



Editorial

Looking back

For once, this editorial is not so much about the content as about *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* itself, or rather, the editing of it.

Now that I am leaving as editor after nine years, it seems a good moment to reflect on what we have achieved in that period. Since 2010 the bulletin has matured significantly as an academic periodical. The decision to publish in English had already been taken in 2009, resulting in a larger and international audience. But we aspired to more, and we especially hoped to invite writers all over the world to shed their light on parts of our collection. To entice them, we worked hard to achieve a higher academic ranking. This meant establishing an anonymous peer reviewed system, first by one peer, later by two, and installing an editorial board. We looked for members who reflected the scope of our collection, and were happy to find ten professionals who turned out to be as committed to the Bulletin as we were. Every year before TEFAF in Maastricht, we gathered to discuss the latest developments, possible pitfalls and new initiatives. The introduction of this editorial was one of the many improvements that came out of these meetings. What has struck me again and again is how the editorial board encouraged us to set our goals higher and higher.

This ambitious standard involves the exclusive publication of articles that bring new insights, not only into Rijksmuseum objects but into their wider context as well. Furthermore, we want the assembled issues of each year to show the wealth of our collections, and the interrelations between these and the various disciplines in the museum, especially technical, historical and art historical.

In this issue, for instance, our expert on Japanese art Menno Fitski and Lucien van Valen, who researches Chinese painting material, studied an eight-fold screen with genre scenes, which had languished as a forgotten treasure in the depot. Working together, they were able to analyse the materials and techniques used, identify the scenes depicted and reconstruct the provenance of the screen, leading to insights into the trade in Japanese painting in the early nineteenth centuries.

The article by Josephina de Fouw and Ige Verslype (our new editor) on the bizarre experiences of a Jacob de Wit ceiling, of which the design is in our collection, is another classic example of a fruitful cooperation between the art historian and the conservator. But it is also an example of talented research by the younger generation, and encouraging their work is another definite objective of the editors of *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin*. Now that the museum itself is inviting young academics to join us as research fellows, we hope to publish their findings often.

In short, in the almost ten years in which I was happy to be part of it, *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* has grown into a respected academic journal, and a showcase for the varied explorations of our collections. The Rijksmuseum has spread its wings in many ways since reopening in 2013, and the Bulletin underlines the research facilities we now offer. Though sorry to leave the professional and always merry meetings, I am sure the Bulletin will continue in this way and – true to our ambition – will only get better in the future.

Jenny Reynaerts