



# Ada Hondius-Crone: A Life Devoted to the Arts and the Women's Movement

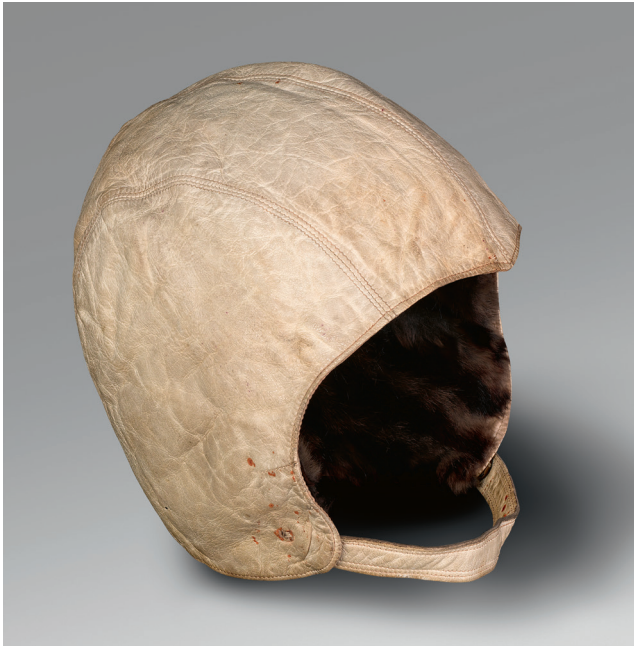
• MARION ANKER\* •

It is 1983. At the age of ninety, the days of Ada Hondius-Crone (1893-1996, fig. 1) were still relatively busy. Although she would live to be 102, her move to a nursing home in this year necessitated that she relinquish many of the possessions with which she had surrounded herself for the greatest part of her life. Meetings with curators from various museums and the 'inventorying and cleaning up' of her possessions were taking up much of her time.<sup>1</sup> As always, though in a somewhat shaky handwriting, Hondius-Crone recorded her daily meetings and tasks in an appointment book. A substantial task was to decide where her possessions could best be preserved, to find them a new home in a fitting context. The Rijksmuseum then received fifty-one pieces, all purchased over the years by Crone<sup>2</sup> for the interior of her home and her wardrobe. These included a suite of sitting room furniture designed by Hildo Krop (c. 1920), various Wiener Werkstätte fabrics and garments (c. 1910-32), and the driver's cap and goggles she wore back in the nineteen tens and twenties (figs. 2, 3).<sup>3</sup> In addition, she donated an eighteenth-century Dongkhe ware vase from South China (inv. no. AK-MAK-1380) to the Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst (VVAK, Asian Art Society in the Netherlands, since 2018 KVVAK), a society located in the Rijksmuseum itself.

< Fig. 1  
Portrait of Ada  
Hondius-Crone at  
her home on the  
Oranje Nassaulaan  
in Amsterdam,  
nineteen eighties.  
Private Archive  
Ada Hondius-Crone,  
Collection IAV-Atria,  
inv. no. iiav00000238.

These were by no means her first donations to either the Rijksmuseum or the VVAK, nor would they be her last. Ultimately, more than two hundred of Hondius-Crone's possessions were accepted into the collections of these two institutions.

The majority of the donated objects were acquired by Crone during the Interbellum, at which time she was also involved in the women's (peace) movement. In some instances, she was able to combine her interests in the (applied and Asian) arts and the feminist cause.<sup>4</sup> One might say that Crone spent more or less the first half of her life – especially in the interwar years – creating an autonomous, or distinctive, identity for herself in the public domain by collecting objects of applied and Asian art while also dedicating herself to the women's movement. After the Second World War, in roughly the second half of her life, she managed to sustain and anchor this distinctive identity by donating her objects and documentation to museums and archival institutions. This article examines Crone's involvement in the women's movement and her commitment to applied and Asian art, and shows how both contributed to the formation and perpetuation of her distinctive identity as a modern woman with an artistic and varied taste.



*Figs. 2, 3*  
 ANONYMOUS, *Cap with Chin Band, Furnished with Ear Warmers*, c. 1910-25. Leather and fur, h. 20 cm. *Goggles for in the Car or on the Motorcycle*, c. 1900-20. Velvet, mica/plastic, elastic, metal, 11.3 x 7 x 4.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. nos. BK-1984-92 and -207, gifts of A.H. Hondius-Crone, Voorschoten.

Up to now, (short) articles have been devoted to a few of Hondius-Crone's individual donations (and rare exchanges and sales) to various institutions.<sup>5</sup> Those made to the Rijksmuseum have been mentioned in annual reports, in which they are described per collection department. The objects preserved by the vvak have been featured in the society's journal. However, those objects housed in the Rijksmuseum have never been considered from a cross-departmental perspective, nor has there been an analysis of their significance for either

Crone herself or the museum. Lastly, no comprehensive evaluation of Crone's contributions to the women's movement has ever been made.

### Collecting and Donating as a Form of Identity Formation

For a woman in the twentieth century, what was the significance of collecting objects and donating them to a museum? The activity of collecting is often described as a means for creating 'a distinctive identity' and expressing a (refined) taste.<sup>6</sup> A museum's acceptance of a donation confirms the former owner's taste and may – in those instances where the collection remains intact and is permanently associated with the collector – serve to immortalize the former owner.<sup>7</sup> Research into donors has been conducted for decades, also in the Rijksmuseum.<sup>8</sup> In this regard, women donors have quite commonly been neglected, though efforts are now being made to right this imbalance.<sup>9</sup>

That women's role as benefactors has long been overlooked stems partly from the fact that, up until 1956, married women in the Netherlands had no legal capacity. Consequently, their purchases and donations were often listed under the husband's name. Moreover, women were not considered serious collectors, and for a long time commonly seen as 'consumers' of objects in the domestic setting. Male collectors were particularly vehement in their opposition to the idea that items related to the home interior and wardrobe might qualify as objects suitable for applied art collections. Because, generally speaking, these obsolete notions were not modified over time, this bias 'has [largely] passed into institutional memory'.<sup>10</sup>

However, the collecting – as well as the subsequent donation or selling – of these objects does in fact carry significance, both for the collector and the receiving institution. Art historian Dianne Sachko Macleod has

shown that, between the years 1800 and 1940, the purchasing of applied art objects for domestic settings enabled American women to develop their own autonomous identity and allowed them to step out of 'their cloistered interiors' and 'into an engagement with public life'.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, such activities gave these women an opportunity to establish business and personal ties with artists, dealers and, in the case of a later donation or sale, museums. Donations (and sales) of applied art objects brought the domestic setting into the public arena, a shift that consequently changed the very nature of those museums' collections. According to historian Kate Hill, women donors also became 'museum makers', meaning that they contributed to (new) collecting areas of the museum, and in doing so, influenced the direction of museum policy.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, Sachko Macleod observes that, for some women, it was just a small step from 'art' to 'activism': when stepping out of their 'cloistered interiors' through art networks and entering 'into what was construed as [a] masculine public space', these women frequently chose to unite in the women's movement to demand space for women in the public domain. The different spheres sometimes merged or overlapped.<sup>13</sup>

### **Ada Crone: An Introduction**

Ada Helena Crone (1893-1996) was born into a prominent Amsterdam merchant family at the close of the nineteenth century and would live to see the twentieth century almost to its end.<sup>14</sup> From an early age, a broad interest in art and history was fostered. Crone's parents, Eduard Henrich Crone (1852-1918) and Helena Rebecca Ernestine Muller (1862-1945), were avid art collectors, with an emphasis on the Hague School. They belonged to relatively 'new money', with their wealth chiefly accumulated through business dealings with the Dutch East Indies.

Crone's affluent background enabled her to follow and develop her interests. She took classes studying French at a Swiss university, and in the years 1915 to 1918, she immersed herself in the theory and practice of (contemporary) applied arts at the *Kunstnijverheidsschool Quellinus* in Amsterdam, in the school's department of Decorative Art and Interior Design. In the nineteen thirties and forties, she followed courses in cultural history and Buddhist art in Leiden and Greek archaeology in Utrecht. Crone's interest in ancient archaeology resulted in a publication about a temple in Domburg, dedicated to the provincial Roman goddess *Nehalennia*.<sup>15</sup> Participating in these activities was not meant to lead to a career: women of her generation and social class were not expected to engage in paid work.

Throughout her adult life, Ada Crone went by the surname of her three successive husbands. Her marriage to her first husband, Carl Müsseler, a German jurist with whom she briefly lived in Berlin, ended abruptly after only sixteen months with his death on the front in 1915 during the First World War. Four years later, Crone remarried. With her second husband, the Dutch businessman and diplomat August von Saher, she shared an interest and network in applied arts and Asian art. Residing at *Oranje Nassaulaan 10* in Amsterdam, the couple had three children.<sup>16</sup> This marriage ended in divorce in 1929. In 1935, Crone married the Dutch educationalist Jan Hondius, at which time she and her children moved to *Villa Vijverhof* in Bloemendaal. Hondius and Crone shared interests in innovative educational theories, esotericism and Asian art.<sup>17</sup> After the war, the family returned to the house on the *Oranje Nassaulaan* in Amsterdam. Following Jan Hondius's death while staying in India in 1977, Ada Hondius-Crone remained at this address living on her own until 1983, the year in which she moved to the nursing home.<sup>18</sup>

## Women's Movement

After Crone's death, son Herbert von Saher wrote that his mother 'had been active [in the women's movement] all her life'.<sup>19</sup> The women's movement in which Crone had been involved centred on feminist objectives and endeavoured to bring about social change improving the position of women.<sup>20</sup> For her, this 'feminism'<sup>21</sup> was closely linked to the (international) women's peace movement. Moreover, she firmly believed and demonstrated that this feminist ideal could be served and strengthened by the arts.

Crone's active participation in the women's movement primarily spanned the period from the nineteen tens to the nineteen fifties, with the earliest entry in her appointment book made in 1913. In that year, the then nineteen-year-old Ada Crone made several visits to the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913*. This exhibition, part of the centenary celebration of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, was organized to gain recognition for women's contributions to Dutch society and generate interest in the women's suffrage movement. Among the various events accompanying the exhibition, Crone attended a lecture by the renowned American feminist and pacifist Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance (IWSA).<sup>22</sup> Two years later, in 1915, Crone took part in the International Congress of Women in The Hague, set up on the initiative of the physician, feminist and pacifist Aletta Jacobs. With war raging, peace was the topic of this gathering. Women's rights, women's suffrage and sustainable peace were presented as integrally aligned. As evidenced by a thick notebook full of annotations,<sup>23</sup> Crone had a 'wonderful' and very inspiring time at the conference – this, when her husband Carl Müsseler was fighting in the trenches and she could not yet foresee his death only five days later.<sup>24</sup> The 1915 conference led to the founding of the International Women's

Committee for Permanent Peace, after the armistice renamed the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). Ada Crone, for whom the consequences of the war had become very tangible, was appointed secretary of the Dutch chapter, the Comité van Vrouwen voor Duurzamen Vrede. For years, she was responsible for overseeing the organization's (international) correspondence, a task that gave her a granular understanding of those participating in the global women's peace movement, largely comprised of pacifist feminists.<sup>25</sup> Crone's position on this committee may also have brought her into contact with Dutch women artists sympathetic to women's causes. In her 1918 appointment book, for example, Crone recorded the address of Wilhelmina Drupsteen, the artist then creating graphic designs for the Comité.<sup>26</sup>

In the aftermath of the introduction of universal suffrage in 1919 and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles that same year, membership in women's (peace) movements in the Netherlands diminished. Crone herself remained active, committed in her work on behalf of the Dutch chapter of the WILPF.<sup>27</sup> She was also involved in the Nederlandse Vereeniging voor Vrouwenbelangen en Gelijk Staatsburgerschap (The Netherlands Society for Women's Interests and Equal Citizenship, 'Vrouwenbelangen' for short). In the view of this last organization, created in 1930 from a merger of two women's suffrage associations, there was still much work to be done in the struggle for equality between men and women, with marriage legislation, paid women's labour and the promotion of peace high on the agenda.<sup>28</sup> To generate money and attention for their cause, Vrouwenbelangen organized a *Spiegel Historiae* in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in 1931. In a theatre-like setting, participants appeared on stage representing thirty-nine women of historical

importance, offering an alternative to the existing male-dominated historiography. Wearing a 'modest, expensive dress', Ada Crone appeared as Louise de Coligny, the fourth wife of William of Orange (fig. 4).<sup>29</sup> The event proved to be a resounding success: not only was a large sum of money raised and the whole affair repeated one week later, it also brought substantial media attention to the women's movement. With this event, Crone's personal involvement was publicly staged, with her name and photo – published in various newspapers. That this was an important and memorable event for Crone herself is affirmed by the fact that she kept both the costume and the associated documentation for the remainder of her life.<sup>30</sup>

Crone combined her interests in the arts and feminist principles perhaps most visibly in her work for the Flatstichting Voor en Door Vrouwen (Flat Foundation For and By Women), in which she assumed organizational, financial and artistically defining roles. The Flatstichting aimed to provide decent housing for single working women, in the late nineteen thirties culminating in the purchase of a large villa in Haarlem subsequently converted into one-room apartments.<sup>31</sup> This would lead to the foundation being nicknamed the EKAWO project (EenKamerWOning). This highly progressive project was unparalleled in the Netherlands. At the time of the Flatstichting's founding in 1937, Crone was appointed to the supervisory board; two years later, she became chair of the board, a position she would continue to hold until 1956.<sup>32</sup> She also made significant contributions to the EKAWO project, repeatedly ensuring its survival despite periods of financial crisis.<sup>33</sup> In all likelihood, it was Crone's idea to approach the architect Gerrit Rietveld for the villa's renovation. In fact, it was Rietveld who in 1935 oversaw the renovation of Villa Vijverhof in Bloemendaal. In this way, Crone employed her own network in support of the women's movement, while at the same time enriching the villa and the lives of its inhabitants with a contemporary, modernist aesthetic.<sup>34</sup>

### A Modern Interior and Wardrobe

Ada Crone's appreciation for contemporary aesthetics was evident in the furnishing of her own homes and wardrobe. Her interest lay in contemporary, often left-wing and progressive artists and workshops. The objects she acquired were by no means limited to any one artistic movement, with the various styles of Art Nouveau, the Amsterdam

Fig. 4  
Ada Crone (left) and  
Jonkvrouw S. Teding  
van Berkhout (right),  
as Louise de Coligny  
and Mary of Burgundy  
respectively, 1931.  
Photograph.  
Vereenigde  
Fotobureaux, 1931.  
Collection  
IAY-Atria. inv. no.  
iiavi00020994.





Fig. 5

TONI ARENS-TEPE,  
Portrait of Ada Crone  
Wearing a Maggy  
Rouff Collar, with her  
Children Ferdinand,  
Wetka and Herbert,  
January 1935.  
Gelatin silver print,  
174 x 125 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
BK-D-1967-203-3,  
gift of A.M.L.E.  
Verdonck-de Roever,  
Amsterdam.

School and De Stijl all represented in her homes. Through her acquisitions, some of which are today held in the Rijksmuseum collection, Ada Crone presented herself unequivocally as a modern woman with an artistic and varied taste during the interwar period. Simultaneously, her purchases opened doors to the fashion and art world, of which she was to become a part as a buyer and commissioner of objects.

Crone's interest in fashion began at an early age. Already in her teens, she frequented fashion and department stores in cities throughout Europe. In Amsterdam, chic department stores like Hirsch & Cie (for women who dressed 'extremely expensive and fashionable'<sup>35</sup>) and Maison de Bonneterie (very luxurious, costly garments) were her standard fare. In later years, she booked regular appointments with the exclusive Dutch fashion house of Catharina Kruysveldt de Mare. Crone also found her way to the most luxurious fashion houses outside the Netherlands. The Rijksmuseum preserves, among others, an evening gown with matching collar purchased at Maggy Rouff's during a trip to Paris. The collar was also worn with more casual outfits (fig. 5).<sup>36</sup>

During the interwar period, the Wiener Werkstätte was prominently represented in Crone's wardrobe. Already acquainted with the workshop before the First World War via Hirsch in Amsterdam, in the nineteen twenties she visited several of the company's branches across Europe. This renowned manufacturing house, a collaboration of craftsmen and artists, produced high-quality design 'for daily use' in a traditional manner, along with clothing. Because the company rejected industrial mass production, the prices for its products were extremely high, accessible only to the elite. Crone purchased fabrics, garments and accessories from Wiener Werkstätte, and possibly also objects for her interior. In one photograph, both Crone and her newborn son Ferdinand can be seen wrapped in a shawl (most likely) made from Wiener Werkstätte fabric (figs. 6, 7). Similarly, Metz & Co in Amsterdam aimed to draw the artistically evolved buyer.<sup>37</sup> As early as the nineteen tens, it was the only place where one could find so-called 'reform clothing': comfortable attire offering women an alternative to constricting corsets.<sup>38</sup> The department store was better known as 'Liberty', in reference to the London manufacturer Sir Arthur Liberty, whose fabrics were sold by Metz & Co under exclusive rights in the Netherlands until 1918. It was also the name Crone used in her appointment book. For decades, she bought fabrics and custom-made clothing there on a regular basis.

Like the Wiener Werkstätte, Metz & Co was more than a fashion house; it also sold applied art and furniture for the 'modern home interior'. Furthermore, it was a place where leading artists like Gerrit Rietveld, Carl Adolph Lion Cachet and Andries Copier – all represented in Crone's interior – sold their creations. Metz & Co's department of applied art also featured Asian objects.<sup>39</sup>

Fig. 6

JULIUS HEINRICH HISGEN, *Portrait of Ada von Saher-Crone with Shawl, with Son Ferdinand*, 1920-21. Gelatin silver print, 145 x 104 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. BK-D-1967-203-2, gift of A.M.L.E. Verdonck-de Roever, Amsterdam.

Fig. 7

(Possibly) WIENER WERKSTÄTTE, *Shawl with Blue and Grey Figures*, c. 1910-14, Vienna. Printed Silk, 140 x 112 cm, fringe length 19 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. BK-1984-116, gift of A.H. Hondius-Crone, Voorschoten.

Certain is that Crone made purchases at this department and also attended its exhibitions of applied art – though precisely which objects she bought there remains unclear. In January 1914, just prior to her wedding with Carl Müsseler, for example, Ada Crone wrote in her appointment book that chairs she had seen at ‘Liberty’ were ‘sent home’ in that same week.<sup>40</sup>

For her interior design, Ada Crone also commissioned artists directly. Even before she and Von Saher bought the house on the Oranje Nassaulaan in Amsterdam, she had made an appointment with the artist ‘H[ildo] Krop and his wife [to] discuss ... our home and our furnishings’.<sup>41</sup> An established sculptor, furniture designer and adherent of the Amsterdam School, Krop was instructed to design furniture for Crone’s future sitting room, dining room and study, as well as various lamps and room partitions.<sup>42</sup> The first of these arrived on the Oranje Nassaulaan in the

summer of 1920, with the rest delivered in the two ensuing years (figs. 8, 9).<sup>43</sup> In 1925, Crone also commissioned the architect Cornelis Blaauw to design a stone garden house, similarly in the style of the Amsterdam School, located behind the main house. In 1935, Ada Crone – now married to Jan Hondius – moved a selection of the Krop-designed furniture to Villa Vijverhof in Bloemendaal, while the rest remained at the house on the Oranje Nassaulaan.<sup>44</sup>

Crone hired the modernist architect Gerrit Rietveld to renovate Villa Vijverhof. He also converted two of the cabinets designed by Krop.<sup>45</sup> The space and light that Rietveld created in the villa was a clear break from Krop’s heavy furniture, executed in mahogany. Nevertheless, Crone remained an enthusiast of Krop’s designs. Besides moving various furniture pieces from the Oranje Nassaulaan to Villa Vijverhof, she also requested







new work, including a statue for the garden, installed in 1936 just after Rietveld's renovation.<sup>46</sup> Photographs of the hall and living room, commissioned by Crone from the renowned photographer Eva Besnyö in 1937, confirm this mixing of styles (figs. 10, 11).<sup>47</sup> In the hall, for example, Asian reliefs adorned Rietveld's modernist architecture,<sup>48</sup> with a silver service from the Wiener Werkstätte<sup>49</sup> displayed on a dark wooden sideboard. After the Second World War, the Hondius-Crones moved to the house on the Oranje Nassaulaan in Amsterdam, where some of Krop's furniture had been left behind. Here too, the combination of contemporary styles remained characteristic of the couple's interior.

Ada Crone's purchases for her wardrobe and home interior were important to her. Her role as a commissioner of objects enabled her to move in artists' circles: for decades, her appointment books list visits to shops and meetings with artists, on an almost weekly and sometimes even daily basis. These acti-



∩ Fig. 8  
 HILDO KROP,  
*Two Chairs*, c. 1920.  
 Mahogany, walnut,  
 mockado, each  
 82 x 77.5 x 81 cm.  
 Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum,  
 inv. nos. BK-1984-204  
 -A and -B, gift of  
 A.H. Hondius-  
 Crone, Voorschoten.

< Fig. 9  
 Detail of the  
 Study of the  
 House on the  
 Oranje Nassaulaan  
 with Sculptural  
 Decoration by  
 Hildo Krop, 1926.  
 Photograph in  
*Wendingen*:  
*Maandblad voor*  
*Bouwen en Sieren*  
 8 (1927), no. 2.

^  
 v Figs. 10, 11  
 EVA BESNYÖ, *Hall*  
 and *Living Room of*  
*Villa Vijverhof*, c. 1937.  
 Photographs,  
 Collection Centraal  
 Museum Utrecht /  
 Rietveld Schröder-  
 archief, inv. nos.  
 232 F 001, 232 F 003.  
 © Eva Besnyö / MAI  
 © c/o Pictoright  
 Amsterdam 2025



vities contributed to the creation of a distinctive identity as a modern woman with an artistic taste – an identity carefully crafted by Crone herself. To this end, she had professional photographs taken of the interiors of her Amsterdam and Bloemendaal homes: the first series of photos, showing the house on the Oranje Nassaulaan, was published in the leading art and architecture magazine *Wendingen: Maandblad voor Bouwen en Sieren* (fig. 9);<sup>50</sup> and for the second series, showing the interior of Villa Vijverhof (figs. 10, 11), the renowned photographer Besnyö was hired. Crone kept the documentation concerning her homes' interiors for the entirety of her life.

Ada Crone was not 'merely' an enthusiast and buyer of contemporary arts and crafts. Thanks to her education at the Quellinus school, she was well versed in the subject matter and had a large network of contemporary artists. This was further supported by her involvement in the School and Museum of Arts and Crafts in Haarlem, where her father-in-law Eduard von Saher was the director and she herself worked briefly in the secretarial department in the nineteen twenties. Moreover, Crone herself had early, albeit short-lived, ambitions in the field of applied arts. She was particularly proficient in interior drawing and was also interested in textile techniques, including batik.<sup>51</sup> Her designs were mainly kept for personal use.<sup>52</sup> In 1924, for instance, Crone commissioned a furniture workshop to realize her designs for children's chairs, which she subsequently had covered with Liberty fabric she purchased herself.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, she constructed marionettes for her own children (inv. nos. BK-1987-100-A to E, BK-1987-101-A to D and BK-1987-102; e.g. fig. 12), using fabric from a sample book received during a visit to the Wiener Werkstätte.

Why Crone never sought a career in the applied arts remains conjectural. A letter from 1928, written to her then husband August von Saher, indicates that she did not see herself as an artist: 'In the end, after all, life is not about indulging yourself, for which there would then be an excuse were I an artist or were I to have a calling to fulfil. My sole calling is to live for you and our children and to share with you [all] the best in me.'<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, the fact that Crone herself conformed to the traditional standards then applied to a woman of her class by no means implies that she viewed work as unbefitting a woman. After all, she supported working women through the EKAWO project and commissioned female artists like Besnyö. This paradox – fighting for (married) women's participation in the labour market in general but not engaging in (paid) work oneself –

is characteristic of the women's movement during the Interbellum.<sup>55</sup>

### Asian Art and the vvak

Eva Besnyö's photos show that, in the nineteen thirties, Asian art was prominently displayed in Crone's interior of Villa Vijverhof. The identity of most of the Asian-style objects visible in the photos – various reliefs and a vase – is unknown. One recognizable work is the framed painting in the living room: in all likelihood, this is the fragment of a Chinese mural from the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), titled *Two Ladies, One Playing a Flute*.<sup>56</sup>

Crone's interest in Asian art also conveys that she was a woman of her time. During the Interbellum, the Western European predilection for Asian artefacts flourished as never before, with the combining of modern objects and Asian art seen by the elite as a manifestation of 'good taste'. Objects from East Asia (Japan, China and Korea) were particularly desired.<sup>57</sup> In 1918, enthusiasts and collectors of Asian art in the Netherlands united in forming the Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst (vvak). This organization was founded with the aim of stimulating the appreciation for and knowledge of art from Asia, achieved through exhibitions and other means.<sup>58</sup> Several years after its founding, the vvak began building its own collection of high-quality art objects from Asia. Starting in the nineteen thirties, the collection was displayed in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam as the 'Museum for Asian Art'. The society's membership included numerous businessmen – often collectors of Asian art whose wealth was commonly derived from trade in the Dutch East Indies – but also artists inspired by 'oriental art'.<sup>59</sup>

Ada Crone was involved in the vvak from its early years, as were her father, brother and various artist friends. She was in regular contact with Herman

Fig. 12

ADA VON SAHER-CRONE, *Marionette*, c. 1920-30. Wiener Werkstätte printed silk, cotton, wool, velvet, tricot, h. approx. 23 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. BK-1987-100-B, gift of W.M. Feenstra-Von Saher, Leiden.



Visser, curator of the vvak, and other prominent members such as collectors Herman Karel Westendorp and Betsy Westendorp-Osieck. Gatherings were held in each other's homes to exchange knowledge and admire new acquisitions. Crone also made at least one trip to Paris, in 1924, to view and purchase Asian art with Visser and the Westendorps. By that time, Crone already belonged to the vvak's inner circle and was well informed about key events transpiring within the society. On 9 February 1924, for instance, she recorded in her appointment book: 'visit from Herman Visser and v. Erp. Meeting [in] Haarlem by car. Important discussions regarding relocation museum'.<sup>60</sup>

Crone purchased most of her Asian art objects in the nineteen twenties and thirties, actively using her vvak network. Visser often drew her attention to objects of interest and advised her on purchases in the Netherlands and abroad. In August 1924, Crone acquired what she later described as the 'showpiece' of her collection: a 'Korean painting of a Bodhisattva' (fig. 13).<sup>61</sup> Visser had purchased the painting on her behalf from the renowned Hague art dealer Kleykamp and, according to her wishes, had ordered a special display case for the piece, built by one of his contacts in The Hague.<sup>62</sup> In London, Crone was advised and assisted by George Lee, a British art dealer. Like Visser, Lee was to become one of Crone's close acquaintances, with whom she even spent much of the summer of 1931.<sup>63</sup> Among the various objects acquired through him were Chinese figures of an ox and cart (fig. 14).<sup>64</sup> Crone's acquisitions were commonly featured at exhibitions organized by the vvak. The Bodhisattva painting, for example, was shown at the 1925 *Tentoonstelling van Chineesche Kunst* (Exhibition of Chinese Art) in the Amsterdam Stedelijk Museum, as one of two non-Chinese art objects



in the exhibition,<sup>65</sup> along with two other objects Crone had acquired.

Noteworthy is that Ada Crone's name is listed nowhere on the vvak's membership rolls from the nineteen twenties, reflecting above all the spirit and gender norms of the time. In 1918, her participation remained concealed behind that of her father and brother, and from 1919 on, behind that of her husband August von Saher – all of whose names do appear on the rolls

Fig. 13  
ANONYMOUS,  
*Bodhisattva*, Korea,  
1800-1900.  
Paper, 126.5 x 74 cm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum,  
inv. no. AK-MAK-1300,  
on loan from the  
Royal Asian Art  
Society in The  
Netherlands, gift  
of A.H. Hondius-  
Crone, Voorschoten.

for those years. Moreover, the catalogue of the 1925 exhibition lists the Bodhisattva painting under Von Saher's name, when in fact the correspondence between Visser and Crone (then still Ada von Saher-Crone) clearly confirms she was personally responsible for its acquisition. Only after her divorce from Von Saher (in 1929) is she listed as the object's rightful owner in a catalogue.<sup>66</sup> The same applies to her financial dealings with the vvak, with the first documented financial transaction involving the society occurring only after the couple's divorce: a contribution of 5,000 guilders to the vvak's newly established 'Aankoopfonds ten behoeve van objectaankopen' (Acquisition Fund for Object Purchases), made in her own name and issued by the H.G.Th. Crone family business in 1929.<sup>67</sup> One year later, Crone herself became an official member for the first time and only then does her name appear on its membership rolls.

Although in formal documents from the nineteen twenties the act of collecting was ascribed to her husband, Crone was in fact actively establishing her identity as a collector and enthusiast of Asian art. She had display cases

installed in the reception room of her Amsterdam home, which she 'furnish[ed] with new acquisitions'.<sup>68</sup> In her appointment books, Crone diligently recorded the names of her visitors, occasionally even noting which objects were viewed. On 3 February 1924, for example, she wrote 'Mr and Mrs Westendorp coming to tea to unpack the funerary statuette', followed one day later by Frits Lugt, a known collector, art expert and family friend, who viewed 'the new acquisitions'.<sup>69</sup>

Ada Crone greatly valued her involvement in the vvak, both for its role in her own personal development as a connoisseur of Asian art and for the network it provided her. When reflecting on this in the nineteen seventies, she described herself as being 'emotionally involved ... in the struggle for art interests' and 'grateful' to 'belong to the small circle of friends of H.F.E. Visser and other members of the vvak'.<sup>70</sup> She assessed her own purchases of Asian art as 'more or less incidental' and derived greater pride from her financial and sometimes art historical contributions made to support acquisitions by

Fig. 14  
ANONYMOUS,  
*Figures of an Ox  
and Cart*, China,  
c. 400-500 and  
c. 580-650  
respectively.  
Earthenware with  
remnants of poly-  
chromy, h. 18.4 cm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv.  
nos. AK-RAK-1995-1, -2,  
gifts of A.H. Hondius-  
Crone, Voorschoten.



the society. She specifically mentioned the vvak's purchase of a Chinese bronze bell from the Zhou dynasty (1046 BC-256 BC, inv. no. AK-MAK-9), an acquisition she probably helped to finance and about which she wrote a short notice, specifically regarding the bell's snake ornamentation.<sup>71</sup> Well into her senior years, Crone remained actively involved in the vvak as a financial supporter, as well as a lender and donor of objects, and from 1969 on, as a board member. As early as the nineteen forties, she had been granted the status of 'member for life', reserved for a very small group of members whose financial contributions to the society were considerable.<sup>72</sup>

### Donations to and Relations with the Rijksmuseum

In the nineteen tens, Ada Crone had only to look out the window of her parental Amsterdam home to see the Rijksmuseum across the street.<sup>73</sup> She would be a frequent visitor of the museum during her long life. On 17 February 1919, Crone (listed as Mūseler-Crone, as by then she was widowed and not yet remarried) registered her first – and for the time being only – donation to the museum in her appointment book: 'Print Room. Donate lithographs'. Her donation consisted of three early lithographs, possibly inherited as part of the family estate.<sup>74</sup> In this gesture she was likely supported by Frits Lugt.<sup>75</sup>

It was not until after the Second World War that Hondius-Crone became more involved with the Rijksmuseum, stemming in part from the Museum of Asian Art's move onto its premises in 1952.<sup>76</sup> By the nineteen fifties, contact between Hondius-Crone and other departments in the museum was also established. In 1953, for example, she exchanged her colour lithograph *Standing Nude with Red Hair* by Edvard Munch (fig. 15) – a work she had purchased in Berlin in the nineteen tens – for a lithograph by Henri de



Toulouse-Lautrec, of which the Print Room held two impressions. Hondius-Crone was undeterred by the fact that the Munch's worth was twice that of the De Toulouse-Lautrec print: 'Mrs Hondius is aware of this and is therefore likewise doing the Print Room a favour.'<sup>77</sup> In fact, the Munch lithograph was the first object to enter the Rijksmuseum collection originally purchased by Hondius-Crone herself. In 1962 – more than forty years after her first gift – Hondius-Crone donated numerous textiles from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, acquired via her family's estate. Textile curator Louise Erkelens came to her home to personally collect the objects.<sup>78</sup>

Fig. 15  
EDVARD MUNCH,  
*Standing Nude  
with Red Hair*, 1902.  
Print, 781 x 491 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum,  
inv. no. RP-P-1953-888,  
trade with A.H.  
Hondius-Crone,  
Amsterdam.

Hondius-Crone continued to donate items obtained from her family estate, including more than twenty historical garments and a sixteenth-century *cassapanca* (inv. no. BK-1973-134).

Meanwhile, Hondius-Crone was speaking to several Rijksmuseum curators, some of whom had also seen her objects from the first half of the twentieth century during visits to her home. Regardless of their assessment of these objects, any move to negotiate their acquisition was simply out of the question: the Rijksmuseum's collection policy restricted acquisitions to objects produced no later than 1850.<sup>79</sup> This policy was adjusted in 1967 when the threshold was extended to the year 1920. In practice, this opened the door for the admission of works produced after this date as well. Hondius-Crone was among the first donors (and sellers) to contribute to this previously unexplored area of collecting. In 1968, her donations to the Rijksmuseum included a sample book of fabrics from the Wiener Werkstätte (fig. 16), a dish of amber-coloured glass designed by Andries Copier (fig. 17) and panels of batiked silk, tentatively attributed to Chris Lebeau (1905-10, inv. no. BK-1968-288-A to C). Not long after, the panels were shown at the 1972

exhibition *Art Nouveau, Jugendstil, Nieuwe Kunst*, with which the Rijksmuseum debuted its new collection to the public.<sup>80</sup>

By this time, however, the museum was interested in more of Hondius-Crone's objects. With this in mind, Arthur van Schendel, the museum's then general director, approached the minister of Culture, Recreation and Social Work in 1968, requesting that she write a letter thanking Hondius-Crone, in the hope that this might serve as 'an encouragement' for her to donate or bequeath 'items important for our collection'.<sup>81</sup> At the top of the museum's wish list was the set of twelve painted cups and saucers from 1913, manufactured by the Rozenburg ceramics factory in the Hague (fig. 18). Hondius-Crone decided to sell the set to the Rijksmuseum for 800 guilders.<sup>82</sup> Why she chose not to donate this porcelainware, as with virtually all the other objects, is unclear.<sup>83</sup> Given the appraised value of 3,800 guilders, however, Hondius-Crone's offering price was exceedingly reasonable,<sup>84</sup> as was acknowledged in the Rijksmuseum's annual report of that year, stating that the set had been acquired 'on highly favourable terms'.<sup>85</sup> After decades during which the



Fig. 16

WIENER  
WERKSTÄTTE  
(manufacturer),  
DAGOBERT PECHE  
(designer), *Sample  
Book Wiener  
Werkstätte*, 1910-25.  
Silk, cotton,  
25.4 x 30 x 5 cm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum,  
inv. no. BK-1968-292,  
gift of A.H. Hondius-  
Crone, Amsterdam.



Fig. 17  
GLASFABRIEK  
LEERDAM  
(manufacturer),  
ANDRIES COPIER  
(designer), *Dish of  
Amber-Coloured  
Glass with White  
Tincraquelé*, 1946.  
Glass, h. 5.5 cm,  
diam. 33.6 cm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum,  
inv. no. BK-1968-151,  
gift of A.H. Hondius-  
Crone, Amsterdam.



Fig. 18  
N.V. HAAGSCHE  
PLATEELFABRIEK  
ROZENBURG  
(manufacturer),  
C.W.J. 'T HART  
(painter), *Saucer,  
from a Twelve-Piece  
Set Painted with  
Birds and Violas*, 1913.  
Porcelain, 0.9 x 11 cm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum,  
inv. no. BK-1968-66-N,  
purchased from  
A.H. Hondius-Crone,  
Amsterdam.

frequency of donations to the Rijksmuseum had increased, Ada Hondius-Crone moved to the nursing home in Voorschoten in 1983. Her new two-room apartment was too small to accommodate the many material memories acquired throughout her rich, long life.<sup>86</sup> Together with her daughter, Wetka Feenstra-Von Saher, Hondius-Crone began inventorying all her remaining possessions, at the same time carefully considering the most suitable destination. This resulted in the collection's fragmentation, as the objects were distributed across a wide variety of museums and other cultural institutions.<sup>87</sup> Accordingly, the Rijksmuseum by no means had exclusive rights to choose from the collection; it did not receive, for example, any of the objects that best represented Hondius-Crone's ideals during the Interbellum. Documents related to the women's movement and the Louise de Coligny costume worn during the performance of the *Spiegel Historiaal* in 1931 went to the International Archives of the Women's Movement (IAV), while her Rietveld documentation, pertaining to Hondius-Crone's own home as well as the EKAWO project, was entrusted to the Centraal Museum in Utrecht.

What the Rijksmuseum did receive in 1983 was a selection of the objects Crone purchased during the Interbellum period that served to affirm her artistic and modern identity: the Hildo Krop suite of sitting room furniture, art nouveau curtains by Carel Adolph Lion Cachet (inv. nos. BK-1984-192-A and B) and a large collection of garments and accessories. With respect to the latter, Hondius-Crone had already donated a great deal to the Hague Costume Museum. Even so, the Rijksmuseum's then recently appointed curator of costumes, Bianca M. du Mortier, was fortunate to find numerous objects of interest still in Hondius-Crone's home: a variety of purses, Wiener Werkstätte



fabrics and garments (e.g. fig. 19), custom-made gowns from Joles & Co (e.g. fig. 20) and gloves from the Amsterdam department stores Hirsch & Cie and Maison de Bonneterie. She also retrieved a driver's cap and goggles, likely worn in open roof cars in the nineteen tens and twenties (see figs. 2, 3). For Du Mortier, Hondius-Crone's personality – a woman who distinguished herself with a progressive style of clothing – also contributed to the appeal of this significant addition to the museum's costumes and accessories collection.<sup>88</sup>

The 1983 donation was followed by several gifts made to the Rijksmuseum and vvak just prior to Hondius-Crone's death in 1996. This consisted of historical garments (inv. nos. BK-1995-12, -13, -18, -19) and two Chinese artefacts (see fig. 14 and AK-RAK-1996-1). In total, more than two hundred objects entered the collections of the Rijksmuseum and the vvak. This was

still only part of Hondius-Crone's collection, of which many more items were transferred to the public domain through other museums and cultural institutions.

### Conclusion

In his obituary for his mother, Herbert von Saher wrote that 'museums fell over themselves to acquire [the Hildo Krop] furniture'.<sup>89</sup> Although undoubtedly an exaggeration, it does provide insight into the pride with which the family viewed Ada Hondius-Crone's donations to museums. By accepting her donations (as well as the items she offered for sale), the museums confirmed and anchored Hondius-Crone's 'distinctive identity' as an autonomous, modern woman with an artistic and varied taste, which she carefully constructed during the Interbellum and subsequently displayed to the outside world. Hondius-Crone's financial, organ-

Fig. 19  
WIENER  
WERKSTÄTTE,  
*Beige-Coloured  
Blouse with  
Fantastical  
Figures*, c. 1910-32.  
Printed silk.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum,  
inv. no. BK-1984-83-A,  
gift of A.H. Hondius-  
Crone, Voorschoten.



izational and managerial – and to a lesser extent, art historical – contributions essentially granted her entry into two public domains: that of the (applied and Asian) arts and that of the women's movement. Both opened doors to her participation in public life in a 'contrived masculine sphere'. Occasionally, these two worlds reinforced and overlapped one another. Hondius-Crone enriched the *EKAWO* project with modern aesthetics and was confronted with traditional gender norms in the art world, which she endeavoured to overcome with her contributions to the women's movement.

By donating to the various institutions she deemed best suited, where – in her own estimation – her objects could be ideally represented, Hondius-Crone's collection became fragmented. Accordingly, there is no preserved collection that, through the sum of its parts, accurately reflects the identity of Ada Hondius-Crone and honours her life and memory. Nevertheless, through her donations and sales to the Rijksmuseum and the *VVAK* (a society to which she also made financial gifts), she greatly contributed to the development of two new areas of collecting: Asian art from the nineteen twenties on, and twentieth-century applied arts from 1966-68 onwards. This makes Hondius-Crone – along with being a feminist and collector – a 'museum maker'.



*Fig. 20*  
 JOLES & CO,  
 Dress with Black  
 Fond and Fantastical  
 Motifs, c. 1930-39.  
 Crêpe de Chine (silk).  
 Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum,  
 inv. no. BK-1984-75,  
 gift of A.H. Hondius-  
 Crone, Voorschoten.

## ABSTRACT

Ada Hondius-Crone (1893-1996) was a feminist, collector and the donor of more than two hundred objects to the Rijksmuseum and the Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst (VVAK). This article examines her contributions to the women's movement and her acquisitions in the areas of applied and Asian art during the first half of her life, as well as her donations (and rare exchanges and sales) to the Rijksmuseum and the VVAK (chiefly) during the second half of her life. It shows how the public worlds of the (Asian and applied) arts and the women's movement – which sometimes reinforced and overlapped one another – facilitated Hondius-Crone's public participation in a 'construed masculine sphere', and how her acquisitions and donations contributed to the formation and anchoring of her 'distinctive identity' as a modern woman possessing an artistic and varied taste. Hondius-Crone's collection ultimately became fragmented, distributed among various institutions where – in her own estimation – her objects could be ideally represented. As a result, her identity and existence are likewise represented and commemorated in a fragmented manner. Even so, Ada Hondius-Crone's donations and sales to the Rijksmuseum and the VVAK contributed to the development of two new areas of collecting, to wit: Asian art from the nineteen twenties on, and twentieth-century applied art from 1966-68 onwards.

## NOTES

- \* I wish to express my thanks to Naomi Bisping, Jan van Campen, Ceri-Anne van de Geer and Bianca M. du Mortier.
- 1 Atria – Institute on Gender Equality and Women's History (henceforth NL-ASDATRIA), Collection International Archives for the Women's Movement (IAV), Private Archive of Ada Helena Crone (1893-1996), 1901-1996 (henceforth AHC), box 13, appointment book 1983.
  - 2 Ada Hondius-Crone had three surnames throughout her life. In favour of legibility and to avoid confusion and anachronism, this article shall refer to her mostly as 'Crone', her surname at birth. The name 'Hondius-Crone' will also be used, in recognition of her role as benefactor towards the end of her life. In the captions her actual name is given.
  - 3 Crone would have had a chauffeur and would unlikely have driven herself.
  - 4 The women's movement is defined here as 'het streven van vrouwen naar maatschappelijke veranderingen met als doel het verbeteren van de positie van vrouwen' (the striving of women for social changes with the aim of improving the position of women), see Hedy D'Ancona, *Vrouwenlexicon: Tweehonderd jaar emancipatie van A tot Z*, Utrecht 1989, p. 405.
  - 5 See for example Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'Een vaas cadeau', *Mededelingenblad Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst Amsterdam* 13 (1983), no. 5, pp. 6-7; Ietse Meij, 'Paul Poirer: Drie ontwerpen in de kostuumcollectie van het Haags Gemeentemuseum', *Jaarboek Haags Gemeentemuseum* 1994 (1995), pp. 20-33; Jan van Campen, 'De dongkhe-vaas van mevrouw Hondius', *Aziatische Kunst* 38 (2008), no. 3, pp. 91-94; Menno Fitski, 'Een Chinese ossenkar', *Aziatische Kunst* 43 (2013), no. 2, pp. 31-34.
  - 6 Eva Rovers, 'Introduction: The Art Collector – Between Philanthropy and Self-Glorification', *Journal of the History of Collections* 21 (2009), no. 2, pp. 157-61, esp. p. 157; Russell W. Belk and Melanie Wallendorf, 'Of Mice and Men: Gender Identity in Collecting', in Susan M. Pearce (ed.), *Interpreting Object and Collections*, London/New York 1994, pp. 240-251, esp. p. 240.
  - 7 Belk and Wallendorf 1994 (note 6), p. 240.
  - 8 *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 40 (1992), no. 3, is entirely devoted to gifts and bequests donated to the Rijksmuseum; see for example Jan Piet Filedt Kok, 'De betekenis van schenkingen en legaten voor de collectievorming van het Rijksmuseum', pp. 193-224. Also noteworthy is D. de Hoop Scheffer, 'Het Rijksmuseum en zijn begunstigers', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 6 (1958), no. 3/4, pp. 83-100.
  - 9 See for example Kate Hill, *Women and Museums 1850-1914: Modernity and the Gendering of Knowledge*, Manchester 2016. See also the Dutch platform *De Andere Helft: Vrouwen in de Nederlandse Kunstwereld 1780-1980*.
  - 10 Tom Stammers, 'Women Collectors and Cultural Philanthropy c. 1850-1920', *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 31 (2020), pp. 1-42, esp. p. 10. See also Belk and Wallendorf 1994 (note 6); Susan M. Pearce, *On Collecting: An investigation*

- into *Collecting in the European Tradition*, London 1995, p. 207; Dianne Sachko Macleod, *Enchanted Lives, Enchanted Objects: American Women Collectors and the Making of Culture, 1800-1940*, San Francisco/Los Angeles 2008, pp. 3, 6; Hill 2016 (note 9), pp. 63, 83; Adriana Turpin, 'Collecting the Decorative Arts: An Introduction', website of the *Journal of the History of Collections*, undated, see <https://academic.oup.com/jhc/pages/collecting-the-decorative-arts-an-introduction>.
- 11 Macleod 2008 (note 10), p. 3. Important to understand is that this was a strategy applied primarily by women of the (upper) middle class, from families with 'new money'. Women from noble families could more readily rely on social standing and identity.
  - 12 Hill 2016 (note 9), pp. 49, 51.
  - 13 Macleod 2008 (note 10), p. 97.
  - 14 For an introductory biography on Hondius-Crone, by Sylvia Alting van Geusau, see also the website of the Vereniging Vrienden Nieuwe Kunst 1900, <https://www.vvkn.nl/monografieen/hondius-crone-ada-helena-ada/>.
  - 15 Ada Hondius-Crone, *The Temple of Nehalennia at Domburg*, Amsterdam 1955.
  - 16 August von Saher also had a son from a previous marriage: Eddie von Saher. He died in 1924.
  - 17 Crone and Hondius met when she sent her son Ferdinand to a boarding school for 'boys with learning difficulties' in Bloemendaal, of which Hondius was the director. In the nineteen twenties and thirties, Ada von Saher-Crone taught the Voorbereidende Openlucht Montessori (Preparatory Open-Air Montessori) curriculum, with classes given in the garden house on the Oranje Nassaulaan.
  - 18 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 15, 'Johannes Magdalenus Hondius 1900-1977', *Fundatio Hondius* 26 (1977).
  - 19 Ibid., box 15, Herbert von Saher, 'In memoriam Ada Helena Hondius-Crone 1893-1896', *Fundatio Hondius* 45 (1996).
  - 20 D'Ancona 1989 (note 4), p. 405. See also Ulla Jansz, 'Inleiding', in Annick Schreuder et al. (eds.), *Een Verbond van gestudeerde vrouwen: 75 jaar Nederlandse Vereniging van Vrouwen met Academische Opleiding 1918-1993*, Hilversum 1993, pp. 9-19; Jansz rightly observes that, during the Interbellum, the terms 'women's movement' and 'feminism' were by no means necessarily synonymous. The term 'women's movement' could also refer to an organized group of women without feminist goals. For those initiatives in which Crone partook, however, 'women's movement' and 'feminism' were mostly synonymous.
  - 21 As for many who sympathized with the cause, 'feminism' was not a word used by Crone.
  - 22 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1913, 29 July.
  - 23 Ibid., box 12, appointment book 1915, 28-30 April.
  - 24 Ibid., box 1, notebook with annotations made at the conference.
  - 25 NL-ASDATRIA, Archief Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), afdeling Nederland, inv. no. 1, Register van ingekomen en uitgaande stukken van het Nederlandsche Comité van Vrouwen voor Duurzame Vrede. This register contains Crone's handwriting. For more information regarding her work on behalf of this organization, see *Vrouwenjaarboekje van Nederland 14* (1918), p. 193. Members of the Werelddbond voor Vrouwenkiesrecht en Gelijk Staatsburgerschap also frequently became members of the International Women's Committee for Permanent Peace; see Marja Borkus et al., *Vrouwenstemmen: 100 jaar vrouwenbelangen, 75 jaar vrouwenkiesrecht*, Zutphen 1994, pp. 90.
  - 26 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1918. For a postcard made by Wilhelmina Drupesteen, see NL-ASDATRIA, id. no. 104005356.
  - 27 In the nineteen twenties and thirties, the Dutch chapter of the WILPF was pursuing less of a feminist agenda, instead becoming more of a 'union of women'. See Marijke Mossink, 'Mannen over de taak der vrouw voor de vrede. Oftewel: de teloorgang van het feminisme in de vrouwenvredesbeweging tijdens het Interbellum in Nederland', *Jaarboek voor Vrouwengeschiedenis* 12 (1991), pp. 107-30.
  - 28 Borkus et al. 1994 (note 25), p. 86.
  - 29 'ingetogen, kostbaar kleeft'. *De Telegraaf*, 1 March 1931.
  - 30 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1931, 28 February; *De Telegraaf*, 1 March 1931; Susanne Neugebauer and Tessel Dekker, 'Vrouwelijke rolmodellen halen geld op voor de vrouwenzaak', *Ons Amsterdam*, 1 March 2023, online <https://onsamsterdam.nl/artikelen/vrouwelijke-rolmodellen-halengeld-op-voor-de-vrouwenzaak>.
  - 31 NL-ASDATRIA, Archief Flatstichting voor Vrouwen door Vrouwen, inv. no. 1, Notulen oprichtingsvergadering, 29 October 1937.
  - 32 Ibid., inv. no. 10, annual report 1956.
  - 33 For example *ibid.*, inv. no. 3, Notulen 1938. Hondius-Crone loaned 2,500 guilders to the foundation.

- 34 Mirjam Kuijpers and Ellen van den Heiligenberg, *Een kamer in het Kenaupark: Ontstaan en ontwikkeling van de Flatstichting vóór Vrouwen dóór Vrouwen in Haarlem*, Haarlem 1996, pp. 23, 25, 39; Marijke Kuper and Ida van Zijl, *Gerrit Th. Rietveld 1888-1964: Het volledige werk*, Utrecht 1992, p. 183.
- 35 'uiterst duur en modieus kleedden'. Annemarie den Dekker 'Verleiden en verkopen', in Annemarie den Dekker et al., *Modepaleizen in Amsterdam 1880-1960*, Bussum 2007, pp. 78-99, esp. pp. 80, 83.
- 36 Inv. nos. BK-1984-81-A and -B. For insight into the fashion houses that Crone visited outside the Netherlands, see Meij 1994 (note 5).
- 37 Petra Timmer, 'Van Liberty tot Mary Quant: De mode van Metz & Co', in Den Dekker et al. 2007 (note 35), pp. 54-73, esp. p. 56.
- 38 Anonymous, 'Metz & Co. ('Liberty') verlaat Leidsestraatkasteeltje', *Ons Amsterdam*, 8 April 2012, online <https://onsamsterdam.nl/artikelen/metz-co-liberty-verlaat-leidsestraatkasteeltje>, referencing [www.winkelstories.com](http://www.winkelstories.com).
- 39 Petra Timmer, *Metz & Co: De creatieve jaren*, Rotterdam 1995, p. 50.
- 40 'thuisgestuurd'. NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1914.
- 41 'H. Krop en zijn vrouw [om te] spreken over ... ons huis en onze inrichting.' Ibid., appointment book 1919.
- 42 For an overview of the objects that Crone commissioned from Hildo Krop, see Emmy Lagerweij-Polak, *Hildo Krop: Beeldhouwer*, The Hague/Amsterdam 1992, pp. 131-32.
- 43 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1920. According to the caption to fig. 9, Blaauw also (partly) contributed to the design of the house's interior: 'Architect C.J. Blaauw'. Ada Hondius-Crone donated documentation and drawings of the house and garden house to Het Nieuwe Instituut.
- 44 Inge de Wilde, 'De kunstlievende bewoners van Villa Vijverhof: Fotografen, een studeerkamer van Hildo Krop en verbouwing door Gerrit Rietveld', *Ons Bloemendaal* (2016), pp. 20-24.
- 45 Lagerweij-Polak 1992 (note 42), p. 131.
- 46 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1935.
- 47 Ibid., appointment book 1936.
- 48 These are possibly modern plaster casts of stone reliefs (my thanks to Jan van Campen).
- 49 The service displays major similarities to Wiener Werkstätte, Modell Nr. S. se 3 1918-25, after a design by Joseph Hoffmann (my thanks to Naomi Bisping).
- 50 *Wendingen: Maandblad voor Bouwen en Sieren* 8 (1927), no. 2.
- 51 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1918.
- 52 During her studies, she worked on several commissions.
- 53 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1924.
- 54 'Per slot is het leven ook geen uitleven van je zelf, hiervoor zou nog een excuus zijn als ik een kunstnares was of als ik een roeping te vervullen had. Mijn eenige roeping is voor jou en onze kinderen te leven en jullie mee te delen van het beste wat in me is.' NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 5, folder 7. Letter from Ada von Saher-Crone to August von Saher, 16 July 1928.
- 55 Jansz 1993 (note 20), pp. 13-15.
- 56 Herman Floris Eduard Visser, *Asiatic Art in Private Collections in Holland and Belgium*, Amsterdam 1948, pp. 304-05. Present whereabouts unknown (my thanks to Jan van Campen).
- 57 Pauline Lusingh Scheurleer, 'Aziatische Kunst in het Rijksmuseum', in Jan van Campen et al., *Aziatische Kunst*, coll. cat. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 2013, pp. 12-13, 22; Jan van Campen, 'Honderd jaar Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst', *Aziatische Kunst* 48 (2018), no. 2, pp. 15-16.
- 58 *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van Oost-Aziatische kunst | Catalogue de l'exposition d'art d'extrême orient*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Stedelijk Museum) 1925, p. 9.
- 59 'oosterse kunst'. Renée Steenbergen, 'De Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst in het interbellum: Deftige verzamelaars, rijke donateurs en Indische fortuinen', *Mededelingenblad van de Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst* 38 (2008), no. 3, pp. 3-16, esp. pp. 8-9.
- 60 'bezoek van Herman Visser en v. Erp. Verg Haarlem per auto erheen. Belangrijke besprekingen over verplaatsing museum'. NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1924. Theodoor van Erp was a board member of the VVAK from 1918 to 1946.
- 61 Bodhisattva: all beings who, after having reached the different stages of holiness, stand on the last step before achieving Buddhahood. See *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van Aziatische kunst in particuliere en openbare collecties in Nederland*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Stedelijk Museum) 1936, p. 25. Karwin Cheung, 'Ver weg en nabij op de gierenpiek: Twee Koreaanse schilderijen in de collectie van de kvvak', *Aziatische Kunst* 52 (2022), no. 1, pp. 65-72.
- 62 Ada Hondius-Crone, 'Ontmoetingen', *Maandblad Vereniging Vrienden van Aziatische Kunst* 9 (1979), no. 2. See also,

- preserved in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, Koninklijke Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst (henceforth NL-ASDKVVAK), Archief Vereniging Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst (1903) 1918-1965 (1972) (henceforth VVAK), inv. no. 616, Letters from Herman Visser to Ada Crone and accompanying documents, 1924-1969, Letters from Herman Visser to Ada Crone, 1924; and NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1924.
- 63 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1931.
- 64 Fitski 2013 (note 5).
- 65 *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van Oost-Aziatische kunst* 1925 (note 58), p. 16.
- 66 *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van Aziatische kunst* 1936 (note 61), p. 13. This applies to two other objects as well.
- 67 NL-ASDKVVAK, VVAK, inv. no. 166, Rekeningen en boekingsstukken betreffende het Aankoopfonds 1929-1934. An amount equivalent to 109,000 euros in 2023 (<http://cbs.nl/nl-nl-visualisaties/prijzen-toen-en-nu>).
- 68 'inricht[te] met nieuwe acquisities'. NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1924.
- 69 'heer en mevrouw Westendorp op thee komen grafbeeldje uitpakken'; 'de nieuwe acquisities'. NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1924.
- 70 'emotioneel betrokken ... in de strijd voor de kunstbelangen'; 'dankbaar' [om] 'tot de kleine vriendenkring van H.F.E. Visser en andere leden van de VVAK te behoren'. Hondius-Crone 1979 (note 62).
- 71 Herman Floris Eduard Visser, 'Een unicum onder de Chineesche bronzen', *Maandblad voor beeldende kunsten* 17 (1940), pp. 214-19, esp. p. 214.
- 72 NL-ASDKVVAK, VVAK, inv. no. 147, Ledenlijsten, 1946-1948. These rolls listed members and donors.
- 73 The family first resided at Hobbemastraat 4, and from 1916 on, at Hobbemastraat 12.
- 74 'Prentenkab. Lithografieën schenken'. ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1919. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1919-575, -576, -577: *Ruins near a Village*, anonymous, 1809-c. 1899; *Pavilion*, anonymous, 1817; *Iris*, anonymous, 1817. Crone's father had died one year before, with these objects possibly coming from his estate.
- 75 Frits Lugt was a friend of the family, whose name regularly appears in Crone's appointment book. In the days preceding the donation, Crone met with Frits Lugt on multiple occasions. At the time, he appraised her fashion prints and other items. See NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1919.
- 76 Gijs van der Ham, *200 jaar Rijksmuseum: Geschiedenis van een nationaal symbool*, Amsterdam 2000, p. 366.
- 77 'mevrouw Hondius is zich daarvan bewust en bewijst dus tevens het Prentenkabinet een dienst.' Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (henceforth NL-ASDRM), Archief van het Rijksmuseum en zijn voorgangers te Amsterdam (henceforth RM, accession no. 6.a.3126), inv. no. D069404, Letter from Johan Quirijn van Regteren Altena to Ton Koot, 4 December 1953.
- 78 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 13, appointment book 1962.
- 79 Van der Ham 2000 (note 76), p. 346. This policy was strongly adhered to particularly in the department of applied arts, with the exception of the subcollection Textiles, which by this time had already acquired various items from the twentieth century. The Print Room had also acquired various items (see for example the acquisition of the Munch lithograph). See also A.L. den Blaauwen et al., 'Art nouveau, Jugendstil, Nieuwe kunst', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 20 (1972), no. 1, pp. 3-69, esp. p. 3; Susan Adam, 'Het verzamelbeleid van de art nouveau en art deco meubelcollectie', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 53 (2005), no. 1, pp. 2-17; Jan Daniël van Dam and Jan Jaap Heij, *Art nouveau in het Rijksmuseum*, Amsterdam 2010.
- 80 Den Blaauwen 1972 (note 79).
- 81 'een aanmoediging'; 'voor onze verzameling belangrijke stukken'. NL-ASDRM, RM, inv. no. D069407, Letter from head director Van Schendel to Marga Klompé, the minister of Culture, Recreation and Social Work, 4 March 1968.
- 82 An amount equivalent to approximately 2,300 euros in 2023. Ibid., D069406, Invoice from Hondius-Crone to the Rijksmuseum, 14 March 1968.
- 83 The only other object sold by Crone to the Rijksmuseum was inv. no. RP-T-1968-78: drawing by John Rådecker, *Self-Portrait*, 1940-56.
- 84 Converted to euros, Crone sold it for 2,300 euros, though it had been appraised at 11,000 euros. NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 12, appointment book 1968, 4 March and 7 March.
- 85 *Nederlandse Rijksmusea in 1968*, The Hague 1970 (Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work), p. 55.
- 86 NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 15, 'In memoriam' (note 19).
- 87 See NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 11, donations.
- 88 Interview with Bianca M. du Mortier, 19 April 2024.
- 89 'musea over elkaar [rolden] om [het Hildo Krop] meubilair te bemachtigen'. NL-ASDATRIA, AHC, box 15, 'In memoriam' (note 19).