



Print Room Acquisitions

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1 JAN DE BISSCHOP (Amsterdam 1628-1671 The Hague)

Bust of Philibert of Savoy (After Conrad Meit), c. 1664

Pen and brown ink, with brown wash, over a preliminary sketch in black chalk or graphite, contours incised for transfer, 211 x 182 mm

Top right, in pen and brown ink: 28 Sept 1664; on verso, centre: 28 Sept 1664

(both in the hand of Constantijn Huygens Jr)

Jan de Bisschop enjoyed a distinguished career as a lawyer at the Court of Holland in The Hague, but also achieved considerable success and fame as an amateur draughtsman. So much so, in fact, that Arnold Houbraken exceptionally included him among the painters in his 1718 *Grote Schouburgh* 'because of his extraordinary manner of drawing ... with the brush on white paper'.

De Bisschop probably learned this manner from the Italianate landscape painter Bartholomeus Breenbergh (1598-1657) during his years at the Latin School in his native Amsterdam between 1644 and 1648. Indeed, De Bisschop's couple of hundred landscape drawings executed with characteristic broad, luminous washes betray the older master's approach. But De Bisschop extended this technique to the rest of his substantial oeuvre, which, apart from some works of his own invention, consists of copies after other works of art that were already highly regarded during his lifetime. According to Houbraken, 'he was able to recreate each artist's special manner

so cleverly that one could already see at first glance whether his drawing was after a painting by Tintoretto, Bassano'. These copies can be grouped in three categories: drawings after paintings by contemporary and earlier masters; drawings after drawings by earlier masters (some of which were published in his 1671 book *Paradigmata graphices variorum artificum*), and drawings after sculptures, mostly Classical and some contemporary (the former he etched and published in his 1668-69, two-volume book with one hundred prints after Classical sculpture *Signorum veterum icones*).

This previously unpublished drawing is rare in the extant body of drawings by De Bisschop in that it depicts a Renaissance sculpture rather than a contemporary or antique one. As Frits Scholten first recognized shortly before the drawing was acquired by the museum, it represents the bust of Philibert II, Duke of Savoy (1480-1504), late husband of Margaret of Austria (1480-1530), Regent of the Netherlands, executed by her court

sculptor Conrad Meit (1485-1550/51) in c. 1513-23. He is wearing a close cap under a wide-brimmed hat and a fur-trimmed mantle over a pleated shirt. The expression on his face, which is turned to the left, is dignified and kind, reflecting his nickname the Good. Two autograph versions of the sculpture are in the Bode Museum in Berlin and the British Museum in London, both miniature busts executed in wood and measuring approximately twelve centimetres.

There are significant differences between both busts and the drawing. The London sculpture has a conspicuous circular badge in the centre of the hat brim, and both works are cropped straight below the shoulders. The bust in the drawing has a slanted cut and stands on a pedestal. It might therefore be based on a third, now unknown, version, that De Bisschop could have seen in one of the private sculpture collections he was familiar with, perhaps in court circles in The Hague, or on a drawing made after it. It is tempting to interpret the unusually discrete black lines of the initial sketch and the strikingly subtle washes as signs that he was looking at an actual tiny, delicate sculpture and, true to his nature, trying to capture the hand of its creator as well. Although the contour lines are carefully incised for transfer, no print or second drawing after this work is known.

The drawing is inscribed on both sides with the date 28 September 1664 in the handwriting of De Bisschop's good friend and fellow amateur draughtsman Constantijn Huygens the Younger (1628-1697), who became Secretary to Stadholder William III in 1672. Several of De Bisschop's drawings bear such dates, including some among the roughly eighty of his drawings in the Print Room, and it may be assumed that they represent the dates on which the artist gifted the drawings to Huygens. Perhaps the fact that the present work was part of a group of eight drawings that remained with the heirs of Huygens until very recently signifies that Huygens held it particularly dear. In any event, it was certainly treasured by one of its later owners, the artist Machtella, Baroness van Lynden (1880-1943), who kept the drawing, along with the seven others, in her portfolio with her own artwork.

PROVENANCE:

? Given by the artist to Constantijn Huygens Jr (1628-1697), The Hague; by descent to Susanna Louise Huygens (1715-1785), The Hague; by descent through the Huygens and Teding van Berkhout families to Machtella, Baroness van Lynden (1880-1943), Bennekom; by descent through the family; from whom acquired by Antiquariaat Acanthus, I. van Daalen, Utrecht, 2006; from whom purchased by the dealer O. van Seggelen Fine Arts, Rotterdam, 2018; from whom purchased by the museum (L. 2228) with the support of the Rijsterborgh Fonds/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2018

(inv. no. RP-T-2019-24).



2 JOSEPHUS AUGUSTUS KNIP (Tilburg 1777-1847 Berlicum)

View in the Valley of Ariccia, c. 1809-12

Oil over a sketch in pencil on paper, later mounted on panel, 301 x 500 mm

The Dutch artist Josephus Augustus Knip was in Italy from November 1809 to September 1812. We know of many beautiful examples of the five hundred or so studies on paper that he made, chiefly in watercolour, during that period. For a long time, he and his children used them as the basis for finished watercolours, gouaches and paintings. Far less is known about the eighty or so oil studies on paper that Knip also made in Italy. In a short autobiography, the artist categorically wrote that he had already 'painted' his some five hundred Italian studies 'in detail on the spot'.

We now only know of ten or so oil sketches by Knip. Some of them, such as the large landscapes on paper in the museums in Düsseldorf, Cologne and Hamburg, are almost like finished paintings. At the important *Paysages d'Italie. Les peintres du plein air (1780-1830)*, an exhibition staged in Paris and Mantua in 2001, Knip was shown in an international setting – with his watercolour studies and with one of the two oil studies from Hamburg. Unsurprisingly, there was no hesitation when it proved possible to purchase the beautifully painted sketch of a *View in the Valley of Ariccia*. It is not only a depiction of a magnificent landscape in a composition that suggests peace and quiet, it is also an exercise in the rendering of atmosphere. The haziness of an early morning is sensitively suggested by the slightly purple hue of the range of hills in the background.

The sheet was once owned by the collector and art historian Jan Knoef (1896-1948). It is far superior to the five other oil sketches by Knip he owned, which are mostly of landscape features, cattle and objects. They all came from the source that Knoef called his 'Knip discovery'. None of those works were signed, as is often the case in studies that were only meant to be used in the workshop. Our oil sketch was set up according to the method we know so well from Knip's watercolours. All the outlines in the landscape are indicated in pencil, but the composition is not completely painted in. We do not know whether Knip developed this approach himself or, perhaps, copied it from Simon Denis (1755-1813), a friend of his in Italy who had made studies like this before Knip did.

Given the scene and the use of colour in the sketch, C.J. de Bruyn Kops saw it as a work by the Dutch artist Hendrik Voogd (1768-1839), who also spent time in Italy, although we know of no other oil studies by this artist. Kops noticed that the range of hills in the background was almost like that in his painting *La valle Ariccia* of 1817 (Museo Civico, Bassano). Knip and Voogd, together or not, probably once made a study from the same easily accessible viewpoint; there are more examples of this in their oeuvres. When it comes to topographical scenes it is striking how often artists, independently of one another, drew from the same place. Aside from providing the best view, the reason was practical: there was somewhere artists could sit comfortably to draw, on a bench, flat stone or large tree-stump. Ariccia was a popular destination for artists when they sought somewhere cool outside Rome during the summer months.

RJtR

LITERATURE:

- J.W. Niemeijer and Robert-Jan te Rijdt, 'À l'improvvisu. Een weinig gekend aspect van de Hollandse achttiende-eeuwse tekenkunst', *Delineavit et Sculptit. Journal for Dutch and Flemish Prints and Drawings* 40 (October 2016), no. 27, pp. 55-58, with fig. (J.A. Knip)
- Ellinoor S. Bergvelt, *J.A. Knip 1774-1847. Landschapschilder*, thesis (typescript) University of Amsterdam, 1974, pp. 29-33 and 243, no. Sk 12 (J.A. Knip, *Italiaans landschap*)
- C.J. de Bruyn Kops, 'Hendrik Voogd, Nederlands landschapschilder te Rome (1768-1849)', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 21 (1970), pp. 358-59 and p. 365, no. 20, fig. p. 363 (H. Voogd, *Het dal van Ariccia*)
- J. Knoef, *Een eeuw Nederlandse schilderkunst*, Amsterdam 1948, fig. between pp. 36 and 37
- J. Knoef, *Tusschen Rococo en Romantiek. Een bundel kunsthistorische opstellen*, The Hague 1943, p. 212, fig. p. 208 (J.A. Knip, *Italiaansche landschapstudie*)

PROVENANCE:

? inherited by the artist's daughter, Henriette Ronner-Knip (1821-1909), Brussels and Elsen; ? her sale, Amsterdam (Frederik Muller & Co.), 21 October 1919, probably one of the oil sketches in nos. 171, 173 or 174; ...; collection of Jan Knoef (1896-1948), Amsterdam, before 1943; Stichting 'Genootschap Cornelis Ploos van Amstel, Knoef', Amsterdam; purchased by the museum with the support of the Driessen bequest and the Anita Nijboer Fonds/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2019

(inv. no. RP-T-2019-257).



3 THEO VAN HOYTEMA (The Hague 1863-1917 The Hague)

Greenhouse with Gourd Vines, c. 1897-1901

Pastel, oil pastel, crayon and watercolour on strawboard, 1165 x 877 mm

In the lower right corner: *THoytema and Atelier van Hoytema* | RNRH

In June 1897, the artist Theo van Hoytema and his wife Tine Hogervorst (1865-1927), relocated to Hilversum, where they moved into the former house of a florist at 24b Hoge Naarderweg. Adjoining this house was a large rectangular greenhouse with brick foundation walls and a glass roof on a wooden frame. Theo planted gourd vines in the greenhouse and ended up depicting them in a small group of splendid drawings, which are decorative in the best sense of the word.

This recent acquisition, with its abundance of leaves in many different shades of green and bright yellow flowers set against the backdrop of a flawless blue sky, is the largest known drawing in that group. The wild freedom of the fast-growing, intertwined vines contrasts beautifully with the grid-like structure of the greenhouse roof. Two smaller drawings from Theo's gourd vine series are in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (inv. no. TVH 4) and in the Groninger Museum (inv. no. 1985.0443). Both these drawings feature a black crow, partially hidden from view by the plants. The drawing in Groningen is still in its original walnut frame, which was decorated with carved tendrils and leaves by Theo himself.

In his 1938 memoirs, the classicist and writer Aegidius Willem Timmerman (1858-1941), who had befriended Theo in 1893, fondly remembered spending time with Theo and Tine in Hilversum. According to Aegidius, Theo had the habit of spraying Tine with water inside the greenhouse on hot summer days. 'It was a jolly sight – in between the orange fruits and the large, rough, dark green leaves – to see her rose-white, dripping body shining and gleaming in the bright sun. ... Theo would just stand there laughing, turning on the faucet at full force every now and then, having the greatest fun, while [Tine] scolded and cursed and laughed, all at the same time.'

Since Theo and Tine had moved to a new address in Hilversum in 1901, the probable creation date of the drawing lies between 1897 and 1901. Later in 1901, Theo and Tine's tumultuous marriage ended, and around the same time Theo started suffering the torments of syphilis, a disease that would eventually lead to his untimely death at the age

of 53 in 1917. The drawing stayed in his possession until his death. The artist Richard Nicolaüs Roland Holst (1868-1938), who had been a long-time, loyal friend of Theo's, handled his artistic estate. Carefully, almost invisibly, he annotated the drawing on a brick in the lower right corner: *Atelier van Hoytema* | RNRH.

NVM

PROVENANCE:

Estate of the artist; sale Amsterdam (Frederik Muller & Cie), 14 November 1917, no. 340 (fig. in sale cat.); ...; Municipality of Amerongen, merged into the Municipality of Utrechtse Heuvelrug in 2006; their sale, Den Bosch (Korst van der Hoeff), 19 November 2019, no. 2197, to the art dealer Onno van Seggelen, Rotterdam; from whom purchased by the museum with the support of the Otto van Noppen Fonds/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2020

(inv. no. RP-T-2020-29).



- 4 HENDRIK (HENK) HERMAN VAN DEN BERG (Batavia 1875-1944 Wassenaar)
 Album page with seven photographs of 'Skating on Museumplein' from the album *Amsterdam 1890-1894*
 Collodion printing-out papers, 238 x 275 mm

Whereas professionals often keep to what is tried and tested, the work of amateurs – although sometimes imperfect – can be refreshingly new and different. This was certainly true of the photographs in the album of Henk van den Berg, the son of the director of the Bank of the Netherlands. In the early eighteen-nineties this Amsterdam student photographed everyday life a stone's throw from the Rijksmuseum, proudly calling himself an 'Amat. Fot.' We see groups of skaters, tennis matches, riders on horseback, and life in and around houses and in the city.

Amateur photographers have always been at the forefront when it comes to moving in a new direction. As with so many things in science and technology, it was experimenting enthusiasts who conceived and pursued photography in 1839. Vision, perseverance and knowledge of chemistry and physics had led them to develop a new technique that would ultimately create a new art. A fine example from the early days is the set of photograph albums compiled by the Amsterdam lawyer Eduard Isaac Asser in the Rijksmuseum's collection, which contains the earliest surviving photographs of Amsterdam and the Netherlands. In the decades that followed, photography was mainly the work of professionals.

It would be another fifty years before new, radical developments in photography made it more personal, faster and more dynamic. In the late eighteen-eighties and early nineties the hand-held Kodak camera and cameras made in France, Germany and the Netherlands created new photographers: *Everyone a Photographer*, as the retailers' advertisements promised. The work of these amateurs is the interesting 'missing link' in the long history of photography; it paved the way to the influential 'new photography' of modern times in the nineteen-twenties and thirties. In recent years the Rijksmuseum has undertaken extensive research into the rise of amateur photography in the Netherlands, and rescued photograph albums and photographs from anonymity. The research revealed that it was mainly upper-class young men and sometimes young women in the big cities and from the world of business who bought hand-held cameras to photograph their

friends, outings and world travels. A variety of photographs and photograph albums from this period have been gifted to the Rijksmuseum in recent years by the descendants of these amateurs.

MB

LITERATURE:

Mattie Boom, *Everyone a Photographer: The Rise of Amateur Photography 1880-1940*, Amsterdam 2019, pp. 170, 253, 254

PROVENANCE:

Donated by Norbert van den Berg (the grandson of the photographer), Amsterdam, to the museum, 2016 (inv. no. RP-F-2016-135-2-41).

27



-41

- 5 WILLEM WITSEN (Amsterdam 1860-1923 Amsterdam)
Betsy with a Cat on her Lap, c. 1890-1900
 Gelatin printing-out paper, 101 x 86 mm

Willem Witsen may be best known as a painter, draughtsman and printmaker, but he was a photographer as well. He is in good company: his contemporaries Pierre Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Édouard Vuillard, Henri Rivière, Henri Evenepoel and (in the Netherlands) George Hendrik Breitner were also artists who now and then used cameras. Many of their photographs are of intimate and everyday scenes: families and friends, interiors and outings. They took photographs for pleasure and shared the results with their families and friends. Witsen was no exception.

Nowadays we are enchanted by the photographs taken by that generation of artists, but their approach has not always been valued. The photographs Witsen and his fellow artists took were very different from the usual: looser, more casual and sloppier, less posed and so not as stiff. The technical quality of their photographs can be criticized, but it is precisely this imperfection and the spontaneous, not completely balanced compositions that make them livelier than those by contemporaries who devoted much more time and care to composition and technique. This is why Witsen's photographs are still as fresh as ever.

This photograph of his wife Betsy with a cat on her lap that he took in the eighteen-nineties is a fine example of Witsen's unconventional approach to photography. Image framing as radical as Witsen's here – he seems to have been more interested in the cat than in Betsy – was unheard of. The print is on its original black cardboard mount – of the kind that Witsen often used – so it is certain that he chose this framing and the photograph was not cropped later by someone else.

Witsen's photographs rarely come up for sale. The majority have remained in the possession of family and friends. In 2016 the board of the Willem Witsenhuis decided to transfer all the photographs to the Rijksmuseum. This year Witsen's grandson Jenno gave the museum almost all the photographs he had held on to for many years in his home. Until a couple of years ago, the Rijksmuseum only had a small group of twenty-one of Witsen's original photographs; now it has more than five hundred, thanks to the transfer

from the Witsenhuis and the gift from Jenno Witsen. This has now allowed us to produce a good, wide-ranging overview of the exceptional photographs that Witsen took around 1900.

HR

LITERATURE:

...; sale, Haarlem (Bubb Kuyper), 29 November 2018, no. 4998 (inv. no. RP-F-2018-190).



6 BEN SHAHN (Kaunas, Lithuania [then Russia] 1898-1969 New York)

A Deckhand aboard the Queen of Dycusburg, Memphis, Tennessee, October 1935

Gelatin silver print, 167 x 215 mm

Stamped, on the verso: *RURAL RESETTLEMENT*; [illegible stamp]; *OTHER* and *MAY 5, 1936*;
inscribed, on the verso, in pencil: 348-239

Ben Shahn was one of the many artists who drifted into photography by chance and gained more, or at least just as much recognition as they did with their own original disciplines. He was trained as an artist and working as such in September 1935, when he was hired by the Resettlement Administration (RA), one of the many agencies that Franklin D. Roosevelt had set up after he became president of the United States in 1933 in order to combat the Great Depression and its consequences. It was precisely because government intervention in the economy and in the personal lives of the people was far from a matter of course in the United States that the RA photographers had a clear short-term mission: to publicize the good work being done by the Resettlement Administration.

Shahn was not employed as a photographer at the outset and was assigned to the 'Special Skills Section', an RA department tasked with producing posters, pamphlets, murals and displays. He left almost immediately on a round trip through a number of south-eastern and southern states in order to familiarize himself with the areas where the RA was active. Shahn regarded the camera first and foremost as a tool he could employ to make quick, accurate notes to use for his future artworks. It was why he took his camera with him on this trip: he did not know how much time he would have to make sketches on the spot.

This photograph of a deckhand is one of the more than eleven hundred shots he took during this first trip. On his return he gave the negatives to the RA's Historical Section. This department consisted of a number of photographers who travelled around the different parts of the country and recorded the consequences of the drought and erosion. Their photographs showed that a huge number of Americans were in poverty, drifters in search of work, and living and working in abominable conditions. Under the name of the Farm Security Administration (FSA), the agency that took over the tasks of the RA in 1937, this group would get a permanent place in the history of photography. To a significant extent, the tens of thousands of negatives that the RA and FSA

photographers made determine our image of the Great Depression.

In 1938 Shahn transferred to the Historical Section and officially became one of the FSA photographers who would become world famous. It is above all the portraits that Shahn and his colleagues made that are still striking: the impoverished workers and farmers were the face of the agricultural crisis that occurred.

HR

PROVENANCE:

...; Bruce Silverstein Gallery, New York; purchased by the museum with the support of Baker McKenzie, Amsterdam, 2019 (inv. no. RP-F-2019-240).



7 ED VAN DER ELSKEN (1925-1990)

*Worker on the Burutu Wharf, Nigeria, 1959*Gelatin silver prints, spread from a dummy of the photobook *Sweet Life*, 252 x 512 mm, before 1966

Verso: two other photographs are mounted on both parts

In 2019 the Rijksmuseum and the Nederlands Fotomuseum in Rotterdam jointly acquired the estate of the photographer Ed van der Elsken, who died in 1990. It contains considerable numbers of works and substantial series: all told around eight thousand photographs including more than two thousand vintage prints, later reprints, all kinds of print variations and exhibition photographs, as well as the photographer's three thousand contact sheets.

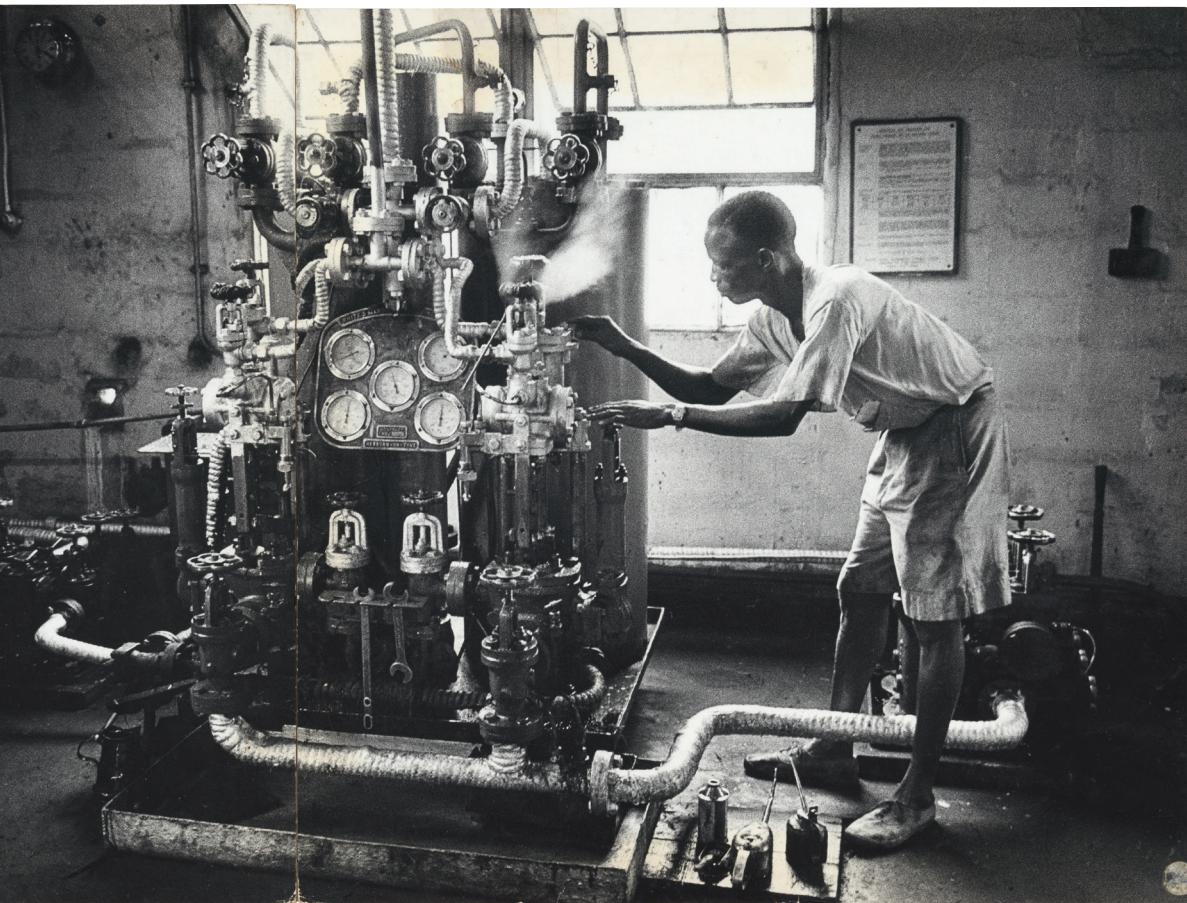
The acquisition of the estate – which was still managed by Anneke Hilhorst, Van der Elsken's widow, in the wooden house beside the IJsselmeerdijk in Edam – means that it has finally been secured for the Netherlands' photograph collection, and conservation and further research into the complete oeuvre has become possible. We can now get a much better idea of the photographer's work and selection process by way of contact sheets and the different print variations over the entire period up to the exhibition prints. We see the photographer at work, as it were, not only while he was taking a photograph or making a print, but afterwards as well: he cropped and mounted his prints himself and wrote and scratched on his photographs. His working process is still tangible. The Nederlands Fotomuseum where the negatives and colour material were already housed, had already begun on the conservation and treatment of the works in colour. The same thing can now be done with the black-and-white photographs.

Over time Van der Elsken's work has been widely distributed. During his lifetime the photographer had sold photographs and series to the Stedelijk Museum, Leiden University, the Dutch State and to private collectors. There is also work in a number of Dutch collections such as the National Archives in The Hague and the Amsterdam City Archives. Recently his photographs appeared on the international market and were also on display at events such as the Paris Photo fair. The Rijksmuseum had made some purchases in the recent past; it already also owned small groups of Van der Elsken's photographs, including individual photographs and photobooks from the Hartkamp and Diepraam collections, and not long ago received a magnificent gift from the collectors



Jan and Trish de Bont. It was clear, however, that the Rijksmuseum's collection could use a boost when it came to a great master with an international reputation like this. There are now interesting early photographs and some hitherto unknown works from the Netherlands, Paris, Africa, the United States, Asia and Japan. Important items include a dummy for the photobook *Sweet Life* and the dummies *Ratatouille Japonica* and *feest* which also shed light on Van der Elsken as a talented book designer.

MB



LITERATURE:

Ed van der Elsken and Frits Gierstberg (text), *Lust for Life: Ed van der Elsken in Colour*, cat. Rotterdam (Nederlands Fotomuseum) 2019
 Hripsimé Visser et al., *Ed van der Elsken: Camera in Love*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Stedelijk Museum) 2017
 Ed van der Elsken and Evelyn de Regt (text), *Once Upon a Time/Ed van der Elsken*, Amsterdam 1991

PROVENANCE:

Anneke Hilhorst, Warder; purchased by the museum with the support of the Mondriaan Fonds, the Rembrandt Society (in part to its Themafonds Fotografie en Video and its Dura Kunstfonds), the BankGiro Lottery, the Paul Huf Fonds/Rijksmuseum Fonds and the Marque Joosten en Eduard Planting Fonds/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2019
 (inv. no. RP-F-2019-242-1-3(v)).

8 MARK COHEN (Wilkes-Barre, PA, 1943)

Knee, 1973

Gelatin silver print, 405 x 508 mm, printed 1978

Signed and inscribed at the verso: *Mark Cohen* | p 1978

It is a lot easier to follow the rules than to break them. If you do not stick to the rules you are unlikely to be successful in the short term. This was the experience of Mark Cohen, the American photographer who from the nineteen-sixties onwards created a body of work in which much that was long considered a *sine qua non* in photography was missing. His aesthetics are anti-aesthetics: the opposite of deliberate, carefully considered compositions, of classical beauty, of the clever lighting in a studio that can be achieved with the aid of lamps, of a meaning that is immediately clear to everyone (the photographer included). Look at his 1973 work *Knee*: we see a girl's right leg, a long white sock, her bare knee and thigh, a piece of her skirt or dress, and the top of her shoe. Radically cropped, starkly photographed with a flash and again without a clear meaning or the suggestion of anything more profound. Cohen has taken lots of photographs like this one: knees and legs appear to interest him more than faces.

For a long time, Cohen had a studio in which he made portraits in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, the town where he was born. He even covered weddings. Greater contrast between that kind of work, which has to please the customer and look attractive, and the extremely unflattering photographs he took of his fellow townsmen is hard to imagine. There were those who disliked it: he frequently experienced aggression in the streets when he snatched close-ups and quickly walked away, instead of making conversation first to gain his subject's trust and tell them what he had in mind. (As he did not work for a newspaper or magazine there was little to explain anyway.)

As Cohen said in an interview, he takes 'pictures without a defined motive'. He says that he works purely by intuition, capturing his subject as soon as he becomes aware of it, and often by deliberately not using his camera's viewfinder. As a result, he often only discovers exactly what is on the film after it has been developed. For many of his photographs he uses flash, even during the day and in the street. It reinforces the insolence of his approach, and the heavy shadows dramatically



change the image. The extremely short duration of the flash also means he cannot check on the spot or discover what effect it had.

HR



PROVENANCE:

...; Bruce Silverstein Gallery, New York; purchased by the museum with the support of Baker McKenzie, Amsterdam, 2019 (inv. no. RP-F-2019-241).

9 ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE (New York 1946-1989 Boston)

Self-Portrait with Cigarette, 1980

Gelatin silver print, 356 x 355 mm

Recto: 4/15 and *Robert Mapplethorpe '80*; stamped at the verso:© [in pencil: 1980] ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE/ THIS PHOTO MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED
[CUT OFF: WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION BY PHOTOGRAPHER]

When Robert Mapplethorpe died at the age of forty-two in 1989 it marked the end of a tumultuous career. From the late nineteen-seventies onwards he made his name in a genre which, to put it mildly, was rather sensitive, particularly in America: hard-core explicit s&m and gay sex. Mapplethorpe made respectable what until then had almost only ever been shown in the sort of magazines that were sold under the counter. With the care he took directing his models (sometimes in classical poses), the lucid way he illuminated them and the perfection he demanded when he had his negatives printed, any vestige of sleaziness disappeared.

This did not prevent many of his fellow Americans from taking offence at his work. This also had to do with the quasi-public nature of his exhibitions and the use of taxpayers' money for mounting them. He took photographs of s&m and gay sex and, unexceptionably, portraits and pictures of flowers, but he also made photographs of naked children. The controversy came to a climax soon after Mapplethorpe's death, when a touring retrospective of his work, *The Perfect Moment*, was staged at the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati. The director of the CAC was taken to court, but was acquitted on the basis that the jury deemed Mapplethorpe's work to be art and not pornography.

The case of *City of Cincinnati v. Contemporary Arts Center* remains a cause célèbre. It probably increased awareness of Mapplethorpe's name and boosted his reputation. Since then the prices paid for his work have been invariably high. This means that it is difficult for a latecomer to photography like the Rijksmuseum to put together a good, representative overview of his work. Until recently, the museum only owned a 1976 portrait of Patti Smith. But in 2019 Hans van Manen and Henk van Dijk gave us twenty-four photographs by Mapplethorpe, including the 1980 self-portrait shown here and the *Y Portfolio* of flower still lifes (RP-F-2019-243-1 to 24). The former gallery owner Bram Volkers decided to gift the two portraits that Mapplethorpe had made of him in 1980

during one of the latter's visits to Amsterdam (RP-F-2019-291, 292). That was followed this year by Arendt Brinks, who sold the museum two photographs and donated thirty-one, including the *x* and *z Portfolios*, which respectively contain gay and s&m sex and nudes of black men (RP-F-2019-293-1 to 33). And this year Eduard Planting and Marquie Joosten gave the museum a flower still life and a photograph of Lisa Lyon (RP-F-2020-22 and 23). Thanks to these generous gifts, the museum was able to make up lost ground and increase the number of Mapplethorpe's works it owns to sixty-two.

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PROVENANCE:

Galerie Rob Jurka, Amsterdam; donated by Hans van Manen and Henk van Dijk to the museum, 2019

(inv. no. RP-F-2019-243-1).



7/15

Philipp Plein

10 BRUCE WRIGHTON (1950-1988)

Woman in Pink, Carnival, Johnson City, New York, 1987

Chromogenic print, 254 x 203 mm

Since 2007, the Rijksmuseum has been able to acquire a magnificent group of American photographs thanks in part to the support of Baker McKenzie. Striking work by famous photographers like Lewis Hine, William Klein, Robert Frank, Helen Levitt and Gordon Parks now enhances the Rijksmuseum's collection of photographs. The museum has also made a point of focusing on the work of minor, more or less forgotten masters like Steve Fitch, Dave Heath, Edward Wallowitch and Mark Cohen.

The Rijksmuseum has four photographs by Bruce Wrighton – another forgotten minor master of American photography. In the nineteen-eighties he wandered around the area where he was born in Binghamton in New York State. He used a large, technical camera (8 inches by 10) to portray people from his immediate surroundings whom he found in shopping malls, in parking lots or at funfairs. He also took photographs of interiors of restaurants, houses and churches. He placed the people he portrayed straight in front of the camera. Unadorned but with a lot of – seemingly unimportant – details he captured a woman with a handbag near a branch of Woolworth's, or a parking lot attendant and a man in a blue sweater, or as in this photograph a tattooed young woman wearing a pink cardigan. In each case Wrighton photographed them three-quarter length and full face and must have taken his time doing so with his bulky technical camera mounted on a tripod. He said that he chose the technical camera because it involved a substantially different way of operating and resulted in a far more meditative kind of photography.

Together Wrighton's pin-sharp portraits form a fascinating gallery of the average American. The majority of the photographs taken in the post-war period were shot in black and white and photographers developed and printed their own work themselves, so good quality colour photographs from that time are extremely rare. In those days colour photography was sometimes viewed with disdain; it was regarded as something for amateurs and home photographers. It was not until the nineteen-seventies and eighties that photographers gradually began to work in colour, some of them developing and printing their photographs them-

selves. Others left that to colour laboratories. Because the procedure was so laborious and complicated, many colour photographs were never printed. Wrighton died soon after he made the series.

MB

LITERATURE:

Laurence Miller (text), *At Home Reloaded: Bruce Wrighton*, Berlin 2015

PROVENANCE:

...; Laurence Miller Gallery, New York; purchased by the museum with the support of Baker McKenzie, Amsterdam, 2018 (inv. no. RP-F-2018-102).



II PIETER HENKET (Geldrop 1979)
Riverbed [The Two Nkééngé Sisters], 2018
 Inkjet print, 1213 x 1613 mm

In 2019 – purchased through the Stefanie Georgina Alexa Nühn Fonds/Rijksmuseum Fonds and with a gift from the photographer Pieter Henket – the Rijksmuseum acquired six photographs from the Congo Tales Project. In this series, Congolese people from Odzala-Kokoua National Park depict their myths and stories themselves. This protected area in the Congo Basin is the world's second largest tropical rain forest after the Amazon. The region and its inhabitants are threatened by climate change, overcropping, the destruction of biodiversity and all that this entails. The series was the result of a special project in which Henket and a team of local philosophers, writers, teachers and conservationists worked together. Before that, there had only been an oral tradition of stories that had been passed down, often for centuries. These tales were recorded in writing for this project and then photographed. It was interesting that the population of Mbomo – including many children – played the roles and helped in the direction. The inhabitants themselves made the clothes and planned and discussed the execution. The complete series and the chronicled tales appear in the *Congo Tales* photobook.

Riverbed tells the story of a dispute and disagreement between two beautiful sisters who cannot get pregnant and are buckling under the enormous social pressure. A seer in the jungle treats them and promises that they will become pregnant, provided they do not look back on their return journey. The older sister does, and gives birth to an ugly little boy, whereas her sister has a beautiful little girl. By the river the unlucky sister slyly swaps the babies and finally drowns her son and her sister who, like Ophelia in Shakespeare's play, are left as spirits in the riverbed. Eventually, after many discursions, there is reconciliation through the combined power of man and nature, thanks to Ya Nkala, the river crab. He comes up with the ruse of playing a drum to get the river spirits to release the woman and the baby and reunite them with their family.

After a large exhibition in Museum Barberini in Potsdam in 2018 the photographs were given to the inhabitants and now hang in the library at Mbomo. The proceeds from a large sale also went to the village and the people who live there, and they were presented with the photobook.

MB



LITERATURE:
 Pieter Henket, Stefanie Plattner and Eva Vonk (eds.), *Congo Tales Told by the People of Mbomo*, Munich/London/New York 2018



PROVENANCE:

Donated by Pieter Henket, New York, to the museum, 2019
(inv. no. RP-F-2019-116).

12 WILLEM DIEPRAAM (Amsterdam 1944)

Nightscape #5, 2019

Gelatin silver print, 376 x 568 mm, 480 x 609 mm (sheet)

Verso, in pencil: *onbekend; 1980s/1990s*

The photograph shown here is one of Willem Diepraam's most recent works from the 2019 *Nightscapes* series, after older and not previously printed work. It marks the end of his long career in photography. In the late nineteen-sixties, as a student of sociology, Diepraam began to work for various magazines: at first for the Amsterdam student magazine *Student*, afterwards also for *Vrij Nederland* and *De Groene Amsterdammer*. After an interrupted university course, he made his name as a photo journalist and repeatedly badgered editors to appreciate the added value of photography: alongside the written copy photographs had their own individual quality and function. He regularly went on assignments in the Netherlands and in Europe, for example to Munich for the Olympic games that ended in terror, and to Greece and Portugal after the fall of the dictators. He gave Dutch photo-journalism a major boost by focusing on in-depth photo reports. For *Vrij Nederland* he also spent long periods in Suriname in 1973 and 1975 and photographed the country on the eve of independence.

In 1975 Diepraam stopped 'following' the news; he distanced himself from it and looked for more depth in photographs. He developed a cautious, observational style and spent hours at a time in his dark room printing. He also collected work by the grand masters of photography in order to study it. When he printed on baryta paper, with its richness of tone, he used every centimetre of the image and tried to get to the heart of a story. In the nineteen-eighties he travelled to Africa and South America for Novib and Médecins Sans Frontières and worked there in black and white and colour: the photobooks *Sahel* (1982) and *Lima* (1991) were among the results. He also concentrated on the classical themes of photography: the nude and the landscape and over many years he photographed his wife. Diepraam has a number of books of photographs and monographs to his name.

The transfer of all Willem Diepraam's photographs was completed this year. Almost a thousand large photographs testify to a long journey through photography. They are based on intensive looking, and an intuitive quest for the essence of what a photograph is.

MB



LITERATURE:

Willem Diepraam, *Willem Diepraam: 50 Years of Photography*, Amsterdam 2020

PROVENANCE:

Willem Diepraam, on long-term loan to the museum, 2009-20
(inv. no. RP-F-2019-226-4).



13 RINEKE DIJKSTRA (Sittard 1959)

Night Watching, 2020

Video installation, one of an edition of five

Case with a hard drive (containing files of *Night Watching*), certificate of authenticity and instructions

What do we see when we look at the *Night Watch*? Very few of the many visitors who visit the Rijksmuseum bypass Rembrandt's most famous painting. But do they all see the same thing? Which details strike some people, and are overlooked by others? Do they know everything that is going on in that painting, with thirty-one figures and a dog? After all, even art historians have discussed it endlessly. In terms of its composition alone, the *Night Watch* is a complex painting: unlike his contemporaries, Rembrandt pictured a group in motion rather than place all the figures neatly in one or two orderly rows. The work is also surrounded by misconceptions and myths. Take the title, for example: officially the painting is called 'The Militia Company of District II under the Command of Captain Frans Banninck Cocq and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburch'. The shortened name *Night Watch*, which we have been using since the end of the eighteenth century, is based on the misconception that we are looking at a scene taking place at night. In fact, it is the darkening of the varnish that has created this impression.

With the extensive, thorough and long-term restoration of the *Night Watch* in the offing, the Rijksmuseum invited Rineke Dijkstra to make an artwork that related to the painting. She made her name worldwide with photographs of teenagers in swimsuits on beaches from Poland to the United States. Since 1995 she has also been making video works. As in her photographs, she includes such themes as awakening adolescence, uncertainty, self-assured posing and lack of inhibition.

Night Watching adds an extra theme: how do we look at the Netherlands' best-known painting? Dijkstra decided to bring together diverse groups of visitors, whom she placed in front of the *Night Watch* and asked them to tell her what they were seeing, or what they thought they were seeing. Among these groups were schoolchildren, accountants, Japanese expats, cashiers and students from an art academy. Dijkstra only filmed these spectators: she did not include the painting they were talking about. The remarks and observations are telling, moving, hilarious and revealing. The *Night Watch* proves to be more complex, more layered, more surprising,



more challenging and more appealing than the briefly-worded, matter-of-fact description on a label beside the painting suggests.

From September to December 2019 *Night Watching* could be viewed in the Gallery of Honour, near the painting. Anyone who watched the video and listened to the conversations was tempted to take a really good look at the painting again, or for the first time: a painting we all know, but – to be honest – one we usually walk past without giving it our close attention.

HR



PROVENANCE

Commissioned by the Rijksmuseum with the support of the
Joep and Monique Krouwels/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2019
(inv. no. RP-F-2020-13).

14 JACOBIE DE ROOIJ (Rotterdam 1947)

De nachtwolken drijven het vergetene mee (The Night Clouds Drive the Forgotten Along), 1997

Charcoal and pastel chalk on paper (in two parts), 3000 x 6080 mm

Behind a ramshackle fence of metal pipes, branches and empty wooden window frames, there is a piece of waste ground on which we can just make out some ponies. The tall, overgrown clumps of grass in front of the fence are echoed in the row of trees that define the back of the plot and stand out starkly against the evening sky. The setting sun illuminates wisps of clouds with a rosy glow. It is an autumn evening on the outskirts of Utrecht, near Fort Blauwkapel, and the ponies stand there quietly.

As a genre, the drawing can be termed a nocturne, a romantic depiction of the atmosphere of the night. But De Rooij does not want her landscapes to convey idyllic or lofty ideas. On the contrary, she aims to turn the spotlight on insignificant places in which, even though they are nondescript, she identifies a stimulus to investigate how nature adapts itself to that location and circumstances.

This monumental *coulisse* landscape creates the suggestion of a vast panorama the viewer can easily 'enter'. The gaze is drawn back and forth between the grasses and the nearby trees, the fence with the waste ground behind it and the evening sky far away. The viewer is led zig-zag across every part of the image and encouraged to reflect on its entirety. What is this and how did it all come together? How can this endure? Gradually you come to realize that after a succession of a barely related interventions, this rough patch of land has become an ideal habitat for ponies as well as for suburban vegetation. But it is also vulnerable. Nowadays a high-rise building occupies this waste ground.

In her more than forty-year career, almost all of De Rooij's drawings have been inspired by these kinds of corners in nature, as well as by flowers and animals. She takes photos of them, which she then works up into drawings in her studio. They can be extremely large, but also smaller. They can produce an image that comes across as very recognizable, like this evening landscape, but also almost abstract when she zooms in on details such as puddles in which stones, algae, the movement of the water and reflections of light form colourful patterns. However different in appearance they may be, they invite you to reflect upon the nature, the past and the future of the natural phenomena she draws. These reflections are guided in part



by the titles she gives her works: lines of a poem or another piece of poetic text. De Rooij reveals that she was inspired by these quotes, titles that are sometimes already there before the drawings take shape.

AO

LITERATURE:

Een ceder in mijn tuin, exh. cat. Den Bosch (KW14) 2000, pp. 46-47

PROVENANCE:

The artist, 1997-2019; from whom purchased by the museum with the support of the Knecht-Drenth Fonds/Rijksmuseum Fonds and the Bert & Lammie Fonds/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2019 (inv. no. RP-F-2019-424).



15 PAM EMMERIK (Amerongen 1964-2015 Rotterdam)

Ooggif (Eye Poison), 2004

Gouache, watercolour, acrylic paint and collages in a concertina book of ten sheets of paper glued together, total 600 x 5300 mm

On the last sheet, upper right: *OOGGIF/PE2004*

...Ik zat strontziek thuis... & als een dodelijk
verveelde Baselitz hing ik mezelf vleermuisgelijk
aan het plafond op om te ontkomen besloot ik
in gedachten te verdwijnen.

(...I sat at home sick as a dog... & like a Baselitz
bored to death I hung from the ceiling bat-like
in order to escape and decided to disappear
in thought.)

This is the opening line of Pam Emmerik's first sheet of her ten-page concertina book illuminated with text and images, one of the most striking works in her contrarian oeuvre. The intensity of her words, which seem to have been written in a stream of consciousness, is reinforced by jotting down the words in different, flamboyant writing styles. In cartoon strip typography they are scattered around the images, as they are around the green head with bloodshot eyes that hangs upside down. There is an extra image in this head of Baselitz: a photograph of an artwork stuck between the eyes. It echoes the little portrait photo alongside it in which, according to the inscription, we can identify (Ulrike) Meinhof. The little flowers in girl's diary style that adorn this sheet, as well as those that follow are of an entirely different order and they find a counterpart in the many small brown turds scattered over the sheet. Alongside beauty there is filth. Where there is cuteness and charm, Emmerik constantly also sees the dark side: where there is beauty and charm, there is filth and evil. The turn to this other dark side, which not infrequently goes too far, is a question that she brings up on the next sheet. She wonders why her drawings

are often so ugly and so very busy. Why not just make something beautiful? It is a dilemma that she investigates further in the following sheets.

From the outset, Emmerik used ugliness to open eyes to bizarre situations. These can be funny, but equally often unjust and inhuman, as is also evident from the books, plays and art reviews that she has been writing since 1990. But what she ultimately chooses, in her visual arts too, is deliberately ugly. Tapping into issues as raw and direct as possible is characteristic of all her work.

With her violent, confrontational subjects she has always been openly questioning and primarily focused on herself. In art, as in life, the way of the heart must be followed. Hence she ends her concertina book with:

tot/slot Laat je ogen niet vergiftigen en je hersenen
niet verschrompelen en je hart niet verdorren en zie,
zie dan toch hoe het dansmasker komt uit Afrika
(om alle vuile spoken te verjagen)

(finally, don't let your eyes be poisoned and your
mind be shrivelled and your heart wither, and just
look, look how the dance mask comes from Africa
(to drive away all evil spirits))

AO

PROVENANCE:

The artist 2004-15; her heirs, 2015-16; online sale, Rotterdam (Venduhuis), 8-20 December 2016, to Branca Emmerik, 2016-19; from whom purchased by the museum, through the mediation of Cokkie Snoei, Rotterdam, with the support of the Knecht-Drenth Fonds/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2019 (inv. no. RP-T-2019-442).





Sheets 1 and 2

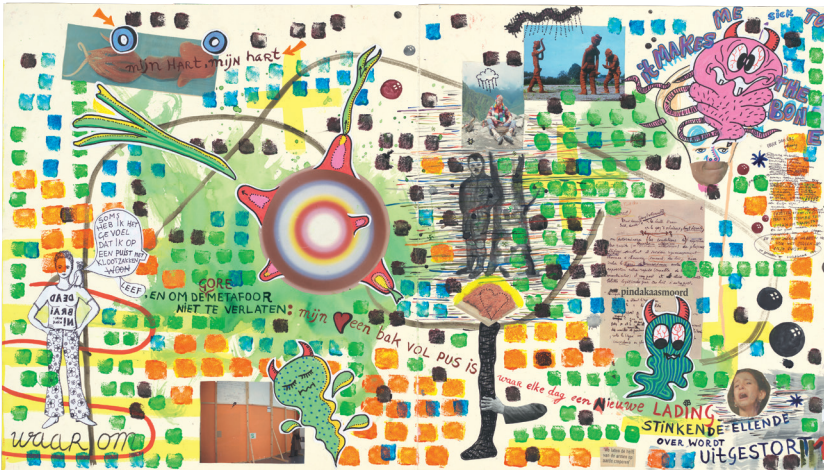


Sheets 3 and 4





Sheets 5 and 6



Sheets 7 and 8



Sheets 9 and 10