



Recent Acquisitions: Dutch History

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1 *Three Sugar or Syrup Pots from a Rotterdam Sugar Refinery*
Netherlands, c. 1700-1841
Earthenware, height 27.5, 22 and 44 cm

In April 2021, large quantities of earthenware pots were discovered beneath a house under renovation on the Walenburgerweg in Rotterdam. Stacked one on top of the other, the pots had probably been used to fill in a former canal at the time of the building's construction in 1905. The find comprised squat, round pots in various sizes, tall conical pots and several earthenware funnels. All were empty, with no trace of their former contents. Comparable finds in Amsterdam suggest pots of this sort were used for sugar refining.

In the eighteenth century, the process of refining raw sugar – making it suitable for consumption in the form of table sugar or syrup – occurred in the many 'suikerbakkerijen' (sugar refineries) found primarily in the cities Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Dordrecht. Sugar cane was grown and processed by enslaved people in Suriname and other Dutch colonies, from where it was shipped to the Netherlands. In the sugar refineries, the raw sugar was first melted and subsequently purified by adding lime

and egg. The syrup produced was then carefully poured into a cone-shaped mould placed on top of a round sugar or syrup pot. As the sugar mass dried, most of it crystallized in the funnel, resulting in the conical form in which sugar was typically sold. During the drying phase, some of the syrup dripped down through the funnel into a round pot – a by-product destined for less affluent consumers. Like the trading and processing of other luxury colonial consumer goods, such as tobacco and coffee, sugar refining provided ample job opportunities in the cities and their environs.

A number of pots excavated on the Walenburgerweg are marked with the letters VD&K or an eight-pointed star (those donated to the museum are unmarked). Research conducted by the City of Rotterdam's archaeology department links the marks to the former country estate Walenburch, located east of where the pots were discovered. From the mid-nineteenth century to 1881, the estate was owned by Pieter van der Dussen van Beeftingh (1794-1875), son of the sugar refiner Arnout van Beeftingh (1759-1831).

The family's sugar refinery had in fact been founded at the onset of the eighteenth century by Pieter's grandfather, Schalkius van Beeftingh (1682-1771), whose wife was Maria van der Dussen (1684-1770). Later generations of the family added Van der Dussen to their surnames, possibly explaining the letters vd found on a few of the pots. A definitive explanation for this and the presence of the letter K remains to be found.

Arnout van Beeftingh appears in a family portrait held on long-term loan in the Rijksmuseum collection (inv. no. SK-C-1586). Baby Pieter can be seen sitting in a highchair, wearing a padded head covering. Although a sugar refiner by profession, Pieter was chiefly preoccupied with the Rotterdam city council and art collecting. His decision to sell the company to the Van Oordt brothers in 1841 brought the family's involvement in the sugar refining industry to an end – a timely decision, given growing competition from the sugar beet. Decades later, circa 1905, a large number of unused sugar or syrup pots, left behind after the family's move elsewhere, were conceivably repurposed as building material to fill in a canal on what had once been the Walenburch family estate.

ESN

LITERATURE:

G.F.H.M. Kempenaar, *Rotterdam Walenburgerweg 55. Suikerpotten onder de vloer. Waarneming naar aanleiding van een vondstmelding*. BOORnotitie 43, Municipality of Rotterdam 2021

PROVENANCE:

Probably commissioned by the family Van der Dussen-Beeftingh, Rotterdam, before 1841;...; found by Arjen van Bruchem (1969), Rotterdam, 2021; by whom donated to the museum, 2023
(inv. nos. NG-2023-74,-75,-76).





- 2 Struck: DAVID VAN DER KELLEN SR (1764-1825), Utrecht or Brussels, 1828
 Engraved: ANONYMOUS, 1830
A Satirical Medal of One Cent
 Copper, diam. 22 mm, weight 3.60 grams

An abraded and mutilated Dutch copper *one cent* was recently added to our extensive numismatic collection. Acquired at the sale of the Lodewijk Beuth Collection (1900-1982), the coin dates from the reign of King William I (1813-40). It serves as a remarkable testament to events occurring in and around 1830 leading up to Belgium's emergence as an autonomous state. As it turns out, the modified coin has a greater historical value than an unmodified piece.

The one cent coin was still a novelty in 1828, the year in which the present coin was struck. With the introduction of the decimal monetary system in the United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1816, the guilder was divided into 100 cents. This greatly simplified currency calculations and transactions, as under the old system, the guilder had been equivalent to twenty stuivers, and a stuiver to eight duits. The minting of one cent coins in large quantities first occurred in 1821.

Although much alike, medals and coins are not the same. In most cases, medals are made to commemorate a seminal figure or event. The recently acquired one cent coin was reworked into a satirical medal; therefore, it was no longer a valid means of payment. Normally, the obverse of a one cent coin from this period bears a crowned w (for King William I), with the crowned coat of arms of the Netherlands on the reverse (e.g. inv. no. KOG-MP-1-2234). On the present piece, however, the Dutch coat of arms has been reworked by hand into a donkey's head, onto which ears were subsequently engraved. The resulting representation of a crowned donkey, an allusion to William I, therefore makes a mockery of the king. By means of a hole discernible above the crown, likely made with a wrought-iron nail, this satirical medal could be worn on one's clothing like a badge – a sign of loyalty to the Belgian cause.

This satirical medal conveys the prevailing dissatisfaction in the Southern Netherlands with what was perceived as an inequitable balance of power within the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. On 25 August 1830, a revolution erupted in the Brussels civic theatre, the Munt-schouwburg. Shortly thereafter, William I sent Dutch troops to the south, further escalating the

situation. This ultimately led to a declaration of independence by the 'Provisional Government of Belgium' on 4 October of the same year. Not until several years later, with the signing of the Treaty of London on 19 April 1839, would the new political reality finally be recognized in the north.

Even after 1830, the traditional one cent coin retained its appearance: succeeding kings of the Netherlands also bore the name William, while the coat of arms remained unchanged after Belgium's independence. Needing its own national coinage, a newly autonomous Belgium chose the franc – divided into 100 centimes – as its currency, with a value of approximately one-half that of a guilder. Simultaneously, the Belgians also introduced a two-centime coin – in diameter precisely the same size as the Dutch cent. Cleverly, the Belgians now had access to vast quantities of coin blanks – i.e. the Dutch cents already in circulation – that only had to be restruck. In some cases, one can still discern the underlying coin (e.g. inv. no. KOG-MP-1-2685).

A tangible remnant of the separation of the Netherlands and Belgium, this small, mutilated object moreover exemplifies the phenomena of recoinage and currency mutilation in the early nineteenth century.

JP

LITERATURE:

Jan Pelsdonk, 'De ezel en de (on)misbare stempelsnijder', *De Beeldenaar* 48 (2024), no. 1, pp. 31-32
 Fritz Rudolf Künker and Laurens Schulman, *Auktion 393. Munten van Nederland en de Nederlandse overzeese gebiedsdelen sinds 1795: De verzameling Lodewijk S. Beuth*, part I, sale cat. Osnabrück September 2023, no. 3367

PROVENANCE:

Lodewijk S. Beuth Collection (1900-1982); sale, Osnabrück (Fritz Rudolf Künker GmbH & Co. KG and Laurens Schulman B.V.), 27-28 September 2023, no. 3367, to the museum with the support of H.S.L. Beuth (inv. no. NG-2023-68).



3 ANONYMOUS

萬國船旗印圖集 / Bankoku hakki inzushū (Collection of Images of Ship Flags of the World)
Nagasaki (?), c. 1855

15 unnumbered rice-paper pages, with 87 coloured flags, bound in cloth, h. 28 cm

In the colonial era, flags were the ultimate symbol of Western world powers' attempts to subordinate overseas territories by imposing their capitalistic system. The prominent sea presence of the Dutch Republic's trading and war fleet around the world coincides with the increasing use of Dutch flag books from the seventeenth century onwards, in the form of handwritten albums, printed books or flag maps. During this same period, flag books were also produced in France, and to a lesser extent in the United Kingdom and other Western European countries. Internationally, however, the Dutch were most influential. Information found in these early works, though often outdated and even erroneous, was adopted in later flag publications well into the nineteenth century.

Flag books produced in non-Western countries in the nineteenth century are rare. These include a small number of Japanese works, mostly printed. Their creation from 1854 onwards can be directly traced to the Dutch presence in Japan. As early as the mid-seventeenth century, the Dutch East India Company was the only Western enterprise granted rights to operate a trading post on Dejima, an artificial island near Nagasaki. Over the course of the nineteenth century, Japan faced ever-growing pressure from other Western trading nations to open its borders. Through its existing diplomatic channels, the Dutch government also assisted in the effort to convince the shogunate of the need for open trade with the West. The Americans finally convinced Japan to make concessions in 1854-55, following a show of military force under naval commander Matthew C. Perry (1794-1858). This resulted in a shake-up of Japanese internal power relations and facilitated major advances in natural sciences, medicine and the military.

In the early years of the opening of Japan, the Netherlands in particular assumed a major role in meeting the Japanese rulers' demands for this transfer of knowledge. In essence, it was an effort to obtain even greater trade concessions. Key players were, in the medical field, the physician Jan Karel van den Broek (1814-1865), and in the maritime field, naval officer Gerhardus Fabius (1806-1888). Steam navigation, for example, was introduced to a Japanese naval cadre on board the paddle steamer

Soembing, donated by the Dutch government to Japan for diplomatic ends. Studies in nautical science and navigation were an integral part of this training, with classes taught in Nagasaki and at hastily founded 'Dutch schools' elsewhere in the country. In nautical science, flag books were used to instruct mariners in flag recognition. The Rijksmuseum has acquired a rare handwritten example of such a work, bearing the Japanese title 萬國船旗印圖集 (Bankoku hakki inzushū: 'Collection of Images of Ship Flags of the World'). This manuscript is a hybrid of Japanese and Dutch flag books, with Japanese elements such as rice paper, a right-to-left page layout and Japanese-language captions inserted later, and various Dutch elements, i.e. the specific classification of flags by nation, the method of illustration and the Dutch-language titles.

The present flag book is remarkable for its numerous depictions of Dutch flags: besides illustrations of the various naval flags, the book also contains the flags of the so-called *scheepvaart-colleges* (captains' associations in the shipping ports). Particularly evident is the influence of Carel Allard's *Nieuwe Hollandse scheepsbouw ... benevens de afbeeldingen van alle de voornaamste vlaggen* (1695 and 1705), a highly influential book well into the nineteenth century. Various flags found in the acquired manuscript were directly copied from this authoritative work, some of which were already obsolete more than a century before and others even having no factual basis whatsoever. Jean-Baptiste-Philibert Willaumez's *Dictionnaire de Marine* (1820) was also certainly consulted, as affirmed by the Argentine flag with a curious narrow white stripe at the top, a printing error copied from this earlier work.

JtB

LITERATURE:

Unpublished

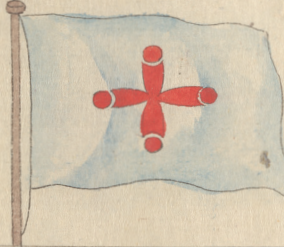
PROVENANCE:

...; Rulon-Miller Books, St Paul (Minnesota); from which to Antiquarian Bookseller Rodolphe Chamonal, Paris, 2013; from which to Antiquarian Bookseller Forum, 't Goy 2013; from which purchased by the museum, 2023
(Rijksmuseum Research Library 307 F 34,
inv. no. BI-2023-1093).

Napels



Lisborne



China

支那



Venetie

勿搦黎亞



Japan

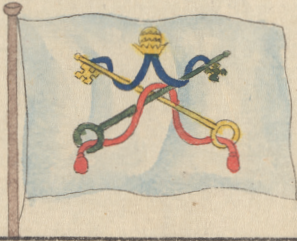
日本



Rome

羅馬

即意大利亞都府



4 SOUBLETTE ET FILS PHOTO STUDIO

Photos of Curaçao, Willemstad and its Inhabitants

Willemstad, c. 1880-96

103 x 63 mm (cartes-de-visite), 165 x 105 mm (cabinet photos)

Selly Constance Ferguson (1892-1978) was only several months old when photographed together with her *jaja* (nanny) in 1892. This photo was produced in the Soubllette et Fils photo studio in Willemstad on the island of Curaçao. The inscription on the reverse states that it was destined for 'v. Daalen Wetters. Prins Hendrikstr 1 The Hague'. Two other portraits of the Ferguson family were sent to the same address in The Hague. They are among twenty-two cartes-de-visite and cabinet photos recently added to the Rijksmuseum collection, which despite the varying provenances, all originate from the Soubllette et Fils photo studio.

At the time his baby daughter's photo was taken, father Hendrik Ferguson (1862-1945) was the municipal physician of Willemstad on Curaçao. Ferguson was born and raised on the island. During a sojourn in the Netherlands, he married Elisabeth Johanna van Daalen Wetters (1870-1889) on 2 August 1888. One month later, the couple boarded the steamship Prins Willem 1, bound for Curaçao. Sadly, the young bride never reached her new home: during a stopover in Paramaribo, Elisabeth died in 1889. In 1890, Hendrik remarried. On 9 January 1892, he and his second wife, Mathilde Constance van den Bossche (1861-1905), welcomed their first child, Selly Constance. The photo of Selly with her nanny taken a few months after her birth was sent to the Wetters, the family of Hendrik's first wife, in The Hague. It was not to be the last. A second photo followed one year later, this time of Selly Constance and her baby brother, George Eduard, together with their parents. In 1896, a third was sent, showing the two eldest children posing with their younger brother, George Jean. The three photos attest to Hendrik Ferguson's lasting bond with his first in-laws. They also provide insight into the work of a prominent Curaçao photo studio.

Felix Roberto Casper (Robert) Soubllette (1846-1921) founded his photo studio around 1880 but was likely active as a photographer prior to this time. Soubllette made both cartes-de-visite, in the format approximately 108 by 68 mm, and cabinet photos, with the dimensions approximately 168 by 108 mm. Besides photographs of Curaçao and the capital Willemstad, Soubllette produced portrait

shots of members of the island's upper class. Unique in his oeuvre is a group comprising six cartes-de-visite depicting women from the island, some of whom he photographed accompanied by a basket or barrel, in reference to their occupation. Four of these studio photos, each bearing the inscription 'R. Soubllette', appear to form a series. All thirteen cabinet photos acquired by the museum were taken at the onset of the eighteen nineties (probably in 1890), in the period that Soubllette collaborated with his son, Robert Joseph (Tito, 1870-1938). The outdoor shots show important buildings in the city, such as the gouvernements-paleis (Government Palace), and the different neighbourhoods, with connecting bridges like the 'Van den Brandhof' bridge and the 'Pontjes' bridge. Photos taken outside the city include scenes of a plantation house, people gathering at a water well and the quarantine station at Caracas Bay.

An overview of the studio's oeuvre, *Soubllette et Fils: Photography in Curaçao around 1900*, published in 1999, includes only one portrait of a Black woman: a carte-de-visite taken in 1907, showing the nanny 'Paulina' supporting two White babies, one on each arm. Unfortunately, the nanny in Selly Constance Ferguson's 1892 portrait has not yet been identified. Even so, the image might very well be the earliest known photographic portrait of a Black woman produced in the Soubllette et Fils photo studio.

ESN

LITERATURE:

Jacob A. Schiltkamp et al., *Soubllette et Fils: Photography in Curaçao around 1900*, Willemstad/Amsterdam 1999

PROVENANCE:

Commissioned by Hendrik Ferguson (1862-1945) and Mathilde Constance van den Bossche (1861-1905), Willemstad, Curaçao; family of Ferguson's first wife Van Daalen Wetters, The Hague; ...; an unknown Dutch private collector; Dutch private collector, 2010; Carl Haarnack (1963), Amsterdam, 2022; from whom purchased by the museum with the support of the Fonds 1975/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2023

(inv. no. NG-2023-70-1 to -3)

...; an unknown Dutch private collector; Dutch private collector, 2010; Carl Haarnack (1963), Amsterdam, 2022; from whom purchased by the museum with the support of the Fonds 1975/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2023

(inv. no. NG-2023-70-4 to -22).



NG-2023-70-1



NG-2023-70-3

5 JOHN JAMES FLETCHER (1846-1906)

Manuscript on the History and Salvages of the HMS 'Lutine' Sunken near Terschelling in 1799, titled The Wreck of HMS "Lutine"

Terschelling, 1897

75 numbered pages, bound with oak and copper from the ship's wreckage, 25 x 16 x 5 cm

From 1894 to 1897, the British engineer and salvage specialist John Fletcher carried out salvage attempts on the wreck of the British Royal Navy ship of the line HMS 'Lutine', an undertaking commissioned by the Lutine Syndicate and financed with a concession from Lloyd's of London. Sailing from Great Yarmouth to Hamburg in the year 1799, the Lutine foundered in a storm, struck a sandbank and subsequently sank between the Dutch islands of Vlieland and Terschelling. Only one crew member survived the disaster, though he disappeared not long afterwards. Also lost was the ship's precious cargo of gold and silver bars and a large quantity of coins, then approximately worth £1.2 million, funds destined for saving several north-German trading houses from bankruptcy. Salvage efforts were made in the direct aftermath, with several others ensuing. These involved the use of landing nets and grabs, helmet divers, diving bells, and in 1938, the enlistment of the colossal tin-mining dredge 'Karimata'. In the end, these various salvages led to the recovery of a portion of the valuable cargo, as well as large quantities of shipping timber, anchors, cannons and cannonballs, edged weapons, firearms and other miscellaneous items, and also human remains. Even today, much of the well-documented cargo has not yet been recovered, due to sand accumulation burying the wreckage, the dispersion of the wreck and salvage operation costs that far outweigh the return.

During the last campaign of his various salvages (1897), Fletcher began writing an account of the history of the HMS Lutine and its unfortunate final voyage, in what he referred to as his 'spare time' on Terschelling. In his account, he provided an overview of all previous salvage attempts, accompanied by a summary of the results and the objects recovered. He concluded his document with a detailed reconstruction of the total amount of precious metals on board the ship, as deduced from archival sources and newspaper reports. For the bank-marked and numbered gold and silver bars, he also incorporated a specified overview of what had already been brought to

the surface and what still might be found lying on the seabed. Four copies of Fletcher's manuscript are known today, each comprising seventy-three pages of handwritten text accompanied by several hand-drawn sketches of research material, landmarks, etc. In addition to a copy preserved in the Lloyd's of London archive, two are held in the collection of the National Maritime Museum (Greenwich), with the present copy recently acquired by the Rijksmuseum being the fourth.

All four manuscripts have a special binding, with a cover made of wood salvaged from the wreckage of the HMS Lutine. The oak has been sawn to size in panel form, with a round piece of copper, cut from the original lower ship's plating, in the centre. While textually identical in content, each of the handwritten publications differs from the others thanks to the (later?) pasted-in photos, newspaper clippings and inserted brochures and letters. The Rijksmuseum copy contains a number of letters, from which the provenance of this book can largely be reconstructed. It was originally in the possession of the investor William Jaffrey (1854-1905), who, together with engineer Walter Robert Kinipple (1832-1901) and Fletcher, co-founded the Lutine Syndicate. In 1897, Jaffrey donated his own (?) copy to Sir John Edward Gray Hill (1839-1814), a renowned English book collector. One copy destined for Lloyd's, at Fletcher's request, remains preserved there today. One of the two copies in the National Maritime Museum collection (part of the Royal Museum Greenwich) is known to have come from Fletcher's estate, with the other possibly made for Kinipple. A printed, slightly modified version of the manuscript, published in a small edition that same year, was presented to the Dutch queen regent Emma, Queen Victoria, Lloyd's and others.

JTB

LITERATURE:

[John James Fletcher and Henry Montague Hozier], *History of the 'Lutine'*, London (Lloyd's) 1897



PROVENANCE:

Sir William Jaffrey (board member Lutine Syndicate);
 donated to Sir John Edward Gray Hill (1897); acquired by
 Young Antiquarian Books Liverpool; from which donated
 to Lloyd's Underwriters, Liverpool, 1952; private collection;

from which to Christie's London Auction, 2000; private collec-
 tion; from which to Charles Miller Auction, 2023; from which
 to a private individual, 2023; his gift to the museum, 2023
 (inv. no. NG-2023-67).

6 *Individual Photos of Hendrik Petrus Berlage, c. 1900-34*
Photo Album of the Construction and Opening of the Amsterdam Berlage Bridge, 1929-32

The work of Hendrik Petrus Berlage (1856-1934) is an important part of Dutch cultural heritage. As an influential architect, urban planner and interior designer, Berlage played a crucial role in the development of modern Dutch architecture. Among his best-known works are the Amsterdam Stock Exchange building (1903) and the St Hubert's hunting lodge (1920), with the Kunstmuseum Den Haag (1935) considered his masterpiece. In accordance with the principles of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, Berlage also designed the interior and decoration for many of his projects. Currently, the Rijksmuseum collection contains more than one hundred objects by Berlage himself, including designs and model drawings, tableware, vases and furniture pieces, as well as personal letters. Also included are two portraits of Berlage: a 1912 lithography by Chris Lebeau (inv. nos. RP-P-1936-400, RP-P-OB -16.828) and a terracotta relief after a design by Lambertus Zijl (inv. no. BK-1972-116). Until now, photographic images of Berlage were not represented.

In 2022, Berlage's grandson Max van Rooy published the book *Heb ik dat gemaakt? Van Rooy* writes about his grandfather's social engagement, personality and work, based on, amongst other sources, photos in the family's possession. From this private collection, the Rijksmuseum received a donation of eighteen individual photos and a photo album containing nineteen photos. Collectively, these images provide a visual representation of Berlage's life and work, offering us a glimpse of the architect in his studio and at home with family. Above all, the photos show Berlage in his role as architect attending important historical events, such as the hoisting of the bell at the Amsterdam Stock Exchange building two years before its completion and the opening of the Berlage Bridge in 1932. These images capture both Berlage himself as well as spectators' reactions.

One exceptional photo (even with part of it torn off bottom left), taken during an architecture exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam in 1915, shows Berlage seated with his hands and legs crossed and staring ahead. A poster on the wall above him reads 'Broederschapsfederatie Vrede' (Brotherhood Federation of Peace). At this exhibition, Berlage presented his design for the unrealized building 'Pantheon der Menschheid'

(Pantheon of Humanity): visible are a cross section, a ground plan, and a model of the 'Monument der Menschen-eenheid' (Monument of Humanity's Unity) with lines connected to objects representing various communities and organizations. This peace monument, in fact Berlage's response to the First World War, was to be built somewhere in central Europe. With it, he aimed to restore faith in a new society. It was Berlage's desire to represent the ideals of pacifism and internationalism. Octagonal in plan, each building's corner was dedicated to a single theme: freedom, love, inspiration, power, peace, courage, contemplation and knowledge. This photo provides insight into the way Berlage contextualized one of his autonomous works when presenting it to his peers.

The acquired photos are an essential addition to the Rijksmuseum collection. They offer a more complete view of Berlage's legacy and a starting point for future research, as well as a broader perspective on his work and personal life.

SA

LITERATURE:

Max van Rooy, *'Heb ik dit gemaakt?' De vormende jaren van H.P. Berlage, Bouwmeester*, Amsterdam 2022, p. 348 (fig. pp. 346-47)

PROVENANCE:

Gift of Max van Rooy (1942-2022), Amsterdam, to the museum, 2023
 (inv. no. NG-2023-78 to -91).



NG-2023-91

7 JAN SCHLECHTER (Tanjungpandan, Belitung 1922-2009 Prigen, East Java)
Women's Camp (or *The Red Bird*), 1959
 Oil on hardboard, 88 x 44 cm

In 1959, Jan Schlechter was employed as an art teacher in Veendam, a city in the northern Dutch province Groningen. Two years earlier, facing discrimination in his native Indonesia because of his Indo-Dutch background after having chosen Indonesian citizenship, Schlechter had been forced to emigrate to the Netherlands together with his family. Living a rather uprooted existence as an Indo-Dutch man in the Netherlands, he subsequently turned to drawing and painting as an escape, becoming completely absorbed every day after his work-days of teaching. Looking back on those years, Schlechter describes in a letter from 2005 how, upon arriving home, he would 'disappear' up into the attic 'into this sacred world of painting ... All sorts of colours quickly filled the big, small and in-between spaces in the drawn shapes. I was shocked by how the base colours when combined could produce such a multitude of variations. I filled entire panels with paint.' The present panel, from 1959, is certain to be among these works, produced when Schlechter was living and working in Veendam, before starting his work as a drawing instructor at the Sint Agnes Lyceum in Leiden in September.

In the same letter, Schlechter writes that the key to his paintings was 'the camp past' and 'the camp anguish': 'Without preliminary sketches, without a palette, full of *fury* – I worked, as they say, just *mata gelap*, with my eyes closed. I think I was very close to the truth ... the form lay concealed in the use of colour, the colour range. Every day after school, I went to hell on those [attic] stairs, where, with one eye, you see, not yourself, but *people*: the mutilated person, the deformed person, the broken person.' Between April 1942 and August 1945, Schlechter was interned in various prisoner of war camps on Java and was forced to do heavy labour when working on the infamous Burma Railway in Siam (modern Thailand).

Slechter saw himself as a 'marginal person', living on the edge of two worlds – East and West – still obliged to choose. These involuntary choices in part determined the course of his uprooted existence, marked by a series of (forced) migrations: from Indonesia to the

Netherlands (1957), from the Netherlands to the United States (1962), and back to Indonesia (1993).

In his art – the 'sacred painter's world' – Schlechter seemingly managed to free himself from having to make such choices. With dream images, memories and the inspired world of his youth on Belitung setting an entirely distinct tone, Schlechter's paintings and drawings offer a multifaceted view of the border world in which he felt at home. As can be observed in works like *Women's Camp* and another panel acquired by the Rijksmuseum, *Children of Lingadjati* (1961, inv. no. NG-2003-5), this also involved the traumas of war, degrading internment, forced labour, and severed ties with one's country of origin, as experienced by many Indo-Dutch people. Circa 1960, such themes were rarely encountered or received only minimal attention in art.

At an exhibition in the Sint Agnes Lyceum in Leiden in 1960, the surrealist poet Jak van der Meulen (1928-1998) introduced Schlechter to his close friend Laurens Vancrevel (1941), a nineteen-year-old prospective art student. The meeting would result in a lifelong friendship maintained long-distance through frequent correspondence. *Women's Camp* was the first of Vancrevel's acquisitions, made at the Lyceum exhibition and purchased with his father's financial help. As such, Schlechter's panel marked the start of a growing collection of art and poetry by surrealist artists from around the world, at the time still relatively unknown. Vancrevel built the collection initially on his own, later in collaboration with his wife, Frida de Jong.

Vancrevel succeeded in bringing Schlechter to the attention of organizers of surrealist group exhibitions in the United States and other countries around the world. Ultimately seen as an 'Indo-Surrealist' artist, Schlechter showed eight paintings at the 1969 international exhibition *Zwarte Zon – Bloem in Opstand: Surrealistische manifestatie ter introductie van de komende dekade* (Black Sun – Flower in Protest: Surrealist Manifestation as an Introduction to the Coming Decade), held in the former Palace Hotel in Scheveningen.

HS



LITERATURE:

Laurens Vancrevel and Esther Wils, *Jan Schlechter Duvall: Schilderijen, tekeningen en gedichten van een Indo-Surrealist*, The Hague 2016, p. 4 and back cover
 Miguel Pérez Corrales, 'Jan Schlechter Duvall', in idem, *Caleidoscopio Surrealista: Una visión del surrealismo internacional (1916-2015)*, El Sauzal (Tenerife) 2015, pp. 662-63

PROVENANCE:

Gift of Mr and Mrs van Krevelen, Bloemendaal, to the museum, 2023
 (inv. no. NG-2023-6).

- 8 RIK LINA (Valkenburg aan de Geul 1942)
Tanka Diptych The Gate Opens, 1968/69
 Watercolour, gouache, 97 x 67 cm
Tanka Diptych The Gate Closes, 1969
 Watercolour, ink and gouache, 93 x 65 cm

From 1967 on, the artist Rik Lina's work was influenced by his use of the mind-altering substance LSD. Prior to this time, Lina, who studied at the Instituut voor Kunstnijverheidsonderwijs in Amsterdam, had experimented with a variety of other drugs, including mescaline, peyote, opium and marijuana. In most cases, these experiences had an indirect influence on his work. When producing the present pair of watercolours, Lina had not been on drugs but painted his recollections of moments from an earlier LSD trip. *Tanka Diptych The Gate Opens* shows the brightly coloured, scintillating onset of a trip, when the mind-expanding gate opens. *The Gate Closes*, in an interesting contrast, is a depiction of a so-called 'bad' trip.

Lina worked 'automatically', as he describes it. Attempting to capture the unknown and unpredictable, he relied on a rapid, expressive means of registering spontaneously arising feelings. Logical thinking played no role – images found their form during the actual creation of the work. Lina saw both the creative act and the drug experience as experiments, as exercises in perception, born from his interest in shifting consciousness.

In the nineteen sixties, drugs were an important part of youth and counterculture, at a time when spirituality and New Age notions strongly prevailed. From about 1967 on, this drug-inspired psychedelic culture became a fixed feature of underground magazines published in cities like San Francisco, Amsterdam and London. It was also reflected in the era's pop music, especially manifested in visual form on the covers of vinyl records and concert posters. In 1968, Lina and other artists created painted murals in Fantasio, a new Amsterdam youth and pop centre. Lina also provided illustrations for the magazine *Moksha: Tijdschrift voor bewustzijnsverandering en drugs*. There he first met Laurens Vancrevel, an encounter that ultimately led to his joining the surrealist group Bureau de Recherches Surréalistes en Hollande. In 1969, Lina took part in the international surrealist exhibition *Zwarte Zon – Bloem in Opstand: Surrealistische*

manifestatie ter introductie van de komende dekade, held at Tiffany's Gallery in the former Palace Hotel in Scheveningen, where he showed *Tanka Diptych* and other works. As stated in *Moksha* no. 11, the catalogue of this 'surreal manifestation', the aim was to further underscore the ties 'between psychedelics and surrealism'. The press release promoted the exhibition as a 'Surrealistic manifestation to introduce the nineteen seventies':

The lifestyle of the flaming power of the nineteen seventies presents itself in a major collective manifestation in Tiffany's Gallery ... in Scheveningen. This life form is called surrealism, the black sun of the senses, the rebellious flower of creativity. ... The international surrealist movement overthrows the art insemination of national property and fertilizes the counter-national monuments of resistance. This signifies nothing but the unconditional democratization of emotion and the integral liberation of inspiration. The surreal undercurrent of contemporary subversiveness surfaces once and for all, to herald the life form of the coming decade.

This revolutionary text clearly conveys how Lina's psychedelic art, which in fact centres on an introspective exploration of individual consciousness, strongly resonated with the prevailing revolutionary spirit circa 1969: art that proclaims the coming of a radical shift, of entering a new era.

HS

LITERATURE:

Moksha: Psychedelies bulletin en tijdschrift voor bewustzijnsverandering en drugs, no. 11, Amsterdam 1969, cat. nos. 43, 44

PROVENANCE:

Purchased from the artist by the museum with the support of Pon Holdings B.V.

(inv. nos. NG-2024-7, -8).



NG-2024-7



NG-2024-8

9 Design: Floris Guntenaar (Amsterdam 1946)

Humming Top, 1972

Aluminium, iron, wood and paint, height approx. 150 cm

On 20 June 1972, the musical piece *To You* was performed at the annual Holland Festival by STEIM (STudio Electro-Instrumental Music) in Amsterdam's Carré Theatre. The song was based on a socially critical poem of the same name, penned in 1964 by the British poet Adrian Mitchell and set to music by the Dutch musical innovator and composer Peter Schat (1935-2003). In the somewhat ironical words of one reviewer writing in the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf*, the piece centres on the theme of dictatorship: 'She, the materialistic, capitalistic, war-making society with all her depraved institutions, exerting influence on us, the poet (the composer) and the reader: insofar as they threaten to drive us crazy, insofar as we are able to defend ourselves against this by a means They do not know: Kommunikation, to make love.' Four enormous hand-driven humming tops making an electrically amplified whirring sound – musical instruments designed by Floris Guntenaar, inspired by children's toys – increased the auditory and visual character of STEIM's original music theatre.

Social criticism and innovation were seminal to the artistic work of STEIM and Peter Schat starting in the nineteen sixties. Schat was a key figure in the action group *Aktie Notenkraaker* and the Holland Festival opera production *Reconstruction*, the latter conceived as an indictment of American imperialism. *Aktie Notenkraaker* demanded that avant-garde and experimental modern-classical music be given a place in the world of contemporary classical music. In the same year *To You* was released, Schat, together with Stephan Willenborg, Rob van de Poel and the designer Floris Guntenaar, founded the musical group Amsterdam Electric Circus (AEC), a successor of the STEIM quartet in which they had previously been involved. The AEC was modelled after the 'Red Theater' featured in the book *Red Star Over China*, published in 1937. The book's author, the American writer Edgar Snow, describes the theatre as a group of artists travelling by wagon, from which they perform in village squares across rural China. Guntenaar's giant humming tops would become a defining auditory and visual element of the AEC performances.

A mobile, open-air stage, designed by Guntenaar for the AEC, was meant to offer an alternative to the stately, exclusive concert halls. Due to limitations posed by music performed in the open air, the AEC turned to electronically amplified instruments. On an inflatable sphere, films, slides and texts were shown, projected from within. By means of such innovative forms of music and theatre 'using image and sound' (as stated in the company's founding manifesto), the AEC wished to close the gap between the elitist establishment of the art world and the street, and to appeal to a broader audience, spontaneously and directly. Schat called it a 'socialist circus'.

In the years 1972-78, the AEC performed across the country, travelling from one Dutch city to the next – from Zevenaar to the future polder city Almere – often in collaboration with local theatre and musical groups. The company also travelled to the German cities Bonn and Ulm. The electronic circus's visits were often initiated by local city councillors, who were eager to make art and culture accessible to as many inhabitants as possible. The performances initially drew large numbers of attendees, but apparently not everyone was quite prepared for the AEC's avant-garde tones or left-oriented political messaging, with some leaving before the end. Art in public spaces also left empty places in the grass.

Nonetheless, the AEC's arrival at each of its venues was undoubtedly spectacular. Four vans of the British make Commer, travelling in a convoy, were used to transport the entire theatre. Spectators could see the giant humming tops, mounted to the roof of each approaching vehicle on car racks. When played from the roofs of the four vans, the music-making tops signalled the performance's commencement.

HS

LITERATURE:
UnpublishedPROVENANCE:
Gift of Floris Guntenaar, Amsterdam, to the museum, 2023
(inv. no. NG-2023-3).



10 *Pistol Used to Assassinate Pim Fortuyn in 2002*
 Spain, in or before 1994
 Calibre 9x19mm, serial number 1909659

The assassination of the politician Pim Fortuyn (1948–2002) by Volkert van der Graaf on Monday 6 May 2002 is one of the most shocking events in the recent history of the Netherlands. Shot dead in a parking lot of the Mediapark in Hilversum, Fortuyn had just completed an interview broadcast live on the Dutch radio station Radio 3FM. At the moment the shooting occurred, the interviewer, DJ Ruud de Wild, was walking next to Fortuyn, together with a small group of people.

In 2002, Pim Fortuyn, leading candidate of the eponymous political party Lijst Pim Fortuyn (LPF), was a dominant figure in the political debate in the Netherlands. In the run-up to the parliamentary elections held on 15 May, Fortuyn – an outspoken newcomer among the established political parties – had been scoring high in the opinion polls. He was a sharp critic of the so-called ‘purple’ cabinets, a collaboration between liberals and social democrats since 1994, formed under the premiership of Prime Minister Wim Kok. Fortuyn’s book with the telling title *De puinhopen van acht jaar paars* (The Mess of Eight Purple Years), published in April 2002, constituted the LPF’s party platform. *De puinhopen* was by no means the politician’s first publication: Fortuyn had already made a name for himself writing as a columnist for the weekly magazine *Elsevier*. As early as 1995, he published *De verweesde samenleving*, followed by *Tegen de islamisering van onze cultuur: Nederlandse identiteit als fundament* in 1997. In that same year, Fortuyn published a third book, this time bearing the title *Zielloos Europa: Tegen een Europa van technocraten, bureaucratie, subsidies en onvermijdelijke fraude*. In all three publications, Fortuyn resolutely called for a greater sense of community. He was also highly critical of the influence of Islam and the European Union on Dutch society. Under the slogan ‘I say what I think and I do what I say’, Fortuyn appeared to be heading for an election victory in 2002, with considerable odds of becoming the country’s next prime minister.

Given what was perceived as an impending political landslide, the shock of Fortuyn’s assassination was all the greater. The evening of the shooting, masses of people gathered outside the Binnenhof in The Hague. Many of Fortuyn’s

supporters were crestfallen by the sudden loss of their political leader; some placed the blame for the murder on the incumbent governmental leaders. ‘The bullet came from the left, not from the right’, remarked the chairman of the LPF, hinting at the toxic anti-Fortuyn climate in the weeks leading up to the shooting, viewed as eliminating the threshold of violence against the newcomer. Prior to the incident, Fortuyn himself had stated that he was being ‘demonized’ by the left-wing media and politics.

The perpetrator of the crime was the thirty-two-year-old Volkert van der Graaf, who worked for the Vereniging Milieu-Offensief (vmo), a pro-environment group. Van der Graaf had purchased the murder weapon – a Star M-43 Firestar pistol manufactured by Star Bonifacio Echeverria S.A. in Eibar, Spain – in the illegal circuit in 1996/97. Both the pistol and ammunition had been kept in a locked trunk in his attic. Van der Graaf claimed he purchased the pistol to defend himself against physical threats, presumably stemming from his role as an environmental activist. As his motive, he maintained that Fortuyn was a danger to society, and vulnerable groups in particular.

On the day of the shooting, Van der Graaf carried the pistol concealed in a plastic bag so as not to be noticed when approaching his victim. From a distance of less than one-and-a-half metres, he fired off five fatal shots. After threatening a brave pursuer during what was no more than a short flight, Van der Graaf was intercepted and arrested, and his firearm immediately confiscated.

On 5 April 2003, the court sentenced Van der Graaf to eighteen years in prison. In 2004, the Rijksmuseum filed a formal plea with the Dutch Public Prosecution Service, requesting permission for the murder weapon to be incorporated in its collection. The official transfer of stewardship took place in 2012. The deed of transfer to the Rijksmuseum, compiled by the chief public prosecutor, includes the following considerations: ‘the murder of Pim Fortuyn ... was an event that can be viewed as a unique fact in Dutch history’, and furthermore ‘the pistol with which Volkert van der Graaf fired the fatal shots serves as an essential material testimony of Pim Fortuyn’s murder’.

HS



LITERATURE:

Verdict Amsterdam Court of Justice, 15 April 2003, case number 13/123078-02
Indictment in the case against Volkert van der G.,
1 April 2003

PROVENANCE:

...; Volkert van der Graaf; Dutch Public Prosecution Service (the pistol became property of the State of the Netherlands by forfeiture); transfer of stewardship to the museum (under a ten-year embargo), 2012
(inv. no. NG-2012-56).

II KAREN GEGIAZARIAN (1971 Yerevan, Armenia)

Maquette Klompjan Asylum Seekers Centre, Markelo, 2012

Wood, cardboard, aluminium, textile, plastic, plants and paper, 262 x 133 x 30 cm

Karen Gegiazarian and his family fled Abkhazia in 2011. Seeking refuge in the Netherlands, they were received at the 'Asielzoekerscentrum (AZC) Klompjan' situated in Markelo (province Overijssel). During his sojourn in this asylum seekers centre, Gegiazarian began working on a special project: a highly realistic maquette, recreating the site where thousands of asylum seekers from around the world had been housed for short- and longer-term stays over the last twenty years. By doing so, he was able to transform the temporary site of an asylum seekers centre into something permanent, an object to be preserved. When made by architects, urban planners, project developers and governments, maquettes function to project a vision of the future, an idea of what the ultimate building will look like and how future residents will live. Gegiazarian's maquette, however, is of an entirely different order, as it captures, literally and figuratively, from the insider's perspective of a resident, something that would soon no longer exist.

From 1991 to 2012, the AZC Klompjan provided a place where those seeking asylum in the Netherlands could stay temporarily while awaiting a residence permit and official refugee status. As defined by the Dutch government, the term 'asylum seeker' applies to any person who flees his country of origin due to war or persecution and requests asylum in the Netherlands. So-called 'status holders' also resided at the AZC, until assigned permanent accommodation. Klompjan derived its name from a former campsite established on the same location in 1967. Asylum seekers were housed in identical mobile homes. A historic farmhouse on the site functioned as a meeting hall. Also present were a small school, modest-scale sports facilities and some playground equipment. The centre was initially designed to hold 200 residents. Due to an influx of large numbers of Yugoslavian war refugees in 1991, however, the centre's capacity was quickly expanded to 350 residents. Due to a sharp decline in the number of asylum seekers, the AZC Klompjan in Markelo was permanently closed in 2012, at which time the housing and related structures disappeared.

As one of the last inhabitants of Klompjan, Gegiazarian began working on his miniature

building project to combat stress and keep busy. His 'workshop' was a simple shed with a window, measured in advance to ensure the maquette could be removed upon its completion. An automobile painter by profession in his native Abkhazia, Gegiazarian worked on the maquette mainly at night; during the day, he roamed the grounds, taking measurements with notebook and pencil. Safety considerations, as he was told, prohibited him from obtaining a map of the site. Taking photographs was also not permitted.

Gegiazarian also improvised when it came to gathering building materials for his maquette. Dried twigs, moss, soda cans, toy automobiles and plastic drinking straws (for the dozens of lampposts) were found close to home and tested for durability. His goal was to recreate a highly detailed miniature representation of his surroundings, down to the numbers on the caravans – Gegiazarian and his family lived at no. 404 – and the characteristic Dutch tiles paving the sidewalks that connected the various buildings. To convey the nighttime situation, the maquette was equipped with an extensive electricity network mounted on the baseboard's underside, complete with miniature lights installed in the lampposts, caravans and other buildings.

After the AZC's closure, the maquette led an itinerant existence. In 2012, it was exhibited at the Eungs Schöppe regional museum in Markelo; in 2014, it appeared in Sergej Kreso's documentary *Asielzoekas*. The maquette returned to Markelo in 2021, when temporarily on display at the cultural centre Het Beaufort. From that year on, it formed part of the project *Tussenlanding*, an initiative of journalist and curator Milena Mulders and migration expert Hanneke Verbeek. Serving as a case study, the maquette was used to research the significance of former AZC residents' heritage from two perspectives: first, within the community of people who had been in direct contact with these temporary locations either as an inhabitant, employee or resident of Markelo; second, within the more institutional domain of Dutch museums and heritage institutions. An additional aim was to find a permanent, public function for the maquette, now realized with its recent acquisition by the Rijksmuseum.

HS



LITERATURE:

Milena Mulders and Hanneke Verbeek,
*Tussenlanding: Een tastbare herinnering aan
tijdelijkheid*, (unpublished report) n.d.

PROVENANCE:

Purchased from the maker by the museum
with the support of the Johan Huizinga Fonds/
Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2023
(inv. no. NG-2023-77).

12 *Ribbons Used during the King's Apology for Slavery in 2023*

Netherlands, 2023

Textile, 97 x 18 cm each

'Today, I stand before you. As your King and as part of the government, on this day I offer these words of apology myself. I experience them intensely with heart and soul.' Thus Willem-Alexander, King of the Netherlands, opened his speech on 1 July 2023 during the annual Slavery Commemoration, organized by the National Institute for the Study of Dutch Slavery and its Legacy (NiNsee). This historical ceremony was held at the Slavery Monument, made by the Surinamese artist Erwin de Vries, in the Amsterdam Oosterpark. The king addressed his speech to the audience in the park and a large crowd gathered on the city's Museumplein, but also to multitudes of people in Suriname, in the Dutch Caribbean and 'wherever in the world you are watching'.

The king believed it was his moral obligation to take a stand and apologize for the Dutch colonial period. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, the Netherlands was actively engaged in slave trade and forced labour in the transatlantic region and around the Indian Ocean, where the Dutch West India Company (wic) and Dutch East India Company (voc) operated. In the king's words, it was a period when people '[saw] their fellow man as a commodity, to be dispensed with as one wishes. As a soulless working implement to be used for making profit. That you can enchain, trade, brand, torture, punish, even kill with impunity. ... For the abundantly evident lack of action in condemning this crime against humanity, I ask today – on this day that we commemorate the Dutch slavery past together – forgiveness.'

King Willem-Alexander went on to observe that slavery is by no means a closed history. Even after slavery's abolition, the road to achieving greater social equality and an openness regarding the impact of this inequality from the past has been long: 'We carry with us the horror of slavery's past. The consequences thereof are still palpable today in the racism in our society. ... But let us ... extend the hand to one another and together build a world free of racism, discrimination and economic exploitation. After acknowledgement and apologies, may we work together on healing, reconciliation and rehabilitation'. To close the ceremony, King Willem-Alexander and Queen

Maxima jointly laid a wreath of white roses at the foot of the Slavery Monument. Hanging from the wreath were two ribbons in the colours of the Dutch flag, with gold fringe attached, bearing the crowned gilt initials WA and M.

For many people, this commemoration was an important step in the struggle for the acknowledgement and recognition of the Dutch slavery past. A physical testament to the king's spoken apology, the ribbons now form part of the Rijksmuseum collection, where they are kept and preserved in a public place. Their transferral ensures that we can tell future generations about this historical moment – a benchmark evoking joy and emotions among the many who witnessed it.

SA

LITERATURE:

www.koninklijkhuis.nl/documenten/toespraken/2023/07/01/toespraak-van-koning-willem-alexander-tijdens-de-nationale-herdenking-slavernijverleden-2023

PROVENANCE:

Gift of the National Institute for the Dutch Slavery History and Legacy to the museum, 2023
(inv. nos. NG-2023-65, -66).



NG-2023-65



NG-2023-66