

COLLECTING COLLECTORS

AT MUSEUM BOIJMANS VAN BEUNINGEN

Honoré Daumier,
The Print Collector (detail)
(*L'Amateur d'estampes*)
Black chalk, pen and black ink, watercolour,
18.9 x 23.7 cm
Circa 1860-65
Koenigs Collection

DRAWINGS AND PRINTS FROM FIVE CENTURIES

ALBERT J. ELEN

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam was founded as Museum Boymans in 1849 and accommodated in the historic Schielandshuis, a seventeenth-century classicist building in the city centre, originally the seat of the polder board. Since 1958 the museum, now situated between the Westersingel and the Museumpark, has been named after the two collectors who were both essential in the establishment of the museum's international reputation, particularly in the fields of old master paintings and works on paper. The first was Frans Boijmans (1767-1847), a judge from Utrecht, whose bequest furnished the museum with its founding collection 167 years ago. The second was D.G. van Beuningen (1877-1955), whose magnificent collection of old masters was acquired from his heirs by the City of Rotterdam in 1958. In 1940, Van Beuningen had already acquired, and subsequently donated, the major part of the extraordinary Franz Koenigs Collection of old master drawings (approx. 2200 sheets), which had been on loan since the opening of the newly built museum in 1935. Other eminent collectors who contributed greatly to the collections of drawings and prints were Dr Adriaan Domela Nieuwenhuis, in 1923, and Dr Johan Bierens de Haan, in 1951. The latter not only gave 26,000 prints, acquired over a period of three decades with the specific purpose of complementing the museum's collection, but also bequeathed his art-historical library and a sizeable sum to create a fund for the further acquisition of prints, institutionalised in the Lucas van Leyden Foundation. This fund has yielded 14,000 more prints up to the present day, including, in 1997, some 4000 ornamental prints from the collection of Leiden University professor Theo Lunsingh Scheurleer, a renowned scholar in the field of applied arts and industrial design. Smaller numbers of drawings were acquired with the bequest of Dr Vitale Bloch in 1976 and the important acquisition of a group of surrealist paintings and drawings from the Edward James Foundation in 1977 and 1979. The Van Beuningen/Peterich Fund, founded in 1965 by Peter Paul Peterich, grandson of D.G. van Beuningen, concentrates on acquisitions of modern and contemporary drawings. The Ploos van Amstel Knoef Collection, assembled by the connoisseurs Jan Knoef (1896-1948) and Baron Cornelis Schimmelpenninck van der Oije (1906-1987), donated by the latter's son in 2000, enriched the Print Room with around 4500 drawings by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Dutch artists. Containing approximately 17,000 drawings and 65,000 prints, the collections of the Print Room provide an overview of Western art from the Middle Ages to the present day. Although both collections focus on the Low Countries, foreign schools such as the Italian, German and French are also well represented, strengthening Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen's unique position in the Netherlands as a universal museum of Western art of all periods.



DRAWINGS

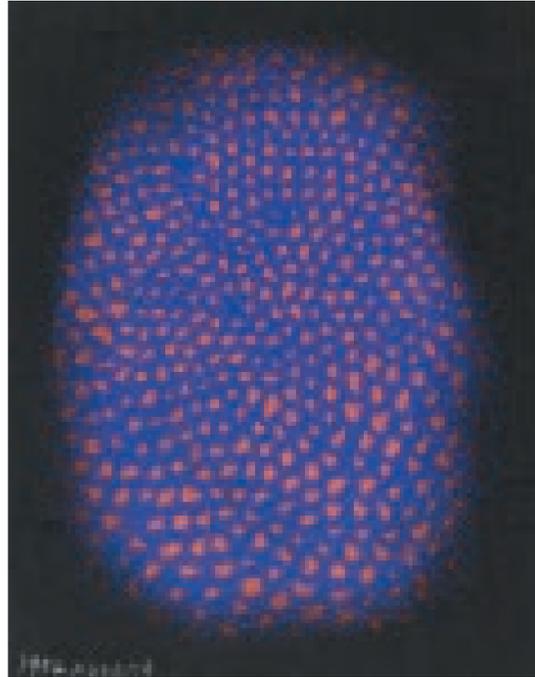
Italian drawings – totalling some 1200 sheets – include famous works by Pisanello, Giorgione, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Fra Bartolommeo, Veronese, Tintoretto and Tiepolo, most of them from the collection of Franz Koenigs (1881-1941), a German merchant-banker living in the Netherlands from 1922 and naturalised in 1939. The museum’s collection of sixteenth- and nineteenth-century German drawings, including important sheets by Dürer, Grünewald and Altdorfer, Koch, Rothmann and Richter, is among the three largest collections of German drawings outside Germany and Austria. The greater part of the early German drawings were collected by Franz Koenigs, the later drawings mostly by the Dutch collector Adriaan Domela Nieuwenhuis (1850-1935), who lived and worked in Germany for more than fifty years, before returning to the Netherlands in 1923 and donating his collection to the museum. French drawings, mainly from the Koenigs Collection, include important works by most of the leading artists from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, including Poussin, Claude, Watteau, Fragonard, Boucher, Ingres, Delacroix, Manet, Daumier, Degas and Cézanne.

Albrecht Dürer
Study of Two Feet for the Heller Altarpiece
 Brush and black ink, grey wash, heightened with white, on green prepared paper
 17.6 x 21.6 cm
 Van Beuningen Collection

Rembrandt van Rijn
Seated Lady with a Book in Her Lap
 Pen and brown ink, brown wash
 12.6 x 11 cm
 Circa 1639
 Koenigs Collection

Edgar Degas
Female Dancer with a Contrabass
 Black chalk
 31.1 x 24.3 cm
 Circa 1876-80
 Bloch Collection

Maarten van Heemskerck
The Sacrifice of Eliza
 Pen and brown ink, indented for transfer
 20.3 x 25.3 cm
 1565
 Boijmans Collection



Yayoi Kusama
Flower
Charcoal and gouache
24 x 19 cm
1954
Van Beuningen/Peterich Fund Collection

Juste de Juste
Pyramid of Five Men
Etching
27 x 20.6 cm
Circa 1543
Domela Nieuwenhuis Collection

René Magritte
Le Poison
Gouache
33.5 x 40.7 cm
1939
James Collection

By contrast, the number of Spanish drawings is relatively small, but still the largest group in the Netherlands, including five by Goya.

Seventeenth-century Flemish drawings also constitute a significant group, totalling around 200 sheets, including twenty or more each by Rubens, Van Dyck and Jordaens. A strong group of 31 drawings by Rembrandt and many more by artists from his school is the core of the seventeenth-century Dutch drawings section, which also includes works by other prominent artist such as Buytewech, Saenredam, Van Goyen and Ruisdael. A substantial group of around 600 marine drawings by Willem van de Velde, both the Elder and the Younger, is the second largest in the world, befitting the harbour city of Rotterdam, one of the main naval bases in the Golden Age and still one of the world's largest commercial harbours. The early Netherlandish drawings are an especially important section, numbering 410 sheets, rivalling only those in the Rijksmuseum, including well-known drawings by Jheronimus Bosch, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Hans Bol, Goltzius and De Gheyn. The museum is keen to strengthen this major section. The two most recent acquisitions (2014) are an extremely rare fifteenth-century drawing of a Crucifixion by an unknown artist close to Jan van Eyck, and an exceptional black chalk study for the dead Christ in *The Lamentation* (c. 1625) by Abraham Bloemaert, which is also in the museum's collection. Both acquisitions were made possible with substantial support from several funds, both government and private, foremost the Mondriaan Foundation, the Rembrandt Association and the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation. A selection of the early Netherlandish drawings was exhibited at the Fondation Custodia in Paris in the spring of 2014 (Bosch to Bloemaert) and will travel to the National Gallery of Art in Washington in 2017. As works on paper are extremely sensitive to light and their exposure times must therefore be restricted, unfortunately none will be presented in the Paper Section of TEFAF 2016.

Drawings by world-class modern and contemporary artists are well represented in the collection. As a graphic counterpart to the paintings by Surrealist artists – one of the museum's key assets – there are drawings by, among others, Dalí, Magritte and Picabia from the collection of Edward James, acquired in 1977-79. A major recent acquisition was the group of 29 drawings by Max Beckmann, donated in 2009, along with the purchase of the portrait of the donors' parents, Helmut Lütjens and his wife. The museum also actively collects contemporary drawings, thanks to government funds, private funds including the Van Beuningen/Peterich Fund,

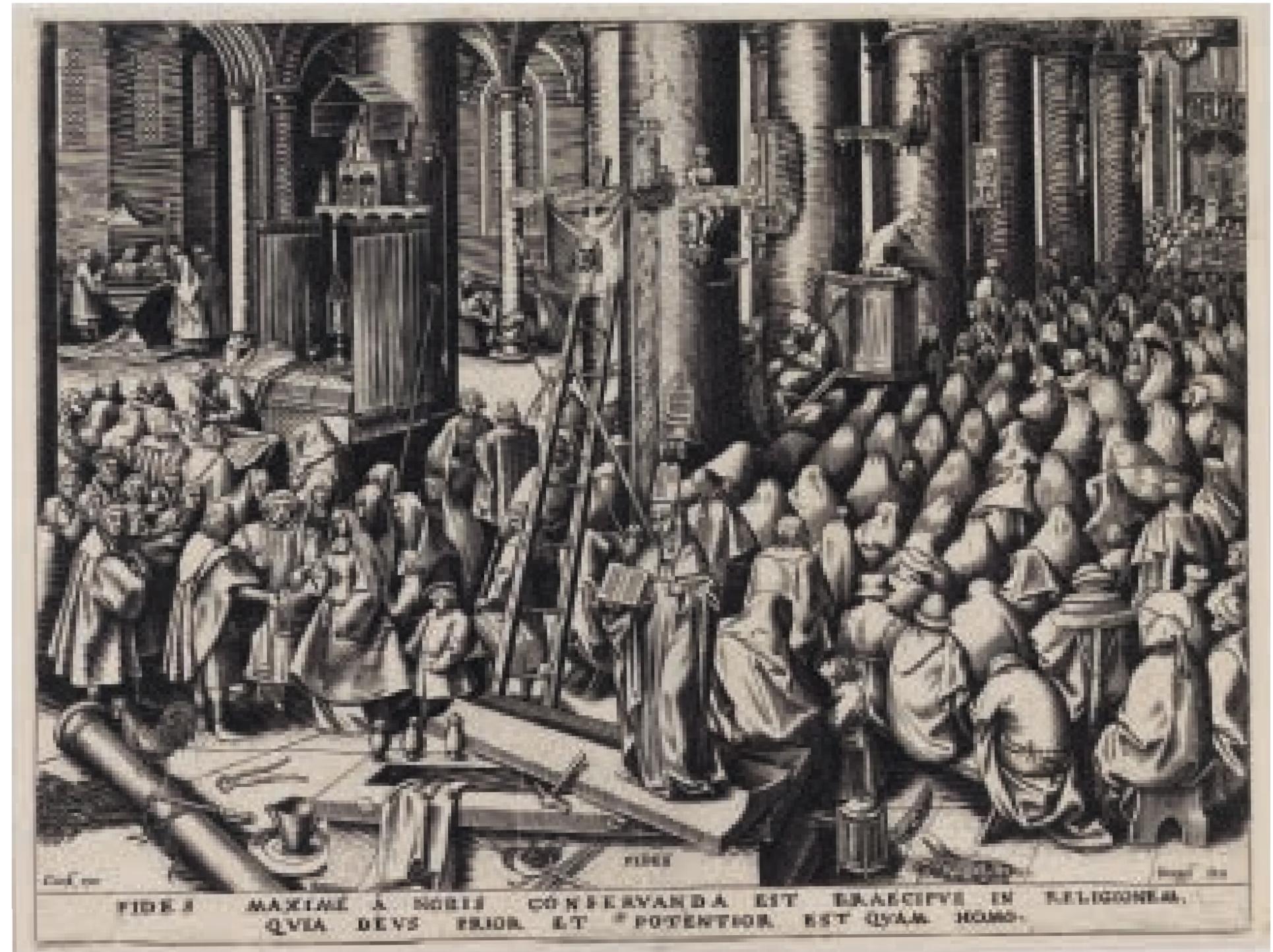
and individual donations. Among the recent acquisitions are works by internationally renowned artists including Charlie Roberts, Paul Noble, Jean Raine, Robert Wilson and Charles Avery. Small works by Roger Raveel and Yayoi Kusama have been selected for the Paper Section of TEFAF 2016.

PRINTS

The majority of the prints in the museum's founding collection were lost in the fire that destroyed the Schielandshuis in 1864. The basis of the museum's current collection was laid by the donation by Adriaan Domela Nieuwenhuis of 3000 prints in 1923, followed by the bequests of Hubert Montauban van Swijndregt in 1929 (1200 sheets) and Johan Bierens de Haan in 1951 (26,000 sheets). In its present form, the prints collection offers a universal overview of European printmaking from the earliest fifteenth-century woodcuts to contemporary lithographs and monotypes. The collection is especially strong in prints by Netherlandish artists from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, both in quantity (16,000 sheets) and quality, including highlights by Lucas van Leyden, Cornelis Cort, De Gheyn, Goltzius, Buytewech, Rembrandt and Van Ostade.

The German prints amount to some 3000 sheets, including wonderful groups of engravings by Dürer and Schongauer and their circle, etchings by Wenceslaus Hollar, and graphic works by modern artists including Klinger, Kollwitz and Beckmann. In 2009 the museum acquired two unique sets of hand-coloured woodcuts (38 sheets in all) by Nuremberg artists (c. 1530) representing mercenaries and Turks, including wonderful sheets by Erhard Schön, Sebald Beham and Niklas Stoer. French prints from all centuries are well represented (7000 sheets), especially late-nineteenth-century colour lithographs by artists such as Toulouse-Lautrec, Vuillard and Bonnard. The collection is particularly strong in engravings after designs by artists from the School of Fontainebleau, disseminating Italian mannerism throughout Europe. They include sheets by Antonio Fantuzzi, Léon Davent and Jean Mignon after Rosso Fiorentino, Primaticcio and Lucca Penni. The remarkable series of five 'Human Pyramid' etchings (1543) by Juste de Juste is just one of the highlights. Italian artists are also well represented (3000 sheets). Engravings by Pollaiuolo and Mantegna are among the earliest and finest. The collection contains the Carceri series by Piranesi, in both the second and the rare first edition, and also the complete etchings of Canaletto. The museum has an impressive core of prints by Picasso (nearly 400 sheets) and owns a copy of Dalí's *Les Chants de Maldoror*, comprising 44 etchings, acquired in 2000.

Although there are hardly any English drawings in the collection, there are approximately a thousand prints, particularly from the last three decades of the nineteenth century, including etchings by Whistler, and a strong selection of works by Pop artists such as Hockney, Blake, Kitaj, Paolozzi and Hamilton. In addition, there are works by their American Pop-art counterparts including Rauschenberg, Lichtenstein, Rosenquist and Warhol. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen's Print Room is unique in the Netherlands in terms of its international character and its limitation to prints of only the highest quality.



Philips Galle after Pieter Bruegel
Fides / Faith (from a series of Virtues)
 Engraving
 22.5 x 29.6 cm
 Circa 1559
 Bierens de Haan Collection

COLLECTORS' ALBUMS

Collectors' albums are a special feature of the collection, giving an impression of the personal taste of collectors and how they arranged their prints and drawings. Thus not only nineteenth- and twentieth-century collectors are represented, but also earlier ones. In the early 1930s Johan Bierens de Haan was able to purchase 29 large albums from the famous prints collection of Frederick August II, King of Saxony (1797-1854). In 2012 the museum acquired an album containing 328 prints from the collection of Thomas Herbert, 8th Earl of Pembroke (1656-1733), which is presented in the TEFAF Paper Section. The museum also has the two famous, gold-tooled, leather-bound albums, made in 1729 for the Florentine nobleman and collector Francesco Maria Niccolò Gabburri (1676-1742), containing 505 drawings on 401 sheets by Fra Bartolommeo (1473-1517), by far the largest collection of drawings by this master draughtsman of the High Renaissance. The albums were subsequently owned by famous collectors including Benjamin West, Sir Thomas Lawrence, King William II of the Netherlands, the Grand Dukes of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach and, lastly, Franz Koenigs. The drawings were removed from the albums in 1989-90 for conservational reasons, with the additional advantage that they can now be exhibited individually. A large selection of the figurative black and red chalk drawings will be shown in a large exhibition in the museum from 15 October 2016 to 15 January 2017. Ten paintings by Fra Bartolommeo, ranging from a small diptych from the Uffizi in Florence to two huge altar pieces from the Museo Nazionale di Villa Guinigi in Lucca - most of them leaving Italy for the first time - will be shown together with their preliminary drawings taken from the Gabburri albums.

THE PRINT ROOM

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen's Print Room is located at the heart of the museum, on the ground floor behind the main entrance. The new state-of-the-art depository (2008) designed by Marieke van Diemen is visible to the public through a huge glass wall. In the darkened Print Room Gallery selections of drawings and prints are on show on a quarterly basis. In the Digital Depository visitors can browse in the collection database, from which they can order individual works to be presented in a showcase.

THE PUBLIC ART DEPOT

The wealth and scope of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen's collection of 145,000 objects is due in large part to the ceaseless generosity of private collectors. Over the past 167 years more than 1700 individuals have given more than 30,000 artworks to the museum. A new Public Art Depot, adjacent to the museum complex in the Museumpark, designed by Winy Maas of MVRDV architects, is planned to open in 2018. The museum hopes to continue and extend its relationships with private collectors through this iconic building with its new concept of collection storage, realised in public-private partnership. In the Paper Section of TEFAF 2016, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen wishes to demonstrate its importance as a museum of and for collectors and invites the public to visit the collections and depositories in Rotterdam.

Print Room gallery and depository (2008)
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Public Art Depot, visualisation MVRDV
(expected 2018)

