Ter Gedenktenisse
van den Weylen Deod Log
Edel Gestrengen Heere
Erbiaan François Hendrikk
Ezijn Edel Gestrengen Genen
Onder Major General in Diensten
Van de Staate der Verenigde
Nederlanden op Gouverneur-
En Commandant en chef over
De Colonie Suriname: Mc. MC.
Oveleeden in persoon van
66 Jaaren in de Colonie Suriname
Op den 18 November 1799.
Gerrit Schouten’s
Diorama of the Memorial for the ex-Governor J.F. de Friderici (1812) revisited

With reference to the discussion about Gerrit Schouten’s Diorama of a Model of the Memorial for the ex-Governor J.F. de Friderici, (Bulletin of the Rijksmuseum 2008, p. 365, acquisition no. 3) the editors received a response from Professor Sergiusz Michalski (Kunsthistorisches Institut, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen).

In his letter Professor Michalski correctly points out that Schouten’s memorial (fig. 1) is directly derived from a known French example, the memorial to Marshal Maurice of Saxony by the sculptor Jean-Baptiste Pigalle (1714-1785) in the protestant church of St Thomas in Strasbourg (completed in 1777) (fig. 2). A comparison of the two monuments immediately makes it clear that Schouten followed the celebrated French example precisely. To all intents and purposes the two monuments are exactly alike with the exception of the standing figure of the deceased De Friderici and the skeleton. This borrowing demonstrates yet again the rétardaire nature of classicism in the colonial world of the Dutch West-Indies, says Michalski. This is further underlined by Schouten’s addition of the skeleton, which in fact goes back to a 17th-century Baroque idiom and makes his design more old-fashioned than the clothed personification of Death on the Strasbourg tomb.

Fig. 1
GERRIT SCHOUTEN, Diorama of a Model of the Memorial for J.F. de Friderici, Paramaribo, 1812.

Fig. 2
JEAN-BAPTISTE PIGALLE (1714-1785), Funeral Monument to Marshal Maurice of Saxony, Strasbourg, 1777.