appropriate to retain the use of this notion, that is more normative than descriptive.

**Claudia Swan**, Northwestern University

***The Dutch Colonial Imaginary***

This talk relates to an ongoing research project on the power of foreign goods and foreign relations within the Dutch Republic. It extends beyond the scope of my recent book on Dutch interest in the exotic—*Rarities of these Lands. Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Dutch Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021)—by considering power relations that are not explicitly operative within Dutch culture of the time. I refer to one of the most significant and horrifying historical facts and shapes of power imaginable: slavery. Slavery, as I will explore further in this lecture, was an animating force of the Dutch colonial imaginary. This talk is structured in four parts, in which I present depictions of Blackness; observations on exotic shells and labor; a brief history of Dutch interest in ebony; and, to conclude, I will present an example of an image—a map—that is as much the product of the Dutch colonial imaginary as it is a record of how conceptions of the imagination figured into the makings of race.

**Jaya Remond**, Ghent University

***Paper Gardens: Observing, Manipulating, and Representing Plants in Print c. 1530-1630***

During the early modern period, the (re)discovery of nature, locally and overseas, generated in Europe an intense production of images. Plants, home-grown and foreign, offered unprecedented promises for profit—as medical remedies, foodstuffs, or collectibles. The pictorial representations of plants promoted their commercial potential, served as epistemic vehicles, and/or stood as artistic objects in their own right. Focusing on printed pictures, my paper examines *florilegia* and illustrated herbals (from Fuchs to Dodoens to De Passe, and beyond), as new types of objects which flourished in Northern Europe. As I interrogate the status of the images displayed in these innovative artefacts, I investigate the ways in which different pictorial strategies were generated through them, how they intersected and informed each other, and what this meant for early modern protocols of observation.

## PAPER SESSIONS

REPRESENTATION, MEANING, USAGE

### “Here and Now”: Capturing the Moment in Netherlandish Art (1400–1700)

#### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Jan Blanc**, University of Geneva

**Marije Osnabrugge**, University of Geneva

We can identify an increased focus on the present time as one of the main innovations introduced by Dutch artists from the beginning of the fifteenth century onwards.<sup>1</sup> This focus took shape in several ways. In 1454, George Chastellain of Ghent, the official historiographer of the court of Burgundy, was the first to use in French the word *contemporain* to explain, at the beginning of his *Chronicle*, that Charles VII of France and Philip of Burgundy are “contemporains et en égalité d’âge, régnans glorieusement tous deux en ce royaume et dehors, à la dure confusion de leurs ennemis et à la grant joye et félicité de leurs subjets”. He thus created a word that put the actuality and the present world at the core of his historical writing. Twenty years earlier, in Bruges, Jan van Eyck famously signed the *Arnolfini Portrait*: “Johannes de Eyck fuit hic 1434.”<sup>2</sup> (ill. 1). Although written in the past tense and in Latin, the principal purpose of this sentence is to recall the “present” of the conception of his painting, as well as the “presence” of the painter in front of his models and his easel – evoked in addition by the coloured silhouettes visible in the convex mirror.



ill. 1 Jan van Eyck, *Arnolfini Portrait*, 1434, London, National Gallery

Van Eyck’s painting is one of the first explicit cases in which this Dutch artistic ambition makes *acte de présence* in artworks in the early modern period. It is a question, in the words of Dutch theoreticians, of studying the world *naer het leven*, i.e. in an illusionistic way, but also of becoming one with their subject matter.<sup>3</sup> This aspect of artistic practice gains great importance in all pictorial genres. We recognize it in the inclusion of contemporary costumes, as well as Gothic architecture and views of modern cities in Flemish fifteenth-century religious paintings, or in the development of portraits during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in which the three-quarter view and the gaze is directed towards the spectator, thereby attempting to blur the boundaries between the image and its viewers and to establish an increasingly developed narrative during the seventeenth century.<sup>4</sup> The interest in everyday life, portrayed in sixteenth- and seventeenth-



ill. 2 Jan Asselijn, *The Breach of the Saint Anthony's Dike near Amsterdam*, 1651, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

century Netherlandish genre paintings, can be seen as another result of the increased interest in and awareness of the present. Depictions of notable contemporary events, such as disasters (e.g. floods [ill. 2], miracles (stranded whales, comets in the sky), battles, diplomatic visits (joyous entries, visits by foreign princes) or festivities, constitute yet another manner in which the focus on the present is evident – besides forming valuable documents for historians.

1 This issue has so far been the subject of very few studies. However, it will be possible to refer to Lyle MASSEY, 'Reflections on Temporality in Netherlandish Art', *Art History*, XXXV (2012), pp. 1050-57, and, in a broader context, Simona COHEN, *Transformations of Time and Temporality in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (Leyden: Brill, 2014).

2 Karin GLUDOVATS, 'Der Name am Rahmen, der Maler im Bild. Künstlerselbstverständnis und Produktionskommentar in den Signaturen Jan van Eycks', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, LIV (2005), pp. 115-75; Benjamin BINSTOCK, 'Why was Jan van Eyck here? The subject, sitters, and significance of the Arnolfini Marriage Portrait', *Venezia Arti*, XXVI (2017), pp. 109-35.

3 Claudia SWAN, 'Ad vivum, naer het leven, from the life: Defining a mode of representation', *Word & Image*, XI (1995), pp. 353-75.

4 Ann JENSEN ADAMS, 'Temporality and the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Portrait', *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art*, V (2013), pp. 1-17. See also Susan DONAHUE KURETSKY and Walter S. GIBSON, *Time and Transformation in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Poughkeepsie: Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, 2005).

## **SPEAKERS**

**Sandra Braune**, GRASSI Museum for Applied Art

### ***Everyday Life Spiritualized – Early Genre Art as a Contribution to Inner Piety***

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From a modern point of view, the profane world and the religious world have been separated since the Late Middle Ages. The emerging realism, for which Early Netherlandish painting is exemplary, is regarded as a turning towards the world. City dwellers emancipated themselves, and the need for individuality grew. During this period, the first genre images were created in the Flemish-Rhenish region.

But until now, research has not recognized that the beginnings of genre art can be linked to a new understanding of piety that spiritualizes everyday life and strives for an inner reformation of the individual. The possibilities of imitatio Christi and the tasks associated with it are related to a critical self-examination, which should lead to the recognition of one's own sins and consequently to a more virtuous life. Lay catechesis of that time refers permanently to the present, as is evident in the sermon or in meditation tracts. Cusanus, for example, speaks of the preacher as baker and cook, and Geiler von Kaysersberg interprets an Alsatian recipe for preparing a hare allegorically. For that, Hans Baldung Grien creates a woodcut showing a genre scene with a cook flaying a hare. In addition to the revaluation of the vita activa, the memory is also stimulated, whereas events of salvation and Christian Doctrine are linked with everyday events. In this sense, genre images belong to the context of lay catechesis. They can contribute to inner piety as they stimulate the self-reflection of the contemporary observer through targeted pictorial strategies and the use of Christian topoi and symbols. In this way, they introduce the recipient into Christian doctrine and the events of salvation, too.

This new approach embeds early genre art in a Christian theological context and implies topics such as the relationship between *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*, the development of a spiritual view, or *ars memorativa*. A Goldsmith in his Shop by Petrus Christus, which is considered as the first genre painting, represents a suitable example. Involving Christian iconography and the pictorial strategies used by the artist, details can be reassessed, which opens up new paths of interpretation. Targeted activation strategies encourage the viewer to self-reflect and to take up the covenant with God. Furthermore, an interesting aspect, with regard to the present taken up in the painting arises from the Latin inscription "m petr[vs] xpi me · · fecit · anno 1449 · ", by which Petrus Christus – similar to Jan van Eyck in the Arnolfini Portrait before – refers to the present and, in addition, gives the picture its own voice. The reference to the time of the painting's creation is intensified by the fact that " fecit · anno 1449" appears brightest and thus most present within the script. All in all, the contribution invites us to break up existing patterns of thought and, by linking everyday life and religion, to call for a reassessment of early genre art.

**Arthur J. Di Furia**, Savannah College of Art and Design

### ***Moment as Microcosm in the Bruegel Dynasty's Season Cycles***

Approaches to portrayals of the seasons by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (extended by his son, Pieter the Younger) have emphasized several of their key temporal aspects: their indebtedness to earlier calendar imagery, their seminal status in the development of genre and landscape, and more recently per Stephanie Porras, their status as products of Bruegel's historical imagination for a timeless, rustic antiquity's collapse onto the present. Situating the artist within his antiquarian milieu, Porras re-presents Bruegel's oeuvre within a broadly scoped, epochal temporality, conflating past and present through the lens of antiquity. However, to date, we have no sustained consideration of the temporal implications in the minutiae these paintings present. Devoid of anachronisms, incongruities such as the presence of donor portraits within a biblical scene or biblical figures before fifteenth- or sixteenth-century architecture, Bruegel's season cycle images present apparent temporal unities. Even in the famous set of six owned by Nikolaes Jonghelinck, some of which visualize transitions from one time of year to the next, figures share a unified outlay of framed space and an ostensibly specific moment embedding the smaller actions in which they are engrossed, all of which are tethered to it. Hunters trudge wearily into the frame, returning from the hunt with a paltry bounty. Meanwhile, at the same time, skaters frolic on a distant frozen lake and birds soar overhead. Foregrounded harvesters rest, eat, or drink while others continue to reap and cows graze in the far-off distance. And yet, as we continue to explore these images, cataloging each seemingly momentary action as if it will soon pass, we note that each possesses its own time extending beyond the fleeting, calling out to the cyclical nature of the larger time suggested by the group of images. The hunters will repeat their quest in the coming days, years, and lifetimes; they will consume the game they catch only to find more each year; ice will melt with the passing of winter; children will become too big for their skates and pass them on to younger siblings or children of their own; threshed wheat will dry and more will grow in its place; harvesters absorbed by their tasks will grow old, yielding to subsequent generations who will perform the same task.

Many of these seemingly momentary acts comprise microcosms of eternal time. Pieter the Younger's four-panel cycle, assembled out of his father's compositions is notable for its especially focused presentation of fleeting moments embodying the eternal. Such devices suggest links between specific portrayals in the Bruegel dynasty's season cycles and sixteenth-century notions of time prevalent in Bruegel's circle. Contemporaneous personifications of time, the burgeoning interest in ruins, and contemporary exegeses of time among Netherlandish humanists – all ideas that were close at hand as the Bruegels conceived these image groups – suggest yet another way of receiving them: as compendia of contemporary notions of time. Bruegel's elite, erudite audiences meditated on the minutiae of each painting, humbled by their ephemeral place in an eternally renewed temporal cycle.

**Anne-Rieke van Schaik**, University of Amsterdam

### ***Mapping Every Now and Then – Aspects of Temporality of News Maps Produced During the Dutch Revolt***

Today, yesterday's newspapers end up in the wastepaper bin, news websites are refreshed several times a day and digital *real-time* maps closely follow the most recent events in the world. News is nearly useless at the moment it is produced and consumed. In the Dutch sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, news enjoyed a different status. Alongside the rise of newspapers and pamphlets, the genre of news cartography was thriving. Such 'story maps' – maps in which narrative and spatial data are combined with the purpose of communicating a story – shared recent events, in this period mostly on battles and sieges, taking place overseas or nearby, with a large (international) public. These documents were far from ephemeral, as they were often made as highly qualitative, luxury products, designed by illustrious engravers and cartographers, printed on large, assembled sheets (sometimes even hand-colored) – these were simply not prints one throws away after 'use'. They almost raised news to a form of art, a collector's item, to preserve and to hang on the wall. In some cases, the news maps were reused by publishers as part of atlases or as illustrations for books. In this sense, news maps became 'timeless'. On the other hand, however, the maps represent plenty of temporal properties, as they depict specific moments from an event, such as the beginning, the end, or other crucial fragments. They were also often produced under high pressure of time. Mapmakers either had to return from the site where the events happened or had to wait weeks or months before news finally reached them. Cartographers and publishers had to deal with this discrepancy, while they were at the same time competing with other producers of news that were keen to publish a more accurate, updated version of the story. In addition, the seemingly engagement of cartographers with the event or the suggestion of their actual presence 'on site', portraying the events 'naer het leven', seems to play an important role in this genre. In this paper, I will discuss the temporal qualities of news story maps and their ambiguous relationship with the 'now' and 'present' in various ways. I will argue, by showing various examples of military news maps on the Dutch Revolt, that news maps are both internally (by their contents) and externally (by their production and consumption) defined by temporality, the here and the now. What can we learn from these sources with regard to the notions of 'news', 'topicality' and the 'present' in the Early Modern period?

## Indeterminacy in Netherlandish Visual Arts and Culture (1400-1800)

### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**GEMCA – Group for Early Modern Cultural Analysis, UCLouvain**

**Ralph Dekoninck**

**Ingrid Falque**

**Caroline Heering**

The art of the Netherlands in the early modern period is full of works whose meaning is not revealed at first glance, or whose interpretations by art historians have revealed all the ambiguity. Just think of Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini Portrait*, Quinten Massys' *Money Changer and his Wife* or Johannes Vermeer's *Art of Painting* to name only a few famous examples which have been deciphered by scholars in turn from a moralizing, allegorical, spiritual or profane perspective. All the interpretations that have been forged on these works are but one reflection of the way ambiguity is cultivated in all registers of early modern Netherlandish visual culture. Double images, illusionism, visual games, framing devices, plays between different levels of reality, the indeterminacy of pictorial spaces, emblematic and rebus are other key components of this taste for ambivalence.

In this session, we would like to invite papers that will explore early modern Netherlandish visual arts and culture in the light of the concept of "indeterminacy", understood as "the character of something undefined, unestablished, not precisely outlined" (Dario Gamboni, *Potential Images. Ambiguity and Indeterminacy in Modern Art*, 2002, 13), and its variations of ambiguity (the character of what is open to several interpretations) and ambivalence (the character of what has two opposing components). These concepts can be applied to different, yet intimately related, registers:

- that of the images themselves and their internal functioning: i.e. their iconography, composition, formal language which can be read in different ways);
- that of the experience and use of images at the time of their reception: how do we define and understand the relationship between these images and their producers, patrons and beholders, depending notably on where and how they were gazed and used (private or public spaces, in an intimate or distant relation...)?;
- and finally that of the interpretative layers that have been superimposed up to the present day by art historians: it is sufficient to think of the many debates that the paintings mentioned above have provoked in the course of time.

Considering artworks through the prism of indeterminacy will enable us to unlock the potentialities of images without confining them to single interpretations or compartmentalize them in specific genres, that are side-effect of traditional iconographical approach. Instead, it will allow us to grasp the polysemy and richness of the images. On a more general level, this approach will also allow to reconsider the relationships between form and meaning, but also between genres or between the profane and the sacred, and therefore invite us to consider the process of indeterminacy as a participant in the power of artworks.

## **SESSION 1: “Pensive Images”**

### **SESSION CHAIR**

Ralph Dekoninck

### **RESPONDENT**

**Reindert Falkenburg**, NYU Abu Dhabi

### **SPEAKERS**

**Bret Rothstein**, Indiana University

### ***“You Can't Bluff Someone Who's Not Paying Attention”***

This paper begins with the so-called Washington, D.C., *Ill-Matched Couple* by Quinten Massys, which it discusses in relation to a number of other contemporaneous depictions of the subject. This painting is deceptively difficult, insofar as it lays out its moral a little too neatly. Think, for instance, of the stark – in truth, rather obvious – contrast between hungry, comely youth and withered, avaricious age. The visual disjunction of the couple is unmistakable. Interestingly, though, Massys seems to perturb that neatness with subtle wit, as in the ambiguous intertwining of the couples' foreground arms. Most distressing, perhaps, is that deck of cards, placed face-up and oriented for maximum legibility, perhaps even trustworthiness. Although it initially reads as a kind of full disclosure, this detail more than any other calls into question the very possibility of perceiving the painting accurately. For, in the early sixteenth century no less than today, playing cards were not simply emblematic of risk. They could be instrumental in creating it, particularly when deployed shrewdly and dexterously. Card sharps abounded at the time, with some of their techniques surviving in legal records, educational texts, and eventually popular writing. Placing those cards in the extreme foreground and arranging them as if for our use, Massys seems to be taunting us. After all, what could be simpler, more accessible than a stack of printed images governed by a strict set of categories (suits, numbers) and subjected to commonly-agreed local rules? The answer, it turns out, is that in the hands of a true virtuoso, pretty much anything. For in those hands, playing cards could be made to conform to a hidden order that seemed to defy comprehension. Counting cards, performing a handful of simple mathematical calculations, or even just top- or bottom-dealing could cause them to behave in ways seemingly almost supernatural. Under such circumstances, those simple, entirely legible pieces of stock could become what the late close-up magician Ricky Jay once called “weapons” that could, in the case of a painting such as the Washington Massys, destabilize the viewing subject and force him to reflect on what he thought he understood. (After all, if I can't trust that deck of cards, which someone else has clearly laid out for me, how can I possibly trust other, no less obvious aspects of the painting?). Drawing on contemporaneous accounts of trickery, I seek to reframe an important subset of early sixteenth-century moralizing imagery. While painting and prints of the time indisputably stood in a close, reciprocal relationship with rhetoric, something else appears to be at stake in a number of Netherlandish depictions of *Ill-Matched Lovers*. In their scruffy, slightly

disreputable air, I suggest, these images offer a kind of street-level account of depiction, not as eloquence, but rather as a form of con artistry dedicated to setting the devout and reflective soul in motion.

Linda Pincus, Rhode Island School of Design

### ***Willing indeterminacy: Representation as Meaning in Carel Fabritius's The Sentry***

Indeterminacy in representation presupposes a sufficiency of meaning, and while some scholars seek the closure of unitary interpretation when facing it, others adopt the tack of open-ended ambiguity, puzzles, and puns taken by Dutch artists themselves. Most of the latter admit of meaning or subject, obscure or ambiguous though it may be. How, then, should we understand images considered to be devoid of meaning, accused of falling outside any system of interpretation? Such is the case in Carel Fabritius's *The Sentry*, 1654, whose charge of meaninglessness casts it outside the realm of signification, with a result that little attempt has been made to analyze critically this frankly baffling painting. *The Sentry* so successfully resists interpretation because its indeterminacy is itself overdetermined. Fabritius deliberately uses the tools of realism to unreal ends which means that the painting's strangeness reveals itself only slowly. The seated figure of the sentry, the protagonist and the most finely rendered passage of the painting, sprawls on his bench, absorbed in his activity—sleeping, perhaps, or loading his musket, a previously noted ambiguity. Other potentially interpretable moments include the truncated figure of St Antony Abbot on the stone relief of the archway, its decapitation cutting its iconographic force. The bottom half of a bisected gentleman striding along the dike wall, revealed upon the painting's 2005 conservation, can be understood to stride either to the left or to the right. And the broadsheets on the column, though tantalizing, are too indistinct to signify specifically. Lastly, the sentry's dog sits at attention in contrast to its derelict master but to what end we can't know. The preoccupied sentry, ostensibly a *clavis interpretandi*, refuses a reciprocal exchange with the viewer, foreclosing connection. These observations exhaust the usual sources of interpretation. Then there's the painting's form. Famed for his mastery of perspective, Fabritius upends its conventions, confusing rather than clarifying spatial relations. Elements are depicted only partially; relations between them dissolve into shadow or smears of color; perpendicular and parallel relations are uncertain; the composition seemingly invites circulation but trades layered surfaces for perspectival depth obscuring views into or through space. Against logic, the painter arrays a pair monumental, historically resonant elements—the city gate and the column—with the nonfunctional column obstructing passage through an open gate constructed for the purpose of movement. Though it stimulates the eye, the indeterminate nature of *The Sentry* permits neither the narrative closure nor spatial logic to satisfy a viewer's anticipated curiosity. Stripped of these structures, *The Sentry* poses questions about the tools of its own representation. The viewer can't successfully ask what the picture means because it concerns its own making, the meaning forged in the viewer's own self-reflective engagement, the kind of meta-pictorial experience that is the work of representation itself. Fabritius's sly joke is that we need to be far more attentive than is his sentry in order to gain the paintings many rewards.

***Stilled Lives. Portraying the Genre in Cornelis Bisschop's Interior with Jacket on a Chair of c. 1660***

The painting *Interior with Jacket on a Chair* of c. 1660 (SMPK Berlin) by Cornelis Bisschop, one of the 'minor masters' of the Golden Age, has been hitherto analyzed mostly in respect of the representative components of the Netherlandish genre painting. The research focus was set either on the historically verifiable elements of the domestic interior scene, or, the supposed use of camera obscura for drawing the exact perspective, or, the artistic reflection of the contemporary culture of things—textiles, furniture, and paintings—as visual carriers of civic prosperity in the Republic. Furthermore, Hanneke Grootenboer recently proposed a new term “pensive image,” which goes beyond such symbolical ascriptions and assumes painting as a form of visual thinking, related more to philosophical reflexion beyond the realm of interpretation, than to a secondary representation of an object or a scene (cf. the lecture at FU Berlin in 2019, book forthcoming in Dec. 2020). The paper initiates a critical dialogue with this preliminarily formulated thesis and points on the basis of Bisschop's canvas to the very limitations of the iconological and socio-historical interpretation of Netherlandish interior scenes. The painting will be analyzed in terms of images' sovereign self-reference regarding the blurred boundaries of dialectically intertwined artistic genres. In comparison to such remarkably suspended, anachronistic vestigial animation of past presence in the Netherlandish painting of the 17th c., like that by Samuel van Hoogstraten in his famous *View of an Interior / The Slippers* of 1655-62, Bisschop's canvas reveals its very distinction as an artificial, inherently pictorial discourse on the staging of stillness, materiality, and space in art. Although equipped with material vestiges of domestic life, this painting shows a section of a household deprived of any animated presence and does allude to the invisible, neither in terms of timely delay, nor advanced spatial extension. It initiates, instead, an immanent painterly dialogue between the objects depicted put in the role of generic terms of particular artistic genres, including the antechamber, the cast-off garment, the still-life painting, and the seascape. The *Interior with Jacket*, as visibly representative as it is, thus reveals itself at the very second glance as a thoughtful frontal construction of pictorial notions beyond both the quest for mimetic veracity and the mere painterly illusion. In his canvas, Bisschop, a portrait painter who was well acquainted with the ambiguous and multi-layered features of painting as staged presentation (cf. his *Self-Portrait*, or, the trompe l'oeil of his *Boy Asleep In a Chair*), thus delivers a comprehensive commentary on what contemporary art is made of. The main question goes consequently beyond the established categories of a genre and reads as follows: Can an interior be portrayed as a still-life? In this way, the *Interior with Jacket*, one-of-a-kind, contributes today to the topical issue of possible theoretical re-definitions of 'still-life' as a genre, brought to perfection by the Netherlandish artists. Its criteria would transcend the hitherto art-historical taxonomization of objects represented and rather more intensely relate to the then contemporary practical modes of showing mastery through sophisticated ostentation of painterly self-awareness.

## SESSION 2

### “Ambiguous Images”

#### SESSION CHAIR

Ingrid Falque

#### RESPONDENT

Michel Weemans, ENSA Bourges

#### SPEAKERS

Alice Blow, University of Cambridge

### ***Androgyny and Ambiguous Portraiture in the Renaissance: A Triple Profile Portrait, c. 1570***

This paper will introduce a new reading of an understudied *Triple Profile Portrait* in Milwaukee Art Museum, attributed to the Netherlandish artist, Lucas de Heere, which places the sitters' gender ambiguity at its the centre. During the early modern period there was a growth in concern with ambiguity from artists, writers, and philosophers. Art historians like James Elkins, Mitchell Merback, and Peter Parshall have explored ambiguity, from visual indistinctness to double meanings, in the work of artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Hieronymus Bosch and Albrecht Dürer. This paper extends these conclusions, to demonstrate how gender ambiguity formed another channel for this fascination with ambiguity. Gender ambiguity typically has been resolved by art historians during interpretation, speaking to the field's long-standing hostility to ambiguity.

Epitomising this view, one of the most influential and widely read art historians of the twentieth century, Ernst Gombrich, defined the art historian's task in *Art and Illusion* as 'the forging of master keys' with which to unlock art's mysteries. This metaphor evokes the long-standing conceit of the art work as a 'locked door', behind which lies a single meaning, providing the viewer can find the interpretative 'key'. In portraiture, the interpretative primacy of the historical sitter has tended to act as this 'key', and to necessitate their gender categorisation along a strict binary. More recently, gender ambiguity in portraits has been approached as evidence of a sitter's gender or sexual identity. Early modern poetry and literature from this portrait's likely French context, however, suggests that androgyny was often admired as a visually ambiguous spectacle that enjoyably confounded the viewer's expectations. Presenting a visual parallel to these literary products, the *Triple Profile Portrait* will therefore be explored as a case study of how to approach ambiguity in portraiture. Rather than seeking to resolve its ambiguity, this paper will explore how its pictorial techniques are designed to arouse the viewer's curiosity, yet evade definite conclusion about who the sitters are, and even their gender. In this way, the *Triple Profile Portrait* will be treated, to borrow James Elkins' phrase, as an 'ambiguous object', containing more than one meaning, but presenting no logical way to choose between them. This ambiguity had two-fold appeal, displaying the artist's skill in capturing the indeterminate, while allowing connoisseurs to showcase their knowledge through its

interpretation. Building on the work of scholars such as James Grantham Turner, who have shown that gender ambiguous subjects were often linked to an appreciation of ambiguity and difficulty in art, this paper will therefore highlight the artistic functions of gender ambiguity, approaching them not only as expressions of personal gender identity, but as fictions that also appealed to artistic concerns and drew upon its traditions. By reframing the discussion of gender ambiguous images around ambiguity, this paper seeks to understand these works in their historical and artistic context, and to redress the flattening of ambiguity produced by an iconographic approach to these images.

**Lieke Smith**, Leiden University

### ***Playing with Meaning: Fluid Encounters in Games of Make-Believe***

The notion of 'play' as an important part of culture, forwarded by Huizinga in his groundbreaking *Homo ludens*, has recently regained popularity in the study of medieval culture. Mary Carruthers speaks of the "ludic play space" of medieval art, not separate from but integrated with ordinary life, allowing for knowledge to be gained through sensory engagement with objects. Decker has explored Geertgen tot Sint Jans' *Holy Kinship* as inviting meditative play. This notion of perceiving and engaging with medieval art as an act of play implies that fixed meanings were not intended; the act of free association was a goal in and of itself. In this paper I will further the understanding of playful interactions with art and indeterminacy of meaning by taking into account the intertwined traditions of bridal mysticism and spiritual role-play.

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In medieval exegesis, the *Song of Songs* was regarded as a kind of puzzle. Augustine declared the Song's obscure comparisons were like a meditation game. This complex puzzle had the effect of bringing the soul delight. As Bernard of Clairvaux expressed in his Sermons on the *Song of Songs*: What is hidden is most desirable. One frequent manner of 'disguising' in the *Song of Songs* involves various roles that the bridegroom takes on and that are, in the commentary tradition, ascribed to Christ. As Bernard of Clairvaux enumerates: You must already have noticed how often he changes his countenance in the course of this love-song, how he delights in transforming himself from one charming guise to another in the beloved's presence: at one moment like a bashful bridegroom ... at another coming along like a physician ... Sometimes, too, he joins up as a traveller with the bride and the maidens who accompany her on the road ... At another time he comes to meet them as a wealthy father of a family ... or again like a magnificent and powerful king. This 'spiritual role-play', in which the devotee is encouraged to relate to Christ in various roles, influenced the perception of artworks. Images and objects used in playful interactions gained meaning by becoming conversation partners and props in games of make-believe. Christ inhabited all roles at once, and in devotional texts they often overlap and run into each other. This fluidity was, I argue, also projected onto images of Christ in his various guises. These interactions, often taking place in the imagination, have left little traces. In order to explore the fluid meanings created through role-play, I focus on images from the late medieval Low Countries that are accompanied by or can be connected to texts. Examples are a diptych in Museum Catharijneconvent showing a portrait of Christ accompanied by the Lentulus Letter

(a description of Jesus' countenance), which can be linked to his role of beloved, and images of Christ as healer that are connected to devotional texts on spiritual health.

**Alexander Marr**, University of Cambridge

### ***Landscape, Anthropomorphism and the Erotics of Ambiguity in Niklaus Manuel and Urs Graf***

This paper will explore the ways in which the Swiss mercenary artists Niklaus Manuel (c. 1484-1530) and Urs Graf (c. 1485-1528) treated ambiguity in their graphic works. It will be focused on a series of drawings of Alpine landscape capricci, which render form and subject purposely ambiguous through a variety of compositional means, especially the incorporation of anthropomorphic motifs. Informed especially by the latent anthropomorphism of Albrecht Dürer's early engravings, the style and subjects of which both artists consciously emulated, the drawings are bound up with Manuel and Graf's fascination with violence and the eroticized female figure. In these images, it will be argued, ambiguity serves as a means to grapple artistically with a misogynistic fear of female power, expressed as brutality—both actual and aesthetic—towards the female body.

## **The Performativity of Liturgical Art**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Ralph Dekoninck**, UCLouvain,  
**Barbara Baert**, KU Leuven  
**Marie-Christine Claes**, KIK-IRPA, Brussels

This session seeks to investigate the performativity of the late medieval and early modern liturgical heritage from the Southern Netherlands. As liturgical objects are endowed with a ritually instituted efficacy, they lead indeed to a reflection on performativity. The *performative turn* in the Humanities is in line with the renewed interest in rituals and their relationships to objects, artistic or not. This approach has opened new avenues of research in art history. In this respect, we may say that art is performative insofar as it engages the spectator in a performance; it could even be argued that art is effective only when it is performed. The art object can be therefore considered as an *agent*, that is to say, as an object endowed with an ability to act or to trigger reactions and not simply as a thing to be interpreted as a passive vector of forms and ideas.

This session aims to study these objects within the wide network of relationships that shape their meaning and their efficacy: the relationship with their spatial environment, especially with the rituals performed in this environment, the relationship with their users, but also the relationship between the different objects themselves. Liturgical objects – such as chasubles, copes, altar frontals, chalices, monstrances, altar bells... – were displayed and used in a certain order and were part of a network not only of other artefacts, but also of

images, gestures, words, sounds and smells. Issues related to the contextualization of the liturgical objects in their spatial, material and religious environment will be explored so as to provide a renewed analysis of their ritual and artistic significance.

## **SESSION 1**

### **SPEAKERS**

**Anja Grebe**, Danube University Krems

#### ***Singing the Codex. Performing Liturgical Books in Late Medieval and Early Modern Times***

In our modern Western culture written 'text' usually implies (silent) 'reading'. If we wish a text to be sung, we usually add a second notation system, e.g. modern musical symbols. In many past and present cultures, however, written texts are meant to be sung even without this being indicated by any specific notation system. In medieval and early modern times, for instance, the usual way of reception of a text in verse was singing and hearing. Besides secular texts such as epics, ballads, odes, many sacred texts and books, like the Psalms in Christian and Jewish cultures, the Qur'an in Islamic cultures are 'read' - recited - by singing. In my paper, I would like to explore the practices of singing written texts with a special focus on illuminated books used in liturgy from the Southern Netherlands. Though late medieval and early modern mass books contain musical notation in some parts, other parts remain without any specific notation system. Up until now, art history has almost completely neglected the performative dimension of illuminated books. Particular emphasis will be placed on the question of the visual organisation of the text including images/image cycles, ornaments, punctuation, colours, blanks, headlines, as well as the size of the letters, etc. As many texts have an oral origin: Does the visual organisation of the text contain any hints to its oral tradition? And does the visual organisation of the text bear any information on the way it was or is supposed to be performed? Or, asked the other way round: How did the liturgical performance influence the way the images and other elements of the book were 'seen' or experienced by those taking part in the ritual? And finally, in which way did the books and the way they (and/or their contents) were performed interact with other objects used in liturgy and what does it tell us about the performativity of late medieval and early modern liturgical art in general?

**Stefaan Grieten**, KULeuven

#### ***Work for the People, Work for the Ruler. The Investments of Erard de La Marck for St Lambert's Cathedral in Liège***

During his long reign as Prince-Bishop of Liège, Erard de La Marck (1472-1538) realised a continuous policy of investments in liturgical objects for St Lambert's cathedral. They included paraments, tapestries and reliquaries. Although they presented a notable variety of primary functions and of current visibility, they were interconnected with a strategy that aimed to produce material incentives for both a community spirit among the Liège population, and for Erard's role as the undisputed leader of the Prince-Bishopric. The

common layer for both goals was the location of these investments. The cathedral meant more than the official church of the Prince-Bishop in his function of ecclesiastic leader. Through its long history, its precious relics of local saints, its function in major public events and the political importance of its chapter as one of the estates of the Prince-Bishopric, the cathedral embodied the quintessence of the Liège society. Each of Erard's investments enriched the decorum of this iconic building, and many of them related to important saints of the glorious past of the city, St Theodard of Maastricht and specially St Lambert, honoured with a monumental head reliquary that is preserved in the treasury of St Paul's cathedral. Following the completion of the reliquary in 1512, Erard installed the yearly procession of St Lambert, in remembrance of the translation of the remains of the saint to Liège. The festivity had an engaging power for the Liège society, that had suffered from the Liège Wars (1465-1468) and still was recovering from the subsequent civil war that had ended only in 1492. The procession presented important relics and material references of local and patron saints to the community, thus activating shared connections with the state of Liège and its sacred history. The festivity also symbolically regenerated the historic translation of the remains of both St Lambert and St Theodardus, presenting Erard as leading figure, marching in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessors.

The procession was renewed in 1526. The new enlarged circuit, probably meant to reflect the presumed route of the translation of St Lambert's remains, included references to the Corpus Christi Feast, a solemnity that had its origin in Liège, thus enhancing the engaging effect of the festivity. The funeral monument of Erard, constructed in 1528 in the choir of the cathedral, would become a focus point. This intervention meant a fundamental shift compared to the initial concept of the procession and Erard's role in this festive event. The Prince-Bishop disappeared from the stage as an active participant, but reappeared in his mausoleum, a central site in the festive event. The combination of the renewed translation ritual of 1526, the reliquary of St Lambert and other liturgical objects, together with Erard's mausoleum, created a chain of references and associations through visual sensations, space, text and music, that connected the devotion for the patron saint of the community with a splendid tribute to Erard de La Marck as Father of the Nation and pious protector of the relics of St Lambert.

**Ethan Matt Kavalier**, University of Toronto

### ***Tombs and Performance: Ambiguous Actors***

Tombs of Europe's elite grew ever larger over the long sixteenth century, playing both to the salvation of the deceased and to their elevation as political leaders. It may help to see Burgundian and Netherlandish tombs as a particular type of structure that invites performances before them, with the roles of actor and audience ambiguously assigned. It is through such performance that these works manifest their agency. We find both scripted rituals like the masses celebrated before the tombs and unscripted experiences prompted by the sculptures themselves. This second category of more free-wheeling enactments may be the most powerful and influential. Theories of performance developed by Victor Turner, Richard Schechner, Erving Goffman, Stijn Bussels, Caroline van Eck, and others help us comprehend the effect that such sculptures exerted on beholders. For this paper I will

discuss two sepulchers with over-life-size figures: the Tomb of Philippe Pot, grand chamberlain to Charles the Bold (c. 1495) and that of the Habsburg general Melchior von Redern (1605). Their references to funeral processions, courtly audiences, and the Resurrection established a grounding for the experience of these works, never entirely forgotten nor literally repeated. Notions of 'restored behavior' and 'consciousness of doubleness' help explain how previous lived and imagined encounters informed the viewing of these tombs and conveyed upon them the power to modify sacred and profane relationships.

## **SESSION 2**

### **SPEAKERS**

**Lynn F. Jacobs**, University of Arkansas

### ***Performing Interiority: The Chapel Space and the Antwerp Carved Altarpiece at Ringsaker***

Netherlandish carved altarpieces are well known for the way in which the compartments of their sculpted caisses are typically configured in the form of so-called chapel spaces, that is, as miniaturized chapels, with their back and side walls articulated with Gothic tracery and their ceilings covered with vaulting. As a result, the retables' sculpted scenes (typically narrative events of the Passion or Infancy) appear within interior spaces, regardless of whether the scenes historically occurred in outdoor spaces. Thus, for example, in the Dijon Passion Altarpiece, an Antwerp work of c. 1510-20, the Crucifixion appears in front of the skyline of Jerusalem, all contained within a chapel-like enclosure, so that Christ and the thieves hang on crosses set in front of Gothic lancet windows and surmounted by tracery baldachins and a vaulted ceiling.

This paper argues that the chapel spaces in carved altarpieces perform interiority on the interior of the altarpiece, and in this way elicit the interiority that they wish their viewers to perform. Interiority held deep significance within religious practices of the late middle ages, and is evident in calls for inwardness in prayer rubrics, in mystical writings discussing uniting with God in secret chambers, and in guides to pilgrimages that offered indulgences for travels that took place only in the mind. Interiority was also a key value of the *Devotio Moderna*, one of the most influential religious movements in the Lowlands, which emphasized identification with Christ through contemplative meditation on his life and Passion. One of the central texts of the movement, the *Imitation of Christ*, is organized under four rubrics, of which one is an "Admonition drawing [you] to internal things," which begins saying that the reader will receive Christ's consolations "if you have prepared a worthy dwelling for him from within."

The Ringsaker Altarpiece, a sixteenth-century Antwerp altarpiece exported to Norway, provides a case study in how the chapel space functions within a work designed to assure the donor's salvation. The entire caisse is articulated as chapel spaces, which derive sanctity through their articulation with gilded Gothic decoration of celestial refinement and delicacy; the miniaturization of the figures within them; their illogical inclusion of outdoor settings;

and their location on the often concealed interior of the altarpiece. This latter feature, which allows the chapel space to doubly mark the interior of the altarpiece *as* an interior, leverages the chapel space's Medialität by exploiting its position within a winged structure. The opened predella at Ringsaker, depicting the Last Judgment, is the only sculpted section where the chapel space is absent. Its absence indicates that the Last Judgment represents the endpoint of interiority. The souls, now naked in a barren landscape, must face judgment before finding admittance into either the portal of Heaven or the mouth of Hell—spaces that could not be contained within chapels. In Ringsaker's predella, the desire to enter Heaven's interior is unveiled as the motivation for the performance of interiority in the altarpiece's caisse and its goal of eliciting a similar performance from its viewers.

**Valentine Langlais**, University Paul Valéry, Montpellier III

### ***The Last Supper on the Altarpieces of the Holy Sacrament: a performative representation of the Catholic Mass***

During the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, we can observe the multiplication of depictions of the Last Supper, the founding episode of the Mass rite, on Catholic altarpieces in the Netherlands, especially in the Chapels of the Holy Sacrament. The altarpiece is one of the liturgical objects present on the Catholic altar and one of the essential supports of the Catholic faith in churches. Displayed on the altar, it is both the visual support of the Church of Rome's dogmas and a tool acting to make the divine presence on earth.

While the Church must reaffirm the dogma of transubstantiation, the doctrine of the Mass, and define precisely the liturgy used during the celebration of the Holy Sacrament, the episode of the Last Supper seems particularly adapted to these different objectives. Because of the fundamental link between the Mass and the Last Supper, and the theological implications of this episode for Catholics, the Last Supper seems particularly suitable for an altarpiece: it is here a question of presenting the founding episode of the rite taking place in front of the altar. This way, the depiction of the Last Supper on an altarpiece becomes performative.

The Netherlandish artists create a *mise en abyme* in the iconography of the Last Supper between, on the one hand, the historical Supper lived by Christ and Apostles and, the other hand, the rite of Mass lived by the priest and contemporary faithful, but also between Christ and the priest themselves. The Mass is then perceived as a repetition, or even a reenactment, of the Last Supper celebrated by Christ. To make obvious this analogy, the painters borrow a large number of elements from the Catholic rite: Christ's gesture, the *benediction latina*, the offering of the bread or the elevation of the host; the liturgical objects as the *vasa sacra*, especially the paten and the chalice, or less often, the monstrance; the lights, curtains or even canopies. By depicting the Last Supper with these liturgical codes of the Mass, in particular by the inclusion of liturgical objects, the artists establish a visual continuity between the Last Supper and the Mass : through the *mise en abyme*, the faithful have the impression that the Last Supper takes place in a space identical to the one in which they are, and that they themselves attend the celebration of the

Eucharist by Christ. That is why we can say that the representation of the Last Supper on altarpiece is performative.

This is particularly obvious on the altarpieces painted for the Chapels of the Holy Sacrament, where the iconography of the Last Supper is deeply marked by the liturgy of the Mass. Through some accurate examples of Catholic Netherlandish altarpieces from these Chapels – painted by Michiel Coxcie or Ambrosius Francken – we aim to show how the representation of the Last Supper is performative, since it engages the spectator in a performance, that is, the celebration of the first Mass by Christ in the model of the contemporary Mass, because of their position on the altar and the use of the liturgical objects in the decorum.

**Junko Ninagawa**, Kansai University

### ***Visual Instructions for Performing Rituals – Images of Sacraments***

Concerning the performance of rituals, the images of the seven sacraments shouldn't be missed, as they play a role as visual instructions for how to activate sacraments. As S. Gieben states, generally speaking, scholastic theology made use of the Aristotelian terms of matter and form for the explanation of sacraments. However, they weren't conceived in their strictly philosophical significance, but in the more general sense of indeterminate element, or matter, and determining element, or form. This dichotomy is interdependent, or reciprocal. The systematization of Thomas Aquinas, whose words determined the rank, or order, of sacraments, is not followed in the painting by Rogier van der Weyden, where the factor to determine the order seems to be the aging steps of human life or matter. The order of Rogier (or the commissioner) is not always followed as it is, of course.

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Next, I'll explain a series of engravings brought by Western missionaries to Japan in the 16th or 17th century. It's called the Seven Petitions of *Oratio Dominica* with Seven Sacraments and Seven Virtues, and it's a series of six engravings kept at the Ibaraki Municipal Museum of Cultural Assets. It's a rare example of a Christian heirloom from a time when Christianity was gradually being strictly banned in Japan. The series originally consisted of eight pages, and the original version seems to have been invented by a German engraver, Matthaus Greuter (1565/6 Strasburg-1638 Roma). Derivative prints are housed in several European libraries or museums, including the National Library of France (BnF), whose version, which was made in Lyon, seems to be the earliest. According to Hollstein, besides the Paris version, there are similar complete versions like Vienna's (which is actually preserved in the archive of Schlegel Monastery), Erlangen's, and a Roman one. The iconographies of the Roman one are quite different from those of the one in Paris, but they all share a similar cover page. The reason I'd like to discuss them in this session on Netherlandish art is that on the cartouche of the Japanese cover, which is terribly damaged, you can see the word 'Flan,' probably indicating Flanders. Indeed, missionaries from Iberian countries brought a lot of ritual books or goods made in the Netherlands.

Here the words *Oratio Dominica* determined the order of sacraments and virtues, which does not follow those of Aquinas or Van der Weyden. It's interesting to see that Eve, seen

on the page of the sixth petition with the Sacrament of Marriage, is depicted fully clothed while the European versions show her almost naked. The substance seems to be altered according to the missionary's purpose, probably in the Netherlands. Regarding the interdependency of the form and subject matter, I'll discuss the cartouche images at the bottom of the pages, which show scenes of people performing rituals, explaining how to pray to God, how to use the depicted devices, how to behave, how to occupy space, and so on.

## **Netherlandish Art and the Eschatological Imagination: Space, Time and Experience of the Other World(s)**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Christine Göttler**, Universität Bern

**Anna Pawlak**, Eberhard Karls Universität, Tübingen

In the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there were radical shifts in the ways in which the world beyond death was imagined, represented, and conceived in its spatial and temporal as well as its material and affective dimensions. The Protestant Reformation rejected Purgatory, the most recent addition to the eschatological landscape construed as an intermediary site that still allowed communication between the living and the dead. In response to Protestant criticism, Catholic reformers began to promote the purgative rather than punitive aspects of a stay in Purgatory, relocating it from a realm near Hell to one near Heaven. The increasingly global dissemination of Christian doctrines further broadened the imagery of eschatology, accommodating it to that of other belief systems. Finally, a growing curiosity in realms not accessible to human eyes—the outermost reaches of the heavens, and the innermost depths of the earth—gave rise to a whole new genre of spatial and cosmological reflections and representations. With their changing political and confessional loyalties along with their highly developed printing culture and artistic traditions, the Netherlands (under Burgundian, Spanish and Dutch rule) provides a particularly interesting case to study the shifting foci and norms of eschatological imageries and imaginaries. Combining image, language and object-centered perspectives, the session seeks to shed more light on the formation, reception, and transmission of extra-temporal and extra-spatial worlds. Its focus is on the sensual and affective components of these two worlds, whether future or parallel, and their multiple links with the actual world that created them. Conceptualizations and imaginations of the hereafter can be helpfully understood as 'chronotopes' in the sense used by Mikhail Bakhtin, in that they reconfigure spatial and temporal relations and experiences. How was the specific 'materiality' of the 'world beyond' explored in different visual and textual media in both the Spanish Netherlands and the Dutch Republic? Were there parallels or intersections in the imagination of other worlds beyond the space of the known, both 'real' and eschatological? We are particularly interested in contributions that engage with the roles of emotions, affects, and perceptions—sensations generally associated with human bodies—in a world beyond the visible and tangible and beyond time and space. How were the otherworldly loci described and imagined in exegetical, didactic, and devotional literature? In what ways did

these images and texts evoke the spatio-temporal dimensions and affective atmospheres and ambiances of these places never seen by human eyes? How did people conceive of the possibility of communication between this world and other-worldly spheres, or among the latter (e.g., between heaven and hell)? What elements of the visual language of eschatology successfully permeated confessional and religious boundaries, and which were adapted and transformed? Among other topics, papers may address configurations of otherworldly spaces in religious didactic and religious subversive genres or ones that engage with the use of eschatological imaginings in spaces of leisure and recreation such as theatres, gardens, and parks.

## SPEAKERS

**Minou Schraven**, VU University, Amsterdam | Amsterdam University College

### ***Ecstasy as the Gateway to the Celestial World. The Sermons and Blessed Beads of Juana de la Cruz (d. 1534) between Spain, Rome and the Spanish Netherlands***

For thirteen long years, the Spanish mystic Juana de la Cruz (1481-1534) had a weekly appointment with Christ. Surrounded by her fellow nuns in a Franciscan convent near Toledo, Juana would go in ecstatic rapture and visit the celestial realm. Occasionally, high-placed visitors would assist at these raptures, among them a young Charles V and Cardinal Francisco de Cisneros. While Juana lay motionless on the ground, a low-register voice, claiming to be that of Christ, would recount Juana's experiences and the teachings she received while in Heaven: about 72 of these Sermons have come to us. In these Sermons, Juana (in the voice of Christ) re-narrated key events of the Gospel, providing a range of details that go beyond the canonical texts. What's more, she mixed in extensive descriptions of the events taking place in Heaven while she was there. In these *figuras* (pageants), Christ emerges as strikingly human, playing cards, engaging in horse-races, or making music with angels and saints. At the same time, he is suffering throughout: the food and drink consumed during the festive banquets is taken from his wounds. He also visibly suffers each time a soul is liberated from Purgatory.

Strikingly, Juana would take large amounts of rosaries and beads on her journeys to Heaven to have them blessed. Once back on earth, they would smell "most deliciously", as they had been "in the most holy hands of Our Lord Jesus Christ." The fame of these *cuentas benditas* would spread wherever Spanish nuns took them, as far as New Spain, the Far East, and the Spanish Netherlands. With the support of King Philip III of Spain, Juana's canonization process started in Rome in 1619: she would eventually be declared *Venerable*. In this very period, Antonio Deza's biography *Vida y Milagros [...] de la Bienaventurada Virgen Sor Juana de la Cruz* (Lerida, 1610) was translated in several languages: Italian (Padua 1617), English (St Omer, 1625), German (Munich, 1619), Polish (Krakow, 1621) and Dutch (Brussels, 1627). Based on a close reading of the Sermons, this paper will explore how Juana envisioned the time and space of the celestial realm and the life and nature of its inhabitants, among them Christ, Mary, the angels and the Saints. We will also unpick the mechanisms enabling Juana and the devotional objects to travel between this and the other world, and the particular role of miracle-working Marian images in Juana's convent. Secondly, we will see how these

constructs have been mediated in Deza's biography and in the records of Juana's canonization process. In line with post-Tridentine sensibilities, Deza clearly refrained from elaborating too much on Juana's revelations about the scriptures, the daily life in the celestial realm, or the make-up of Purgatory. Instead, he took great care to set Juana's *cuentas* apart from devotional objects blessed by the Pope in Rome. What does this tell us about the ways that early modern Catholics imagined the celestial realm and the conferral of celestial powers and blessings onto devotional objects?

**Anna-Claire Stinebring**, Metropolitan Museum of Art | University of Pennsylvania

### ***Entangled Bodies at the End Times: The Rockox "Last Judgment"***

A dense thicket of bodies overwhelms the foreground of the central panel of the monumental Rockox *Last Judgment Triptych*. The c. 1537-39 altarpiece, commissioned by Adriaen Rockox and Catharina van Overhoff for their family chapel in the Antwerp Sint-Jacobskerk, is a *prestige collaboration* between two major Antwerp artists: Jan Sanders van Hemessen, who painted the nearly life-sized muscular foreground bodies; and (I contend) the young Pieter Aertsen, who was responsible for the more loosely painted small figures in the background and upper registers of the center panel. In comparison to its Netherlandish precursors, notably Bernard van Orley's 1525 *Last Judgment and Seven Acts of Mercy*, the Rockox *Last Judgment* stands out for its resistance to imposing orderly divisions between the damned and the elect. The full perilousness of the eschatological scene is magnified by Van Hemessen and Aertsen's double vision of a panoramic environment almost entirely composed of carnal, fallen bodies: bodies viewed at alarmingly close range and bodies comprising a remote yet extending field. This landscape of bodies is designed to appear infinite through its drastic modulation of scale. A collaboration between two artists best known for their development of genre imagery, the Rockox *Last Judgment* envisions an otherworldly space emphatically implicated with the material realities of the here-and-now. Almost none of the figures instantiate a Pauline vision of resurrected bodies that "rise in incorruption (I Corinthians 15:42)." Two of the only remaining standing foreground figures, at far-left, hold poses that broadcast bodily shame and that echo the expulsion of Adam and Eve from paradise. Their presence conflates the beginning and ending of historical time in the Christian tradition and emphasizes the first pair's legacy of mortality and Original Sin. Only a select number of Aertsen's most wispy figures climb heavenward. In rendering heaven, Aertsen manipulated color and scale to communicate the majesty yet remoteness of the ethereal realm. In contrast to the distant heaven, hell is placed on earth. Its billowing smoke merges with the dark clouds of the nocturnal landscape above the donor portraits on the triptych wings, stressing the high stakes of the family's devotion. The memorial function of the altarpiece in the Rockox chapel, which served as a family burial place, was already activated at its inception through the generic profile portrait of the daughter Anna, who died in 1535 at age 25. Anna alone enacts a visionary experience of the apocalyptic scene, serving as a link between it and the family's finite, historical plane of existence. She stares calmly ahead at the central panel's profoundly pessimistic view of the possibility of salvation. The Rockox *Last Judgment Triptych* brings into focus the urgency of doctrinal and devotional debates in Antwerp religious life at the outset of the Reformation, specifically as they played out in period conceptualizations of the end times and bodily resurrection.

Focusing on the case study of the triptych and its patronage, this paper examines early modern imaginings of supernatural space and time that do not free the body from its worldly entanglements.

**Walter S. Melion**, Emory University, Atlanta

***“Purga aciem mentis”*: Visual Purgation in the Eschatological Spiritual Exercises of Jan David, S.J.**

Designed and engraved by the Galle family of Antwerp, the extensive print series around which Jan David, S.J.’s innovative emblem books are organized all conclude with eschatological images having to do with the spiritual exercise of purgation—the freeing of one’s bodily and spiritual senses from sinful impulses, in anticipation of one’s imminent death and of final judgment. These emblems consistently turn on *paradoxa* that assist the votary visually and affectively to experience something beyond the realm of human experience, to see what cannot be seen, to partake in time of a state of salvation or damnation that is timeless. In the *Veridicus Christianus* (True Christian, 1601), the final emblems concern the nature of eternity and its relation to terrestrial affairs. In the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* (Opportunity Seized, Neglected, 1605), the final emblem depicts the book’s protagonists—five wise and five foolish boys—respectively translated to heaven and hell, from where they are seen eternally to dwell on the consequences of having snatched or shirked temporal opportunity. In the *Pancarpium Marianum* (Marian Garland, 1607), the final emblems focus on apocalyptic *tituli* of the Virgin, who exemplifies the dual power of embodied grace, as encapsulated in the epithet *rapiens*: Mary, exemplum and personification of grace, jointly exercises the power to ‘capture by force’ and to ‘captivate’. In the *Duodecim specula* (Twelve Mirrors, 1610), the final emblem conflates the prophet Daniel with the evangelist John, showing how both were divinely inspired to demonstrate how purging of the mind’s eye is the necessary step toward achieving the beatific vision in this life. These emblems, in various ways, allow the reader-viewer to reflect on the nature of the relation between present and future experience, between a prevenient and everlasting state of grace, and on the thoughts and emotions, texts and images that preview the eternal future of the embodied soul from the its present contingent circumstances. In particular, my paper looks closely at the images collaboratively designed by the Galles and David to represent how the end of the world and its perpetual aftermath may be imagined.

## **Art and Philosophy in the Early Modern Netherlands**

### **SESSION ORGANIZER**

**Hanneke Grootenboer**, Radboud University, Nijmegen

The relation between art and science in early modern Netherlands has long been the focus of art historical scrutiny. By contrast, the connection between art and philosophy in the Dutch Republic has remained under-explored. This is surprising, as a wide range of thinkers,

among them many refugees, initiated the so-called age of 'new philosophy' which eventually resulted in the rise of a 'radical enlightenment' by the turn of the century. While artists got influenced by particular visions (most evidently Romeyn de Hooghe by Spinoza), philosophers frequented artistic circles (such as Pierre Bayle) or considered their art collections as an extension of their thinking (as did, for instance, Franciscus Sylvius). In the visual arts, certain artistic categories such as emblem books containing denkbeelden or thought-images, or particular sub-genres such as vanitas paintings were traditionally associated with philosophical reflection. In the writings of René Descartes, among others, we see an increase in the use of pictorial metaphors (such as of the house, the painting or the automaton) to reinforce particular concepts. In addition, painters started to self-consciously include mirror images in their work, as did Clara Peeters, while illusionistic tricks used in art and entertainment evoked profound bodily experiences in their audiences that were meant to let the senses 'think'. Recent literature on material culture suggests that luxury collectibles, such as cunningly crafted artifacts or exotica, were considered not only as objects of knowledge and spiritual meditation, but also as things to 'think with'. This panel invites papers that explore the relation between the visual arts and philosophy in the Low Countries during the 'long' 17th century in the broadest sense, addressing questions that may include: What was the relation between art and philosophy that Samuel van Hoogstraten famously called sister-arts? How did philosophical concepts resonate in visual culture? What was the impact of image-making on verbalising intellectual ideas? To what extent did artists contribute to philosophical debates or did philosophers shape art theoretical discourse? What was the function of art objects and images and the stimulation of the senses on the expansion of the mind? Papers dealing with the influence of 17<sup>th</sup>-century visual culture on philosophical writings beyond the early modern period (such as of Hegel or Schopenhauer) are also welcome.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Valentin Bec**, Université Grenoble-Alpes

#### ***Rejects in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Reconsidering the Gaze from Spinoza to Contemporary Thing Theory***

In *The Embarrassment of Riches*, Simon Schama thoroughly describes Dutch society's obsession for cleanliness, depicting a society where hygiene is a social value of most importance for civil and symbolical reasons. Schama illustrates his words with Pieter de Hooch's interiors, which would epitomize this Dutch sanitary-based mindset and show people a model of a well-run interior. As opposed to those idealistic depictions stand the tavern scenes that function according to the symbolical inversion Nanette Salomon analysed in Jan Steen's « dissolute households ». There, chaos reigns and grounds are covered with spilled and felt objects. And then there is an « intermediate » type of painting that stand between those two radical formal expressions. What is the meaning of that metal platter ignored and left on the ground of the bourgeois room of de Hooch's *Interior with a Child Feeding a Parrot* (1668-1672) ? Examples abound of paintings depicting a bourgeois interior, supposedly clean and where sometimes a maid is present, while presenting objects (and sometimes even rubbish) lying on the ground. Those objects are then presented in a deactivated mode, a dysfunctional state of being – they are *rejects*.

This way of representing objects in a state of *reject* can be considered as a contribution to the moral debate about material overabundance raised during the 17th century. In « Le monde-objet », Roland Barthes evoked the stakes underpinning the representation of used and obsolete material culture in Dutch paintings. Furthermore, bringing the observer's gaze onto those usually irrelevant areas of a painting (the ground) and onto useless things (an object whose function is broken) leads the art historian to think about the question of what is (seemingly) indifferent or insignificant, and to further wonder about the issue of gaze itself. With this in mind, those singular depictions of useless *things* fall in line with Spinoza's conceptual and ontological reconsideration that brings us to consider every little part of matter in this world and to pay attention to what had been until then seen as despicable. Just like rejects in paintings widen the optic gaze we project on them, Spinoza's system offers new reflexive territories to the gaze conceived as a mental act. More widely, those representations of rejects are fully part of the Dutch *épistémè* that has then known a radical reassessment of the manner we comprehend and understand the world through new images – produced, notably, by Leeuwenhoek's discoveries – as Gysbrechts' trompe-l'oeil of a painting's back epitomizes it.

Absorbing Spinoza's ontological vision of the world – based on the hierarchy substance/attribute/mode – the contemporary *Thing Theory* (Jane Bennett, Bill Brown, Bruno Latour, et al) invites us to look *through* the objects rather than only look *at* them. Such a strategy enables us to take objects' agency into account and to turn them into fully-fledged subject matter, regardless of any literal or allegorical interpretation. Penetrating seventeenth-century genre painting through the lens of rejects' agency on the painting's viewers will therefore question again the way these pictorial compositions took part in philosophical and theoretical debates in seventeenth-century Dutch society.

**Teresa Esposito**, Rubenianum, Antwerp

### ***Physiognomics in Rubens' Theoretical Notebook***

Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) was not the first artist to recognize that painting deals with natural philosophy. Before him, Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) had expressed similar views to justify his concept of painting as a science and provide theoretical foundation to the visual arts in opposition to poetry. One century later, while following the admonitions of his predecessor, the young and ambitious Rubens recorded and collected physiognomic types inspired by antiquity in his notebook. By means of comparative studies between humans and animals, he explored different kinds of physiognomic expressiveness and anatomical proportion in order to determine the ideal male and female types. Rubens' drawings of human and animal heads (*nothomie*) were accompanied by autograph notes in Latin and Dutch, wherein he sometimes paraphrased current philosophical concepts of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Later on, Rubens would have applied his knowledge of physiognomic principles to the appearance of the figures of his more finished compositions in order to enhance their inner qualities, virtues and vices.

At the center of Rubens' theoretical investigation was his belief in the existence of a reciprocal relation between body and soul; if the study of the human passions was

indispensable for the attainment of a laudable art, Rubens' images, with their evocative power, raised questions on the nature of the human soul and the existence of a universal *spiritus* animating every living being. Moreover, in Rubens' work the concept of the resemblance of man to animal is intimately related to the ancient Stoic law of sympathy. Such questions were discussed by the members of those elitist intellectual circles and the first scientific societies with whom Rubens entertained relations during the course of his life. Among them, the German physician and member of the Lincean Academy in Rome Johann Faber is known to have studied comparative physiognomics, while the Neostoic philosopher Justus Lipsius developed his reflections on the nature of the soul in the third book of his treatise on natural philosophy, the *Physiologia Stoicorum* (1604).

This paper explores the extent to which ancient and early modern philosophical ideas on the interrelation between body and soul and the notion of sympathy affected Rubens' drawings and notes on physiognomics. It also addresses the relevance that Rubens attributed to emotional expressiveness and pictorial variety displayed in his works in order to stir the desired effect upon the beholder.

**Joseph Saravo**, Boston University

### ***Re-Covering Gerrit Dou: The Case of Still Lifes and Embodied Deception***

Gerrit Dou's (1613-1675) meticulously crafted paintings were avidly collected by the seventeenth-century Dutch elite. However, documents reveal that at least eight of Dou's paintings were originally concealed in cases which featured highly illusionistic still life paintings on the outside of their hinged doors or sliding lids. While only two of the recorded covers survive, they feature both common and luxury objects with varied surface textures and lighting effects that exhibit a level of artifice true to the goal of painting professed by Samuel van Hoogstraten: *schijn zonder sijn* ("semblance without being"). Projecting out of the darkness of false shallow niches, the objects addressed the viewer with a startling mimetic force that invited closer scrutiny. Yet, Dou's still life works are rarely the subject of critical analysis and remain on the periphery of scholarship, overshadowed by his novel achievements in genre painting.

Scholars most often interpret Dou's still lifes as protective mechanisms for and allegorical glosses on the paintings they concealed, but I argue these approaches have limited our understanding of their significance. The disassembly and loss of most of these painted covers has further obscured their functions and meanings. I gather evidence of Dou's extant and lost still life covers in order to quantify this practice and consider these paintings together as an understudied corpus. My research seeks to re-place these painted covers in Dou's oeuvre in order to reimagine their overlooked functions and explore the ways in which their subject and mode of representation structured the beholder's temporal experience by holding the senses of sight and touch in dynamic tension. By considering the painted covers as both deceptive pictorial illusions and three-dimensional objects that demand physical interaction, my phenomenological approach underscores the ways in which these painted still life covers fostered an embodied relationship with the beholder in

the context of the art collections for which they were destined. This approach repositions these paintings as theoretical objects charged with their own agency and the ability to invite the beholder to “think” with both their mind and body. Ultimately, I explore the ways in which Dou’s still life covers and René Descartes’s natural philosophy exhibit a shared and contemporaneous distrust of the senses through an epistemology of doubt and deceit.

## **Heraldic Imagination in the Netherlands, 1500-1800**

### **SESSION ORGANIZER**

**Marika Keblusek**, Leiden Centre for the Arts in Society (LUCAS), Leiden

Originally hereditary symbols of the medieval noble elite, from the late-14th century onwards crests, coat of arms and blazons were increasingly altered, added to and custom made for members of other, emancipatory social groups, most notably the urban elites. Merchants, for example, formed a fast growing, powerful professional segment of early modern European society – especially in the Netherlands. The increasing awareness of their personal and collective identity is evident in their visual branding and representation: not only in commissioned portraits, but in the adaptation of crests and devices which were publicly visible on a variety of media and platforms. In fact, heraldic imagery embodies much more than an individual’s or corporate coat of arms. The powerful tradition of heraldic emblems is reflected in the use of blazons and crests by literary and artistic groups and institutions, such as chambers of rhetoricians, or painters’ associations. Other, closely related visual emblems which act as identity markers are, for example, printers’ devices, trademarks, logos, monograms or even calligraphic signatures.

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This session aims to explore how early modern individuals and groups branded themselves through their heraldic presentation on contemporary social media and materials. We will focus on early modern branding through personalised heraldic imagery, which may have been displayed on wooden and stone shields in churches and houses; on painted portraits; in stained glass and windows; engraved in silver, gold, precious stones and glass work; embroidered on linen; pressed on book bindings; hand-painted in manuscripts like *alba amicorum* (friendship books) and on ceramics – indeed, on every material and (semi-)public medium thinkable.

Papers may focus on various aspects of the heraldic imagination, discussing how this visual personal and collective branding functioned in the Netherlands between 1500 and 1800. How innovative was the transformation of heraldic culture from the late medieval age into early modern times? How and why did it take place? Who were responsible for designing new coats of arms? In other words, how did this visual language of the self in everyday surroundings develop and how, in time, did this multimedia manifestation of personal and collective identities undergo a process of formalisation, authentication and the creation of types and stock images?

This session welcomes curators and scholars to address pictorial and material elements of heraldic culture in the context of art history, material history, emblem history, and heritage studies.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Margreet Brandsma**, Leiden University

#### ***Personalised Heraldic Representation by a Late Medieval Princess: Margaret of Burgundy***

Medieval heraldic representation is strongly associated with male members of noble families. On the battlefield and during tournaments they could be identified by their family's coat of arms and impressive helmet signs, which were registered pictorially in armorials by heralds. Nowadays we can still admire these, even online, and get a glimpse of which knightly individuals were present at important events, and how the public could recognize them. An association with today's society columns in magazines or pictures on social media easily comes to mind.

But knights in shining armour were not the only attendees of medieval tournaments. Miniatures in medieval chronicles, as well as the accompanying text, show that the presence of ladies in the audience was indispensable. These ladies are less well represented in armorials, but they did communicate their identity through heraldic presentation, as well as personalised imagery. The use of personal symbols in addition to traditional coats of arms was not invented by Renaissance princesses, but had its roots in an earlier period. The blazon of a medieval princess consisted of a combination of the coat of arms of her father and her husband, which reflected her dual identity. A medieval noble marriage was usually not a matter of love or personal affection, but a political union between two dynasties. After her marriage, a noble lady had to put the interest of her husband's dynasty first, but still represented her family of origin as well. In an era of conflict, this was a complicated position to be in, and required well-considered communication strategies.

Margaret of Burgundy (1374-1441) is a good example of a late medieval princess in a discordant dynastic situation. As a result of her marriage with the count of Holland, the Northern part of the Netherlands became encapsulated by the Burgundian dynasty, but only after many battles had been fought by her and her daughter Jacqueline of Bavaria (Jacoba van Beieren). This paper will concentrate on how Margaret of Burgundy expressed her identity through personalised heraldic imagery, for instance by adding '*marguerites*', referring to her first name. Different media, such as seals, an armorial, glass windows, silverware and a wooden shield near her funeral monument, will be brought forward as examples of how she moulded traditional dynastic representations to a more personalised brand.

**Anna Dlabacova**, Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society

***Branding Books. Early Netherlandish Printers and their Printers' Marks, c. 1470-1520***

One feature that sets the early printed book apart from the manuscript is the printer's mark or device. Included in most printed books right from the beginning of printing, printers' marks disseminated various forms of heraldic imagery amongst large and new groups of readers. While heraldic imagery – if present at all – in manuscripts would generally point to the commissioner or owner of the book, printer's marks conveyed a message about maker. Moreover, printers generally disposed of several marks, seemingly allowing them to adjust the message from book to book and through time as their business grew and changed. Throughout his career, Gerard Leeu (d. 1492), for example, used five different devices, all with different coats of arms. This paper focuses on the role of heraldic imagery in the design of early Netherlandish printer's marks and the ways in which they (co-)shaped the identity of a printer, a city, and possibly also communities of readers.

**Frances Hughes**, University of Cambridge

***Heraldic Prints and the Ornamental Imagination in the Early Sixteenth Century***

This paper will explore the depiction of imaginative heraldic motifs in ornamental imagery from the early sixteenth century. Art historians have tended to interpret coats of arms as a distinctly medieval brand of image that was at odds with 'Renaissance' culture, using the adjective 'heraldic' to connote social and artistic conservatism. However, heraldry was such an ubiquitous part of late medieval and early modern visual culture that almost all artisans would have had some experience representing coats of arms. Indeed, due to the importance of heraldic display, coats of arms were central arenas for the development and transmission of new ornamental and stylistic repertoires, for instance the introduction of classicising putti as shield bearers. My paper will therefore consider the relationship between artistic identity, ornamental innovation and heraldic imagery in the Netherlands in the early sixteenth century.

Artists responded to a new emphasis on ornamental invention by blending fictive heraldry with other ornamental topics, like classicising putti or grotesque vegetation. Ornamental designs were circulated to much wider audiences on printed sheets, which untethered motifs from the margins of luxurious illuminated manuscripts and endowed them with a new, semi-autonomous status. Similarly, printed coats of arms separated heraldry from the group dynamics of the medieval armorial and allowed them to circulate more readily as objects of aesthetic interest, no longer bound to the heraldic knowledge of small localities. Innovative printmakers such as Lucas van Leyden relished heraldry as an appropriate topic for showcasing their capacity for ornamental invention, as well as for positioning their practice within a pedigree of famous artists, including Albrecht Dürer.

My paper will argue that heraldry became a key means for artists to express their individual authorial identity in relation to communal, civic identities. For example, across Northern Europe, guilds of painters displayed a common shield containing three miniature

escutcheons, visually tying their artistic identity to the heraldic. Many Netherlandish artists incorporated this shield into their ornamental designs, using it both as a sign of their profession and as a generic 'filler' for empty cartouches. Heraldry was not simply a utilitarian visual sign system; in first few decades of the sixteenth century, it was increasingly treated as a generic type of ornamental motif ripe for artistic manipulation. My doctoral research is focussed on the 'heraldic imagination' in German-speaking regions, including the depiction of heraldry in the work of Albrecht Dürer, Niklaus Manuel and Sebald Beham. In this paper, I will foreground the heraldic innovations of their Netherlandish counterparts, demonstrating how coats of arms became a vehicle for the transmission of ornamental invention in the Northern Renaissance.

## **Nature's End: Ecology and Exploitation in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Joost Keizer**, University of Groningen

**Ann-Sophie Lehmann**, University of Groningen

With a sudden intensity, early seventeenth-century Dutch artists began picturing their own environment, launching an entirely new category of representation that tested the boundaries between man and nature, representation and truth, and past and future. These pictures do more than show a real, often familiar, landscape. They also depict how humans experience nature. Thousands of landscape paintings – most of them of an underestimated artistic radicality – interrogate the boundaries between nature and culture. They map out what past and future ecologies look like. And place us humans in the midst of them. Landscape paintings intersect with a set of early modern questions about how to use and preserve the land. They open up new venues of sight from a use-perspective (of farmers in the dirt, fishermen on the beach); they draw visual attention to the boundaries between landscape (*landschap*) and the dunes (called the *wildernisse*); they speak of the erosion of the coast; they visualize what humans did with and to nature; they distinguish classes of looking and using (from strolling city-dwellers to a bent-over sower). Apart from the visual wealth of information about living in and of cultured nature, an untapped variety of Dutch early modern textual sources speaks to the ecology of human life and the land humans occupy, which has been studied surprisingly little with regard to landscape painting. This panel discusses these questions of ecology and exploitation in landscape painting.

### **SPEAKERS**

**Amy Knight Powell**, University of Southern California

### ***Ecologies of Sand***

Around 1600, the coastal dunes near Haarlem became a major motif in Dutch landscape drawings, prints, and paintings. Dunes are nature's ruin, made of sand, particles of stone,

ordinary, unshaped stones but also stones that were once carved into sculptures or assembled into architectural structures. Sand is those stones (and sculptures and structures) ground down into a corpuscular, quasi-liquid, time-telling record of decay. Images of Holland's relatively sparsely populated coastal dunes allowed for a fantasy of wilderness in a country that was already famous for being shaped by man rather than nature. (Formal management of the dunes, which protect the low-lying hinterland from flooding, had already begun in the sixteenth century.) The fictional Dutch desert was a local, internal wilderness—a wilderness in two senses.

First, internal to the nation, Egypt brought to Holland. This trope capitalized on a certain superficial resemblance between the sandy ecology of Europe's coastline and the sandy ecology of the desert to which early Christian ascetics had retreated. It was the substance of sand (loose, granular, eroded rock) that made this analogy possible, specifically the quasi-liquid, corpuscular quality of sand that made it possible for the ecology of the desert to flow from Egypt to Holland. Once monuments and edifices have been ground down into sandy ruins, place can slide. Once place is atomized, it can be displaced.

The second sense in which Holland's sandy wilderness was an internal place is that it was a figure for the deep, intensive structure of matter. Holland's desert stood for the wilderness that the microscope and particulate theories of matter were opening up beneath the surfaces of what one could see. After describing the sand in which he finds a small shell, Hooke reports: "I Have often observed the Sand or Gravel of Urine, which seems to be . . . generated out of a saline and a terrestrial substance crystallized together, in the form of Tartar, sometimes sticking to the sides of the Urinal, but for the most part sinking to the bottom, and there lying in the form of coarse, common Sand" (Hooke, *Micrographia*, 1665). With his microscope, Hooke discovers sandy drifts deep inside the human body—a lonely landscape that is no longer far away but instead lodged in the most intimate recesses of the physical self.

The sandy ecology of Holland's dunes was local and specific and yet subject to metaphoric displacements of several kinds.

**Christopher P. Heuer**, University of Rochester

### ***Antiquity Without Humans: The Primordial Landscapes of Cornelis van Dalem***

The artist Cornelis van Dalem (1530-1575) offered the world a small corpus of painted meditations on time. His so-called *Dawn of Civilization* (1565) now in Rotterdam, for example, has puzzled scholars for decades. The panel depicts a grotto scene with early humans and animals, all amidst rocky cliffs and trees indebted to Dürer. No Netherlandish artist had explored the subject before. Stemming loosely from Lucretius, Dalem presents the scene as geologic in character (van Mander referred to the painter as a "fraye schilder van rotsen".) But the painting also engages the idea of natural history and "environment" at a moment of iconoclasm and colonialism. It interrogates the very relationship between humans and animals, and the "separation" that takes place - in social as well as artistic terms - when civilization appears.

***Cultivated Creation: Selecting from Nature in Art and Reality in the Seventeenth-Century Netherlands***

In the inconspicuous, yet highly informative treatise on painting, *The Big World Painted Small* (1692), Willem Beurs gives instructions for painting the 17th-century environment. The author, who was a painter himself, aimed at painting from life, or at observing reality to make a meticulous and convincing depiction. By using (standardized) recipes nature was, however, shown in its best possible manifestation: the specific combinations of colours are fundamental to 17th-century paintings's convincingness and appeal. Not only does this source show how painters beautified their surroundings, it gives a unique, aesthetically motivated insight into 17th-century's taste for nature and agriculture, as well. One out of six books is devoted to landscape painting entirely. Skies, grounds and waters are decomposed in spatial parts and colours or colour mixtures, offering painters a system to hold onto while handling the brush. Furthermore, every thinkable object or being that could adorn such a view is treated in the other books discussing flowers, fish, birds, insects, man-made things, fruits, quadruped animals and humans.

Contrary to many animals that Willem Beurs provides a painting recipe for, most herbs seem to have been at his and his readership's disposal. The fruit trade was a lively one, yet Beurs' chapter on exotic fruits is brief: it treats pomegranates, oranges, lemons, chestnuts, olives and capers. Would this mean that all other fruits that are discussed, such as peaches and grapes, were regional? And chestnuts were foreign, but melons were not? And how about the flowers, pictured in Beurs' initial color exercises: had a medical or botanical garden to be visited to see them, was access to a manorial estate needed, or was every market garden generally embellished with a strip of african marigolds? With Beurs, landscape or garden paintings and horticultural sources at hand, Dutch horticulture will be explored. The author could rely on familiarity and did not mention any literature, whereas natural philosophy and prints are explicitly mentioned regarding the animal kingdom. Botany was an old area of expertise that had been the domain of medical practitioners and pharmacists, aristocratic land owners, and of everyone with a vegetable garden. Knowledge of horticulture and assorted edibles became more common among citizens as the number of orchards, herb and vegetable gardens around Dutch cities increased to feed the growing populations from the sixteenth century onward. People would visit the countryside of the town walls, where pleasure gardens were realized around these functional gardens. The growing of ostentatious vegetation came into vogue among wealthy citizens in the Dutch Republic in the 1660s, with urgings in horticulturalist publications, such as Jan van der Groen's 1669 *Den nederlandsen hovenier* ('The Dutch Horticulturalist').

We will see that the taste for surroundings that Beurs and many garden and landscape paintings demonstrate, is that for a flourishing cultivated landscape that reflects gardening achievements and styles. Both early modern horticulturalists and painters felt they were engaging with Creation and with scientific precision; beholders were invited to see and sense it.

Catherine Levesque, The College of William and Mary

### ***Ruisdael's Grainfields and the Ecological Landscape***

Jacob Ruisdael's landscapes of dunes and country roads reveal his pronounced attention to finding a technique for inscribing the details of nature he observed so closely in paintings, a consistent concern in his early work. Even Ruisdael's depiction of soil, his attention to the differences of color, texture, and weight reveal just how closely he observed and meticulously recorded his environment—not only (as long recognized) of wind and clouds but on their action on the earth, of the growth of plants but also their relationship to particular kinds of soil. Though other painters—especially of dune landscapes—show the effects of wind and erosion, it is not with such specificity. Even Ruisdael's soil formations and stratification are closely observed and rendered. Consequently, this examination of the artist's "ecological" landscapes is also an examination of his material practice. Moreover, his emphasis on labor and transformation in his process of making is of a piece with his subject matter. Both would have been appreciated by his likely patrons. This preoccupation with finding a way of making such images is best captured by the term *technē*, the process by which an artist such as Ruisdael worked to embody what he saw (the domain of 'knowledge') by means of his craft (practice). *Technē* so understood considers the work of art as including the labor and explorations required to effect the best possible solution. In Ruisdael's case, that would be to capture the structure, morphology, and even something of the sprightliness of natural forms.

By labeling Ruisdael's grainfields as ecological, I intend to highlight his central concern with an environment as a dynamic place. Ruisdael's attention to the details of a poor but arable landscape is not to suggest that he had an extraordinary concern with farming—but certainly an awareness of agricultural improvement would not have been unusual for anyone who saw the development of property in and around the dunes. The relationship of wild and the sown land in Ruisdael's paintings is of a piece with the general preoccupation with soil fertility in his time and place. Moreover, his range of ground cover and his attention to the morphology, physiology, and ecology of plants within a carefully observed local landscape makes evident its potential for regeneration; consistently an interest in accord with his choice of subject matter and the way he depicts it. The emphasis on borders or different zones of ground and growth is especially to the fore in Ruisdael's depiction of landscapes that embrace both barren and the fertile ground. In these works his geological exactitude in describing the play between different natural environments—edges, borders, and boundaries—is as precise as his description of individual species. This boundary between the wild and the sown, and Ruisdael's technique in conveying this as a dynamic environment is the topic of my talk. His labor (and awareness of that labor as *tēchne* or process) in drawings, etchings, and various kinds of paintings in conveying that dynamic is its substance.

## The Affective and Hermeneutic Functions of the Self-Aware Picture

### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Walter S. Melion**, Emory University, Atlanta

**Michael Zell**, Boston University

This session examines paintings, drawings, and prints that use various representational contrivances jointly to foreground their status as pictorial images and as objects of the beholder's gaze. Such devices often highlight the mimetic properties of the picture in question, as in the case of *ogenbedriegertjes* (little eye-deceivers, i.e., trompes-l'oeil), which prompt the viewer to acknowledge that s/he is looking at a pictured picture. A related device utilizes elements within the pictorial field—*doorkijkjes* (optical corridors), *gordijnen* (feigned curtains), or *omlijsten* (framing devices, e.g., doorways, casements, archways, stairwells, etc.)—to call attention to the ways in which visual attention is being mobilized, directed, and/or deflected, as it moves toward a targeted destination. The visual itinerary thus mapped often stands proxy for the viewer's gaze, the motion of which the image can be seen both to harness and portray. More obviously, pictures may contain depicted viewers whose action of beholding doubles that of the actual viewer looking at the painting, drawing, or print, from a vantage point external to it. Finally, *handelingh* (handling, rendering)—the marks made by a burin, stylus, or brush—can be applied so conspicuously that they compel the viewer to track the marks' pattern of application: their forceful motion functions as a diagram of sorts for the movement of the viewer's eyes as they travel along pathways leading *in 't verschiet* (into the distance). Although scholars of Dutch and Flemish art have duly noted the ubiquity of these and other pictorial devices focusing on sight, their affective and interpretative functions have yet to be fully studied. The now common consensus that the reflex of picturing pointedly alludes to *vaardigheid* (skill) and *meesterschap* (artisanal mastery) is surely right, but key questions still remain to be answered: when allusions to the viewer's gaze are coupled with explicit emphasis on the pictorial register, what affects are stirred, what meanings are generated, how, why, and to what end does the bestowal of attention constitute a primary theme or call forth an hermeneutic response? Take Nicolaes Maes's *Jonge vrouw bij een wieg* (Young Woman by a Crib), recently featured in the Maes retrospective at the Mauritshuis. The picture, as the show's curators astutely observe, turns on an analogy between the trompe-l'oeil curtain, ostensibly pushed to one side by the beholder, and the mother's raising of the cloth draped over her sleeping child's head. In turn, a second analogy, this time internal to the picture, invites the viewer to draw a parallel between the woman's act of reading (presumably scriptural) and her display of maternal solicitude. Maes asks us to consider how viewing his picture can produce sentiments as tender as those elicited by a babe, and conversely, how enthrallment in a sleeping child is like attention paid to an enchanting image. He also invites us to reflect on the relation between devout reading and attentive beholding. Our session provides a forum for further examination of the form and function of such prompts to affective and hermeneutic engagement with self-aware pictures.

## SPEAKERS

Graham Lea, Emory University, Atlanta | University of Groningen

### ***A Convicting Portrait Historié in Hendrick Goltzius' Susanna and the Elders (1607)***

In his painting of 1607, depicting the apocryphal story of Susanna assaulted by the elders, Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617) includes a *portrait historié* of the painting's patron and his friend, Jan Govertsz. van der Aar, fashioned in the guise of one of the elders. Sourced from the thirteenth chapter of the Book of Daniel, the story tells of the righteous Susanna who is faithful to God and her husband. Two of her husband's colleagues, who were elders and magistrates among the people, surprised Susanna and presented her with a dilemma while she was bathing in the privacy of her garden: Susanna must either consent to fornicate with the elders lest she be taken by force, or, if she resists, the elders threaten to claim publicly that they have caught her in adultery with a young man.

Goltzius' inclusion of the patron's likeness as one of the reviled figures in the narrative is a perplexing and compelling feature that both asserts the status of the *portrait historié* as a pictured picture and implies that its hermeneutic function significantly informs how we understand Goltzius' biblical history. Not only does the *portrait historié* call attention to the painting as a pictorial image, it also emphasizes the painting as an object of a specific beholder's gaze. This function operates not merely by Jan Govertsz., as the primary beholder, viewing himself portrayed as a participative character in a visualized biblical history, but more interestingly by how Goltzius uses the *portrait historié* to depict Jan Govertsz.-cum-elder beholding the beautiful and nude Susanna, which replicates Jan Govertsz.-cum-viewer beholding the painting and, specifically, Susanna's nude form within it.

This representational device of the *portrait historié* is further amplified by virtue of Govertsz.'s likely membership in Haarlem's *De Wijngaertrancken* chamber of rhetoric. Such circumstantial evidence suggests that the hermeneutic implications of the device are understood by a rhetorical reading of the story such as that found in the rhetoricians' play *Tspeel van Susanna*, which was performed in the same year as Goltzius' painting. What a comparative analysis of the rhetoricians' play shows are the affective and hermeneutic qualities produced by Goltzius' inclusion of Govertsz.'s likeness. In beholding the painting, Govertsz. would have watched himself accost a beautiful young woman, aware that his figuration adopts the perverted motivations and intentions of the elders in the story. While some have described the affective intent of Goltzius' *portrait historié* as humor or amusement, a comparison with the play suggests that lamentation and grief are also affective products of the device. These affective qualities inform an interpretation of Goltzius' painting as an exhortation and an admonition to Jan Govertsz., encouraging him to pursue repentance, practice moral rectitude, and remember that, as the play proclaims, "*sullen sy al varen, die doen oneerbaerhyt oft eenighe vrouwen nemen haer eere* [they, who indulge in lust or destroy a woman's honor, shall all perish]."

Lizzie Marx, Pembroke College, University of Cambridge

### ***The Significance of Smell in Johannes van Wijckersloot's Self-Aware Self-Portrait***

From 11 February until 6 June 2021, the Mauritshuis displayed *Fleeting – Scents in Colour*, an exhibition about smells in the seventeenth century. A key piece in the show, and a focal point of the exhibition's research, is a painting that is believed to be a self-portrait of Johannes van Wijckersloot (1625/30–1687) in 1669 from the Maximilian Speck von Sternburg Stiftung at the Museum der bildenden Künste Leipzig. Like much of Van Wijckersloot's art, the painting is remarkably cryptic. Van Wijckersloot portrays himself holding a lit candle that props up some spectacles and a coil of paper decorated with sketches of body parts. His other hand steadies a drum which is painted with a depiction of a young artist dressed in theatrical clothing, who is in the middle of painting a sheep wearing a fool's cap. On the ledge where the drum rests, there are some fragrant flowers and a piece of smouldering rope. The fumes of the cord snake upwards and end just beneath the young artist's nose. The scent is so strong that it compels the young artist to clench his nose to block out the fumes. This is an astonishing detail, as the smoke manages to defy the painterly dimensions. It penetrates the painting on the drum and enters the space of the young artist. Like a Parrhasian curtain, Van Wijckersloot demonstrates that he has deceived the young artist, for he has painted the smoke so convincingly that the young artist believes he is smelling a potent odour. For the young artist, the painting of the smoke is a *trompe l'oeil*, a trick of the eye, as well as a so-called *trompe nez*, a trick of the nose. No *doorkijkjes*, *gordijnen*, or *omlijsten* are to be seen, and yet the painting is undoubtedly self-aware. Van Wijckersloot's self-portrait is a remarkable example that achieves self-awareness through an entirely original example of a figure reacting to painted fumes. Assuming that the painting is indeed a self-portrait of the artist, what does this extraordinary motif say about the painting in question? What does it say about the role of the artist and the role of the viewer? And what does it say about the role of the sensory and the imagination in works of art? This paper will offer some answers through the analysis of classical ekphrasis from Philostratus; writings by contemporaneous art theorists including Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627–1678); and texts by art lovers, including Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687). Using the Van Wijckersloot self-portrait as a case study, it may be possible to gain a deeper understanding about the values and meanings that seventeenth-century Dutch artists intended to communicate in their self-aware pictures, and the ways in which such artworks were seen and interpreted by viewers of the time.

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Jun Nakamura, University of Michigan

### ***A Prometheus with the Burin: Goltzius's Allegory of Sight and Teycken-const as Originary Art***

Hendrick Goltzius's many metapictorial meditations on the medium of print have been well examined by scholars such as Walter Melion and Huigen Leeftang. In his *Meesterstukjes*, he made original prints in the style of earlier masters—both printmakers and painters—calling attention not only to the engraving style with which he rendered his images, but also to the rhetoric of reproductive style, and its (ostensible) ability to render painted models

transparently. His penworks imitated print style with the materials of drawing and painting, again calling attention to his printed manner and its meaning outside of the material specificity of print. However, Goltzius's engagement with print has not been brought to bear on his *Allegory of Sight and the Art of Painting*, designed around 1600 and engraved by his pupil Jan Saenredam. Previous scholarship has focused on contextualizing Goltzius's image within allegories of sight and its possible moralizing connotations. Others have looked at it as an allegory of painting, including a reference to the origin of painting in Narcissus paralleled by the Venus figure enamored of her reflection. However, Goltzius built his reputation as a printmaker and was lauded by his contemporaries as the preeminent practitioner of *teyckenconst* (the art of delineation); thus any allegory of art by the artist—especially one rendered in print—ought to be seen in light of his print practice.

In this paper, I read Goltzius's print against the grain, arguing that more than simply an allegory of painting or sight, the print makes substantial claims for *teyckenconst*, and thus also print. Beyond references to the origin of art in Narcissus, Goltzius also incorporated allusions to other analogous origins of art such as the story of the ancient potter Butades, whose daughter traced the outline of her lover's shadow on a wall; and the first image of man made by Prometheus, which he animated with celestial fire. The brush of the titular painter conspicuously traces the profile of the Venus he depicts, revealing that—as with the story of Butades—delineation is the originary art, preceding painting and sculpture. Throughout the print one also finds references to shadows and the relationship of truth to the animating power of light/fire. Sundials, astrolabes, and astronomical rings—all tools that reveal truth through the measurement of shadows—litter the foreground and background. These tools function by indexing the trace of the sun and the arced course it plots across the sky. Goltzius's mannered style of engraving, characterized by regular and measured parallel courses—much like those drawn by the sundials or by the compass held by a background cosmographer—finds its origin in the movements of the universe itself. That Goltzius's student Saenredam was responsible for engraving the print raises a further question of how integrated into Goltzius's theoretical practice his students were. Other prints by Jacob Matham and Jan Muller provide support for the idea that they too understood the theoretical underpinnings of the style that they came to take over from their teacher.

**Caecilie Weissert**, University of Stuttgart

### ***Anamorphoses. Bodily and Intellectual Perception of the Image***

Anamorphic images address both the status of paintings, drawings, and prints as pictorial images and as objects of the beholder's gaze. They belong to the self-aware pictures par excellence. The word "ana-morphosis" comes from the Greek prefix ana-, meaning "back" or "again", and the word morphe, that means "shape" or "form". In the double-formed anamorphic image, something is reshaped, whereby the expression already refers to an active role of the viewer. The term anamorphosis has been used for pictures for the first time in Gaspar Schott, *Magie universalis naturae et artis* (vol 1, 1657, 88).

Leonardo da Vinci is regarded as the inventor of the anamorphic image in the early modern period; Gian Paolo Lomazzo theoretically reflected the anamorphosis in his treatise on

painting (1584); and the French artist and mathematician Jean-Francois Nicéron (1613-46) wrote the most important work on anamorphoses in the 17th century. In this treatise he speaks of the "magie artificielle des effets merveilleux" (artistic magic with wonderful effects), which makes it clear that the experience of this kind of transformation process was perceived as something moving, exceptional and as an extension of the natural, everyday experience. Nicéron's main task is to deal, as he wrote, with those images which, seen from a point of view, show something different from what they actually represent when viewed from another point of view (Nicéron, *La Perspective curieuse*, 1652, 89). In the third part of his treatise, he points to the effects of Catoptrique as extraordinarily versatile and emotionally stirring. He discusses as well the use of mirrors, the creation of very unusual images that are, as he expressed it, floating in space (*ibid.*, 149).

To see an anamorphic painting correctly, the viewer must become active; he must leave his point of view and look for a new one that makes the painting recognizable. Peepholes in frames, mirrors or optical devices aid this. Particularly interesting is the process of change and the accompanying movement of the image. This expressly happens when the observer is still looking for the right point of view (which has its own philosophical impact), has to walk back and forth in front of the object, has to rotate and turn the print in his hands, or has to shape the distorted image with the help of an optical device. This action triggers affects of surprise or amazement. Anamorphoses thus require the mental and physical effort of the viewer and are good examples of how art viewing affects the whole body. The paper will focus on the affective and interpretative potential of anamorphic image in Netherlandish art, e.g. of William Scrots' anamorphic portrait of Eduard VI. (National Portrait Gallery, London), the practical and theoretical work of Samuel van Hoogstraten, the Anamorphosis painting of "perspective view of a ship model" by Willem van de Velde (c. 1750; Science Museum, London) and the anamorphic print series of the 18th century (e.g. Getty Library; 2002.R.27; 7 prints).

## **Art and knowledge: Cognitive Categories in Visual Compositions**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Sophie Suykens**, Ghent University

**Elizabeth Vandeweghe**, Ghent University

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries mark a period of gradual but profound transformation of the way in which phenomena of the natural world were studied. This session aims to explore the interaction between the visual arts and early modern theories of knowledge and nature. Medieval and early modern knowledge theories are characterized by their high reliance on the so-called 'categories' (dialectics). Knowledge and reasoning were embedded into a complex web of interconnected categories, which correspond to underlying structuring principles. One example illustrating the ubiquity of categorical thinking was the division of the natural world into four elements. These were not only associated to the primary qualities derived from the theory of humourism, but also to motive qualities and other classifications of nature, such as the four seasons and the four

temperaments. Such categories were shared by various cultural and social spheres at the time. However, only little attention has been paid to parallels between early modern cognitive categories and the way they relate – or not – to visual strategies of composition in early modern artworks. This will be the focus of the present session.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**V.E. Mandrij**, University of Konstanz

#### ***Otto Marseus van Schrieck and the Technique of Butterfly Impressions: a Practice between Art and Natural History***

In the seventeenth century, naturalists highlighted the epistemological value of naturalistic images to identify, record, and describe nature (Smith, 2006). The Dutch artist Otto Marseus van Schrieck (c. 1621-1678) was adept at painting nature *naer het leven*. He depicted specimens with details so accurate and minute that they allow species' identification (Leonhard, 2013; Hildebrecht, 2004). He developed a category of painting that was unusual for that period: the *sottobosco*, painting representing plants and animals, such as insects, amphibians, and reptiles, in dark forests. Marseus' highly naturalistic style relates to a pursuit of natural historical knowledge shared by contemporary Dutch painters exploring the genres of landscape and still life. However, he went a step further in the imitation of nature, as he sometimes transferred real butterfly scales onto the canvas instead of painting them through paint (Berthier, 2008; Beier, 1987). The technique of butterfly impressions was instrumental in natural historical fields from the eighteenth century onwards. Amateurs and naturalists published recipes in English, French, German, and Italian, describing the technical process, and a few nineteenth-century albums with butterfly impressions are still conserved. Sometimes called lepidochromy (from the ancient Greek *lepidos*, for scale, and *chromo*, for colour), this technique was used as a hobby for amateurs as well as a tool to preserve specimens and to identify species in natural historical circles (Orousset 2008). Marseus' use of real butterfly materials in painting does not only demonstrate his ambition as an artist to challenge the imitation of nature represented *naer het leven*. It also indicates his interest in the epistemological functions of images and preserved specimens. Recent research demonstrated that, besides his activity as a painter, Marseus was a naturalist who collected living and dry specimens. Moreover, it is known that he maintained close relationships with scholars who were studying nature and insects in Amsterdam and in Rome, where he worked in 1652 (Seelig, 2017). This paper will reflect upon the technique of butterfly impressions in Marseus' *sottobosco* paintings to answer the question: How does this technique contribute to the early modern pursuit of knowledge in natural history? This contribution will compare Marseus' artistic technique and the recipes of pressing butterfly wings for natural historical purposes. Considering contemporary treatises on painting, such as *De groote waereld in 't kleen geschildertsuch* (1692), where the author Willem Beurs describes how to paint insects, this paper will further elaborate on the technical limits of the butterfly impressions in comparison to pictorial representations of these creatures.

**Marte Sophie Meessen**, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

### ***Gravity in Art History***

From the sixteenth century onwards, artists and science practitioners increasingly explored the interactions between nature and early modern theories of knowledge. Artists contributed to scientific progress by 'dissecting' reality with their eyes, minds and hands. Instructional manuals subsequently reflected on and incorporated ways to depict a credible reality. References in art history about gravitational effects, in particular prior to Newton's definition in 1687, have not yet been sufficiently assessed. Phenomenological physics as a factor in realistic representation has been largely overlooked in art historical scholarship on visual strategies to create a composition. Even though visualised gravity relies on pictorial cornerstones such as perspective, light, and colour, its particular significance for the narrative cannot be overstated. For example, the suggestion of a jumping person in a painting is determined by gravitational expectation, otherwise the viewer might assume that the person is flying or floating. Artists, even though they were unaware of the Newtonian concept of the downward pulling force, included gravity's effects in artworks, both correctly and incorrectly, solely based on experience and observations of consistencies. As gravity is critical for understanding the visual narrative, I aim to clarify how it is integrated in art history prior to Newton's acclaimed concept. During my presentation I will indicate how contemporary knowledge relates to early modern experiences and renderings of the omnipresent yet enigmatic phenomenon of gravity.

**Helen Gramotnev**, Queensland Art Gallery & Gallery of Modern Art | Queensland Military Historical Society Australia

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### ***The Skeletal Detail in the Images of Fish in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art***

This research focuses on the skeletal structures of fish in the Dutch art of the seventeenth century. By exploring the bones protruding through the skin surfaces, this project investigates the scientific drive of the Dutch Republic, combined with the dramatic desire for the unknown and the hidden, which contributed to the prosperity of the republic over the seventeenth century. The ability to see protruding bones through skin (of animal or human) evoked emotion in the viewer and praise of the painter's skill. It also exposed the hidden world of the inside of the body, suggesting the divine secrets of God's creations. Finally, it fuelled the scientific urge to explore the body, while at the same time serving as poignant reminder of the fragility of life. The fishing industry, which is seen by some historians as the catalyst for the economic boom in the Netherlands in the 1600s, is also well documented in the oeuvre of art depicting still- life compositions with fish, market scenes, and marine landscapes. Fish was the economic backbone of the Dutch Republic, and herring was caught off specially designed boats that allowed longer journeys, with the fishermen gutting and packing the fish as they received it from the water. The heavy regulation of herring by guilds ensured its high standards, with the Dutch pride in this commodity reflecting in the abundance of art depicting this accessible and hearty fish. Recalling the scientific drawings of animal studies, such portrayals of the internal and skeletal body structures represented not only the economic prosperity and nourishment,

but also the circle of life and the undiscovered secrets of science and nature. Artists often showed the skeletal structure visible through the skin of the fish, or portrayed dissected fish revealing their internal details. Artists like Pieter van Schaeyenborgh, Isaac van Duynen, Abraham Hendricksz. van Beyeren, and Willem Ormea placed the exposed body of fish on the background of maritime exploration scenes, or an orchestrated *nature morte* of culinary delights, or a vibrant market stall. Using paintings of fish still-life, I will explore the scientific and artistic drive of artists in their pursuit of intricacy of detail. The complexity of the world celebrated in such works was combined with the anxiety of too much excess and indulgence, while the theatricality of Dutch realism resulted in engaging portrayals that reflected the fluidity of everyday life and human interest in the world and what it had to offer.

## TRADE, PRICES, MARKETS

### Place Value

#### SESSION ORGANIZER

**Paul Crenshaw**, Providence College

The application of value theories to art historical investigations seeks to understand the factors that drive axiology, the study of value and valuation. While pricing and sales information in the early modern period is sporadic, there are enough sources to form foundations for comparative analysis of individual artists' work, to see regional disparities in valuation of artworks, to assess medium and material distinctions in pricing, and to some extent understand the effects of size and format variances on monetary worth, to name a few directions for such studies. These studies often attempt to provide subjective nuance to seemingly objective, "hard" sums of monetary evaluation. Other types of investigation may examine the development of the language of art, vocabulary and terms of praise or criticism as an avenue to discern a sense of value. Such art theory or art criticism studies enable qualitative assessments of the value placed on innovation and types of expected artistic skills needed to attain excellence in the opinions of various writers.

This session seeks papers that specifically examine the role of "place" in the evaluation of works of art in northern Europe and particularly in the Netherlands during the early modern period. This may include the representation of specific spaces or places, and how that adds value. It may be public site specificity of an artwork, where the value of placement in a particular location is discernable and accountable. It may examine placement in a collection, where comparison to other works can be drawn, or a particular mode of display or encounter is evident, or where location within a domestic setting can be said to add value. Papers that apply innovative methodological approaches or present new material evidence in these areas are most welcome.

## SPEAKERS

Petra Maclot, Monumenta, Antwerp | KU Leuven

### ***Redefining Space: Hans Vredeman de Vries's Monumental Murals in the Antwerp Town Hall as an Elaborate Framework for Quinten Metsys's Altarpiece for the Guild of the Joiners***

The Antwerp Town Hall, an icon of *all'antica* architecture even before it was completed in 1565, was heavily damaged by the great fire in 1576, and was rebuilt under Calvinist rule (1577-1585). In 1582 the Calvinist municipality commissioned Hans Vredeman de Vries - renowned for his *perspectivae* - to design a new interior decoration for the different representative rooms on the first floor. The monumental *trompe l'oeil* murals the artist created must have been grandiose, but that of the *Statencamere* - the building's main reception hall where the distinguished guests were received and important agreements were made - was particularly interesting. Of its original interior, only the magnificent chimney piece by sculptor-architect Cornelis Floris had survived and was restored, as was the beamed ceiling. The new wall-paintings had a most specific purpose: they had to underline the importance of a masterpiece by Quinten Metsys the city had purchased and that was intended to ornate this space. Originally painted around 1511 for the Joiners' Guild's, and to be placed at their altar in the Church of Our Lady, the triptych was considered a jewel of Brabantine heritage and desired by royals. Yet to prevent its going abroad, the prominent artist Maerten de Vos had convinced the town council to buy the work. Despite its Catholic theme, it was now assigned a prominent place at the seat of the Calvinist power. Both architecture and figurative elements of the mural decoration had to draw the visitor's attention to that one object and in fact 'reinvented' the entire space by a rather unexpected *spartimento*.

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As the Catholics regained the city in 1585 and the painting was returned in 1589, the object of this setting suddenly disappeared. Once the context was lost, the murals lost their significance, upon which once more, a new interior decoration was created. Whitewashed and hidden behind gilt leather hangings, the murals were rediscovered only in 1873, and in view of a complete redecoration of the hall, in 1886 the remaining fragments were 'documented'. However, as yet, there has never been an attempt to visualize the intended effect in situ.

The altarpiece still exists and has been temporarily put back in its original context of the Antwerp Cathedral. The space of the *Statencamere* as well, is still one of the important spaces of the Town Hall, even if it is unrecognizable for its heavily decorated neo-Flemish Renaissance decoration, serving as the Marriage Hall, in which only the original chimney piece has survived the events of history. The paper proposes a reconstruction of the extraordinary decorative composition of this space, based on building historical and archaeological surveys, including archival and iconographical documents, measurements and information gathered from other cases. Thus it aims to evoke a quite remarkable spatial decoration that has in fact existed only for seven years.

**Giorgios Kokkoris**, Athens School of Fine Arts

### ***The Cases of Rubens's and Rembrandt's Collecting and Real Estate Investments***

Collecting was a celebrated practice among highly-educated and socially-renowned artists in Europe during the early modern period. The phenomenon of artists-collectors is encountered significantly in the Italian city-states. It is worth noticing, in parallel, that collecting was not as popular among artists north of the Alps. Two of the few and most important exceptions in the wider region of the Netherlands are the cases of the collections of the Flemish court painter and diplomat, Peter Paul Rubens, and of the Dutch painter, Rembrandt van Rijn. These collections were remarkable both in terms of size and in terms of the variety of their contents -objects, artworks and curiosities, from the international and the local market of the Netherlands.

Interestingly, except from collecting, both Rubens and Rembrandt sought also to invest in the real estate market. In 1610 Rubens bought a house and adjoining grounds on the Wapper, just off the Meir, one of the wealthiest streets of the city of Antwerp. In 1635 he also bought *Het Steen*, a country chateau at Elewijt, an area of countryside between Brussels and Antwerp. Accordingly, in 1639 Rembrandt moved into a new, imposing house on AntoniesBreestraat, one of the most expensive streets of Amsterdam, in the artistic center of the city. These acquisitions have often been discussed in relation to the economic potentials of the artists and have traditionally been interpreted as an attempt at social advancement. Undoubtedly, they were aspiring investments on both an economic and a symbolic level and, according to my estimation, very important movements towards the formation of ambitious collections.

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The collections of the two painters have been the subject of art historical research in the recent decades. Nevertheless, as I would suggest, they still need to be addressed in light of new findings and ideas. In this study I seek, firstly, to map the origin of the objects from the collections, by exporting statistical analysis. In this respect, the relation between classical antiquity and local or native art objects in both collections will be given special attention. Secondly, I wish to reconsider the investment movements of the painters in real estate. This issue is being reexamined here, particularly in terms of the impact it may have had on the painters' profile as collectors. Discussing (again) the data of Rubens's and Rembrandt's collecting and real estate practices would contribute to framing their work within a more fertile, thought-provoking context.

**Weixuan Li**, University of Amsterdam | Huygens ING

### ***Place and Value inside Domestic Interiors: Paintings in the Houses of Artists, Art Dealers and Citizens in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam***

How did the domestic space contribute to the value of paintings on display? And in particular, how did the placement of artworks in artists' and art dealers' homes and (work)shops relate to their value? The burgeoning line of research on 'art in context' – studying relationships between works of art and their 'original' environments – often points

to the settings in which the commissioners/owners exhibited the artworks, described in contemporary writings or estate inventories. Rarely did these studies venture into the utmost 'original' places – artists and art dealers' houses, where works of art were created and sold, before they ended up on the walls of collectors' mansions.

This research attempts to bring works of art back to the (work)shops of artists and dealers and compares the placement of arts in the homes of artists and dealers against the backdrop of the interior decorations observed in the affluent burghers in Amsterdam. I do so by deploying a widely-used, yet strangely under-explored source: Abraham Bredius's *Künstler-Inventare*, which contains over fifty inventories that described the full interiors of painters' and dealers' houses room by room, and in many cases, recorded the location of the houses within Amsterdam. This study, as part of the large research project *Virtual Interiors as Interfaces for Big Historical Data*, takes these fifty inventories as a point of departure, traces them back to the archival sources, expands the existing transcription of artworks to the entire registered estates, and finally compiles them into a digital database – the *Künstler-Inventare* database (which will be published in 2022). Using this database, this research first studies the spatial arrangement of the houses and develops the typology of artists' and dealer's houses, fitting into the architectural norms in seventeenth-century Amsterdam. I further look into artists' and dealers' use of interior space and their display of works of art *in situ* to understand how artists and dealers conducted their businesses to make a living, and how the location of paintings related to their value. Then, the place and value in artists' and dealers' houses will be put into perspective by comparing to the placement of arts in the affluent burgher's homes, revealed from the inventories in the Getty Provenance Index and the Montias database.

By scrutinizing how domestic setting relates to the attribution (especially for artists who owned and displayed their fellow artists' works), subject matter, and framing condition of paintings, as well as the "hard" sums of monetary evaluation, this research strives to gain a holistic view of how artists and dealers made a living through the space inside their house and the place within the city, and how they transferred value of paintings from their homes to the walls of collectors' mansions.

## **In the Shadow of the Pand and Beurs: Religious Art and the Early Modern Market**

### **SESSION ORGANIZER**

**Mitzi Kirkland-Ives**, Missouri State University

In the early modern era the region of the Low Countries was one of the centers of a number of shifts in economic life and practice in Europe. The period saw the expansion of the middle class and increasing urbanization, a shift from the manorial system and the commons to enclosure and agrarian capitalism, the development of modern banking, changes in the system of markets including the availability of year-round markets, and, in time, the mechanization of production, development of stock exchanges, mercantilism, and public companies such as the Muscovy Company and British and Dutch East India Companies.

This session aims to revisit the effects of this changing economic environment on religious art in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and to highlight new insights into the relationship between economic life and the arts, especially religious art. Topics might include the effects of new patterns of patronage; adaptations in the iconography and style of religious art in response to the new developments in the marketplace and economic systems; deployment of religious imagery in service of promoting economic systems or individual entities; changes in practices relating to corporate chapels or corporate participation in festival/procession traditions; new perspectives on the shifts in genre; patterns of artistic commission, competition, and rivalry; reflections and representations of the products of new trade and exchange patterns; changes in devotional portraiture related to these new models; new or altered contexts for the sites/display of art.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Helen Hillyard**, Dulwich Picture Gallery, London

#### ***Material Witnesses: Urban Economies, Civic Pride and the Images of Pieter Saenredam***

This paper investigates the relationship between the economic life of the early seventeenth-century Dutch Republic and the rise of church interiors as a new type of religious art, as witnessed in the works of Pieter Saenredam. It argues that changes in individual wealth and local economic developments were just as important in shaping the artist's output as confessional debates, which have traditionally been the primary means of interpreting Saenredam's oeuvre. The beginning of the seventeenth century saw a broadening of the genres that utilized religious themes, as well as a shift in the clientele for such paintings. Saenredam created works that communicated the authoritative status of the Reformed Church and expressed prevailing doctrine, whilst also conveying a sober but profound spirituality. The economic conditions of the period undoubtedly provided a fertile ground for the creation of such art. Saenredam's patrons belonged to an urban political and mercantile elite who rapidly advanced their positions throughout the period. At least two – but probably many more – of the artist's patrons from this group were holders of public office, and visible allegiance to the Reformed Church was a prerequisite for many positions of civic authority. This paper discusses how ownership of Saenredam's paintings could demonstrate religious orthodoxy and confer cultural legitimacy. It makes the case that Saenredam's works would have been perceived as befitting, and even reinforcing, the socio-economic status of his patrons. With the growing prosperity of urban communities, displays of civic pride became ever more prolific. During its economic apex in the 1630s and 1640s, the artist's native Haarlem saw a dramatic increase in the production of civic commentaries, poems and artworks devoted to eulogizing the city. Other cities in the northern Netherlands witnessed similar developments. This paper will consider Saenredam's paintings as a vital part of these social trends and examine how patrons could display their sense of civic responsibility by owning such objects. Finally, the paper considers how Saenredam positioned himself in relation to the art market. He produced paintings for a relatively small but wealthy group of connoisseurs and dominated a niche area of the market. The paper addresses the particular qualities of the economic climate that allowed Saenredam to foster and sustain such a practice.

**John R. Decker**, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn

### ***It Takes a Village to Nurture a Church***

Nearly a quarter century ago, Mecheleer published the *Rekeningen van de Kerkfabriek van de Sint-Leonarduskerk van Zoutleeuw (1405, 1452-1599)*. The publication transcribes nearly 150 years of accounting records and provides scholars with a resource for understanding the *Sint-Leonarduskerk* in its socio-economic context. In addition to recording the purchase of expensive items like panel paintings and statues, the accounts also bring to light the myriad quotidian transactions that undergirded the day-to-day operation of the church and its land holdings. These include entries for hanging bells in the bell tower, sewing curtains and altar cloths, cleaning the organ, and the production of souvenirs for sale to pilgrims. With one or two exceptions, however, little appears to have been done with this trove of information after its publication. In this paper, I discuss a digital humanities project I have undertaken using the records in Mecheleer's publication as my point of reference. In particular, I am building a database using the records for the period 1405, 1452-1506. The *Sint-Leonarduskerk* employed local and non-local tradespeople, some on a regular basis, to produce the items and carry out the short and long-term work needed to build and maintain the church's fabric. Not only were there efforts in Zoutleeuw, but also in neighboring towns where the church held property. In other words, the entries for these years paint a picture in which the church was a central node in a dynamic web of relationships between vendors, workers, church officials, the community, and nearby towns. My project acknowledges the efforts of master craftspeople but primarily attends to the contributions of those normally overlooked in histories of art. In doing so, I hope to provide a more nuanced view of the ever evolving role of a community in building and maintaining its church over time.

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**Barbara Kaminska**, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville

### ***Between Disability and Metaphor: Images of Blindness in Early Modern Collections***

In the famous *Allegory of Sight* by Jan Brueghel the Elder and Peter Paul Rubens (1617-18), the title personification contemplates a landscape painting with Christ healing a blind man, and another landscape, with the parable of the blind, is propped against the wall. We see both of these themes repeated in other *Kunstkammer* images, testifying to their popularity among wealthy – but not necessarily noble – collectors. This presentation aims to analyze socioreligious functions of images of the blind in private collections of newly wealthy, aspirational, non-aristocratic owners in mercantile centers of the early modern Netherlands. In contrast to what has frequently been proposed, inventories clearly show that images based on the biblical narratives of miraculous healing of the blind were not displayed in hospices (*gasthuizen*), but, rather, in private houses. Thus, the appeal of this theme is a part of the larger shift towards discursive and open-ended religious imagery in domestic spaces, associated with merchants, bankers, and other non-noble members of the elite. However, as in Brueghel's and Rubens's *Allegory*, the interest in the stories of miraculous healing of the blind overlapped with the increasing popularity of the parable of the blind, of whose Pieter Bruegel the Elder's last painting is the best known example. Although the parable of

the blind has typically been interpreted as a metaphor of spiritual ignorance and hubris, its iconography in the Netherlands registers a myriad of negative stereotypes about blind beggars, alongside their exclusion from the society. The parable of the blind strengthened the privileged status of owners of those paintings, whose wealth has traditionally been attributed to industriousness, entrepreneurship, and honesty – virtues juxtaposed with the idleness and deceit of blind mendicants in much of contemporary social discourse. While paintings of the healing of the blind argued for a charitable, compassionate treatment of the impaired, images of blind leading the blind served to encourage protocapitalist virtues of their owners. The growing popularity of these two themes in the later sixteenth century is thus directly related to the economic shifts in the Netherlands, and the introduction of religious imagery into domestic setting as a locus of reflection on how to create a successful urban community.

## THE ROLE OF MIGRATING ARTIST

### **Belonging in the Republic: Whose Amsterdam?**

#### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Ann Jensen Adams**, University of California at Santa Barbara

**Maarten Prak**, Utrecht University

Amsterdam in the seventeenth century was a multi-cultural city and magnet for migrants seeking a better life. As the city grew, it witnessed the establishment of new professions and industries, the practice of a variety of religions, and a reorganization of guilds, of charitable institutions, of civic rituals. The changes in urban fabric responded to changing demographics, as families of many inhabitants were newly arrived from the countryside, other cities, or even other nations. As Maarten Prak has recently elaborated, the idea of citizenship was undergoing dramatic revision. This raises the question of who belongs and who does not and, in particular, to what does one belong? Allegiances to family, guild, religion, the city, the province, and an emerging republic were multiple, and in flux. Artists of the time were creating new types of images which responded to some of these changes, images which pictured a variety of peoples and classes, of urban neighborhoods, of activities and events. These images in turn created, in the words of Benedict Anderson, “imagined communities” that included some, and excluded others. From the perspective of our twenty-first century, the historical question of the role of images in creating belonging, and exclusion, has particular relevance.

## **SESSION 1**

### **SPEAKERS**

**Suzanne van de Meerendonk**, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University

#### ***Performing and Imag(in)ing the Ideal City during Maria de' Medici's Visit to Amsterdam in 1638***

Urban ceremonial receptions featuring elaborate decoration schemes and pageantry formed a longstanding tradition in medieval and early modern Europe. For centuries, royal entries formed key ritual moments during which the relationship between ruler and city was negotiated, reconfirmed or contested—at times violently so. Following the Dutch Revolt, however, Amsterdam organized ceremonial entries for Stadtholders and foreign royalty in an increasingly overt republican, rather than monarchical, context. Due to the continued ceremonial and diplomatic weight of the tradition, however, these events and their representations were able to function as platforms that communicated and helped shape nascent power structures. This paper argues that one such reception, the remarkable entry of Maria de' Medici (1575–1642) into the city in 1638, utilized tropes of civic progress and commercial superiority to bolster the credibility of Amsterdam's merchant regents both domestically and on the international diplomatic stage. First in the ephemeral decoration program, and subsequently via text and images included in its commemorative festival book *Medicea Hospes* (1638) authored by Caspar Barlaeus (1584–1648), the city's status as a mercantile city was presented as fundamental to Dutch Republican progress and state-making. Comparing the images and rhetoric involved in the construction of this ideal with the material facts of the event and the city that staged it—and in particular what or who were left out of this imagined body politic—this paper concludes with an exploration of the event's role in a contentious and often exclusionary process of cultural memory formation.

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**Joaneath Spicer**, Walters Art Museum

#### ***"Afro-Amsterdammer Workmen Relaxing in an Inn": An Evocation of Community?***

Given that one of the signal characteristics of 17th-century Dutch art is the remarkable number of paintings and prints that evoke, reinforce, validate a sense of social belonging or community, even when highlighting foibles or failings, this paper probes circumstances of one outlier Amsterdam community, Afro-Amsterdammers, members of which were frequently drawn, painted or etched. Nevertheless, for all this rich corpus of images, imagery of community, the communal life of Afro-Amsterdammers, is almost entirely missing. The recent acquisition by the Walters of a small Dutch painting, really a sketch, with the subject given in the title of this talk is an exception, raising questions that I, for one, had not previously thought to ask. Recent research on images of Amsterdam's small African community has been very productive; witness the exciting body of artistic and documentary material assembled for the 2020 exhibition at the Rembrandthuis. The Walters' painting prompts a further, complementary inquiry as to the nature of the social narrative to which all these representations of Africans, as envisioned by the white gaze, contribute—that of

the African community or in fact that of the dominant white majority. Narratives of inclusion and exclusion playing out here in Baltimore and in the US more generally render the queries embedded in this session remarkably current.

**Marisa Anne Bass**, Yale University

### ***Painting and Public Space in Early Modern Amsterdam***

Bartholomeus van der Helst's *The Nieuwmarkt in Amsterdam* (1666) has always seemed like a misfit within the artist's oeuvre. Van der Helst was not a genre painter but a prominent portraitist, and despite the work's monumental scale, there is no evidence that it was a commission. Rather than adding to the speculation about why he created it, I argue that this remarkable and understudied painting offers an opportunity to think with van der Helst about the conception of public space in seventeenth-century Amsterdam, which was rapidly changing at the time. The 1660s saw a flood of new histories and poems that parallel van der Helst's interest in characterizing the monuments of the city and its diverse populus—from vegetable peddlers to wealthy children and foreign merchants. Analyzing *The Nieuwmarkt in Amsterdam* alongside this body of literature reveals that the painting is itself a kind of monument to the contradictory ideals of the Republic. More than a celebration of urban prosperity, the composition transforms the genre of the market scene into a study of difference, implicitly asking the viewer to weigh the relative value and belonging of its subjects.

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## **SESSION 2**

### **SPEAKERS**

**Susanne Bartels**, University of Geneva

### ***Migrant Artist or Cosmopolitan Socialite? Jacques de Gheyn II Spinning his Social Web***

This paper will demonstrate the relation between the migration and socio-professional development of Jacques de Gheyn II (1565-1629). De Gheyn was born in Antwerp and moved to Haarlem in 1585, where he trained and worked with Hendrick Goltzius. After his departure from Haarlem, De Gheyn set up his business in Amsterdam, before moving to Leiden and finally The Hague. Each move to a new city forced him to re-adjust his production and find his way in the local social and artistic milieus, all the while maintaining ties with previous 'homes'. By forging and maintaining multiple fluctuating networks, he managed to brand himself as a *peintre-graveur*, and quickly became one of the key figures within the network of printmakers, and eventually even in society. De Gheyn's mobility was both spatial and social. Although no mention of his citizenship (*poorterschap*) has been found, the banns of his marriage place him in Amsterdam at the *Molensteech*, close to the Oude kerk and in proximity of various artistic clusters. De Gheyn appears to have worked without membership to the guild, militia or other civic institutions, but his network nevertheless evinces tight relations with Chambers of rhetoric, militia, members of the

guild, and governmental institutions (city of Amsterdam, city of Leiden, board of Admiralty, States general, Prince Maurice). An analysis of the strong and weak ties of De Gheyn's network and of the importance of certain nodes, suggests that he purposely acted on certain relations to 'belong'. These actions were instrumental in achieving a higher social status and a position in the market. By examining motifs and stylistic developments in his printed and painted oeuvre, we can visualize artistic exchange within the network. In printing practices, collaborations, dedications, style, and diffusion form a strong indication about the circles in which the artist moved. As such, prints created notions of inclusion or exclusion. For example, the fact that his prints were exported by the East India Company and that he worked with or for certain people in the trade, allow us to locate De Gheyn in this network. By eventually working for the Stadtholder, De Gheyn made himself an artist *belonging* in the Republic.

**Patrick Larsen**, Radboud University, Nijmegen | RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague

### ***The Success of Jürgen Ovens' (1623-1678) Amsterdam Years and his Inclusion in the City's Highest Circles***

Jürgen Ovens developed into one of the more successful Amsterdam portrait and history painters. He enjoyed fame and esteem in his own time. This paper aims to analyze just how Ovens, who originated from the small town of Tönning in Schleswig-Holstein, succeeded in being included in Amsterdam's highest circles. Traditionally, the Dutch Republic and the northern Germanic lands enjoyed a lively cultural and commercial relationship. Ovens' father was a rich alderman in Tönning and owned a factory in Amsterdam. For a young, ambitious artist from northern Germany, it was natural to be trained in Holland. However, despite his father's business contacts in Amsterdam, Ovens could not rely on a network of *bloedvrienden* (the 'kindred') upon arriving in the metropolis in the late 1630s. This is why his choice of the well-connected Govert Flinck – an artist who was rapidly creating a stir in Amsterdam and also hailed from the German speaking lands – as a teacher would be so consequential. Ovens likely became acquainted with him in the workshop of Hendrick Uylenburgh, who maintained a broad (international) network, and perhaps knew Ovens' father. The fact that Ovens was a Lutheran would not prevent him from obtaining commissions in religiously tolerant Amsterdam. Already quite well off himself, Ovens married the patrician's daughter Maria Martens in 1652 and received 60,000 *thalers* from his father-in-law, whereby he could vie with the gentry from a financial standpoint. After his return to his native region in 1651, he became the privileged painter of Frederick III, Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorf. Ovens' connection with the Gottorf court added considerably to his social standing in Amsterdam. He broke through there after obtaining a commission to paint the regents of the Amsterdam 'Oudezijds Huiszitten-huis' in 1656, probably through Uylenburgh's mediation. Furthermore, it is of great significance that Ovens, contrary to his first stay in Amsterdam, bought the city's *poorterschap* (citizenship) upon his return there in 1657. This enabled Ovens to become a member of the painters guild, which facilitated him to receive prestigious commissions from the burgomasters and wealthy, art loving businessmen – who often originated from the Southern Netherlands or Northern Germany – as well as from prominent citizens. His career in Amsterdam really took off from that point

on. The famous Joost van den Vondel composed poems on several of Ovens' paintings and the writer Philipp von Zesen from Dessau mentioned our artist in his 1664 *Description of Amsterdam*. Ovens became friends with the German artist Johannes Lingelbach – who was raised Lutheran as well – and might have met the Hamburg painter Jurriaen Jacobsz; it has never been remarked that the latter was inspired by a *Caritas* painting by Ovens. Ovens positioned himself in the network of the influential Bicker and De Graeff families, which afforded him many important commissions, like the large *Justice* painting for the new Amsterdam Town Hall (1662). Finally, the execution of a group portrait of the highly placed regents of the civic orphanage in 1663 formed an impressive conclusion of Ovens' second Amsterdam period, and definitively proved that he was included in the city's elite.

**Esther Guillaume**, Université Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne

### ***Biblical Citizenry for Current City-Dwellers: Analyzing a Late Seventeenth-Century Topography of the Temple***

This paper explores the terms of Jeronimo Nunes da Costa's collaboration with Romeyn de Hooghe, with the objective to appraise the ambivalent thoughts of the *Parnassim*, the Dutch Sephardi community's elite, when it came to their integration within Amsterdam's citizenry. During the last quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Romeyn de Hooghe etched one of the liveliest reconstructions of Solomon's Temple and Moses' Tabernacle, combined with an unprecedented visual proposal of what daily life in the Temple must have looked like in the eyes of his contemporaries. A partial, bound, undated edition of this project regrouping a series of nine prints including keys in Dutch and Hebrew, bears the engraved coat of arms of Jeronimo Nunes da Costa, one of the most powerful figures of Amsterdam's *Parnassim*. Printed in Amsterdam, the reconstitution stands out in the field of what Gary Schwartz described as 17<sup>th</sup>-century "Temple studies". It indeed appears as one of the rare cases where the printed image is the sole vector of the narrative, where no biblical or exegetical text complements its composition. The fact that De Hooghe's signature is absent when Jeronimo Nunes da Costa's name and full title are ostensibly emphasized at the beginning of the edition sets an unusual example of Jewish assertion in a Jewish-Christian collaboration of this kind. Coincidentally, the 1690's also witnessed the publication of a series of single sheet prints of similar dimensions and composition – most likely, also engraved by De Hooghe – describing daily life and rituals in and around the *Esnoga* of Amsterdam, some of them clearly hinting at the biblical Temple's surroundings. The correlation of Sephardim's contemporary and biblical life has yet to be studied in this series, which seems to have been initiated by Da Costa. Using contemporary theological and topographical publications as comparative material, this presentation will consider how, while disengaging with any polemical approximation, Romeyn de Hooghe shifts the traditional perception of the Temple towards an anthropo-topographic model, in the vein of urban Atlas collections that were popular amongst Amsterdam's elite. In particular, I will examine how this collaboration can help us to gain insight on the *Parnassim*'s careful contribution to Amsterdam's artistic landscape, and the terms on which they established the image they wished to broadcast to their Dutch counterparts. Looking at this project in the context of 17<sup>th</sup>-century "Temple studies", one can ask if these images express Da Costa's aspiration to engage in contemporary debates on Solomon's building. As emigrants which were never

quite integrated, no matter how high they managed to climb the social scale, this project might as well appear as an attempt to compliment the Dutch gaze on a community whose customs and supposed history stirred all sorts of fantasies and curiosities.

## EAST MEETS WEST

### **Styling a “Worldly” Art History: Traveling Netherlandish Images and Styles in South Asia, c. 1550-1750**

#### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Katharine Campbell**, University of Michigan

**Jamie Richardson**, Bryn Mawr College

How does one approach the global in Netherlandish art history? This question, seemingly straightforward, has stimulated a vast array of scholarly studies that confirm it is anything but easy to answer. Recent developments in scholarship have shown the potential to cultivate scholarship in understudied geographies, as in the recent exhibitions *Rembrandt and the Inspiration of India* (2018) in Los Angeles and *India and the Netherlands in the Age of Rembrandt* (2019) in Mumbai; to reconnect conventionally discrete epistemological categories, such as those of economic, social, and visual data in the study of the impact of Dutch global trade networks in the early modern period; and to decenter Western paradigms for evaluating images and objects. This last approach is proposed by Deborah Hutton and Rebecca Tucker in their 2014 article on Cornelis Claesz. Heda, “The Worldly Artist in the Seventeenth Century.” They ask, “can we—and how might we—study art objects from across the globe in a way that does not re-inscribe past Eurocentric structures onto the field?” Instead, in the case of Heda (c. 1566-1621), they suggest framing case studies of traveling artists and images equally from contexts of origin and of destination, within larger networks comprising many cultural centers.

This session takes inspiration from Hutton and Tucker’s approach, expanding it to consider not just worldly artists, but worldly methods. It asks for papers that actively rethink conventional methodological approaches to global Netherlandish scholarship in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries. These may take the form of new case studies, approached in a creative methodological way; they may also be presentations that take alternative methods themselves as their subjects. In keeping with our focus on alternative methodologies, we encourage scholars to submit papers that are the products (or works in progress) of collaborative studies across specialties, and we envision the possibility of joint presentations of this research.

Papers in this session might address the following topics and questions, among others:

- What visual material, cultural encounters, time periods, or types of research questions have already become marginalized within global early modern studies? What alternative approaches could open up these areas of study?

- Reconsiderations of consumption and collecting practices of Netherlandish art among courtly patrons outside of Europe (for example, the interest that Ibrahim Adil Shah II [r. 1580-1627] took in Netherlandish art through his relationship with Heda)
- How can scholars approach topics for which archives are non-extant or inaccessible? Or when archives exist, but show evidence of unreliability?
- Tracing single commodities across archives, collections, and visual representations.
- What is gained or lost by adopting particular frameworks or terminology (e.g. a center-periphery model vs. one of polycentrality; cultural transmission vs. cultural mediation; and so on)?
- Can style itself function as a global commodity?

## SPEAKERS

**Carrie Anderson**, Middlebury College

**Marsely Kehoe**, Hope College

### ***Between Archive, Image and Textiles: Visualizing Textile Circulation in the Dutch Global Market***

The acquisition and circulation of textiles from around the world was of critical importance for the economic vitality of the Dutch East and West India Companies (VOC and WIC) in the early modern period. The types of textiles carried on VOC and WIC ships varied dramatically, with cargo lists reflecting a broad geographic range: fine linens from Haarlem, raw silk from Persia, loom-patterned cottons from the Coromandel coast, and chintz from Surat, to name only a few of the many textile types necessary for successful trade and diplomacy across the globe. These textiles came in a wide array of colors and patterns—striped, checked, and flower-printed were especially popular in some regions—and they ranged in quality from coarse to fine. Given their important status as commodities, it is perhaps not surprising that textiles—re-presented as garments in paintings, prints, and drawings—also became potent signifiers in an increasingly global world, where clothing played a critical role in shaping identity in colonial and European circles. Despite their ubiquity in written and visual sources, however, it is often only the finest textiles (such as silk and chintz) that remain in museum collections today, making it challenging for scholars to understand the connections between the archival records and their visual counterparts. Each of these sources (archive, image, and textile) tells only part of the story, but when woven together a larger picture of the global textile trade emerges, one that enables us to better understand how textiles shaped – but were also shaped by – the cultures in which they circulated.

This paper will discuss an ongoing collaborative digital project that brings together these archival, visual, and textile data, a methodology that demonstrates how the rhetorical and iconographical structures of historical records can inform perceived or desired relationships between textiles and the human body. The material for this presentation draws primarily from our in-progress Visual Textile Glossary, an interdisciplinary digital resource that enables scholars to interact dynamically with our rich collection of archival, visual, and textile data – a collection that brings to light the truly dialogic nature of textile circulation in the Dutch global trade networks. While the extensive data that underlies the Visual Textile Glossary is specific to the Dutch trading companies, this project seeks to decenter Europe,

as it makes clear that VOC and WIC merchants were latecomers to an already-complex Indian Ocean and trans-Atlantic trade.

**Neilabh Sinha**, Leiden University

***Wonders, from Far Away: Netherlandish Art at Indo-Persianate Courts, 1575-1625***

This paper proposes that the engagement of Indo-Persianate courtly culture with Netherlandish art ought to be considered within its own conception of wonder. In Indic aesthetic traditions the emotional experience of wonder is produced when a work of art possesses the emotional essence called *adbhuta* (marvellous), while the *ajajib* (wonder) theme is a fixture of early modern Perso-Islamicate visual and textual culture towards the same effect.

The attraction of European art as *exotica* for Indo-Persian courts has been commented upon by scholars of both Mughal and Deccan visual culture. Moreover, the influence of Netherlandish engravings on Mughal and, more recently, on Bijapuri visual culture in extant miniatures from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has been studied extensively. The active engagement of Indo-Persianate courtly ateliers with Netherlandish art resulted in new motifs and techniques and even a renewed emphasis on the allegory genre in art. However, Netherlandish art in early modern South Asia has never been investigated through the lens of wonder as conceptualised indigenously.

Indo-Persianate sovereigns such as Akbar, Ibrahim Adil Shah II, and Jahangir were not only greatly interested in wonders—exotic or otherwise—but also aspired, as demanded by the prevalent courtly culture, to discernment and connoisseurship in art in all its forms. The Mughals Akbar and his son Jahangir, are credited with creating a unique fusion of Persianate and Indic cultures at their court. Meanwhile, Ibrahim II is himself the author of the *Kitab-i-Nauras*, a work on music that is also an elaboration on Indic aesthetics for a Persianate cultural milieu. Neither they nor their artists were, therefore, naïve consumers or interpreters of visual culture.

The proposed paper will apply the perspective of Indo-Persian aesthetics to Netherlandish art in three stages. First, it will re-explore existing scholarship on the exoticness of Netherlandish art and artists, as cultural objects in South Asia, in relation to the experience of wonder. Second, it will consider the strangeness of the intellectual, iconographical, and formal aspects of such art as a source of wonder for an Indo-Persianate audience. Third, the paper will test this approach by examining the longer-term, contemplative repercussions of the wonder of Netherlandish art through the ideas and images produced in the course of Netherlandish-South Asian engagements. The paper will aim, therefore, to engage with existing research in order to present a holistic, bilateral approach to Netherlandish art in early modern South Asia. In doing so, it will also aim for the necessity of engaging with regional intellectual and aesthetic cultures not only in the European-South Asian encounter but on a global level.

**Sarah Mallory**, Harvard University

### ***Seeing Swamps***

Working against the local-global binary that so often underpins global Netherlandish art, my case-study paper will suggest that the presence and influence of the Americas was deeply imbricated in ostensibly 'domestic' Dutch concerns. I argue that in an increasingly globalized world, the notion of geographic specificity was in fact an unstable construct, the impact of local events often felt on a global scale. The doctrine of borders and boundaries, while an important and crucial step in forming a global art historical discourse, overlooks the ways in which commonalities are recognized and envisioned, the ways in which borderless spaces are equally important in understanding Netherlandish art as a worldly art.

In April of 1629, the Dutch sieged the Spanish stronghold in 's-Hertogenbosch, slogging through the city's famously marshy ground to eventually drive out imperial troops and reclaim the territory for the Republic. So famously boggy was the area—in a country known for its abundance of saturated soil—that it had the distinct honor of being dubbed 'Swamp Dragon.' A large printed wall map produced in 1633 commemorates the battle, depicting Dutch and Spanish troops mired in reeds and water, while in the foreground a muscular man clad in a lily pad loincloth and crown of cattails proudly personifies the swamp. Though this map ostensibly depicts a distinctly domestic Dutch event, I would like to suggest it also points to a larger discourse about similar battles happening thousands of miles away in the Americas. While the Dutch and Spanish frequently clashed in the Netherlands, these same nations also battled one another and Indigenous peoples for control of swampy territories across the Atlantic.

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My paper will argue that we cannot understand this map as depicting an isolated event whose meaning and consequences are solely related to local concerns. Rather, expanding on J.R. McNeill's concept of the "ecological teleconnection,"—which "refers to linkages of places far apart" via shared ecological conditions and consequences—I will discuss this map's content and modes of making as an expression of connection, an ecological linkage between the people of the Netherlands and the Americas. Here, I use the term ecological to refer to the ways in which the maps expresses connections between people and their environment, and the ways in which the Dutch understood their connection to the environment, especially swamps. I argue that the map reveals how the Dutch were acutely aware of Spanish aggressions against indigenous peoples in swampland; and, in turn, the Dutch take up the role of indigenous persons in the map. That is: just as the Dutch were fighting for what they perceived to be their ancient homeland, so too were indigenous peoples in the Americas fighting the same fight. By no means was the Dutch struggle akin to that faced by people in the Americas; the Dutch, however, melded their understanding of personhood and place with the Americas, identifying themselves with Indigenous groups as victims of the Spanish. Moreover, I will suggest that in discovering that the Americas, too, had swamplands, the Dutch—who had long been denigrated for living in a marshy ecosystem—began to rethink and reconceive of their connection with the land in far broader and more complex terms than simply the local and the foreign. Integral to this point is a discussion of how the map was made. Early modern swamps were sites of concealment and immutability, defined by their borderless-ness, illegibility—never to be fully

comprehended through the act of seeing. Artists depicting swamps, then, had to reconceive the function of the drawn and engraved line, turning it from a tool of representation—the very sinew of maps, the demarcation of boundaries—into a mark of illegibility, making invisibility visible.

I hope to model how the ecocritical study of swamp images, and other iterations of borderless-ness, might further inform the study of global art history. So-called Dutch Golden Age art lacks a systematic mode for recognizing and considering how images were agents of ecology; and for understanding how ecology is, unto itself, a colonial construct that has shaped the study of landscape images from all periods. Instead, scholarship typically focuses on landscapes as metaphorical expressions of Dutch nationhood and triumph. This renders particular landscape features effectively invisible, as evidenced by the scant scholarly discourse regarding the depiction of swamps, marshes, and bogs, which are in fact frequent features in Dutch landscapes.

This historiographical blindness is somewhat curious since it has been well acknowledged by historians that wetland reclamation was vital to the development and growth of the Dutch identity and economy at home and abroad. Indeed, from hydraulic engineering in Mexico to the filling of Brazilian swamplands, the systematic terraforming, outright decimation, and frequent subjugation of swamplands—and *the peoples who lived in them*—drove the Dutch colonial project. Recognizing the pictorial presence of swamps, then, is not simply a matter of aesthetic appreciation, but also an effort to reclaim a crucial history in which seeing wetland is akin to seeing marginalized places, peoples, and environments. By teaching ourselves to see swamps, what other blind spots might we suddenly see?

**Thijs Weststeijn**, Utrecht University

***Global Art History between Macro and Micro Levels of Analysis: Dutch Domesticity on the Slave Coast***

One of the main methodological challenges of global art history is probably how to reconcile the micro-level of traditional object-oriented analysis with the macro-historical patterns of exchange, trade, and migration. Most Dutch paintings actually obfuscate to what extent the cultural flourishing of the “golden” age was rooted in the ugly numbers of outsourced labor and slavery: even when genre paintings or still lifes feature objects from outside Europe, they showcase idealized homeliness rather than the large world of global interconnectivity and power inequalities.

This paper will engage with this challenge by focusing on representations of Elmina Castle in current-day Ghana, the first Portuguese settlement in West Africa and oldest European building south of the Sahara. When the Dutch West India Company captured the fort in 1637, they made it the capital of their operations and an essential node in the triangular Atlantic slave trade. To this day it remains one of UNESCO’s most evocative sites of memory for the nearly 750,000 Africans that were forcibly brought from the Gold Coast to the New World.

Unsurprisingly, Elmina features in a number of artworks. The paper explores how these images mediated between the traditional small world of Dutch painting and large-scale developments in space and time. Special attention will go to the little-known Portrait of Dirck Wilre in Elmina Castle (1669) by Pieter de Wit, currently in a private collection, that presents a unique case study for iconographic, stylistic, and material reasons. It is one of the very few paintings that show a domestic interior in the Dutch colonial world. It is also particular since, even though it is clearly connected to traditional genre painting, it represents, and even glorifies, the slave trade that constituted the riches the Dutch were seeking on the Gold Coast.

The paper will discuss De Wit's painting and related prints and drawings, works of applied art, and written documents in the light of some of the numbers of global trade, migration, and slavery. In so doing, it will reflect on the methodological feasibility of calibrating large and small scales in the exploration of various issues pertinent to a "worldly" history of Netherlandish art: European imperial power engaging with Asia, Africa, and the Americas in relation to the Dutch self-image; the ensuing visual culture that was transformed by imported luxuries and curiosities; the painful attempts to recreate and maintain Dutch domesticity in the tropics; the homesickness and angst that plagued the lived realities of individual Europeans abroad; and, last but surely not least, the West African men and women they encountered and on whose agency the so-called Dutch "golden" age was partly founded.

## Representing Islam

### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Adam Sammut**, University of York

**Sim Hinman Wan**, University of Hong Kong

### CHAIR

**Adam Sammut**

*The general basis of Orientalist thought is an imaginative geography dividing the world into two unequal parts, the larger and "different" one called the Orient.*

Edward Said, "Islam Through Western Eyes".

The early modern period was an age of Islamic superpowers. As Suleiman the Magnificent blazed a trail of conquest from Buda to Baghdad, the Safavid and Mughal dynasties were establishing hegemony in Iran and India. Netherlandish artists responded in myriad ways. Rubens and Rembrandt copied Persian and Mughal miniatures. In the 1530s, Pieter Coecke van Aelst joined a diplomatic mission to Istanbul, while Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen accompanied Charles V on campaign to Tunis; both artists produced monumental tapestry designs based on first-hand observation. Turkish carpets in still life and portraits in oriental

fancy-dress were signs of burgeoning trade with the East. Yet Muslims were enemies at the gates of Christendom, as emblematised by celebrations of victory at Lepanto in 1571. Black figures, a cipher of the slave trade in which Muslims were often mediators, make a regular appearance in Rubens' bacchanals and Adorations of the Magi, calling into question early modern concepts of race. Such ambivalence and hostility are also reflected in Netherlandish art, as discussed by Larry Silver in his 2011 article on the "Turkish Menace".

Islamic themes are gaining traction in the field. Two recent exhibitions in London and Los Angeles showcased drawings by Rubens, Van Dyck and Rembrandt of Ottoman, Persian and Mughal costumes. Topographical imagery such as De Bry's *Collection of Voyages* has received significant scholarly treatment, as have Rubens' African figures. This panel intends to further the global history agenda by highlighting the artistic exchange between Muslim-ruled territories and the Low Countries. While extant studies tend to focus on specific regions, artists or periods, this panel seeks continuity and common ground across the Netherlandish spectrum. In sketching a longer history of Orientalism before the nineteenth century, the panel will engage with associated hot-button issues such as colonialism, cultural appropriation and religious conflict.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Sim Hinman Wan**, University of Hong Kong

#### ***Savage and Opulent: Dutch Visions of Seventeenth-Century Indonesia's Sultanate Cities***

In the seventeenth century, the Dutch became the Indonesian Archipelago's leading European imperial power upon securing a monopoly on exporting spices from this region. While they continued to capture trade ports and build up colonial settlements for the next three hundred years, most territories within the Archipelago remained under various Islamic sultanates' control until the twentieth century. Compared to the fishing villages of native Indonesians and the fortified outposts of Portugal and Spain, sultanate cities did not only exhibit a more sophisticated degree of architectural development. For the Dutch, the monumentally scaled mosques and palaces also marked the presence of an intimidating culture that undermined European hegemony. Dutch travellers had produced a substantial volume of panoramas, maps, and other drawings to document their observation of these urban landscapes as potential sites for colonisation. Such a collection of visual artefacts is the focus of this paper. Rather than understanding these images as portraits of Indonesia's Muslim spaces through an inquisitive Western lens, the analysis explores how this graphical information reflects the Dutch commitment to the early modern notion of a knowable and surmountable world. By identifying a shift in the manner of representation, I argue that the Dutch construction of the Muslim 'Other', specifically in Indonesia, was a process of conflating various Asian societies to derive a fantastically alien identity of paradoxical savagery and opulence. When the Dutch reached this part of Southeast Asia, neither the architecture nor the culture of Islamic states was entirely foreign to these globe-trotters. They traded at the ports of Ottoman Arabia, Safavid Persia, and Mughal India as their peripheral network on the Indian Ocean. Yet, unlike West and South Asia, the Indonesian Archipelago was a land of numerous small sultanates with more regional particularities that interested the Dutch. Examples covered in this paper include North Sumatra's Aceh, West

Java's Banten, and North Maluku's Ternate. In a 1599 engraving of the sultan's visit at the Ternate Mosque, possibly based on Spanish or Portuguese records, the distinctively tiered pyramidal building that still stands today is drawn with considerable accuracy. However, in a later engraving from 1676 that also features the sultan, the architectural scenery appears more like contemporary Europe's imaginative renderings of East Asian houses. Why did the Dutch revert to the fiction of an enigmatic Orient after decades of interactions with Ternate? Were these images an opportunity to trumpet their knowledge of the entire Asia, attained from contacts with China, the Indochinese domains, and the Chinese settled ports of Indonesia? As the globalisation theorists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri recognise, the capitalist 'Empire' achieved momentum worldwide by suspending the historicity of conquest, exploitation, and oppression. Departing from the Eurocentric narrative of victorious explorers advancing to new horizons, this analysis of Muslim cities, building, and spaces in seventeenth-century Dutch prints seeks to foreground the vulnerable position from which the nascent Dutch Republic encountered the extent of Islam as an established global power.

**Sanne Steen**, Erasmus University, Rotterdam

### ***Early Dutch Orientalism and Radical Enlightenment in Mahomets Alkoran (1696)***

Only a single illustrated edition of the Qur'an has ever been published. It is not surprising that this unique edition was published outside the Islamic world because of the restrictions on religious visual imagery in Islam. *Mahomets Alkoran*, a Dutch publication of 1696, is adorned with six illustrations engraved by the Amsterdam artist Caspar Luyken. Four of these illustrations depict praying Muslims in an Islamic environment while the other two depict alleged miraculous scenes from the life of Muhammad. The illustrations seem intended to accurately render Ottoman clothing and topography, but they also criticize the Islamic faith and ridicule Muslims. Like the illustrations, the text of *Mahomets Alkoran* is ambivalent. Apart from republishing the 1657 translation of the Qur'an by Jan Hendricksz Glazemaker, the publication included two biographies of Muhammad and a dialogue between him and Abdias, an obscure figure from the Old Testament. *Mahomets Alkoran* can thus be seen as an assemblage of texts with different origins and purposes, because they not only engage with Islam, but also encourage a comparative reading with the Bible. By comparing text and image, I argue that these contradictory sentiments originate from a concurrence of Orientalism on the one hand – the study and stereotyping of an assumed peripheral and primitive culture – and Radical Enlightenment on the other, the process of radicalization and secularization that Jonathan Israel (2001) observed in the second half of the seventeenth century. Orientalism is evident in *Mahomets Alkoran* from the stereotyping and "othering" of the Islamic world and the treatment of the Ottoman Empire as *pars pro toto* for the Islamic world. While supposedly objective, Radical Enlightenment here emphasized Spinozist themes like cultural relativism, iconoclasm and the oneness of God and nature through illustrations placed strategically within the translated text of the Qur'an. While *Mahomets Alkoran* might possess visual, epistemic, and philosophical food for thought, the combination of Orientalism and Radical Enlightenment also gave it some dichotomies. In the context of the Radical Enlightenment study of Islam, I will explore how these sentiments are expressed through the combination of text and image. The second

part of this paper explores the function of images as bookmarks in early modern books, situating *Mahomets Alkoran* as a microhistory for Islamic studies in the pre-modern era.

**Emily Hannam**, British Museum

### ***Shah-Jahan in Amsterdam: Exploring Willem Schellink's Fascination with Mughal Art and Politics***

Rembrandt's 23 pen-and-ink sketches after imperial Mughal portraits have been the subject of numerous scholarly studies and exhibitions in recent years. Less well known, yet no less significant, are the Mughal inspired paintings of his contemporary, the Dutch artist and poet Willem Schellinks (1627-78). Following the recent attribution of a painting in the British Royal Collection to Schellinks, this paper will explore his works depicting Emperor Shah-Jahan and their possible sources, and argue that Schellinks was the most compelling artist of 17<sup>th</sup>-century Europe to engage with India. Examining paintings and drawings now in the Royal Collection, the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Musée Guimet and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, this paper will provide evidence as to how Schellinks may have got hold of contemporary Mughal pictures, exactly when he was looking at them, and why he may have made this intriguing series.

## GENDER AND DISABILITY

### **Breaking Conventions and Crafting Identity: The Multifaceted Relationship Between Women and Art in the Low Countries**

#### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Samantha Chang**, University of Toronto

**Catherine Powell**, University of Texas at Austin | Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society

**Lauryn Smith**, Case Western Reserve University | Cleveland Museum of Art

This session explores the less commonly portrayed—and much less discussed—representation of women as artists and agents of cultural and artistic change. Recent exhibitions and publications raise and address the participation of mostly 'exceptional' women artists and aristocratic and noblewomen in the creation and patronage of art. Notwithstanding these works, however, the field continues to be dominated by a history of men and centres upon patriarchal analyses and methodologies. Instead of reflecting on the exceptional, what can we gather on the paradigmatic women of the Low Countries? In this session, we critically examine the role of gender and gender identity in creating and curating art in the broadest sense. How did this multifaceted relationship play out in the development and portrayal of women's identity and their self-actualization? How did women construct their identities via commissioning artists and collecting objects, both independently and as a joint venture with their spouses? Can new approaches to patronage

further nuance the concept of conjugal patronage? In what ways did women artists subvert societal norms? Our panel seeks to formulate approaches that further discussions of the role of gender within artistic pursuits.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Andrea Pearson**, American University, Washington, DC

#### ***Negotiating Gender in the Ghent Altarpiece***

The Ghent Altarpiece is undeniably gendered. Such protocols are immediately evident in the exterior view. There, Jan van Eyck aligned female donor Elisabeth Borluut with the conventionally less favored, sinister side of the composition (in relation to the enthroned figures on the interior), and male donor Joos Vijd with the honorific dexter side, an arrangement that elevated Vijd relationally. Yet to be recognized, however, are other, more subtle ways in which van Eyck's approach to figuration supports gender differences between wife and husband, including subtle distinctions in positions, gestures, and tonalities. As with the dexter/sinister alignment, these choices advance a normative marital hierarchy that asserts primacy for Vijd while comparatively marginalizing Borluut through visual and conceptual binaries. They do so even as the imagery unifies the two individuals by suggesting privileged status and salvation for both through the altarpiece's eucharistic iconography and its sitting on an altar: these features imply the couple's access to the host, the perceived source of redemption.

New observations made possible by the recent cleaning of the exterior panels further complicate van Eyck's gendered choices in representation. In particular, the removal of oxidized varnish has revealed previously obscured approaches to color and contrast that connect Borluut far more directly than Vijd to the Annunciate Virgin, archangel Gabriel, and prophets and sibyls portrayed above. Among the implications of these choices, I argue, is that van Eyck defined Borluut as an adherent to normalized ideals for femininity encapsulated by the Virgin, including humility and marital chastity, that were advanced as exemplary for lay women in devotional and conduct literature. However, Borluut's proximity to the holy figures claims for her a degree of spiritual access, understanding, and agency that associates her with another archetypal expectation for lay women: to preside over and advance domestic piety. By this time, female spiritual authority had become a point of contention in certain theological circles. I propose that van Eyck mediated these tensions for the altarpiece's various audiences by embedding Borluut's agency within the defined marital hierarchy described above, which ultimately brought it under her husband's oversight. The image thereby transacted female spiritual authority via masculinization while asserting archetypal masculinity for Vijd as head-of-household. This elevated status would have appealed to Vijd's aspiration for upward mobility, a concern that has been demonstrated. Ultimately, the basic gendered protocols of the work became normalized in large-scale commissions: they appear in images by the next generation of artists, if modified in response to specific circumstances. Such emulation suggests that these typologies were considered effective in sustaining the dominant socioreligious order in which gender-sensitive, visually-skilled patrons and viewers were deeply invested.

As the first dedicated investigation of gender in the canonical Ghent Altarpiece, this study restores the neglected Elisabeth Borluut and the Borluut-Vijd marriage to positions of consequence; analyzes gendered visuality within previously unrecognized negotiations of agency and authority in the imagery; and demonstrates Jan van Eyck as an innovatory and influential genderist.

**Elizabeth Rice Mattison**, University of Toronto

### ***The Sculptress: Carving Women in the Early Modern Low Countries***

Sculpture has long been considered a masculine art form. In his *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters*, Giorgio Vasari singled out Prosperzia de' Rossi, contrasting her femininity with the masculinity of her sculpting practice. He was astonished that her 'little hands, so tender and so white', could perform 'manual labours, braving the roughness of marble and the unkindly chisels'. Even in contemporary scholarship, female artists have been considered primarily for their work in 'feminine' materials like wax or silk, rather than wood or stone.

The wives, widows, sisters, and mothers of sculptors have long formed footnotes in the study of northern European sculpture. The work of these women in managing workshops, administering finances, and forming alliances through marriage has been acknowledged as part of the familial business of art in the early modern period. Yet, the role of women as sculptors in their own right has been overlooked. The famous Brussels-based family of sculptors, the Bormans, included four generations of fathers, sons, *and* daughters: at her death in 1545, Jan II Borman's daughter Maria was described as a sculptress (*beeldsnyderesse*). Anna Coxcie (1547–1595), the daughter of the renowned painter Michael Coxcie, was a documented sculptor in Mechelen. This paper examines the place that women carved for themselves as sculptors in the early modern Netherlands. I argue that female sculptors held positions of agency beyond the 'workshop wife', and succeed in crafting individual artistic identities.

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This paper focuses primarily on the career of Maria Faydherbe (1587–after 1633), a sculptor in Mechelen who specialized in religious statuary. Unusually, she signed many of her works, and as many as twenty statues, of all scales, can be attributed to her, in both stone and wood. A legal suit brought before the Mechelen aldermen in 1633 sheds light on Maria's career and self-definition through her art. In the dispute, Maria claimed she owed no debt to the guild (*niet schuldich*), whereas her male compatriots were mere 'dozen workers' (*dozijnewerckers*). Incensed that a woman would boast of her prowess, the men proposed a sculpting duel, in which Maria's slandered colleagues could prove their merit. At stake was Maria's claim of superiority over the male sculptors of Mechelen. Her insult of 'dozen workers' suggested the men's lack of innovation and mass production. In contrast, Maria's signed works experiment with more dramatic styles, incorporating sweeping drapery and emotional expression distinct from other Mechelen sculptures. Although the outcome of the duel—if it ever took place—remains unknown, Maria Faydherbe's documented career and surviving works demonstrate her ability to craft a space for herself as a sculptor. In the crowded artistic landscape, women could forge a place for themselves, as independent and skillful sculptresses.

***A Face of One's Own? Visualising Learned Women in the Early Modern Low Countries***

In the course of the early modern period, portraits of the learned became an increasingly important element of scholarly identity constructions. From the sixteenth century onwards, humanists included portraits of themselves in their letters to their peers as part of the formality of opening a correspondence, the portrait serving as the face-to-face introduction to a (distant) colleague whom they were unlikely ever to meet in person. After the 1660s, supported by changing printmaking technologies, portrait frontispieces became almost *de rigueur* in any new intellectual book published and the demand for portraits of the learned and literate—both to be included in books and sold separately—increased significantly. This presented the growing number of learned women—who articulated a growing awareness of their public image and an increased interest in actively modelling it—with a challenge: if publicly speaking and publishing were already considered as challenges to the prescriptive definition of modest female behavior, printing a picture of one's person for purchase seemed all the more scandalous. At the same time, however, new emancipatory conceptualisation of the female body and mind gave rise to the hesitant acceptance of women as knowledgeable individuals in their own right.

To investigate the historical efforts of women to represent and embody intellectual authority, this paper will examine how printed images of early modern female intellectuals were constructed, distributed and received with regard to intellectual authority. As such, it builds on recent socio-cultural studies of portraiture and explores the hypothesis that these portraits contributed to the image of female scholarly identity by forming visual repertoires, constructing identities of learned women with a shared and recognisable physiognomy and iconographical program. In particular, I will focus on the visual images of three exemplary female figures actively participating in the Republic of Letters: Anna Maria van Schurman, Margaret Cavendish and Maria Sibylla Merian. I will show how their (self) portraits—both visually and (inter)textually—united their undeniable femininity with their aspired intellectual authority in one image and, as such, challenged the persistent gender hierarchy in the early modern intellectual field.

**Catherine Powell**, University of Texas at Austin | Leiden University Center for the Arts in Society

***Choosing to be Agnes Block: Art in the Service of Self-Definition and Self-Representation***

The life of Amsterdammer Agnes Block illustrates the critical role personal agency played in becoming known as an expert not only in the emerging science of botany, but also in the art of the science, against all contemporary gender expectations. Agnes Block (1629–1704) was the niece of famed poet Joost van den Vondel; she belonged to the wealthy and respected Block, Rutgers, de Wolff, and de Flines families in Amsterdam. She married twice, each time to successful textile merchants with leading roles in the Mennonite church and community. She was the step-mother to three children, godmother to three young women who bore her

name, and grandmother to at least twelve grandchildren. This was a full and respectable (and respected) life: but this is not how SHE wanted to be known and remembered.

Block's passion was Vijverhof, the country estate she bought and developed. This is where she grew flower and plant specimens from all over the world, including the pineapple that cemented her fame. This is also where the art she commissioned from Hermann Henstenburgh, Johannes Bronkhorst, Alida Withoos, Johanna Herolt, Maria Sibylla Merian, and Jan Weenix (amongst many others) has its genesis. Block devoted enormous amounts of money and time to becoming *Flora Batava*, a passionate and knowledgeable botanist and collector. This is how she chose to be known and remembered.

This paper focuses on Block's actions of self-definition and self-representation with respect to three bodies of artworks in particular. The first is Block's *Bloemenboek*, a collection of botanical watercolours commissioned from the best and best-known artists of the time to immortalize her prized garden, most likely assembled after 1674. The second is a family portrait by Jan Weenix (c. 1684), which features Block, her second husband Sybrand de Flines, and two children in front of Vijverhof. The last is a commemorative medal of Block as *Flora Batava* by Jan Boskam (1700), which was produced in several exemplars in silver and bronze and, according to the travel diary of the German polymath Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach, in gold. The paper argues that all three works (or groups of works) are undeniably about Block and her interests in botany and in collecting. The perspective for Block's self-definition and self-representation, however, varies: the *Bloemenboek* is arguably about Block's expertise vis-à-vis the specimens, while the portrait places Block's pursuits in the visual context of her family. The medal stands at the other end of the spectrum as a material manifestation of Block's persona as a woman and individual. Drawing from archival sources and contemporary treatises, this paper explores the arc of Block's self-definition and self-representation through art and proposes a highly personal understanding of these works: they are about choosing to be Agnes Block.

## **Confronting Gender in the Collection: Approaches to Studying Women and Their Relationship with Art Objects**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Samantha Chang**, University of Toronto

**Elizabeth Honig**, University of Maryland

**Catherine Powell**, University of Texas at Austin | Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society

**Lauryn Smith**, Case Western Reserve University | Cleveland Museum of Art

**Thijs Weststeijn**, Utrecht University

What role does gender play in the creation, acquisition, and use of objects? To what extent does gender impact collecting, patronage, display practices, and the visualization of artworks? This session confronts the impact of early-modern women as conscious patrons and collectors and evaluates their contributions via household ledgers, auction records,

inventories, and correspondences. It also considers how gender could affect both the subject matter of paintings and the perception and viewing dynamics of more traditional narratives. This panel fosters discussion on new methodologies for analyzing women as patrons, collectors, and consumers of art. In doing so, we continue the effort to reframe the debate on gender and consumption and consider new models for studies of this nature.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Robbert Jan van der Maal**, *De Nederlandsche Leeuw* (The Royal Netherlands Society for Genealogy and Heraldry)

**Judith Noorman**, University of Amsterdam

#### ***Household Heroine. A Newly Discovered Ledger and Approaches for Studying its Richly Documented Art Purchases***

In 1635, a Dutch painter was approached by a regular client who commissioned him, amongst others, to paint their portrait into a Biblical scene. They haggled over the price, and a deal was made.

This anecdote is taken from the pages of a newly discovered seventeenth-century ledger, the subject of this paper. In its circa 200 pages, the owner documented, in great detail, no fewer than circa 100 art purchases and commissions, along with all other household purchases, large and small, made between 1623 and 1646. The household ledger, which had been hidden in a family archive, is a unique discovery that allows rare insight into scarcely documented art purchases, and into art as part of the much larger category of household consumption. What is more, the owner is, perhaps surprisingly, a woman: an independently wealthy, Catholic woman who never married and whose identity will be disclosed as part of this paper.

First, this paper provides a brief overview of the many art purchases that are documented in the ledger, sifting through its detailed references to prices, restorations, provenance, shops, artists' names, subject matter, raw materials, delivery costs, frames, and much more. Based on this rich documentation, we illustrate the various ways in which a woman could act on the art market: as a patron, consumer on the open market, spontaneous purchaser at fairs, and curator of the family history. Second, this amply documented study case is used to outline promising approaches for studying 'normal' women (i.e. burgers), who are often absent from studies about early modern collecting, as opposed to their aristocratic sisters, such as Amalia van Solms and Elizabeth Stuart. To study these women and their impact on the art market, it is necessary 1) to expand the definition of art as separate from other luxury goods, and 2) to expand art historical methodologies to include household consumption theory. Cultural historians have shown long since that women ruled the household in the Dutch Republic, which was, at the time, the most important economic site and the place where art was sold and consumed. This is amply underscored by the household ledger under discussion. With these new perspectives on art and household consumption, more women consumers can be brought into the light, which will, in turn, bring us closer to understanding women's roles on the art market and in Dutch society of the seventeenth century.

Sander Karst, Utrecht University

***Van Roestraeten's Still Lifes with Exotics as a Reflection of Women's Changing Social Position in England at the End of the Seventeenth Century***

The decades following the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660 were marked by major social and economic changes in England. After the Puritan regime of Cromwell, a more libertine wind now blew through the country. In combination with a general increase in prosperity and an increased social mobility, this led to women being able to enjoy more autonomy and occupy a more prominent place in society. In my paper, I will show how women's changing social position reshaped the English art world and, specifically, how this is registered in the oeuvre of London-based Dutch still life painter Pieter Gerritsz. Van Roestraeten (1630–1700).

During these years people from almost all walks of life started buying paintings to decorate their homes. The growing demand resulted in several Dutch artists emigrating to England in order to tap into this new market. The new market that now emerged was segmented with auctions being organized that were aimed at the English elite and auctions aimed at a more mixed audience, offering more affordable work, including work by Dutch migrant artists. In the paper, I will show that the market was not only segmented based on value and social position, but also based on the gender of potential buyers. As a result of their increased autonomy, women from well-to-do households now often had their own apartment or 'closet' in the house that was used and decorated according to their own preferences. As a result, women increasingly entered the market for luxury goods. I will show that dealers and auctioneers responded to this by explicitly addressing women as well and by adapting their supply. Around 1690, there were auctioneers, for example, who advertised that the auctions they organised were suitable for 'Persons of Quality, and Gentry of either Sex' or that the paintings they offered were suitable for decorating 'ladies closets'. One auctioneer reserved a separate domain for women at his auction house: 'for the Ladies (when drawn) there will be a separate Apartment'. In addition to paintings, auctioneers started to offer exotics at their auction, such as 'Indian Screens stained on Sattin (...), very pleasant for Ladies Closets', 'Rich Tea-Tables', and 'japan work and other curiosities'. Novel products from Asia, such as Chinese porcelain and Japanese lacquerwork, were especially popular among women.

One painter whose work was regularly offered at auctions explicitly aimed at women was Van Roestraeten. He introduced a new sub-genre around that time: still lifes with cups of China porcelain and Yixing teapots often displayed on tables made of Japanese lacquerwork, precisely the kind of exotic objects that were popular among women. In my paper, I will argue that he thereby responded to the growing and idiosyncratic demand for luxury products among women, just like the auctioneers with whom he did business. His paintings thus document how—at a time that women gained more autonomy—a female-oriented space arose in which both paintings and exotics gained popularity.

***A Room of One's Own: The Cabinets of Amalia van Solms-Braunfels (1602–1675), Princess of Orange***

Amalia van Solms-Braunfels (1602–1675), Princess of Orange, first arrived in the United Provinces in 1615 as the favorite lady-in-waiting of the ‘Winter Queen’, Elizabeth Stuart (1596–1662). By 1626, she had married Frederik Hendrik (1584–1647), Prince of Orange and Stadhouder of the United Provinces, and produced their first child and heir, Willem II (1626–1650). Under the princely couple, the United Provinces flourished as a cultural and global power. The strength and wealth of the United Provinces, and by association the House of Orange, is embedded in Amalia’s *cabinets*; intimate spaces in her apartments where she carefully curated ensembles of decorative and fine art objects. These rooms housed a seemingly eclectic collection of materials including rock crystal, amber, coral, and Chinese porcelain, as well as objects consisting of tortoiseshell, lacquerwork, and mother of pearl. Objects from Asia, the Americas, and Africa were displayed alongside works produced by contemporary Netherlandish artists and artisans including Sir Peter Paul Rubens, Rembrandt van Rijn, and Willem de Rots. While scholarly interest in Amalia’s agency as an independent patron and collector has grown over the last two decades, the focus to date on individual, extant objects, while informative, does not provide a comprehensive understanding of her interests and motivations as a patron and collector--how she employed objects, both individually and in decorative ensembles, to construct her various identities. Through an examination of Amalia’s cabinets in the Stadholder’s Quarters and the *Oude Hof* in Noordeinde, this presentation investigates how the Princess cultivated an international social network to acquire works. Once acquired, how did she employ these objects in decorative ensembles to construct her various identities and further the status and prestige of the House of Orange-Nassau? Uniting textual and visual evidence in the form of inventories, correspondences, and objects with critical theory, this presentation charts Amalia’s growth as a collector and art patron through the curation of her cabinets. By focusing on the objects as an ensemble along with the sites they were displayed in, this presentation illuminates the convergence between social discourses on gender and personal agency within the build environment of the cabinet.

**Sandra F. Racek**, Northwestern University | Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

***Hendrick Goltzius’s Vertumnus and Pomona (1613) and the Erotics of Mutability***

This paper will focus on gender role-play in Hendrick Goltzius’s 1613 depiction of *Vertumnus and Pomona*, inspired by Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, and the sexualized dynamics of viewership. According to Eric Jan Sluijter’s landmark essay, “Vertumnus and Pomona by Hendrick Goltzius (1613) and Jan Tengnagel (1617): Constants and Contrasts in Form and Subject” in the *Rijksmuseum Bulletin*, *Vertumnus and Pomona* was “the most frequently depicted mythological subject in the Northern Netherlands [between 1590-1670]”, and seventeenth-century literate (even if not Latin-educated) viewers would have known the narrative. Compositionally, the large canvas stages an intimate encounter with the monumental figures. Though the early provenance of the work is not known, most viewers

would have understood that the leering old woman is Vertumnus, the god of seasons who can change appearance at will, and that he has transformed himself to seduce Pomona, the goddess of fruit, who secludes herself in her garden and refuses to engage male suitors. They would have also recognized and perhaps even delighted in the misunderstanding that structures the tense interaction between the figures: unaware that her companion is the mutable god, Pomona raises her sickle toward the woman who is acting incongruously for her gender and age. In this paper I identify and unpack how Goltzius's rendering invited viewers to consider the dynamics of viewership vis-à-vis the depicted sensual encounter between Pomona and Vertumnus. By analyzing Vertumnus's cross-dressing as both the means for erotic access to Pomona and a display of his mutable identity, I argue that Goltzius's 1613 painting visually exemplifies eroticized conceptions of the dynamics of viewership solicited by virtuosic mutability of artistic skill, for which Goltzius was celebrated in his lifetime.

My analysis of Goltzius's painting is drawn from my dissertation, "Dressed for Deceit: Male Cross-Dressing in Mythological and Pastoral Art in the Netherlands (1600-1680)", which explores the intersection of seventeenth-century debates concerning the credibility of appearances and permissible transgressions of normative gender roles through fantasy depictions of male-female cross-dressing, a practice rarely permissible and seldom documented in seventeenth-century Holland. Much Netherlandish art theoretical writing of the seventeenth century focuses on the power of credible likeness by describing art making and viewing through explicitly erotic language. Karel van Mander uses such rhetoric in *Den Grondt* where he advises artists to design images that operate by enticing the gaze of art lovers, while also inviting viewers to be wary of the pleurably seductive power of art. He notes that a noble and worthy artist is one "who with his artistic work can open a sweet impulse to the eyes of men so that their hearts are lured from their dwelling places and remain attached to it." Landmark scholarship by Elizabeth Honig, Eric Jan Sluijter, Angela Vanhaelen, Bronwen Wilson, Thijs Weststeijn and others address issues of discernment and the moral, metaphysical, and material implications raised by the seventeenth-century tradition of understanding visual encounters in erotic terms. Honig's investigation of the female gaze through the work of Gesina ter Borch, in particular is foundational for drawing attention to the social construction of gendered viewing practices. This paper builds on that scholarship and addresses the erotics of Vertumnus's mutable identity conveyed through cross-dressing.

## **Dis/abilities in Early Modern Netherlandish Art**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Barbara A. Kaminska**, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville

**Bert Watteeuw**, Rubens House | Rubenianum, Antwerp

Netherlandish art has a very rich iconography of sensory and motor disability. This session invites papers that explore, expand and interpret this corpus in novel ways. It aims at analyzing contexts in which the disabled are depicted in secular and religious images, and

examining visual strategies adopted in those images to express socioreligious, legal, and economic anxieties caused by the presence of the disabled in the increasingly urban, mercantile, and work-oriented communities. We invite potential speakers to consider how visual arts negotiated the often negative approaches to the disabled and chronically ill members of society with the Christian call to charity in an era when the traditional distinction between the “deserving” and “undeserving” poor was gradually becoming obsolete. Further, questions of collecting and market for those images shall be addressed, along with the impact of sixteenth-century religious reformations on the approaches to the disabled and the poor. We also want to draw attention to the careers of artists with disability in the early modern period. Finally, this session aims at investigating methodologies relevant to the study of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century iconography of disability. While in recent years disability studies have become an important area of research in social sciences and humanities, their methodological and theoretical approaches, often grounded in postcolonialism, are yet to produce satisfying and non-anachronistic readings of early modern imagery. Conversely, studies published by social, cultural, and medical historians are often sparsely, poorly, and repetitively illustrated. Art historians have a unique contribution to make by bringing to light a broad and diverse visual discourse on disability and to an admittedly smaller yet important group of historic representations of and by individual people with a disability. Similarly, we want to call attention to the relative absence of exhibitions dedicated to disability. While museums themselves have vastly improved physical accessibility, they often struggle with actually engaging people with a disability through content-driven methods. Scholarship in this area is meaningful. It impacts current debates on diversity and inclusion, not just within the confines of academia and the museum world, but in society at large. Together, museum curators and art historians are well equipped to sensitively interpret the generalized visual discourse on disability as they are keenly aware of the specific objectives of differing image types, and can recover unique faces and voices from history through a much more in-depth knowledge of collections. While, as outlined above, we invite papers on a broad range of subjects related to the representation of disability in the early modern Netherlandish art, preference will be given to those papers which discuss unpublished images and case-studies, and explore the careers of artists with a disability.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Bert Watteeuw**, Rubens House | Rubenianum, Antwerp

***Remembering Matthias Jacque (1624-1662). An extraordinary addition to “the history of being on display”***

The range of representations of people with a disability with which art historians are familiar is limited. Well-known images tend to present people with a disability as amusing decorations in the margins of illuminated manuscripts or as crooks who fake a limp or a hump to fool unwitting citizens into handing out alms. In other cases, those who need support are reduced to a supporting role, a marginalized group included at the very edge of a composition as a foil to the virtue and beauty of protagonists who are more centrally positioned. In religious painting, their condition is presented as a hindrance to be

miraculously overcome in faith. In yet other cases, images of people with a disability are collected merely for their novelty value as ‘natural curiosities’.

As Rosemarie Garland-Thomas noted in 2001: *“The history of disabled people in the western world is in part the history of being on display, of being visually conspicuous while being politically and socially erased”*. This talk will discuss an important new addition to this complicated ‘history of being on display’, the 1654 portrait of Matthias Jacque, a double transtibial amputee. This singular portrait is part of a 1000 page court file brought before the very highest court of appeal in the Holy Roman Empire, the *Reichskammergericht* in Speyer. The file offers an exceptionally detailed insight into what it meant to be ‘disabled’ in early modern Europe. Depositions from the protagonists, neighbours and the doctors who treated Jacque, sketch an extraordinarily lively image of the events that shaped his life. The case allows us to witness the impact of more generalized (visual) discourse on disability on the lived reality of individuals with a disability. To my knowledge, it is also the earliest example of a person with a disability using an image to claim compensation for his condition in court. Jacque is presented as a gentleman in fashionable attire, even his soled kneepads are stylish. His pose is almost classical, calling to mind portraits of kneeling donors. Without the lower half, the likeness would honour all the conventions of secular portraiture, including the cocky ‘Renaissance elbow’ that is so typical of male portraiture of the early modern period. The artist took care to include a gold band set with a diamond on the little finger of Jacque’s left hand. This is no destitute man, not a beggar, a supporting act or a foil for someone else’s virtue or beauty. He might be on display, but he is so by choice, and he is looking his intended viewer, a judge at the highest court in the Holy Roman Empire, straight in the eye.

This self-sufficient, strong characterization in itself makes the portrait rare. What makes it even more special is that it in fact served as a mobility aid, a prosthetic that travelled to Speyer in Jacque’s stead. This unique portrait is not just a representation of a footless man; it legitimately represented him and it formed an integral part of his well-documented legal struggle for compensation. The case is a poignant reminder of how crucial issues of representation are to the emancipatory struggles of minority groups.

**Nina Schroeder**, VU University, Amsterdam

***‘Your Brother, the Cripple’: Menno and His Crutch as Iconography in Dutch Portrait Prints and Polemics***

The sixteenth-century Dutch reformer Menno Simons occasionally ended his letters to his followers with the closing text, “your brother, the cripple.” In adult life, Menno suffered from health issues that affected his mobility. There are no true likenesses of Menno from his lifetime; however, many invented portraits of him were produced in the seventeenth century, and the inclusion of a crutch became an important component of the iconography associated with him. In this paper, I will explore the representation of Menno and his crutch, highlighting its differing functions in both laudatory and polemical Dutch illustration work. The function of this crutch motif will be examined in relation to early modern thought about (dis)ability, orthodoxy, heresy, and (religious) leadership.

A Frisian Catholic priest turned Anabaptist, Menno Simons emerged as a key leader of the Anabaptist community in the Low Countries during the late 1530s. The whole Dutch branch of this minority dissenting faith movement soon became known as Mennonites (or as Doopsgezinden). Laudatory portrait prints of Menno circulated in the Dutch Republic where there was a market for his likeness among members of the economically thriving and culturally active Mennonite community. However, his likeness was also used as a key motif in many polemical illustrations that were intended to cast aspersions on Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition (much like representations of leaders such as Calvin or Luther were used in polemics to target the Lutheran and Calvinist denominations as a whole).

I will investigate Menno's status as a "cripple" and consider how this shaped memory culture surrounding him as a man and as a church leader, then I will analyse illustrations that use the crutch motif to illustrate Menno in Dutch art and material culture. I will track the trajectory and function of the use of the crutch as a visual cue to indicate Menno and the Mennonites in satirical illustrations and broadsheets. I will also focus on the effects of both emphasis and de-emphasis of his disability in portraiture and contextualize some artists' choices to put the crutch at the forefront of the portrait (eg. Van Sichem) and other artists' choices to omit it entirely (Luyken etc.). Instances when the crutch motif and its meanings are combined with other common Dutch tropes – like the typical minister's pose of the scholar-theologian in his study – will also come under consideration.

This presentation will offer new insight on the iconography of the crutch in Dutch art and religious polemics. It will also challenge and update some assumptions in the small but useful body of literature on the portraits of Menno Simons (Boekenoogen 1916; Smeding 1948; Visser et al. 1996). This paper will bring subject matter that has so far remained primarily in the realm of religious studies scholarship more fully into dialogue with art historical literature on disability, Dutch portraiture convention, and print culture.

#### Cited Works:

- G.J. Boekenoogen, 'De Portretten van Menno Simons', *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 53 (1916), pp. 33-106.  
S. Smeding, 'The Portraits of Menno Simons', *Mennonite Life* (July 1948), pp. 16-19.  
P. Visser, M. Sprunger (with contributions by A. Plak), *Menno Simons: Places, Portraits, Progeny*, (G.K. Waite, trans. [from Dutch]), Altona: Friesens, 1996.

## WORKSHOP PRACTICES

### Intermedial Collaborations in Artistic Processes

#### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Elizabeth Rice Mattison**, University of Toronto  
**Laura Tillery**, Hamilton College

Art-making in the early modern period necessitated the collaboration of artists. Beyond assistants helping a master in the workshop, artists also worked together between media.

Such coordination across materials might transform a cartoon into a tapestry of gold, silk, and wool threads; painters completed the highly sought-after carved altarpieces produced in Brussels and Antwerp, both through the addition of wings and the application of polychromy to sculpture. This panel explores collaborative and intermedial encounters in Northern Europe, c. 1400–1700, which brought together two or more artists or art forms. Consideration of such coordination between materials challenges the deeply entrenched disciplinary tendency to prioritize the solitary artist and self-contained material. The competition between the arts, especially painting and sculpture, in early modern art has been the subject of much critical study, and collaborations between famous painters, like Jan Brueghel and Peter Paul Rubens, have recently received attention. In contrast, this panel seeks to consider the ways in which both artists and objects worked across and between different media: how the interactivity of artists, named and unnamed, differed from solitary practice, and how artists variously employed media, including mixed media, multimedia, transmedia, and intermedia.

Rather than considering audiences' reception of objects resulting from intermedial collaboration, this panel focuses on the creation of these works. Papers will examine the structures that enabled or prevented the production of objects that crossed the boundaries of a single material. The panel seeks to understand the processes that led to the collaboration of art makers across media in early modern Northern Europe.

Proposed topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Studies of multimedia, transmedia, or intermedia objects that explore relationships across and between media. Examples might include painted and carved altarpieces, stained glass and architecture, books and their covers, or the painting of musical instruments;
- Combining, blending, and fusing of media in the visual and performing arts, such as civic rituals or pageants;
- Tracing of artistic processes that require the cooperation of numerous makers, including the collaborative endeavors of print designers and block cutters or woodworkers' models for metalwork;
- Artistic self-consciousness or response to fellow artists;
- The role of institutions, guilds, and patrons in fostering or limiting collaborations and combinations of media;
- Consideration of the historiographic implications of interartistic and intermedial experiments and the development of the canon of Netherlandish art.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Ruth Ezra**, University of Southern California

#### ***Inside Out and In Hand: the Practitioner's View on the Callimachus Epitaph***

The Callimachus Epitaph, a bronze relief installed in Krakow's Dominican Church in memory of Filippo Buonaccorsi, necessitated the collaboration of two Nuremberg artists: the carver Veit Stoss, who is assumed to have provided the wood model; and the Rotschmied, or brass founder, Hermann Vischer the Younger, who is assumed to have led the casting at his

family's foundry. (The work is undocumented.) This paper reconstructs the steps Vischer took to cast Stoss's model through an indirect lost-wax process. I demonstrate how the guiding forms of the carver's wood prototype manifested a thought style, or sculptural intelligence, convergent with the founder's actions. Whereas less obstinate model-makers would have simplified their designs to streamline Vischer's difficult and time-consuming task of building piece-molds around undercuts, I argue that Stoss prevailed upon his smith to rise to the technical challenge of reproducing, without paraphrase, almost exactly the same upturned drapery pattern that the carver himself had executed not in wood, but in stone a few years prior with the Volckamer Monument (1499). The payoff for Vischer was that the undercut hollows effected spatially expansive illusions and self-reflective technical revelations in the cast. Such passages advertise the virtuosity of modeler and founder, both of whom create fabric as "thin as paper." In closing, I consider Stoss's reception of his own work in bronze, speculating as to what lessons he took from the collaboration with Vischer that he then applied to later projects.

**Daan van Heesch**, Royal Library of Belgium, Brussels

***Weaving Bosch and Bruegel: Cross-Craft Adaptation in a Brussels Tapestry Series (c. 1560)***

The four Brussels tapestries "after" Hieronymus Bosch (c. 1450-1516) in San Lorenzo de El Escorial are undoubtedly among the most remarkable and conspicuous survivals of the painter's near-cult status among the European elite. This well-documented case has received ample attention in scholarship, but much less known is the fact that the aristocratic Bosch craze also inspired other Brussels workshops to experiment with the legacy of the popular painter in the luxurious medium of tapestry.

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This paper deals with several fragmentary sets of a History of Hercules series, first woven in the workshop of Frans Schavaert in about 1560. Central to this study are the medallions in the borders of the Brussels tapestries – woven "marginalia" picturing monsters, drunkards, quacks, beggars, tramps, thieves, fools and other outcasts of society. Curiously themed to the weird and the wonderful, the images will be shown to derive from Bosch and his followers, Pieter Bruegel the Elder most notably among them. While the border designs clearly evince a knowledge of the famous Bosch tapestries, most motifs will be argued to originate from less-conspicuous forms of art, such as prints, cloth paintings and even decorated trenchers. This treasure trove of Bosch-inspired imagery has not yet been fully documented nor interpreted and is absent from the vast literature on the master and his afterlife in Netherlandish art. The History of Hercules series cuts across media that are usually kept separate and raises intriguing questions about the process of cross-craft adaptation.

The present paper looks at the cross-media aesthetics of the Hercules tapestries, the origins of the visual marginalia and the various ways in which the source material was translated in the weaving process. Painted prints, tapestried trenchers and other intermedial crossings challenge the traditional hierarchies of artistic media and induce us to reconsider the facile dichotomy between the "high" and the "low" in the early modern arts.



Lara Yeager-Crasselt, The Leiden Collection, New York

***“Portraits, Patterns, and Designs”: Collaboration at the Pilgrimage Church of Scherpenheuvel and the Brussels Court in the Seventeenth Century***

The completion of the pilgrimage church of Our Lady of Scherpenheuvel outside of Brussels in 1627 marked the end of a nearly two decade-long building project under the patronage of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella. The church stood as a monument to the revitalization of Catholicism in the Southern Netherlands and was a symbol of Habsburg power in the region. The artist responsible for this complex project was Wenzel Coebergher (1557/1561–1634), who, though trained as a painter, had been appointed to the Brussels court in 1605 as the archduke’s “architect and engineer.” Coebergher’s supervisory role at Scherpenheuvel paralleled his duties at court, which included overseeing “anything related to architecture, painting and the other arts [ . . . ] and full power to make portraits, patterns and designs.” For this ambitious project, Coebergher supplied drawings for the architectural and sculptural programs and commissioned a series of seven altarpieces depicting the life of the Virgin from Theodoor van Loon, as well as sculptures for the church’s interior and exterior from Robrecht de Nole. With Coebergher as the guiding force, the church not only succeeded in realizing a unified vision of painting, sculpture, and architecture, but it also embraced a collaborative artistic model that was indicative of the patterns of artistic practice in seventeenth-century Brussels.

This paper investigates the building and artistic program of Scherpenheuvel and Coebergher’s role within it through the lens of intellectual and practical collaboration. It examines the mechanisms in place in Brussels and at the Habsburg court that structured and validated this kind of large-scale, multimedia project, as well as those that guided smaller commissions in the city. Coebergher’s collaborations with artists who worked both within and outside of the court throughout his tenure—among them Jérôme Duquesnoy the Elder, Antoon Sallaert and Jacques Francquart— provide new insight into the dynamics that shaped Brussels’ distinctive artistic character. While Scherpenheuvel and Coebergher’s architectural contributions have been the subject of monographic studies (De Maeyer 1955, Meganck 1998, Duerloo and Wingmans 2002, and Duerloo 2008), as well as, more recently,

the altarpieces of Theodoor van Loon (Van Sprang 2018), the collaborative and intermedial processes integral to the church's making—and the varied roles of its artists—remain understudied. By investigating Scherpenheuvel in this broader context, this paper carries implications for our understanding of Brussels' place within the Flemish canon and the paradigm of artistic collaboration that has long been defined by Antwerp alone.

## PAPER ARTS

### **Media of Exchange: Drawings and the Transmission of Ideas**

#### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Talitha Maria G. Schepers**, The Courtauld Institute of Art, London

**Erin Travers**, Chapman University, Orange | Getty Foundation, Los Angeles

Much attention has been given to the discussion of prints as mobile images that disseminated ideas across geographic, economic, religious, and linguistic borders. This emphasis on prints' multiplication and spread overlooks the important contributions of drawings to cross-cultural and interdisciplinary exchanges. This panel investigates the vital role of drawings in the transmission of ideas, both within and beyond the early modern Low Countries, and their function as active agents to build networks, document encounters, and facilitate knowledge production. We seek to address questions that explore how and why drawings served as unique objects for the transmission of ideas in the early modern period: How did drawings act as points of contact between people, places, and objects? How were different media, for example, chalk, pen and ink, washes, or metalpoint, used for distinct purposes or merged to make new creations? Finally, in what capacities did drawings function differently from other media?

We invite papers that consider the unique material and technical qualities of drawings that positioned this medium as a vehicle for intellectual, educational, cultural, and professional transfer and contact. Sketchbooks, for instance, provided the ideal medium for travelling artists to capture ideas, copy down designs or document their surroundings. Meanwhile, travelling artists, merchants and diplomats alike would leave their pictorial marks in the *alba amicorum* of those they visited abroad. Drawings also enabled knowledge to move between disciplines. For instance, Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678), in his art-theoretical treatise, advises his readers to make copies after his anatomical prints in order to quickly learn the shape and names of the muscles and bones, while medical practitioners made drawings when studying after a cadaver or documenting their patients' maladies. Another fascinating example is how Rudolf II (1552-1612), in addition to collecting prints, commissioned albums of drawings from the artist Joris Hoefnagel (1542-1601), who incorporated natural specimens into his watercolour and gouache images. Finally, this session encourages speakers to consider how drawings provided a platform to express encounters and new ideas for non-professional draughtsmen. Think, for instance, of costume albums produced in the Ottoman Empire by Netherlandish travellers and merchants who were less technically experienced, such as Lambert Wijts (active 1572-1573).

Participants are invited to explore artistic exchanges across geopolitical, cultural and disciplinary divides. Contributions from other disciplines, such as the history of science, digital art history, and conservation are also welcome.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Olenka Horbatsch**, British Museum, London

#### ***Drawing for Gold: Design Drawings in Northern Europe***

Drawings were vital tools for goldsmiths in early modern Europe: sumptuous vessels, weapons, decorative objects and objects for personal adornment were designed, elaborated, and recorded on paper. It is perhaps ironic that designs on paper survive in large numbers from the sixteenth century, whereas the gold objects do not. As such, design drawings have been valued for their utilitarian function, and they have been traditionally understood as documents of lost objects. Design drawings however, are very rarely straightforward records of production – they reveal initial thoughts, changes, and refinements. Carefully chosen media, such as wash and coloured inks, were used to simulate materials and techniques of objects in the round, and this phenomenon merits further attention. Such drawings were important for transmitting knowledge within and beyond the workshop, and as such they were copied, adapted, used and reused in the production of gold work. Methods of transfer and transmission were therefore integral to workshop practice. Drawings were copied free hand or otherwise transferred via offset, incision or tracing, and rubbings from objects were taken to preserve or document the design. Design drawings for gold work therefore represent an important intersection between idea and production and between art and craft.

In this paper, I take a new, critical approach to the category of design drawings for gold work made in the Low Countries and the German-speaking lands during the sixteenth century. I consider how design drawings were active agents in the transmission of the antique style of ornament. My case studies range from designs by Hans Holbein the Younger for the Tudor court to an anonymous jeweller's sketchbook with recipes and rubbings interspersed with drawings. I will examine the aesthetic, intellectual and intermedial aspects of design drawings, together with their use-value and afterlife in the goldsmith's workshop and the collector's cabinet.

**Susan Maxwell**, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh

#### ***Netherlandish Drawings in the Alba Amicorum of a German Art Agent around 1600***

Works on paper served distinctive roles in the culture of collecting that flourished in southern Germany at the turn of the seventeenth century. The travelogues and alba amicorum of the Augsburg art agent Philip Hainhofer give us a rare glimpse into his personal views on the value of drawings as well as their place in princely patronage practices. Hainhofer, something of an itinerant diplomat, assembled no less than four albums, two of

which he took on his many journeys around Europe, not only to gather entries, but also to display the breadth of his contacts to the courts that he visited. Drawings figure prominently in his correspondence and served a central role in populating his *alba amicorum*. Many of the pictorial entries were executed in watercolors commissioned by local artists, but there are a number of important drawings that were collected rather than commissioned, revealing Hainhofer's evaluation of their quality as singular objects.

Hainhofer's albums contain drawings ranging from an architectural drawing purported to be by Jan van Eyck, to contemporaneous artists who were working at various courts during the time of his travels. Unlike prints, the unique quality of the drawing made it a possession eagerly pursued by discerning princely collectors who sought to possess drawings as a matter of prestige while artists were able to convey to their patrons early modern theories and ideas about the value of drawing through the medium itself. In addition to Hainhofer's travelogues and albums, his correspondence with the reigning Duke Maximilian I of Bavaria and the duke's father, Wilhelm V, provide direct evidence of how drawings not only functioned as a means of conveying important aspects of the collection, but also how they were valued as objects of art in and of themselves. This paper will use Hainhofer's correspondence and evidence from his albums to propose that collecting drawings in the early seventeenth century followed a similar trajectory to the concept of the universal collection as a means of possessing a variety of styles, modes, and famous names.

**Rachel Weiss**, University of California, Los Angeles

### ***Drawing Things Together: Jan Hackaert and the Alpine Laboratory***

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Quietly nestled among the formidable array of printed maps and topographical views in the Atlas Blaeu-Van der Hem is an astonishing series of Alpine landscapes. Drawn in pen and grey wash by the Amsterdam artist Jan Hackaert between 1653 and 1656, the landscapes are pasted into the voluminous pages of the atlas, which is zealously preserved at the Austrian National Library as a UNESCO Memory of the World heritage object. The vaunted and exclusive monument in which the drawings reside confers an air of stoicism that belies the dynamic ways in which the drawings were produced, circulated, and instrumentalized in the seventeenth century as vectors of orographic knowledge formation. Seldom discussed in art historical literature and virtually absent from Anglophone scholarship, Hackaert's mountainous landscapes constellate a riveting history of scientific commission, creative collaboration, experimental pedagogy, and visual epistemology. This paper probes the drawings' history through the specific valences of the medium in which they were produced. I argue that—unlike paintings, which are inclined to idealize, and prints, which can perpetuate a certain uniformity of thought—drawings instantiate cognitive plasticity. Hackaert's drawings in particular seize on the medium's unique epistemological offerings in their pictorial innovation, forensic description of Alpine terrain, and stimulus for the discourse on mountains.

## PRESENTATION

### Specifying Site: Making Meaning through Space and Place in Northern Art

#### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Saskia Beranek**, Illinois State University

**Jacquelyn N. Coutré**, Art Institute of Chicago

A number of recent museum renovations, from the Gruuthusemuseum in Bruges to the Museum De Lakenhal in Leiden, have sought to highlight the early modern context of their buildings for the presentation of their northern European collections. Such gallery environments often feature period tapestries and architectural elements, historic installations of artworks, and minimal signage. And yet, in spite of these ambitious constructions, these galleries remain emulative spaces. In contrast, other institutions have embraced the white-cube approach, one that completely negates any reference to historic context and lays bare the intentions of the institution's spaces as purely exhibitionary. As scholarship in other fields increasingly considers experience and display, such as Gail Feigenbaum's *Display of Art in the Roman Palace, 1550-1750* (2014) or Maria Maurer's *Gender, Space and Experience at the Renaissance Court: Performance and Practice at the Palazzo Te* (2019), specialists in the art of Northern Europe can and should contend with the distinct range of viewing experiences created in and for northern audiences.

This panel seeks to explore the relationships between works of art and their original environments in order to answer questions about how aesthetic, spiritual, political, and social aspirations were not internal to discrete objects but contingent on physical surroundings and spatial relationships. How did other sensory experiences, from the tactile to the olfactory to the auditory, contribute to the artwork's affect? How was meaning constructed (whether deliberately or by chance) through the juxtaposition of paintings, sculptures, works on paper and decorative arts within a defined space, and how did this meaning inflect a viewer's understanding of the individual or collective identity of the owner(s)? How did the viewer participate in the owner-constructed ritual of the viewing experience? To what extent do environments privilege specific artworks, and to what extent has that shaped the history of art history? Lastly, how do contemporary scholars and curators responsibly access and present the embodied experience of early modern viewers to 21st-century audiences? We invite papers that present new research on "art in context" across northern Europe between 1400 and 1800 and welcome discussions of the intersections between the built, natural and social environments.

## SPEAKERS

Laura Tillery, Hamilton College

### ***Altarpieces Made Elsewhere: The “Import” of Carved and Polychromed Altarpieces in Norway in Context***

Over thirty carved and polychromed retables made in fifteenth and early-sixteenth century workshops in the Netherlands and northern Germany arrived through mercantile trade routes to be installed in small parish churches scattered throughout the coast in central and northern Norway. These multimedia ensembles structurally bear a context for transport in their small, compact design which typically feature a shallow carved and polychromed corpus with single-standing saints enclosed with painted wings. While foundational studies on the retables focused primarily on stylistic workshop attributions to Lübeck masters, and more recently, technical investigations determined specific regions of origin, this paper seeks to reconsider the surviving retables in terms of their local contexts after arrival. In other words, we know how these objects were made, and often, where they were made, yet what did these objects contribute to their local environment and community? Simply put, how did these objects work in situ? The acquisition and installation of a winged retable in a small church would have been a tremendous occasion for the local viewing community; decidedly different in format from free-standing polychromed sculpture, painted altar frontals, and multi-colored wall paintings from the earlier medieval centuries that filled local churches, the multimedia winged altarpiece stood to carry a range of visual, social, and economic associations as an “imported” liturgical object. Rather than focusing on a single case study, this paper takes a wide lens to examine the common trends of retables in situ to determine the intersection between an object made elsewhere in the local church environment.

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Adam Sammut, University of York

### ***Saints Dominic and Francis Saving the World from the Wrath of Christ: Rubens’ High Altarpiece for the Dominican church in Antwerp in Situ***

*Saints Dominic and Francis saving the world from the wrath of Christ* is a spectacular altarpiece by Rubens, painted c. 1618-1620 for the Dominican church in Antwerp, today St Paul’s (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon). While appreciated by Stendhal for its ‘veracity and liveliness,’ the meaning of the altarpiece was contingent on its liturgical context. It was commissioned by Michaël Ophovius who served as prior of the monastery, prefect of the Dominican mission to the Dutch Republic and bishop of ’s-Hertogenbosch until 1629; the figure of St Dominic is his pseudo-portrait. By having the order’s patron saint save the world from destruction through penance and intercession, the altarpiece urged monastery friars to follow Ophovius and join the Dutch Mission. While putting regular mendicancy at the centre of Antwerp’s confessional topography, the altarpiece was supra-Catholic in rhetoric. Placing St Dominic within a pantheon of Roman martyrs including saints Sebastian, Catherine of Alexandria and Flavia Domitilla, it evoked the Vatican’s post-Tridentine project

of the Early Christian revival which as the placement of the globe indicates was a central tenet of Catholic global mission.

This paper is the first to consider the *Wrath of Christ's* liturgical installation as devised by Rubens and Ophovius. The choir was built in the 1630s to replace the one demolished during the Calvinist Republic (1577-1585); building work was set in motion and partly financed by Ophovius. When 's-Hertogenbosch was captured by Frederik Hendrik, Ophovius sent ornaments and silverware from St John's Cathedral to the Antwerp monastery. In 1631 Ophovius met with Rubens 'in order to discuss his place of burial' and this paper interprets the choir as Ophovius' funeral chapel. With his effigy standing next to the high altar this doubled the rhetorical power of the choir as a *machina spiritualis*, the purpose of which was to generate missionary zeal among novices. Just as the Holy Sepulchre and Loreto's *Casa Santa* were replicated across Christendom, different sacred spaces were telescoped within the choir of the Dominican church. Rome, the *fons et origo* of Catholic sanctity was evoked through the *Wrath of Christ's* hagiographic *romanitas* while 's-Hertogenbosch was signposted by precious objects recovered from the cathedral treasury. The collapsing of 's-Hertogenbosch within Antwerp was made literal by its "Babylonian captivity" which made Antwerp the new "little Rome" on the frontier with the Dutch Republic. The choir had another outstanding feature: a stained glass series by Abraham van Diepenbeeck depicting the life of St Paul in ten windows. By presenting newly-discovered oil sketches and outlining its sequence for the first time, this paper interprets the stained glass as an extension of the *Wrath of Christ's* iconographic discourse which contributed to a decorative ensemble that ultimately advocated the unification of Europe under papal primacy and Habsburg hegemony.

Pamela Bianchi, Paris 8 University

### ***Dutch and Venetian Dwellings: Early Exhibiting Practices and Spaces in the Seventeenth Century***

Before the appearance of the early painting exhibitions and the first spaces specially designed to collect and present collections, the action of showing art was mainly related to the habit of dressing up spaces (Rodolfo, Volpi, 2014) for political and religious commemorations, cultural festivals, or marketing strategies. Thus, various venues (palaces, churches, cloisters, façades, squares, ephemeral pavilions, fairs, shops, ...), where sociability was performed and experienced (Furlotti, 2015), ended up becoming temporary and privileged platforms for the first exhibiting forms. The study of these occasions and their pictorial and literary imagery is today an iconic resource to trace the roots of contemporary exhibition processes in the rudimentary exhibition activities of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe.

Although Italy was the fulcrum of these events, sixteenth-century Dutch profound economic change, and the consequent new art market system played a fruitful role in the evolution of the early exhibition practices and related spaces. Painting galleries (*schilderspand*), *pand*, and fairs exhibiting devices are the cases in point. However, domestic and private interiors

and their setting-up have played an equally important role, even though the topic has received little attention from the literature.

Starting from these considerations, the paper studies seventeenth-century Dutch burghers' dwellings and the layout of works of art within them. It focuses on the Dutch Golden Age, when the society's richness arose alongside a progressive transformation of the domestic interiors' decoration and furnishings. There, Dutch owners began by gathering goods and works of art in specific rooms, and then by distributing them in the whole house, following the imagery of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italian *palazzi*. Specifically, Dutch dwellings' design reminds of Venetian houses, the distribution of paintings and artefacts inside their rooms, and the idea of the house as an architectural self-portrait of its owner, that spread throughout sixteenth-century Italy. This relationship is not surprising if one thinks that Venice, unlike Rome, developed an idea of domestic collecting and art market, not linked to the clergy, but closer to Venetian burghers' habits and tastes.

Therefore, the paper aims to draw parallels between the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch and Venetian burghers' dwellings, thanks to the study of a few iconic cases, and the analysis of paintings, dolls' houses, inventories and treatises. William Sanderson's *Graphice* (1658), Samuel van Hoogstraten's perspective box, *Peepshow* (1650), and Gabriel Metsu's paintings will give us important insights into the display practices of Dutch dwellings, while Pietro Aretino's letters and Marcantonio Michiel's notes will allow us to explore the Venetian house of Milanese-born collector Andrea Odoni. Although the paper mostly focuses on seventeenth-century Dutch domestic interiors and the layout of works of art within them, the cross-study with the Venetian case will show congruences and inconsistencies, by raising questions about the relationship between changes in Dutch society and processes of exhibiting and setting-up. Also, it will explore Dutch society's contribution to defining the evolution of the exhibition-making history, ending up placing it within the historiographical research of contemporary exhibiting practices.

## OPEN SESSIONS

### Open Session: Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Art

#### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Daantje Meuwissen**, VU University, Amsterdam

**Dan Ewing**, Barry University, Miami Shores

This session welcomes papers on any aspect of Netherlandish art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

#### SPEAKERS

**Rachel Wise**, University of Pennsylvania

#### ***Unraveling Belgica: Rape, Textiles, and the 80 Years' War***

The effects of the Dutch Revolt against Spain (1568–1648) on the textile industry were allegorized in a little-known 1597 embroidery by unidentified weavers, held in The Phoebus Foundation, Antwerp. The hanging draws its composition from Hans Collaert I's *Lament Over the Desolation of the Netherlands* (late 1570s), an engraving designed by Ambrosius Francken. Belgica, a personification of the Netherlands, is assaulted and robbed by four soldiers, who rip her clothes off, pull her hair, and tear her heart from her body. This paper analyzes the embroidery, arguing that it allegorizes and equates the process of weaving with the rape of the Netherlands by foreign nations.

In the embroidery, Belgica is portrayed as a tapestry, the most expensive and one of the most important artistic traditions of the Low Countries. Belgica's heart has been exchanged for a weaving implement: the shuttle, the device used to carry the weft thread between the warp. The soldiers' assault on her, then, is a retelling of the looting of the Antwerp Pand during the Spanish Fury and also a more generalized representation of assault on the Netherlands. Significantly, the inscription states that the Spanish, French, and English assault Belgica, making the image a generalized critique of all foreign nations interfering with the unity of the seventeen provinces: ESPAGNOL, LE FRANCHOIS, ET LANGLOIS, ET LES MIENS / PAVVRE PAIS BAS: ONT RAVI DE MES BIENS- / -SUPERBE, AMBICIEU, HERETICQUE ET AUARES / ET LES UAIMES [LAINES] RICHES, ET LES DESPAULES RARES -/ -Et de tout point gatte / ce qu'avole de beaute- / -CDA BIZE[M]E FECIT-/. The border inscription states that they have "ravished" her "rich wools." This rape, then, is not just of a general plundering of the Low Countries but specifically a rape of the tapestry industry, which is visualized by the unraveling of Belgica. In interpreting the Revolt through the lens of textiles, this embroidery brings the conflict to the materials of weaving. At the top of the hanging, the seventeen provinces are held together by Fidelity, implicitly referencing Belgica, who sits directly below using her shuttle to weave her provinces into one body. Distrust and Envy each pull opposite ends of a thick cord to break the provinces apart, just as the soldiers grab Belgica's hair and shuttle to unravel her. Of course, the stitching together of the seventeen provinces

was a forgone impossibility in 1597. Still, the “warp” and “weft” threads are endowed with meanings of peace and unity for the body politic of the Netherlands.

**Erik Eising**, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

### ***Hugo van der Goes: New Suggestions on his Artistic Sources, based on the Vienna Diptych***

Although Hugo van der Goes (c. 1440-1482) was one of the most prominent fifteenth-century painters in the Low Countries, his artistic origins remain a mystery. Despite a clear familiarity with the work of Jan van Eyck, who died in 1441, he could not have been his pupil. Parallels to the work of Rogier van der Weyden and Dieric Bouts are evident as well, yet neither master appears to have had such an influence on van der Goes’s art as to suspect a training in either of their workshops.

A particularly intriguing work with regards to van der Goes’s artistic sources is the so-called *Vienna Diptych*. Its *Fall of Man* has been described as strongly “Eyckian”, while the *Lamentation of Christ* is distinctly “Rogierian” – a dichotomy so strong, that it has even been used as an argument for separating the creation dates of the two scenes. However, recent new analysis of the *Vienna Diptych*’s three remaining compositions has placed to the fore a different artistic influence on van der Goes: the Master of the Redemption Altarpiece, formerly identified as Vrancke van der Stockt. Comparisons of painted figures and other motifs show that a major visual source for Hugo’s Viennese panels was the so-called *Redemption Altarpiece*, now at the Prado, while multiple relevant parallels to other works attributed to the Master can be observed as well. Although probably a former assistant of van der Weyden, the Master was also a student of the work of van Eyck and closely familiar with the art of Bouts. Furthermore, a *Triptych of the Annunciation* attributed to the Master of the Legend of St. Barbara, possibly a former assistant of the Redemption Master, reveals distinct knowledge of the work of both this anonymous painter and van der Goes.

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**Pim Arts**, Cobra Museum of Modern Art, Amsterdam

### ***Pompeius Occo and the Motives of a Mecenat***

Around 1511 Pompeius Occo (1483-1537) arrived in Amsterdam from Augsburg; he was sent by the Fugger banking concern to be their local agent. Occo quickly rose to prominence amongst the local elite, but also moved around in international and royal circles: king Christian II of Denmark (1481-1559) was one of his clients. In the course of his life, Occo commissioned a large number of art works, both for his private home and for the churches for which he was warden. Occo is regularly described as a devout Catholic and humanist and has been called ‘mecenat’ (patron of the arts) in local histories ever since the early seventeenth century. At the core of my recent research is the question of the origin and the motives of Occo’s commissions and collection. As patron and art collector he seems to have been sensitive to what was happening artistically, politically and commercially, both in Amsterdam and across Europe.

Since no written sources are available that testify to Occo's motives, I have answered this question by researching the art works that he commissioned. Art works included in my analysis are paintings, manuscripts and books by artists such as Jacob Cornelisz van Oostanen, Petrus Alamire, Joos van Cleve, Dirck Jacobsz and Allard of Amsterdam. By closely analyzing the composition and iconography of these works, the artists, and the political and religious contexts in which the art works were made, I was able to identify a trend in Occo's art patronage.

Two conclusions stand out: Occo's art commissions, personal wills, and public offices seem to perfectly align with the initially growing support (1520-1535) and later quick decline in support (following the 1535 Anabaptist riot) of the reformist tendencies in Amsterdam. From Occo's perspective, this means that he lay low in times of debate and vocally supported the majority standpoint when socially desired. This leads to the conclusion that Occo was more concerned with his public image than his private convictions. Occo also proved himself to be a seasoned diplomat and very able to combine personal, commercial, artistic and public interests. In copying some of the artistic practices at the Habsburg court in Mechelen, for example, Occo tried to position king Christian II (and himself) favorably in his attempts to attain the final withheld installments of the dowry of Isabella of Austria, Christian's wife and Holy Roman emperor Charles V's sister. These new insights indicate that Occo was very diplomatic and calculating in commissioning works of art and that he recognized the power of art and of his public image. In addition it becomes clear, that Occo's reputation as a devout Catholic, intellectual humanist and dedicated church warden needs amending.

## **Open Session: Seventeenth-Century Dutch and Flemish Art**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Jasper Hillegers**, Salomon Lilian Gallery, Amsterdam

**Angela Jager**, RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague

This session welcomes papers on any aspect of Dutch and Flemish art of the seventeenth century.

### **SPEAKERS**

**Marina Daiman**, Rubenianum, Antwerp

### ***Rubens's Adoption and Uses of Red Chalk***

While red chalk was already used in the Low Countries in the sixteenth century, Rubens apparently imported the technique from Italy. His red chalk drawings, including those by others that he retouched, number about 250 and represent a significant portion of his graphic output. This paper will consider Rubens's adoption of *matita rossa* and his uses of this medium over the course of his career. Some of the earliest examples include two

portrait studies for an altarpiece in Santissima Trinità in Mantua. While Rubens's handling is here somewhat hesitant, the artist already introduced the combination of three chalks that would later become one of his signature modes of using the medium.

During his sojourns in Rome Rubens copied in chalk Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. While it has been suggested that Rubens does not show the full command of the medium in his copies of the prophets and sibyls, I will argue his rigorous use of hatching, avoidance of stumping, and discrete areas of red and black seek to imitate chalk drawings of Cavaliere d'Arpino. Conversely, it is tempting to speculate that Rubens's choice of red chalk alone in his other copies after Michelangelo has to do with the drawings by that artist in *matita rossa* that he acquired.

Red chalk disappears from Rubens's drawings after his return to Antwerp in 1608 even as he continues to use black chalk extensively. The medium resurges again just under a decade later, and I will examine possible reasons for its reappearance. Furthermore, in the last decade of Rubens's life red chalk appears more frequently in his compositional drawings, until then nearly the exclusive purview of pen and ink. I will investigate the likely impetus behind this development and consider the artist's preferences of certain media for specific types of drawings.

**Gerlinde Gruber**, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

***The Art Historian's Perspective on Macro-XRF Scanning: Rubens' Het Pelsken and Two Versions of Rubens' Head of Medusa***

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Over the last years, the Kunsthistorisches Museum (KHM) in Vienna has initiated several collaborations with the University of Antwerp to do Macro-XRF scanning of paintings. This paper will present the MA-XRF findings from two highly different projects, on Rubens' *Het Pelsken* (the little Fur) and on two versions of Rubens' famous *Medusa* (at the KHM and the Moravská Galerie, Brno). In this presentation, I will present both the important contributions that MA-XRF scanning can have for art history - the scanning depicted the complex fountain behind *Het Pelsken* - but will also point to its limitations.

It would be important to demonstrate this to our discipline, as there is a certain tendency to use technical analyses to resolve attribution-issues, which is often not possible. For example, one of the key questions that Rubens' *Head of Medusa* poses is in regard to the possibility of a collaboration between Rubens and Frans Snyder. And although the Macro-XRF scans clearly show that the painting in Brno was the prototype, only a stylistic analysis can help in clarifying the authorship.

**Eric Jan Sluijter**, University of Amsterdam  
**Nicolette Sluijter-Seijffert**, independent researcher

### ***Six (or Ten?) Painters in Competition. A Joseph-Cycle of 1655***

Six paintings of the same size (canvas, c. 112 x 90 cm), all signed and dated 1655, executed by five painters working in Amsterdam and one in Haarlem, render an episode from the story of Joseph.<sup>1</sup> One of them was Rembrandt, who contributed *Joseph Accused by the Wife of Potiphar* (Berlin); the others were Barthomeus Breenbergh, Salomon de Braij, Govert Flinck, Nicolaes van Helt Stockade and Salomon Koninck. Most likely the series originally consisted of ten paintings, as we will argue. We already discovered the name of a seventh contributor (Carel van Savoyen from Antwerp, working in Amsterdam for most of his career) and the subject of his painting, but not yet the painting itself, and we are still searching for more contributors and their works.

Pressing questions are: who commissioned this series and what was the context of the commission? Does the fact that the very idiosyncratic composition by Breenbergh appears to have been conceived before the other ones give an indication? Why were these particular painters chosen? How would this series have functioned? Is there a relation to the activities of the Amsterdamse schouwburg and to the performances of Vondel's Joseph-trilogy in the mid-1650s?

We will also examine the implications of a group of renowned history painters creating in a deliberately competitive situation works of art that offered connoisseurs the pleasure of comparing, contemplating and valuing their manners. It is striking that each of these artists seems to emphasize self-consciously the characteristics of his specific manner. What did this display of such significantly divergent styles and artistic ideals mean to artists and connoisseurs?

<sup>1</sup> Tom van der Molen was the first to realize that these six paintings belonged together: "Painted theatre: Flinck, Rembrandt and other artists paint Vondel's Joseph trilogy", in: Stephanie Dickey (ed.), *Ferdinand Bol and Govert Flinck. New Research*, Zwolle 2017, pp. 82-97.

## **ANKK Sponsored Session: Netherlandish Mobility in Times of Crisis (1500–1700)**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Madeline Delbé**, Bonn University  
**Sabrina Lind**, Ghent University

### **RESPONDENT**

**Birgit Ulrike Münch**, Bonn University

Pandemics, wars, economic declines, religious or political persecution, natural catastrophes, famine – crises such as these are not limited to our present days but have always had an

impact on the life and work of different social groups, amongst them artists. In line with the increasing number of debates and projects on the mobility of artists in (art) historical research, this session considers an aspect of artists' mobility that has not yet been comprehensively investigated: mobility through crisis. As is often the case, the particularities of our own historical moment encourage us to renew our attention to related circumstances in the past.

This session aims to provide a forum for inquiries into the life and work of artists and other actors in the Northern and Southern Netherlands in the period from 1500 until 1700 whose mobility was directly affected by different kinds of crisis. By addressing upheavals such as the Iconoclastic Fury (1566), the Fall of Antwerp (1585), military training and war preparation, as well as the Disaster Year (1672), it focuses both the ways in which crises did – or at times did not – affect artists' private, social, and professional lives. Hence, it faces different crises, taking into account factors that either promoted migration or the lingering and coping with the changed circumstances that impaired the artists' working conditions in one way or another. Since the latter were determined not only by the crisis itself but also by patrons and guilds, the mobility of the artists will also be analyzed in regard to their entanglement with various actors, reacting to the crises individually. By doing so, this panel aims to foster a discussion on this specific kind of artists' mobility and, consequently, to inviting further research on single case studies as well as on methodological issues and theoretical questions.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Suzanne Duff**, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island

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#### ***Fine Tuning: The Antwerp Harpsichord Makers' Proposal to the Saint Luke's Guild During the Turbulent Sixteenth Century***

Artists living in Antwerp during the second half of the sixteenth century faced several periods of socio-economic upheaval. Many emigrated after pivotal moments like the Iconoclastic Fury (1566) and the Fall of Antwerp (1585). But some also chose to stay. After 1585 when the population dropped by half within four years, data suggests that artists left the city in lower numbers than the rest of the population, aware of the professional challenges they would face by relocating. My presentation will investigate how the harpsichord makers negotiated with Antwerp's artists' guild, the Saint Luke's Guild, during this period to not only survive in this challenging environment, but also prosper and even increase their status.

Their success was predicated on an earlier effort, in 1557, to become an official subgroup (*natie*) within the guild. I argue organizing the craft within the guild facilitated the formation of a city-wide production network that made it possible to withstand future periods of instability. The network divided labor across workshops allowing various skill levels to work together to produce higher quantities of instruments for export while maintaining quality. As part of the guild, they could also more easily collaborate with painters, and standardizations developed toward efficiency and secure transportation led to a unique local style that heightened recognition in a global marketplace.

Hans Ruckers (1533/40-1598) utilized this Antwerp network to found a dynasty that defined Antwerp as a center for harpsichord production. Recognizing the possibilities of organizing as a group within the guild, other crafts petitioned for a *natie*, including the embroiderers in 1586, whose profession flourished during the early seventeenth century. This case study illustrates one example of how craftsmen in Antwerp during the sixteenth century turned to the Saint Luke's Guild for order and protection and relied on that during times of crises.

**Stefano Rinaldi**, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

***Military Training and Artistic Exchange. Traveling from Tuscany to the Low Countries during the Dutch Revolt***

In Early Modern Europe, war, with all its horrors, was not usually the intended destination of traveling artists. For a young engineer, however, an experience on the battlefield could represent an important professional opportunity, granting first-hand knowledge of the most advanced developments in military architecture and technology. Building on those premises, the paper will frame the training and career mechanisms of Tuscan engineers at the beginning of the 17th century as a vehicle of artistic exchange with the North. After a first theoretical education, many young engineers would volunteer for a period of military service in Flanders or Germany, before coming back to Tuscany to serve the Grand Dukes as military or civilian architects and engineers.

The Florentine court architect Giulio Parigi (1571–1635) appears to have played a central role in fostering this form of professional mobility through his informal school of architecture, engineering, and landscape drawing. Attended by Tuscan artists and engineers alongside young foreign aristocrats, this unofficial yet influential institution allowed its pupils to integrate into an interdisciplinary and international network, helping advance their later military career abroad. Given the close connection between engineering and art (especially in the form of landscape drawing) in Parigi's teaching, it will be argued that this particular context helps explain the travels of artists like Remigio Cantagallina, Baccio del Bianco or even Jacques Callot.

**Rieke van Leeuwen**, RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague

***Avoiding Disaster. Artists from the Dutch Republic on the Move in 1672–1679***

In the Disaster Year 1672, the Dutch War began, which would last until 1679: the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands was attacked by England, France and the Dioceses of Münster and Cologne. The chaos was complete and public life was completely disrupted. In many Dutch cities, artistic life almost came to a standstill and the already waning art market collapsed. To create new opportunities, artists had to be resourceful. However, because no one could predict how the situation would develop, there was a big gambling element in this. Artists migrated on a large scale, within and outside the Republic, where they stayed for short or longer periods, with varying degrees of success. The initiatives they took were

usually focused on the short term - one step at a time - and related not only to unsafe situations, but also to finding clients.

Arnold Houbraken writes about Gerard Hoet I (1648-1733): "Finally came the disastrous year of 1672, which stopped everything in its tracks, so that Hoet went to The Hague". By coincidence he came into contact with a French (!) colonel, with whom he traveled to his army camp in Rees near Cleves, to work for him there. Hoet found three young colleagues from occupied Utrecht: Jan van Bunnik, Justus van Nijpoort and Andries de With. From there the foursome fanned out in different directions: De With probably went back to Utrecht, Hoet went to Paris for a short time and then settled in Utrecht, Jan van Bunnik did not return home until 12 years later, after he had worked in Germany, Italy and France and Justus van Nijpoort found employment in Slovenia, Austria and Bohemia, where he died 20 years later in Olomouc.

In this paper I will investigate patterns in the (foreign) mobility of Dutch artists triggered by the Disaster Year. Is it true that artists from Utrecht became more adrift than artists from other cities? Charles II of England and Friedrich Wilhelm of Brandenburg made it clear that Dutch artists were very welcome. But what about the opportunities for Dutch artists in other regions, such as France or Scandinavia? And did Dutch artists still travel to Italy to further their education, or was this luxury the first to be cut back?

## ROUND TABLES

### Women in the Shadow: Female Participation in the Art Market of Early Modern Northern Art 1450-1700

#### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Dagmar Eichberger**, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg

**Birgit Ulrike Münch**, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, Bonn

Martin Warnke's famous monograph *The Court Artist: On the Ancestry of the Modern Artist* (1985/1993) lists more than 800 men, but only two female court artists from the pre-modern period, Sofonisba Anguissola and Angelica Kauffmann. In past research, only high-profile women have been of serious interest. Too little archival research has been undertaken in order to find out more about less prominent women artists or art agents. Female court artists were often listed as ladies-of-honor in account books of the courts and are thus not easily recognizable. Interestingly, Susanna Horenbout, Levina Teerlinc and Catharina von Hemessen are three of the earliest identifiable female artists working in this environment. Volcxken Diericx, the wife of Hieronymus Cock, comes from a civic context and thus represents a different role model. This session could focus on producers of all kinds of artefacts, such as paintings from joint workshops, watercolours and sculptures. Collaborations in stained glass as well as printmaking are of similar interest, thus referring to the large field of arts and crafts. Especially in the realm of material culture, this question still remains a desideratum.

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We have been invited to organize our session as ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION. Therefore our *Call for Papers* looks for short, 10-minute contributions that highlight a specific aspect of “women in the shadow”. Ideally, the contributions will provide a first impulse by putting forward a hypothesis or a theoretical problem that contributes to a better understanding of this phenomenon and stimulates discussion. It would also be conceivable to present funded projects in this research field that are in the planning or already underway. Please send your abstract (maximum 300 words) and a CV to Dagmar Eichberger ([d.eichberger@zegk.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:d.eichberger@zegk.uni-heidelberg.de)) and Birgit Ulrike Münch ([bmuench@uni-bonn.de](mailto:bmuench@uni-bonn.de)) before 1 April 2022.

The topic addressed is even more relevant since the majority of pre-modern workshops were dependent on the help of female family members. All women who were part of a family business and participated in the art market (e.g. as agents/sales person) should be part of the general discourse. These women are not comprehensible as “great women artists”; in the light of the paradigm shift initiated by Linda Nochlin, it is thus of paramount significance to operate with alternative concepts. On a methodological level, an expanded concept of “the artist” is required in order to make this phenomenon more apparent. The question arises as to whether more evidence can be found in biographies. Claudia Swan pointed out that women are occasionally mentioned in *Album Amicorum*, and thus are part of relevant discourses. Which artifacts bear witness to this situation, for example in visualizations of the Early Modern workshop?

The organizers of this round table-session have invited a small number of specialists who will present succinct case studies in order to stimulate discussions on the subject of “Women in the Shadow”. We are interested in all areas of female participation in the pre-modern art market north of the Alps, as well as in the question of women's networks. How can these women be made more visible in current database research projects on Dutch and German art. Furthermore, we hope that our session will shed new light on the possibilities of female participation in guilds. This includes investigating purely female guilds (e.g. silk embroiderers in Cologne) as well as thinking about various spheres of influence relevant to wives, widows and daughters in the printing industry of big cities such as Frankfurt, Antwerp, Nuremberg, Amsterdam.

**Peter van der Coelen**, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, will give a short presentation on the role of women in De Jode print publishing family in Antwerp.

**Andrea Pearson**, American University, Washington D.C., is a specialist for gender studies and has published widely on Burgundian female patronage and art in the context of court and convent.

**Patricia Engel**, University of Bonn, will talk about Susanna Horenbout and female artists at the British Court.

**Alexis Slater**, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, will focus on Mayken Verhulst and book printing in sixteenth-century Antwerp. She is interested in questions of collaboration and autonomy.

## Dendrochronology, a Discipline in Flux

### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Ron Spronk**, Queen's University, Kingston, Canada | Radboud University, Nijmegen  
**Jørgen Wadum**, Nivaagaard Collection, Nivå | independent researcher

Historians of Netherlandish Art have used findings from dendrochronology for well over half a century. By determining the felling date of the tree from which the wood for a painting or sculpture was made, the earliest possible date for the creation of the object can be established. Over the years, art historians have used this *terminus post quem* routinely in matters of attribution for example, and the identification of the wood species can be highly important in the study of provenance. But dendrochronology is a complex, interdisciplinary science, and its theoretical foundations and applied techniques are not always fully understood.

This session aims to highlight recent developments within the discipline, and its implications for art history. The sharing of data between dendrochronologists, including the actual measurements of tree ring sequences, is now more widely accepted, for example, which is illustrated by the new Dendro4Art website hosted and developed by the RKD and CATS

(<https://dendro4art.org/>). This will allow for much more efficient datamining in the future, and for increased reliabilities of the data. Moreover, it appears that too much time has been allowed for correction for the period between the felling of the tree and the usage of its wood, i.e. for transportation, seasoning, panel production and artistic creation. Information from cultural historical studies (written sources, inscriptions, and the like) often indicate that trees were usually used relatively quickly after felling. Semi-products made of fresh logs in the Baltic countries could be ready for transportation from the forest down the river to the nearest Baltic harbor. There the timber was re-loaded from raft to ship, and transported to the West. Therefore, timber from trees felled in winter could be found as wainscot and planks at the lumber-yards in the Low Countries just after a few months.

This session will consist of presentations by dendrochronologists Aoife Daly and Ian Tyers, followed by a panel discussion with art historians about the increased reliability of the outcomes of dendrochronological examinations of art works.

## “Technical Art History” is Art History

### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Melanie Gifford**, The National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

**Abbie Vandivere**, Mauritshuis | University of Amsterdam

The exploration and examination of the material nature of artworks is frequently characterized as “technical art history.” We suggest that such research is an aspect of art history, rather than a separate discipline. Art objects are important primary sources. Studying how artworks were made provides invaluable first-hand documentation when artists left no written record of their thoughts. Evidence such as compositional changes or the adoption of new materials, for example, can help us trace the direction of artistic influence or emulation; we can even uncover direct personal relationships. Understanding the practical changes that resulted in an artistic innovation can shed light on market forces as well as the personal creative process.

This roundtable seeks ways to integrate material evidence into the wider practice of art historical study, from introductory classes to scholarly research. How can we lower the barriers to such evidence being used routinely in all sorts of art historical undertakings? One challenge is that scholars trained in the humanities may have little experience interpreting material evidence, just as scientific researchers have limited exposure to interpreting cultural contexts. We in the humanities are less accustomed to collaboration across disciplines; while most scientific scholarship is carried out by research teams, scholarship in art history traditionally appears as single-author publications (and this is sometimes a requirement for academic tenure).

In this roundtable, we will brainstorm ways that art historians of all levels could use research into artistic techniques as routinely as they would the work of specialists in iconography or archival research. How and when should we introduce students to the

fundamentals of interpreting technical evidence? How can we open our accustomed research frameworks to cross-disciplinary collaboration? How can we frame our questions in ways that communicate outside our field? Can stepping outside our comfort zone make our work accessible and meaningful to wider audiences?

This session is structured to facilitate active discussion between panel and participants. Our panelists will be art historians, conservators, and scientists, bringing a range of perspectives. Panelists will introduce themselves with 5-minute case studies that highlight their approach to collaboration and/or communication across disciplines, then our panel will consider:

- How do you frame your research questions?
- How does this impact your research collaborations?
- How do you (or do you) try to share your findings across disciplines?

Our audience will join in:

- What is your experience with incorporating material evidence into your work?
- If not, what is holding you back?
- What resources would help?

We hope our audience, too, will be on a continuum, from experienced collaborators to interested bystanders.

## WORKSHOPS

### Linking Manuscripts and the Other Arts: the Byvanck Database and RKD Explore

#### SESSION ORGANIZER

**Anne Margreet As-Vijvers**, Illuminare scribendo – Research and projects in Art History

#### LOCATION

RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague

In a visionary project, started in the late 1980s, a working group of art historians and manuscript scholars decided to collect the entire Netherlandish cultural heritage of illuminated manuscripts into a searchable database. The resulting database, named the Alexander Willem Byvanck Database,<sup>1</sup> aims to cover all extant illuminated manuscripts in Dutch collections as well as every manuscript made in the northern Netherlands in collections worldwide. The Byvanck Database offers scholarly descriptions of the manuscripts, including illuminators and decoration styles, iconographical descriptions of all images, and an image repository. The realisation of the Byvanck Database provided essential impetus to new research and greatly expanded knowledge in the field of manuscript illumination. Even in 2020, more than thirty years after its initialisation, no other country has achieved a comparable art historical tool for its manuscript heritage.

Several years ago, the Alexander Willem Byvanck Foundation (the administrator of the database) joined forces with the RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History. As a result, the Byvanck Database – built in pre-internet times and therefore a standalone database maintained at the KB | national library of the Netherlands in The Hague – is intended to be integrated into RKD Explore, which is the largest online resource containing visual documentation on early Netherlandish art. While the RKD Explore databases contain artworks from various media, illuminated manuscripts are not yet included.

The merging of the Byvanck Database with RKD Explore will break down traditional borders in scholarship. Research in painting, either in manuscripts or on panel, in prints and other media can now be pursued simultaneously. The career of artists who were active in painting and illumination can be comprehensively analysed. It will even be possible to relate manuscripts and artists to archival material and geo-locational information. The integration of the Byvanck Database into RKD Explore opens up new areas for comparative, comprehensive research into the production and reception of illuminated manuscripts and other artistic media.

This is even more important because scholarship tends to focus on the limited number of extant panel paintings, whereas Netherlandish painting of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries has in fact largely survived in illuminated manuscripts. The thousands of miniatures included in the Byvanck Database feature a wide range of religious and secular themes, which are complemented by numerous marginal illustrations that thematically precede sixteenth- and seventeenth-century genre painting.

The invited speakers for this workshop will address urban and monastic producers of manuscripts, paintings and prints, and the choices made by the consumers of these artefacts, by analysing the artistic milieus in several Dutch cities. The presenters will make use of the new resources integrated in RKD Explore and reflect on their potential for future study, outlining the horizons offered by the use of linked data.

1 Named after Alexander Willem Byvanck, curator of manuscripts at the Koninklijke Bibliotheek in The Hague 1907-1921 and initiator of the study of manuscript illumination in The Netherlands.

## Presenting Early Modern Portraits: What Now, What Next?

### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Stephanie S. Dickey**, Queen's University, Kingston, Canada  
**David De Witt**, The Rembrandt House Museum, Amsterdam

### LOCATION

The Rembrandt House Museum, Amsterdam

Current cultural trends are bringing new tensions to the study of portraiture. In the US, the UK, and elsewhere, portraits of public figures are being scrutinized and sometimes condemned because of their implicit valorization of individuals whose life histories are seldom entirely admirable. While the most newsworthy cases have involved public statues of 19th and 20th-century political leaders, the concerns being raised inspire a reappraisal of approaches to early modern portraiture as well. For the Netherlands, this trend coincides with recent attention to colonial exploitation of Black and indigenous populations by organizations such as the VOC, and by extension the individual investors who profited from them. In the midst of this reckoning, several recent exhibitions have presented early modern portraiture in monographic surveys (Holbein, Hals) or in aggregate (*Vergeet mij niet, Icons*), as markers of community (*Rembrandt's Social Network, Here: Black in Rembrandt's Time, Rembrandt and Amsterdam Portraiture*) or with a focus on the person(s) portrayed (*Historische Vrouwen, Johan Maurits*). This workshop aims to promote cross-disciplinary conversation about productive and insightful ways to study and present early modern portraits for current and future audiences, with a particular interest in recent and forthcoming museum exhibitions and interpretation. How can museums best achieve a balance between aesthetics and identity, between present concerns and historical realities, between appreciation for portraits as works of art and attention to issues of politics, gender, race, and class?

If you would like to speak for 5-10 minutes about your exhibition or research topic in relation to the issues raised above, please contact the co-organizers, Stephanie Dickey and David DeWitt ([stephanie.dickey@queensu.ca](mailto:stephanie.dickey@queensu.ca) and [d.dewitt@rembrandthuis.nl](mailto:d.dewitt@rembrandthuis.nl)), no later than 1 April 2022. To allow time for discussion, 4 or 5 speakers will be invited. All

participants are welcome to submit links to exhibition websites, recent publications, or recorded programming for circulation to registrants in advance.

Due to space limitations, attendance is limited to 20 participants.

## **Rembrandt's Reach, 1629-present: Painting, Prints, Drawings, Photography, and Film**

### **SESSION ORGANIZER**

**Shelley Perlove**, University of Michigan

### **SESSION CHAIR**

**Amy Golahny**, Lycoming College

This workshop explores Rembrandt's influence as an artist and his impact upon western culture over centuries of art and critical assessment. Recent studies offering fresh insights on such art critics as Longinus, Franciscus Junius, Gerardus Vossius, Samuel van Hooft, and others redefine Rembrandt as an artist. Eric Jan Sluiter has provided a seminal study of artists within Rembrandt's orbit which serves as a foundation for further investigations over a longer reach of time. Presenters and participants of the workshop are encouraged to define and locate what was considered a Rembrandt style or approach to subject matter anytime from 1629, during the artist's own lifetime and also encompassing the centuries that follow, up to and including the present day.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are rich in "Rembrandtesque" works of art, and most interestingly critics often grounded their discussions of the artist within a political context, defining him as a man of the people, an individualist, a genius, and a renegade, often in opposition to Rubens as an aristocrat. Such early biographers as Joachim von Sandrart, Roger de Piles, Filippo Baldinucci and Arnold Houbraken promulgated the legend that Rembrandt liked to associate with common people Houbraken claimed the artist loved money. Assertions of Rembrandt's avarice circulated among such French critics as Gustave Planch and Arsène Houssaye, contributing to the legend that the artist's bankruptcy was a consequence of financial relations with his Jewish compatriots. Some critics admired Rembrandt's smooth style yet denigrated his rough manner. The Scottish photographers Robert Adamson and David Octavius Hill endeavored to capture the moody interiority of Rembrandt's figures in the mid nineteenth century; John Harden, the watercolorist, remarked that their photographs "are as Rembrandt's but improved..." Another area of investigation might be the history of Rembrandt connoisseurship, and/or the fluctuations of the art market in the valuation of his works over long periods of time.

Stimulated by Nazi theorists Rembrandt was viewed as an Aryan whose art embodied the spirit of Germanic *völkisch* traditions, but the artist was also deemed a Mischling, however, dominated by Aryan blood. Hitler was obsessed to acquire Rembrandts for his envisioned

Museum in Linz. Biographical films of Rembrandt in 1936 directed by Alexander Korda, starring Charles Laughton, and the Nazi film of 1942 directed by Hans Steinhoff offer varying perspectives on the artist, before and during WWII.

The ideas mentioned here provide a wide range of possibilities for contributions, but they are offered here merely as suggestions. The scope of the workshop will derive from the interests of the participants themselves. The format of the workshop will consist of a panel of short presentations on varied topics, with ample time for full discussion by participants, who are also encouraged to share their own research interests and concerns with others in a stimulating, collegial setting.

Kindly send Shelley Perlove ([sperlove@umich.edu](mailto:sperlove@umich.edu)) and co-chair Amy Golahny ([Golahny@lycoming.edu](mailto:Golahny@lycoming.edu)) a paragraph or two indicating your topical interests for the workshop by 1 April 2022.

## **Multiple Versions of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Paintings**

### **SESSION ORGANIZER**

**Quentin Buvelot**, Mauritshuis, The Hague

### **LOCATION**

Nassauzaal, Mauritshuis, The Hague

In 17th-century Dutch painting, replicas are a rather uncommon phenomenon, with the exclusion of portraiture. Only rarely did painters make second, near identical versions of their paintings. In my present research of the paintings by Jacobus Vrel (active c. 1650-1670), an enigmatic Dutch painter whose oeuvre is limited to only 50 works on panel, I stumbled on a number of replicas, to my great surprise. Apparently, Vrel made some nearly identical versions of both his interior scenes and his street scenes. Sometimes the artist made two versions of the same composition, but in one case multiple versions of one single composition are known. With a few differences in the details, the composition of a genre painting in the Antwerp Museum of Fine Arts is repeated by him in three other versions (Oxford, Washington and San Diego). This aspect of Vrel's oeuvre has never before been studied and is the subject of an essay that I wrote for an upcoming monograph on the artist by Bernd Ebert, Cécile Tainturier and myself.

At present, with the aid of other researchers (some are executing infrared research or dendrochronology as we speak), I am trying to find answers to a number of questions. What is the order of production, i.e. what is in fact the principal version, and what the replica? Is it even possible to establish any order? And did Vrel make these replicas by way of drawings that were transferred onto his panels, or otherwise? And why did he make these replicas? Was it out of commercial reasons, or otherwise? Many of these questions are as yet unanswered.

The ambition of this session is to raise awareness of the phenomenon of versions in Dutch 17th-century art, a subject that is relatively understudied at present. In an ideal world, the research into replicas should be executed by art historians and painting conservators, working side by side. It is instrumental that all of us learn more about this subject, as to be able to make a distinction between replicas by the master himself, or his workshop, and old copies from the time. In practice, this distinction is not always easy to make. The existence of many replicas in Vrel's oeuvre seem to make the artist unique in 17th-century Dutch painting, but he was not the only one copying himself – some other case studies will be discussed, including but not limited to works by other genre painters of the time, e.g. Gerard ter Borch, Gerrit Dou, Pieter de Hooch and Frans van Mieris the Elder. In this discussion, the production of multiple versions of portraits will also be included.

Attendance is limited to 20 participants.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**Anna Krekeler**, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

**Dina Anchin**, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

**Sabrina Meloni**, Mauritshuis, The Hague

#### ***Bedrooms and Courtyards: Two Pairs of near Identical Compositions in the Oeuvre of Pieter de Hooch***

Within the oeuvre of Pieter de Hooch (1624 – in or after 1679), there are a number of closely related compositions that share the same space, though the depicted scenes usually differ, as does the position of the observer. However, it is thought, that De Hooch took this repetition in his compositions even further, painting two pairs of near identical versions, in which nearly all of the compositional elements are the same. These two pairs include *The Bedroom* in the collection of The National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. (NGA) and *In the Bedroom* from the Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, both dated around 1661, as well as *A Dutch Courtyard* also at the NGA and *Man Smoking and a Woman Drinking in a Courtyard* at the Mauritshuis in The Hague, dated around 1658-1660.

Through research into De Hooch's painting technique prior to the recent monographic exhibition (*Pieter de Hooch in Delft – From the Shadow of Vermeer*, October 2019 – February 2020, Museum Prinsenhof, Delft), it became clear, that within each of these two pairs of near identical compositions De Hooch approached the implementation of the perspective differently. However, consistently constructed spaces following the rules of linear perspective are a characteristic feature of De Hooch's compositions, with the exception of his earliest works. Yet, the space within the Karlsruhe *Bedroom* seems strikingly implemented by eye alone. These and other initial findings prompted the reassessment of the assumption that De Hooch copied his own compositions. Are all four compositions actually painted by De Hooch himself? Which one is the principle version? What are the technical similarities and differences between the pairs? To shed more light on these questions, thorough comparison of the painting technique of these two pairs was carried

out using non-invasive chemical imaging techniques, such as scanning macro X-ray fluorescence (MA-XRF), in addition to other non-invasive and invasive research techniques.

**Katja Kleinert**, Gemäldegalerie Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

### ***Gerard ter Borch the Younger – Master of Virtuoso Variations and Skillful Marketing***

*Gallant Conversation* by Gerard ter Borch (1617-1681) is one of the icons of seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting. Ter Borch created two versions of this composition, today at the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum and the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin.<sup>1</sup> In addition to these two works, contemporary variations and partial copies have been identified, as well as numerous versions from later centuries. For this reason, the case of *Gallant Conversation* offers particularly rich research material for a more detailed study of work and reproduction practices in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic.

The exhibition *Gerard ter Borch's Gallant Conversation: A Masterpiece and its Virtuoso Variations* (October 2019 - February 2020, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin) offered the first opportunity to intensively study these two major works from Berlin and Amsterdam, as well as three other contemporary variations. The close, comparative examination of the original paintings and detailed technical research brought about numerous new insights into these works, as well as Ter Borch's working methods. In doing so, questions about the order of production, the development of the motif, as well as the precise transfer and painting processes could be clarified. Still, the question to what extent workshop assistants or pupils of Ter Borch contributed to these variations and repetitions remains unanswered. Ter Borch's masterfully refined painting technique also raised the question of his workshop and reproduction practices, which enabled striking similarities between paintings that are astounding for the accuracy of the details, drapery folds and light reflections.

As the examinations showed, the Berlin painting originally matched the Amsterdam version almost completely with regard to both format and imagery. Only later, presumably in the eighteenth century, was it trimmed and revised. Ter Borch thus produced the *Gallant Conversation* in two identical versions, a procedure that can also be demonstrated for other paintings by the artist. Only during a subsequent step, the figure in a satin dress, seen from the back, was extracted and became an independent motif. The enigmatic and attractive qualities of this figure made it eminently suitable for wide distribution. By making small adjustments, it was possible to embed her in a wide variety of contexts. This kind of transformation and adaptation places a clear spotlight on the extremely skillful marketing of Ter Borch's astonishingly changeable pictorial inventions.

It can be assumed that there was a great variety of forms of repetition and variation in seventeenth-century Dutch painting, the range of which we have little knowledge of and which has so far only been explored in part. The examination of Ter Borch's *Gallant Conversations* provides us with insights that reveal what a high level of creativity and artistry was required if one wanted to produce effectively, yet at the same time be able to offer to the public works of the highest quality.

1 A third, significantly modified version entitled *A Singing Practice*, is at the National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh.

## Samuel van Hoogstraten: Stylistic and Technical Experiments

### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Erma Hermens**, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam | University of Amsterdam

**Leonore van Sloten**, The Rembrandt House Museum, Amsterdam

**David de Witt**, The Rembrandt House Museum, Amsterdam

### LOCATION

The Rembrandt House Museum, Amsterdam

This session aims to explore the technical aspects of Samuel van Hoogstraten's artistic oeuvre in the context of his position as a pupil of Rembrandt, a fellow pupil and friend of other artists, and a writer of the most significant text about painting after Van Mander's *Schilder-Boeck* (1604), the *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst* (1678). After decades of receiving modest attention as one of Rembrandt's more interesting pupils (Sumowski and others, 1983 onwards), Van Hoogstraten came into his own in the 1990s with a succession of in-depth studies, on the documents (Roscam Abbing, 1993), on his oeuvre and image of himself (Brusati, 1995), on the sources and the systematic interpretation of his text (Czech, 1999/2002), on literary-theoretical aspects of his writings with respect to his art (Blanc, 2005/2006), on his text as an application of rhetorical principles to art (Weststeijn, 2013), and on his text as a source for understanding Rembrandt's theory of art (Van de Wetering 2011).

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Van Hoogstraten's treatise, however, also has a strong practical element which so far received much less attention. Technical research of Van Hoogstraten's paintings may therefore provide new insights into the artist's decisions and choices in creating his wide ranging oeuvre. For instance, his two early Self-Portraits (Rotterdam and The Hague, both dated 1644) show substantially different styles, and reveal the artist as an agile stylistic and technical experimenter. In fact, many of Van Hoogstraten's works seem explorations of different genres for which he continually appears to adapt his techniques.

Van Hoogstraten was an apprentice in Rembrandt's studio in the early 1640s, and technical research (Hermens and Black 2020) of *The Women of Jerusalem* (Hunterian Art Gallery, Glasgow) indicated that he used a quartz ground similar to that in Rembrandt's *Nightwatch*. This is an interesting result in the light of the more technical descriptions in Van Hoogstraten's treatise which, as sometimes has been suggested, may reflect Rembrandt's practice. Therefore, the research presented in this session aims at a more in depth technical examination of a selection of Van Hoogstraten's works, using a range of analytical and imaging techniques such as Ma-XRF scanning, IR-imaging, X-radiography, and paint cross-section analyses. Following technical art history methodology, these scientific analytical

results will be set against analyses of the sources on, and developments in, Van Hoogstraten's manner of painting with respect to his theory, his education under Rembrandt, his travels abroad, and his interaction with Dutch artists after his return to Dordrecht, thus outlining the implications — such as impact of Rembrandt's practice as well as local influences — for his technical experiments.

The Rembrandt House Museum is planning a comprehensive exhibition of Van Hoogstraten's life and work for 2024. It has already collaborated with Queen's University on a conference in 2018 largely devoted to Van Hoogstraten, with strong international presence. Branching out into research into technical aspects of Van Hoogstraten's paintings, through a collaboration of Erma Hermens (Rijksmuseum/University of Amsterdam) with Rembrandt House Museum curators Leonore van Sloten and David de Witt, this session will present the results of this novel research approach of Van Hoogstraten's practice and experiments in both his written and visual output.

We would very much welcome short presentations on case studies of Van Hoogstraten's paintings, especially those studies that examine his techniques. These will be short - 5 minute presentations – but would be of great interest for our understanding of Van Hoogstraten as an artist and examiner of different genres, especially technically. If you would like to give a short presentation, please send an email to the session organizers before 1 April 2022: [E.Hermens@rijksmuseum.nl](mailto:E.Hermens@rijksmuseum.nl), [d.dewitt@rembrandthuis.nl](mailto:d.dewitt@rembrandthuis.nl) and [I.vansloten@rembrandthuis.nl](mailto:I.vansloten@rembrandthuis.nl).

## Original Frames on Netherlandish Paintings

### SESSION ORGANIZER

**Hubert Baija**, University of Amsterdam | formerly Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

The picture frame is an unusual but rewarding item in art history. Nearly every painting is contained in a frame, often overlooked and edited out of the illustrations in academic publications. A curious practice because besides physically protecting a painting, its framing co-defines pictorial space. Especially, 'the original frame' – conceived around the same time as the corresponding painting – holds useful keys to iconography, studio practices, and stylistic mindsets of different periods. Even more so where the artist actively engages in creating artworks as a framed ensemble, while the frame materializes through inseparable conceptual and physical processes including drawing, woodworking, relief work, gilding, and painting.

Numerous original picture frames were regrettably removed from their corresponding paintings, thereby removing valuable primary sources for research. Fortunately, the tide changed during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries by publications and exhibitions focusing on picture frames. Publications like *Alte Bilderrahmen* (Claus Grimm, 1978) and *A History of European Picture Frames* (Paul Mitchell & Lynn Roberts, 1996) made general knowledge available about picture frames while, more recently, there were exhibitions at

the Liechtenstein Museum (2008), National Gallery London (2015), Dordrechts Museum (2015), Getty Museum (2016), and Musée du Louvre (2018). Museums like the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin or the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam cataloged thousands of frames as part of their collection databases. Works like *Prijst de lijst* (Pieter van Thiel & Cees de Bruyn Kops, 1984), and *Cadres et supports dans la peinture flamande aux 15e et 16e siècles* (Hélène Verougstraete, 1987) treat early picture framing in depth from the Northern and Southern Netherlands respectively.

During the HNA workshop in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, curators Matthias Ubl and Josephina de Fouw, and conservators Tess Graafland and Hubert Baija will share their knowledge and discuss picture frames with you from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, rotating four groups of up to ten participants each between selected works in the museum galleries.

## **Colour and Context: Ground-Layers in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Northern European Painting**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Moorea Hall-Aquitania**, University of Amsterdam

**Lieve d’Hont**, University of Amsterdam

**Anne Haack Christensen**, National Gallery of Denmark

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Grounds or preparation layers are applied to canvases or panels to create specific and desired surfaces for painting, in terms of texture, absorbency and colour. Coloured grounds in easel painting originate in early 16<sup>th</sup>-century Italy and spread North around 1550. They gave rise to a new way of painting, with an emphasis on tonality and chiaroscuro. Ground colour has a profound influence on the painting methods and visual characteristics of finished pictures. When painting on a dark red, brown, or grey ground, painters had to make conscious choices regarding materials and techniques, since the motif on top would create different optical effects on a coloured ground than on a white ground. Thus, it was a deliberate and important choice for a painter to begin on a specifically coloured ground. Furthermore, alterations of the superimposed paint layers, in particular increased transparency over time, will strongly influence our perception of the painting. The ground layer could play a more significant role after aging, leaving the painting appear darker or with stronger light-dark contrasts compared to the original artistic intent.

This workshop will focus on the introduction, spread, and role of coloured ground layers in paintings across Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period. While coloured ground layers in paintings from the 16th and 17th centuries are receiving increased attention within the field of Technical Art History, the question of how and when the coloured grounds spread and the impact of these layers on our perception of paintings today is relatively underexplored. Recent research projects *Down to the Ground* (2019-), *Mobility Creates Masters* (2017-2019) and *Artists’ Mobility and Ground Colours in Denmark 1580-1680* are investigating these topics further. Researching the ground layer, its colour and context, calls

for new collaborations between the fields of Art History (including Technical Art History), Conservation, Digital Humanities, and the natural sciences, in order to unravel the impact of coloured grounds and the routes of knowledge transfer and artists' mobility that allowed this technique to spread across Europe.

During the workshop we wish to highlight the forces behind the colour changes of the ground layers implemented by painters in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Northern Europe during the Early Modern period. This session will shed light on the transfer mechanisms that influenced the successful spread of coloured grounds, their impact on painting technique and visual effects, and the influence of advances in optics and colour theory. Participants are invited to contribute with short presentations (10-15 minutes) as the basis for an open, informal discussion. A brief proposal should be submitted to the organisers by emailing Moorea Hall-Aquitania ([m.a.hallaquitania@uva.nl](mailto:m.a.hallaquitania@uva.nl)) before 1 April 2022.

## Looking Closely at Early Netherlandish Drawings

### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Olenka Horbatsch**, British Museum, London  
**Ilona van Tuinen**, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

### LOCATION

Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

This object-based workshop will examine the functions and techniques of Early Netherlandish drawings, dating approximately between 1450-1600. During this early period, drawing was integral to artistic education as well as for planning projects in other media, including stained glass, panel paintings, prints, sculpture, architecture, and metalwork. Fifteenth-century workshop sheets and model drawings made for training and recording purposes shed light on studio practice. In the sixteenth century, the functions of drawings became increasingly complex with the evolving intellectual ambitions of artists and the rise of the practice of drawing from life.

Questions we will ask during the workshop are, for instance, how can we tell what the function of a drawing was, and how can the material aspects of the paper and drawing techniques contribute to our assessment? We will examine a representative selection of drawings, including the earliest anonymous works and examples by well-known artists such as Lucas van Leyden and Dirck Pietersz. Crabeth. Idelette van Leeuwen (Head of Paper Conservation, Rijksmuseum) will be in attendance and will share insights into materials and techniques from a conservation perspective. We welcome participants specializing in drawings, but also those interested in learning more about this vital and fascinating part of the artistic process.

The workshop will take place in the study room of the Rijksprentenkabinet in front of works from the collection. The organizers request proposals for participation, and 3-4 participants will be invited to lead a discussion centered on a case study or case studies in the Rijksmuseum's collection of drawings. Participants may submit proposals for discussion along with a list of 1-3 works from the collection (search the collection online on [rijksmuseum.nl](http://rijksmuseum.nl)). Please send your proposal directly to the organizers of this session no later than 1 April 2022: [I.van.Tuinen@rijksmuseum.nl](mailto:I.van.Tuinen@rijksmuseum.nl) and [ohorbatsch@britishmuseum.org](mailto:ohorbatsch@britishmuseum.org).

A total of 15 objects will be available to view and space is limited to 10 participants.

## **An Introduction to Identifying Early Modern Print Processes**

### **SESSION ORGANIZER**

**Jun Nakamura**, University of Michigan

### **LOCATION**

Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

The 'material turn' of the past few decades of art history has pushed scholars to engage with the material facts of the images they study. And while for a long time the study of prints was marginalized by that of paintings, prints have now become a central part of art historical inquiry. In the Netherlandish context, the primacy in Europe of the print trade in the Southern Netherlands in the sixteenth- and the Northern in the seventeenth centuries has now been firmly established and explored. But despite these emphases on the materiality of prints and their importance in the early modern Netherlands, specifics of print processes and their identification remain elusive to many art historians. The aim of this workshop is to equip scholars with basic tools for understanding and identifying print processes used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

As time is limited, the workshop will provide only a basic introduction to print processes. Participants will get an overview of the basic relief (woodcut) and intaglio (engraving, etching, drypoint, mezzotint) processes. The exact format of the workshop will be dependent on the venue and available resources, but it will begin with a PowerPoint presentation on various print processes—how they work and what they look like—followed by an informal quiz using a number of detail slides. Through this, participants will learn the basic indications of each printing process, but will also be exposed to cases that make identification difficult.

Another component of this workshop will be firsthand exposure to and experience with the materials of print. I will provide a few pieces of wood, copper plates, and a handful of tools so that participants can experiment with cutting wood and gouging, incising, engraving, scraping, and burnishing plates, although materials will need to be shared amongst participants. I will additionally have examples of already cut plates and blocks to handle.

Although there is not enough time for participants to make their own matrices, this will at least offer some exposure to the physical qualities of cutting through and otherwise altering wood and metal. There will also be a printing demo on a small table-top etching press. I will ink and print one woodcut and at least one copperplate. Hopefully we will also be able to look at historical examples in person, though this might not be possible. Some activities may be altered depending on time constraints.

Through a combination of presentation, demonstration, and firsthand exposure to experimentation with materials, this workshop aims to train scholars to see and identify print processes prevalent in the early modern Netherlands.

Attendance is limited to 15 participants.

## **Sculpture**

### **SESSION ORGANIZER**

**Frits Scholten**, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

### **LOCATION**

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

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***Further information will be announced.***

## **Netherlandish Artists as Problem-Solvers**

### **SESSION ORGANIZER**

**Marije Osnabrugge**, University of Geneva

This workshop invites participants to explore an alternative conceptual model to appreciate the creativity of early modern Netherlandish artists, complementing the long-standing socio-economic framework that foregrounds innovation. As Nils Büttner has argued, the 'Kategorie des Neuen' (the notion of the new) did not have the same importance in the early modern Netherlands as it has today. Innovation was not necessarily recognized or appreciated as such at the time itself and was merely one of the by-products of emulation and competition (the strive for fame and wealth).<sup>1</sup> Although the value of the socio-economic approach in the study of Netherlandish art is not disputed here, the focus on innovation could arguably be considered disproportional and anachronistic.

In his pioneering *Patterns of intention: on the historical explanation of pictures* (1985), Michael Baxandall proposed the model of the 'triangle of re-enactment', in which artworks

are considered solutions to problems. The problem is (either explicitly or implicitly, depending on the historical context) formulated in a 'Charge' and a 'Brief'. The Charge consists of general framework of conventions, traditions and regulations within the boundaries of which artists can maneuver; the Brief is the specific set of demands to which the artwork has to respond. These demands can be imposed by a patron or stem from the artists themselves in reaction to artistic or societal developments. Effectively, Baxandall portrays the artist as a problem-solver.<sup>2</sup> The task of the art historian, then, is to reconstruct or indeed 're-enact' the problem, in order to understand the solution. Framing artists in the capacity of problem-solvers carries the potential to restore their individual creative agency or faculty,<sup>3</sup> which is often lost in the structuralist approach in which the artist is oftentimes treated as a wheel – a fully rational and intentional entrepreneur – in the economic mechanisms of the art market.

One example of the problem-solving capacities of Netherlandish artists is their reaction to the Iconoclastic Fury. Late sixteenth-century religious troubles eliminated one of the principal sources of income for Netherlandish artists (commissions for altarpieces) and drastically changed their work conditions (e.g. increased regulations), thereby causing a severe crisis in art.<sup>4</sup> The uncertainty about their future and practice stimulated artists to develop new pictorial solutions. Artists revised models for religious art, and other subjects and genres became the focus of their attention. Alternatively, we could think of the many obstacles that migrant artists encountered in negotiating their artistic practice in a new location with other artistic traditions, market conditions and available materials.[5]

The field of art history has evolved a lot since Baxandall presented his model, providing us with new insights on technical, socio-economic, cultural and biographical information on artworks and their makers to inform the 're-enactment'. During this workshop we will approach early modern Netherlandish artistic production as a process of problem-solving and discuss potential internal (artistic, technical, psychological) and external (societal, economic, cultural) challenges that artists faced. After a brief introduction on the topic, each participant will be asked to re-frame one artwork from their current research project as a (artistic, technical, psychological, societal or economic) problem that was solved (or at least attempted to be). In the discussion we will subsequently evaluate the validity and usefulness of defining artistic creativity as a process of problem-solving.

N.B. In preparation for the workshop participants will be asked to read a short text and send an image of the artwork they want to discuss to the chair.

Attendance is limited to 15 participants.

1 Nils BÜTTNER, "'Een Veerdige Handelinghe Op de Nieuw Manier': Das Neue Und Die Kategorie Des Neuen in Haarlem Um 1600," in *"Novità": Neuheitskonzepte in Den Bildkünsten Um 1600*, ed. by Ulrich Pfisterer and Gabriele Wimböck, pp. 87-110. Zürich: Diaphanes, 2011. For a discussion of different kinds and examples of innovation (process and product), see: John Michael MONTIAS, "Cost and Value in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art." *Art History* 10.4 (1987), pp. 455-66; Eric Jan SLUIJTER, "Over Brabantse voddens, economische concurrentie, artistieke wedijver en de groei van de markt voor schilderijen in de eerste decennia van de zeventiende eeuw," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 50 (1999), pp. 112-43.

2 Baxandall thus emphasizes the intentionality of the artist, all the while admitting that it is a daunting and oftentimes impossible task to reconstruct these intentions, due to fragmented available source material. The relevance of his model has been severely questioned by anti-intentionalists.

3 Not coincidentally, 'problem-solving' is considered one of the principal aspects of creativity in the rapidly developing interdisciplinary field of Creativity Research. See, for example: David H. CROPLEY, *Homo Problematis Solvendis - Problem Solving Man: A History of Human Creativity*, New York: Springer, 2019; Jeb. S. PURYEAR and Kristen N. LAMB, 'Defining Creativity: How Far Have We Come Since Plucker, Beghetto, and Dow?', *Creativity Research Journal* 32.3 (2020), pp. 206-14.

4 For examples of artworks that were created in direct response to the religious unrest see, in particular: David FREEDBERG, 'Art and Iconoclasm, 1525-1580: The Case of the North Netherlands,' *Kunst voor de Beeldenstorm. Noordnederlandse Kunst 1525-1580*, ed. by J.P. Filedt Kok et al., Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum; 's-Gravenhage: Staatsuitgeverij, 1986; and Koenraad JONCKHEERE, *Antwerp art after Iconoclasm: experiments in decorum 1566-1685*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.

5 I explore these challenges in my book: Marije OSNABRUGGE, *The Neapolitan Lives and Careers of Netherlandish Immigrant Painters 1575-1655*, Amsterdam: AUP, 2019.

## Research in the Amsterdam City Archives (for Beginners) – Early Modern Art

### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Angela Jager**, RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague  
**Jirsi Reinders**, Huygens Institute (Golden Agents project)  
**Pauline van den Heuvel**, Amsterdam City Archives

### LOCATION

Italiaanse Zaal, Amsterdam City Archives

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The collection of the Stadsarchief Amsterdam (Amsterdam City Archives) includes an abundance of sources for research on early modern art. We organize a hands-on workshop for art historians to explore relevant primary sources in connection to their own research. Many early modern artists and collectors left traces in city registers, church records and notarial volumes. Probate inventories and Weeskamer auction lists often include descriptions and prices of paintings, prints, drawings and sculptures. In recent years, many documents have been digitized. Currently, millions of notary deeds are being disclosed with advanced computer techniques and crowdsourcing, in a collaboration between the Stadsarchief Amsterdam and a large consortium of Dutch academic and cultural heritage institutions, in three projects: *All Amsterdam Deeds*, *Crowd teaches Computer how to Read* and *Golden Agents: Creative Industries and the Making of the Dutch Golden Age*.

This practical workshop hosted by the Stadsarchief Amsterdam offers an introduction to the above mentioned sources and digital research tools, and demonstrates their use in art historical research of the early modern period. Participants are invited to apply with one or more specific research questions, and will be assisted in using the resources available at the Stadsarchief Amsterdam to answer these. Experience with the Dutch language and Dutch paleography is recommended, but not required. Please include in the application your level of experience with both, to help us assess for how many participants we need to assist with the transcription of historical documents.

The workshop consists of two parts:

## 1. Introduction: sources and interpretation

The first part of this workshop will present primary sources for research in artists and art works of the early modern period. We will demonstrate how to initiate research in the Stadsarchief Amsterdam by using the digital research tools, including the indexes on the DTB-registers (baptism, marriage and burial records), transport acts and the Notarial Archives. We will explain what kind of information can be found in these sources, and how to interpret the included data. Finally, we will show a variety of implementations of archival findings with the presentation of some recent and ongoing projects using data from the Stadsarchief Amsterdam, such as Golden Agents.

## 2. Practical research

In the second part, participants will be assisted while hands-on working on their own research questions. We will offer assistance in finding relevant sources and interpreting these documents. If possible, we will prepare the necessary digital and/or original sources to optimize research time. Research topics include, but are not limited to the artist's life (biographical data, personal and/or professional networks, social and financial status, location of the workshop) and contemporary ownership of art works (collections, the art trade, valuations of works by a specific artist).

If relevant for the research question, participants will be asked prior to the workshop to consult external sources, such as Bredius' notes at the RKD (currently being digitized; will be included in the Golden Agents infrastructure), the Getty Provenance Index and/or the Montias Database.

Attendance is limited to 15 participants.

## Mapping and planning early modern Amsterdam

### SESSION ORGANIZERS

**Jaap Evert Abrahamse**, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, Amersfoort  
**Erik Schmitz**, Amsterdam City Archives

### LOCATION

Amsterdam City Archives

### *Metropolis in the Making*

During the late 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, Amsterdam grew from a moderate Dutch port town into the third-largest metropolis of Western Europe. The dynamics and lay-out of its city extensions have been studied for generations. The Amsterdam City Archives keeps in its

deposits a world-renowned collection of Amsterdam city maps, including manuscripts showing draft plans for the third (1613) and fourth (1663) extensions. These can be supplemented with plot maps per building block and corresponding auction books from the city's treasurer's archives, in which the planned approach can be followed from the outlines of plans down to the smallest level, the building plot. Maps on view range from surveys, outline maps, extension plans, plot maps, presentation maps, working maps and commercial city maps, all of which can be linked to documents from the archives of the city's council, the mayors and treasurers.

This workshop aims at providing a state-of-the-art overview of Amsterdam's extensions in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as well as outlining approaches for future research. Participants get the unique opportunity to take a close look at the original documents, and follow the track of the city's planners and developers in the pre-modern era.

Attendance is limited to 15 participants.

## **The RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History and its Research Sources**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

Ellis Dullaart  
Michiel Franken  
Suzanne Laemers  
Sytske Weidema  
Margreet Wolters

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### **LOCATION**

RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague

The RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History has long been known for its extensive collection of visual documentation, its archives and art-historical library. Moreover, continuous developments in the field of digitization have led to an extensive digital infrastructure, called *Explore*. *Explore* currently consists of eight different online databases with a large and versatile amount of art historical information, ranging from biographical data relating to artists to technical documentation of works of art. Recently, the RKD has digitized most of its visual documentation – previously available in the well-known green boxes – to make it available online in the near future, together with various tools and services.

In the context of documentation and/or research projects and in collaboration with various external partners, the databases in *Explore* are continuously enriched with new data. Examples of such projects include *The Rembrandt Database* (a research resource on Rembrandt paintings), *Dendro4Art* (containing metadata and raw data based on dendrochronological research), *The Arts in Leiden 1475-1575* (containing archival records on

artists and craftsmen from the Leiden Archives), as well as the *MARKS on ART database* (containing marks on sculpture, panel paintings and copper plates), which is under construction. *The Bredius Project* dates from very recently, the aim of which is to make Abraham Bredius's archival notes on seventeenth-century Dutch artists digitally available. The RKD will be familiar territory for many HNA members; others may only know the RKD through the website and *Explore*.

This workshop is intended for participants who want to get acquainted with the wide range of research sources, both digital and analog, that are available at the RKD. Are you currently investigating the provenance of a painting or its material history? Do you want to know what technical documentation can be found at the RKD? Are you curious about what the *MARKS ON ART database* can do for you? Have you never worked with the archival notes of Abraham Bredius before? A number of RKD curators are ready to further familiarize you with the various available research sources that may be important for your research. Participate? Describe your research case in a maximum of 400 words and mail it to [laemers@rkd.nl](mailto:laemers@rkd.nl) before 1 April 2022.

Attendance is limited to 20 participants.

## **The Artist's Family Home and Workshop in the Netherlands (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Centuries)**

### **SESSION ORGANIZERS**

**Madelon Simons**, University of Amsterdam  
**Petra Maclot**, KU Leuven | Monumenta, Antwerp  
**Chiara Piccoli**, University of Amsterdam

In this workshop-session at least three cases of research on artists homes and workshops will be deepened, with the use of all kind of sources, such as archeological findings, maps (digital, georeferenced), tax registrations, inventories and biographical material. We hope to discuss our proposals, look into the possibilities of 3D-reconstructions, next to the existing ones in 2-D. The architectural setting will be visualized, as well as parts of the interiors in order to discuss workshop practices and organizations, together with the works that possibly were produced at the location.

In the workshop session itself we will start with a short history of Amsterdam and Antwerp in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the housing in general and the reconstructions of some specific cases. This can be an excellent opportunity to focus on an artist who lived in both cities such as Pieter Aertsen and on the other hand see some of the results of the *Visualizing Amsterdam Interiors* project.

Participants will be asked to join a discussion of the reconstruction of some parcels, studying the differences between construction methods and typological traditions in Antwerp and Amsterdam. See what 3D prints can add to the understanding of the wooden

structures of houses in Amsterdam, just as the visualization of its volumes in 3-D-reconstructions.

In walks that can be undertaken individually or with small groups, workshop members and others are invited to see the locations of the artists houses. The size of the parcels are in many cases still recognizable, the facades and height of the houses have changed in time. That is why we will use the help of Augmented Reality Apps to visualize workshop and houses of Jacob Cornelisz in the Kalverstraat, indicate the house of Joost Jansz, find out where Dirck Barendsz lived and where his workshop could have been, and see where Jan Harmensz Muller had his shop and printing press.

Attendance to the workshop is limited to 25 participants.  
The walks are open for all congress members.

## **“Pronkinterieur”: Interiors for Display in the Eighteenth-Century Dutch Townhouse**

### **SESSION ORGANIZER**

**Alexander Dencher**, Leiden University

In this workshop we will visit three townhouses on the Herengracht canal in Amsterdam (170, 254, 284) to study their historic interiors. The houses were built in the seventeenth century but were extensively modified during the eighteenth century, when the lives of the Republic’s urban elite were increasingly characterized by domestic display and conspicuous consumption. The regents sought out lavish forms of entertaining, which required appropriate, modern settings for the pursuit of these pleasures. The most significant feature of a fashionable townhouse was the addition of a large reception room at the back of the house, sometimes referred to as a *pronkzaal* in Dutch, which became a defining feature of sophisticated city life. Considered by visitors to the Republic as the *state room* of the urban townhouse, these quintessentially eighteenth-century spaces will be the focus of this workshop. How were these interiors constructed, decorated and how did they reflect the aspirations of their patrons? And how are these spaces preserved and utilised today? All of these houses are owned by the Foundation Hendrick de Keyser, but only one is currently open to the public. This workshop therefore offers a rare opportunity to visit and study three well-preserved interiors behind the façades of Amsterdam’s characteristic canalhouses.

Please note that these houses are unfortunately not fully accessible and may include (steep) staircases. The workshop will also involve a moderately vigorous walk between Herengracht 170 and 254. For more information please contact the organiser of this workshop ([a.r.dencher@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:a.r.dencher@hum.leidenuniv.nl)).

Attendance is limited to 15 participants.

## PECHA KUCHA

EMERGING SCHOLARS PECHA KUCHA

### Mapping the Future of Research in Netherlandish Art

#### SESSION ORGANIZER

Lara Yeager-Crasselt, The Leiden Collection, New York

#### SPEAKERS

Niko Munz, University of York

#### *The Interior Scene in Early Netherlandish Painting*

Interior scenes such as Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait (1434) are often praised for their verisimilitude. According to Ernst Gombrich, "a simple corner of the real world had suddenly been fixed on to a panel as if by magic". But in recent studies of these fifteenth-century interior settings (LeZotte), as in studies of the painted interior in seventeenth-century Netherlands (Fock) and fifteenth-century Italy (Kwastek), the focus has been on determining the exact degree of 'realism' by comparison with contemporary probate inventories. The results were unanimous: the apparent verisimilitude of many of these works is a fiction and corresponds only partially to the reality of the spaces depicted and the objects customarily found within. For example, LeZotte found that, compared with inventories of similar rooms, paintings of interiors almost always showed a reduced amount of objects in service of composition and manipulating the viewer's attention.

I interrogate realism from a different perspective: that of rhetoric and artifice. For my PhD, the point is not to reveal how fictional the interiors are, despite their persuasive effect, but rather to ask how their effect is persuasive: how realism operates as a rhetorical style. To do this I will focus on two chapters from my PhD: the domestic interior in religious scenes (case study: Master of Flémalle?, *Werl Triptych*, dated 1438, Prado Museum) and in secular portraits (case study: Petrus Christus, *Edward Grimston*, dated 1446, National Gallery London). I will contrast the domestic interior setting in these two different contexts, hoping specifically to show the parallels and divergences in the use of certain architectural features.

Sumihiro Oki, University of Amsterdam | The Metropolitan Museum of Art

#### *Konrad Witz and Early Netherlandish Painting*

Konrad Witz (c. 1400-c. 1446) was one of the earliest painters active in German-speaking regions who assimilated the ars nova of the Burgundian Netherlands. The painter from Rottweil was admitted to the guild in Basel in 1434. His only signed and dated work, the

Saint Peter altarpiece in Geneva, shows that he fully absorbed the pictorial idioms of early Netherlandish painting before settling in the Upper Rhine. But where and how? Witz's activities during the Wanderjahre are not known at all, and thus scholars have surmised his artistic formation largely on stylistic grounds. Three hypotheses have been suggested so far. The first is to assume his sojourn in the Netherlands before he became a master painter in Basel. This theory naturally supposes his assistantship, not necessarily apprenticeship, in a painter's workshop in the Netherlands. The second presumes his training under a Netherlandish painter active in Basel. This is predicated on the supposition that there were a certain number of émigré painters and illuminators who accompanied the participants of the Council of Basel (1431-1449). The third argues that Witz learnt the Netherlandish avant-garde via manuscript illuminations, based in his native Upper Rhine. All these discussions remain regrettably fragmentary, and therefore should be re-examined in consultation with the recent scholarship of early Netherlandish painting.

In line with my PhD research, a monographic study of Konrad Witz, this talk will sketch out the above three points by referring to some newly discovered archival documents on the painter's activities, and thereby, along with close observations of his works, suggest that Witz was trained in the workshop of Jan van Eyck for a certain period before 1434.

**Haohao Lu**, Vassar College

***Open Secret: Interpretive Ambiguity and Spectatorial Experience in the Habsburg-Burgundian Netherlands***

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This project examines the social value of provocative ambiguity in the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Netherlands. While traditional studies of pictorial complexity tend to focus on objects' agency to equivocate, my research suggests that such a behavior critically involved, if not frequently derived from, acts of observation, interpretation, and even physical manipulation. More to the point, complex, virtual interactions between viewer and artwork (and their shared interpretive context) were key to the very conception of ambiguity. Drawing on key artistic monuments, archival evidence, and contemporaneous literary sources (e.g., diaries and vernacular songs), this study investigates the tacit exchanges between artist and viewer, treating them as a playful sort of antagonism similar to flirtation as defined by Georg Simmel. Through their virtual collaboration paradoxically reinforced by playful rivalry, I suggest, artist and viewer expected the equivocating artwork to confound and entice—that is, to flirt with—the sophisticated observer.

Drawing on theoretical discourses including Simmel's "Flirtation," Alfred Gell's "Agency," and Erving Goffman's "Expression Games," this study considers viewership as an individual experience shaped by the reciprocal agency that viewer and artwork exercises upon each other. The object is to underscore the viewer's input in cultivating and enriching pictorial ambivalence and thus, ultimately, in defining and transforming the narrative on such a topic. With this project, I hope to call renewed attention to spectatorial experience in the early modern Netherlands and stimulate examinations of pictorial ambiguity as a volatile manifestation of emotional and intellectual agility.

***Cleanliness and Dirtiness in Daily-Life Painting in the Northern and Southern Netherlands during the Seventeenth Century***

Impeccable tiled floors, shiny metal dishes, or defecating children and chaotic households: cleanliness and dirtiness are omnipresent in seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish scenes of everyday life, both in the subject matter and its execution. While such themes are to be expected in the context of a contemporary culture of cleanliness, the terminology derived from cleanliness and dirtiness can also be found in art theory with regards to painting style. Words such as *nettigheid* or *zuiverheid*, cleanliness or purity, were often used to qualify the *nette manier* (clean manner), whereas words like *vuil* (dirty) or *drek* (mud, excrement) criticized the *ruwe manier* (rough manner). What influence did the concepts of cleanliness and dirtiness in Dutch and Flemish culture have on an artist's subject choice and manner? While cleanliness in Dutch and Flemish culture is easily interpreted as a sign of healthy morals and prosperity in the household, and dirtiness conversely frowned upon as a metaphor for deviousness and social marginality, such associations can be intentionally blurred in daily-life scenes for humorous purposes, for instance. There are also paintings depicting dirtiness and mess in a clean style, and cleanliness in a rough manner. Some artists like Adriaen Brouwer even found their brand specializing in dirty and boorish subjects, and at times depicting themselves in those scenes. There seems to be a discrepancy between the concepts of cleanliness and dirtiness in Dutch and Flemish culture and the way they are treated in paintings and in art theory. This research should shed a new light on the relationship between artists and their own culture, on the way they thought about their craft and how they developed their specific brand.

Sangmin Lee, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

***Monochrome Still Life in Haarlem in the Seventeenth Century: An Aesthetic of Simplicity***

The vogue for still life paintings in the early modern period is well known, especially in seventeenth-century Netherlandish visual culture. An original type of still life, the laid table pieces called *ontbijten* (breakfasts, simple meals) or *banketten* (banquets) were developed and popularized particularly in Haarlem, around two painters, Pieter Claesz. (1597–1661) and Willem Claesz. Heda (1594–1680) during the 1620s and through the 1650s. This new type of still life is characterized by the simplicity of composition, the austerity of colors, and the meticulousness of rendering. Their works and those of their numerous followers constantly have neutral tones – monochrome in a broad sense. Consequently, Nicolaas R. A. Vroom called these type of artworks “*monochrome banketje*”.

Simplicity and monochromy are major issues for Haarlem still life painters. These characteristics also appear in other kinds of contemporary paintings in Haarlem, particularly in landscape paintings. How and why does this predilection for simplicity and monochromy appear in Haarlem during the first half of the seventeenth century? Is it closely connected with philosophical and religious concepts of the time? Is it connected to economic and social circumstances? Or can it be explained by artistic and cultural tastes of the day, such as

the points of view of humanists and art theorists who based their work on ancient textual sources?

The objective of this dissertation is to understand the mode of expression in Haarlem laid table pieces made between the 1620s and the 1650s. Furthermore, this research aims to explore Haarlem's artistic identity, which would succeed Haarlem Mannerism (late sixteenth to early seventeenth centuries). This identity will be able to be understood in the context of the autonomy of the Dutch Republic's cities, and of the diversity of contemporary schools: Caravaggism in Utrecht and the *fijnschilders* in Leiden.

**The program will be supplemented with museum and city tours organized by the Mauritshuis, The Hague and the Art History Department, University of Amsterdam.**