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Fig. 1 Vilhelm Kyhn, *Rocks at Low Water*, 1860. Oil on canvas, 26.5 × 40.5 cm

NOT LONG **A** GO, my Dutch friend Gijsbert van der Wal published a book titled *Wijd open ogen. Stukken over kunst en kijkplezier* [Eyes Wide Open: Writings on Art and the Pleasure of Looking]. On the cover there is a lush detail of a painting by Willem Drost in the Musée du Louvre, *Bathsheba with King David's Letter* (1654). We see a billowing cotton shift, an arm half in, half out of the shift, a woman's skin that has never seen the sun, part of a breast and a nipple. Your eyes instantly begin to scan the image. Gijsbert asks artists what they want to say in their work, how it comes into being, and writes about it in a wholly engaging manner. This has taught him to look at old art with the same thoughts in mind—an approach that promotes clarity. He is a keen observer with an incisive way of describing what happens in the hands of the makers of paintings and prints. This is a great gift. The book is testimony to the unfailing pleasure of looking and an encouragement to experience it yourself. It is a shame that it only exists in Dutch. Above all, the book teaches you how artists can be fascinated by the guises in which the world appears to us. It is about going for walks in the evening and which artists saw a subject in nocturnes and how the landscape looks at night, about the picturesqueness of parts of the modern city and clichés about beauty. And at the heart of it all is wonder at artists' ability to make us look at the world in another, more penetrating way.

Among the oil sketches recently acquired by the Fondation Custodia, since the bequest of the collection of its former director Carlos van Hasselt (1929—2009) and his partner Andrzej Nieweglowski was accepted, there are quite a few of sun-drenched places in Italy. Frenchmen, Germans and Danes immersed themselves in these scenes with enthusiasm, but they also recorded the landscape in their own countries. A little while ago we acquired a small painting by Vilhelm Kyhn (1819—1903) dated

**FOCUS
USED
LOOK**





2. Peter Ilstedt, *The Little Convalescent*.
Mezzotint in colour on simulated Japanese paper, 226 × 307 mm



3. Vilhelm Kyhn, *Summer Landscape in Denmark*.
Oil on paper, mounted on card, 23.8 × 29 cm

22 June 1860 (fig. 1). This Danish artist visited Italy in 1850, but he made his name with his paintings of the Danish landscape. It was early summer, but it must have been a particularly dull

day when he planted his easel in the sand and painted part of the sea in the most limited of palettes. Reddish rocks rise out of the pale grey sea. Streaks suggest movement in the calm water. The water must have come right up to his feet, and we get the same sensation when we look at the canvas. There is no horizon, no sky—just grey water. Last summer I stood and gazed at the ocean for a long time in a quiet part of the Algarve in Portugal. It could hardly have been more different. Kyhn must have been attracted by the atmosphere of this spot and he caught it superbly. There are very few paintings of this type. No spectacle, no pitting of the insignificance of man against the natural world. Just virtually flat calm water and the same invitation to contemplation you feel when you actually stand on the shore. Minimal art, but from the nineteenth century.

On the back of the stretcher there is a sticker with the name and address of the later Danish artist Peter Ilstedt (1861—1933). Ilstedt was a painter, but he was also a printmaker who produced a series of extraordinary mezzotints. The Fondation Custodia has some sheets by him in its collection (fig. 2). He acquired the painting from the artist's estate in 1903 and must have enjoyed it as we do now. The world of the film director Ingmar Bergman is not far away—it is there in Kyhn's close-up of the coast and in Ilstedt's images of figures in an interior, existential in another way, which clearly relate to the work of his brother-in-law, Vilhelm Hammershøi. The Fondation Custodia also recently acquired a cheerful, summery landscape in Denmark by Kyhn (fig. 3). 'A day in the country,' you think, as the golden light lifts your spirits and gives you a sense of bliss. It is wonderful to see how compellingly Kyhn was able to do this, presenting us with ways of looking at the world.

Nature and art provide opportunities for reflection. The passing of a year and the arrival of an untrodden new year do the same. Make the most of that new year. So will we.

Ger Luijten, *Director*

AN exhibition of drawings by Peter Vos (1935—2010) will run from 7 March until 26 May 2013 in the Institut Néerlandais basement. Vos was one of the most talented draughtsmen of his generation in the Netherlands, extraordinarily well-read, imaginative, humorous, alternately disarming and confrontational in his choice of subjects. Peter Vos worked as an illustrator for literary journals and magazines and made drawings to accompany the work of distinguished authors and for fairy tales. The drawings chosen for the exhibition all revolve around the theme of metamorphosis. They come from numerous private collections, the holdings of Saida Lokhorst, the artist's widow, and from the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, which purchased a considerable selection of Peter Vos's drawings and sketchbooks in 2009. Vos illustrated many of the stories in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but he also drew very personal transformations and free interpretations of

Upcoming Exhibition: Peter Vos. *Metamorphoses*



Peter Vos, *The Metamorphosis of Antigone into a Stork*, 18 September 2003. Pencil, pen and black ink, brush and watercolour, 14.8 × 21 cm, Private collection, Utrecht

mythological tales. He was a bird-lover with a highly-developed talent for drawing birds. The metamorphoses he visualized dominate these stories, too, with humans turning into birds. Vos repeatedly and in an extraordinarily inventive manner pictured the astonishment of a figure who feels flight feathers growing in his arms as they change into wings and then, after various transformative steps, disappears into the sky in drawings that are part of a tradition going back to the Renaissance.

The exhibition is accompanied by a book with images of all the drawings, sketchbooks and prints on display, which are discussed by authors Eddy de Jongh and Jan Piet Filedt Kok. They analyse the drawings in the context of the iconographic tradition of illustrating metamorphoses,

and come to the conclusion that in a number of cases Vos was the first artist ever to picture a particular subject. There is also a French edition, translated by Edouard Vergnon (catalogue in French and in Dutch, 240 pp, 24 × 30 cm, 258 pl., hard-back).

The exhibition is an initiative of the Fondation Custodia, who will in future be looking more often at the artists of today (or very recently), for whom the art of the more distant past plays a significant role in their work. It will then move to the Rembrandt House in Amsterdam.



Peter Vos, *Recumbent Centaur*, 15 August 2001. Pen and black ink, brush and watercolour, 15.8 × 23.8 cm, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam



1. Andrea Meldolla, called Schiavone,
St Paul. Etching with plate tone,
220 × 107 mm

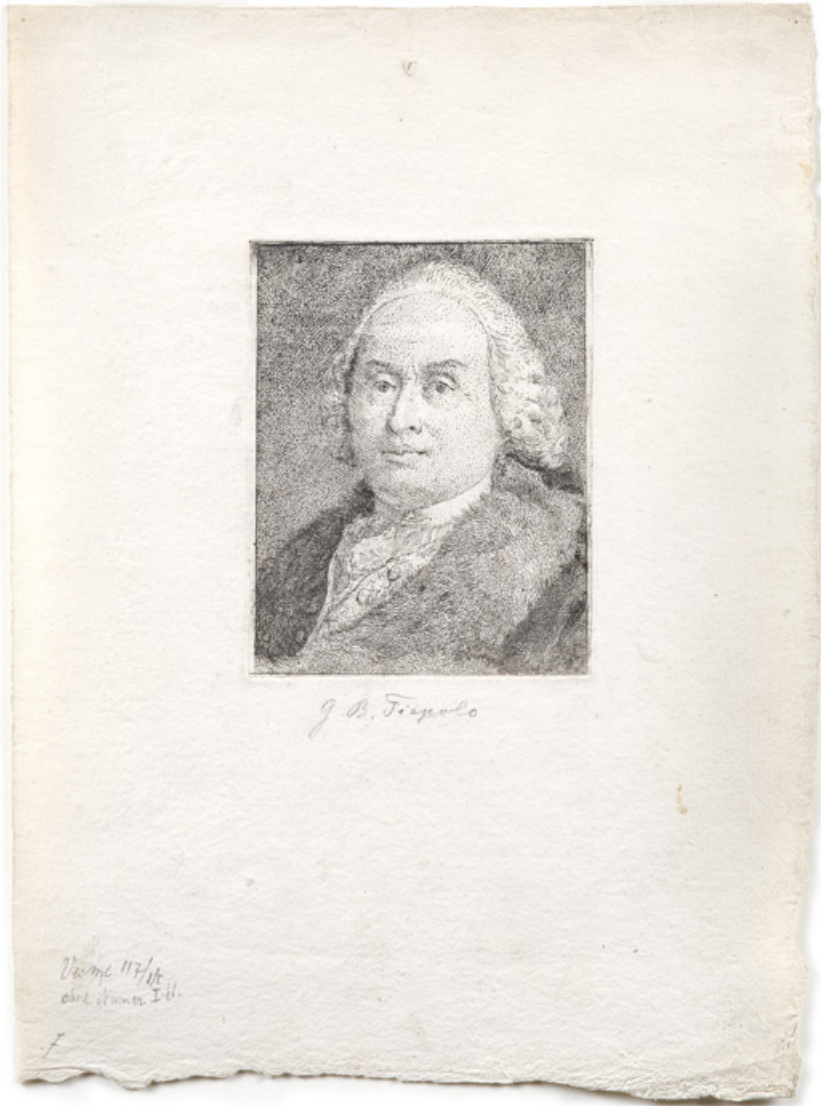
2. Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo
after Giovanni Battista Tiepolo,
Vecchio di Profilo con Cappello
(Old man in Profile with a Cap),
c. 1772/1773. Etching, 122 × 92 mm



Acquisitions: Venetian Prints

IT was recently decided that when making purchases for the Fondazione Custodia's print collection we should make a point of building up groups that relate to the drawings and artists' letters we have. This means broadening the focus on artists who are already represented. Recent additions to the Italian school include etchings by Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione and others, and a rare, atmospheric impression with greyish plate tone of Saint Paul by Andrea Meldolla,

called Schiavone (c. 1510—1563) (fig. 1). His printmaking was unmistakably influenced by Parmigianino's etchings and he experimented with ink on the press so that every one of his etchings has a wholly individual character. The Fondazione has also bought some superior etchings of study heads on large sheets of paper by Giandomenico Tiepolo after drawings by his father Giambattista (fig. 2), and we succeeded in acquiring Giandomenico's affectionate portrait



3. Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo,
Portrait of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo.
Etching, 118 × 95 mm



4. Giovanni Antonio Canal, Il Canaletto, *View of Mestre*,
c. 1740. Etching, first state, 299 × 427 mm

of his father in later life (fig. 3). Drawings by the Tiepolos are well represented in the collection, and the study heads in particular reveal echoes of the art of Rembrandt and other seventeenth-century artists. We also purchased two monumental

etchings—the *View of Mestre* (from the private collection of Ruth Bromberg, author of the catalogue of Canaletto’s graphic oeuvre) (fig. 4), and *Ale Porte del Dolo*, with a crowded passenger boat sailing upstream — by Canaletto, to whom

Frits Lugt did full justice in his drawing collection. The etchings of Marco Ricci, one of which has been acquired (fig. 5), are far more sparsely hatched and more drawing-like. The collection has a particularly fine section of artists' portraits,

so it was very gratifying to be able to add a series of Venetian likenesses of painters by Alessandro Longhi. Some of them derive from painted prototypes, but it is clear from others that several artists were happy to sit for Longhi (fig. 6).



5. Marco Ricci, *Mountain Landscape with Four Horses Led by Men*.
Etching, 250 × 350 mm



6. Alessandro Longhi, *Portrait of the painter Giambettino Cignaroli (1706–1770)*.
Etching, 198 × 145 mm



1. Daniel Chodowiecki,
letter to Wilhelm Gottlieb Becker,
16 April 1798

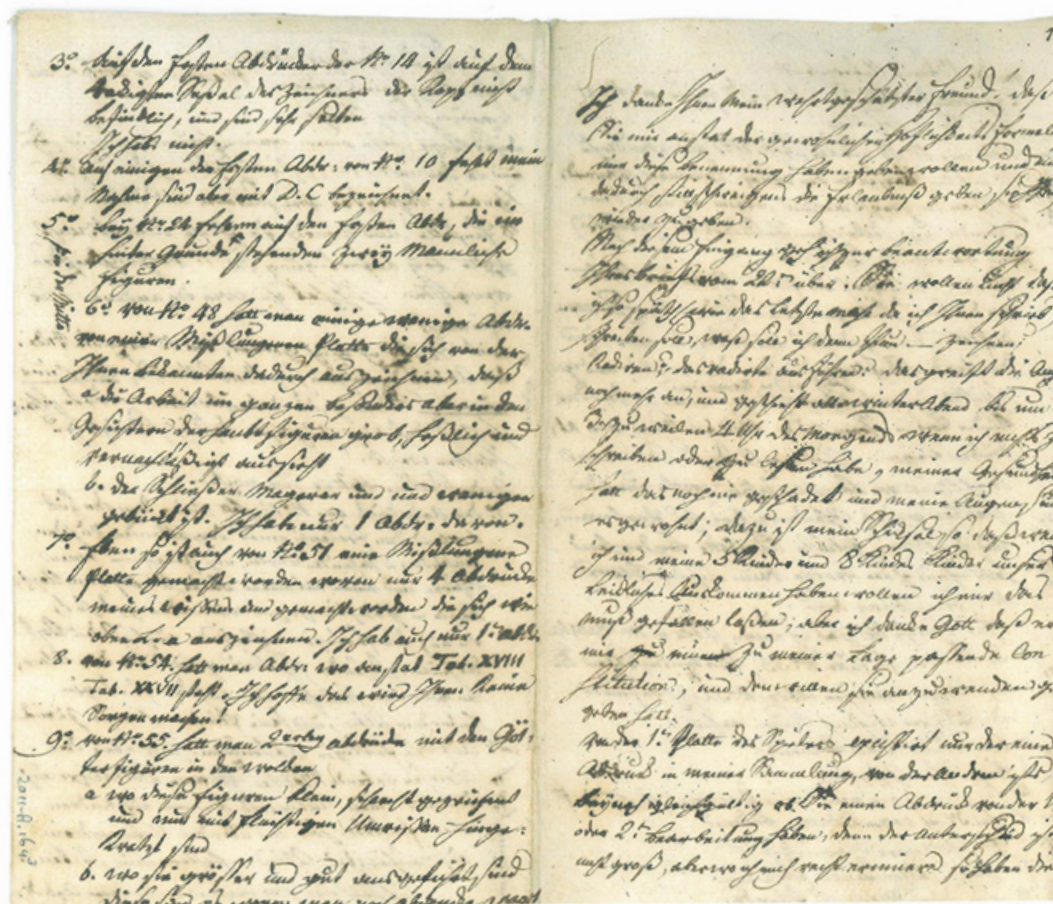
A letter from Daniel Chodowiecki

LETTERS from engravers are almost always worth reading. Unlike painters or sculptors, they have a surprising amount of news to impart—about the prints they are working on, their publication, changes and corrections, editions, shipments and payments, and about colleagues, designers, publishers, enthusiasts and collectors. They are a mine of information about the print world and one that has so far been little explored. The correspondence of Johann Georg Wille (1715—1808), who worked in Paris, has been published and it paints a fascinating picture of a cultural network spanning the whole of Europe.¹ The book includes the fine selection of Wille’s letters in the Fondation Custodia’s collection, but this has since been augmented; some new, previously unknown letters have been added, together with a very special document—the missing volume of Wille’s famous diary, which

was published in the nineteenth century.² The equally voluminous correspondence of Wille’s Berlin contemporary, the now much more famous Daniel Chodowiecki (1726—1801), is still largely awaiting editing. The Fondation also has a number of his letters, including one dated 1798 to Wilhelm Gottlieb Becker (1753—1813), which is illustrated with sketches of various

heads along the bottom (fig. 1). Becker, a professor and director of the Antikensammlungen—the museum of antiquities—in Dresden, was a great admirer of Chodowiecki and had even conceived a plan to write a commentary on the engraver’s extensive oeuvre. Chodowiecki’s unusually long letter to Becker, which was recently acquired for the collection (fig. 2), may be related

to this project, which in the end did not come to fruition. The letter, eight closely-written pages in Chodowiecki's fine handwriting, describes in detail the circumstances in which twenty of his prints were created, the states that the plates had undergone, their availability and their prices. But Becker was also a passionate collector of Chodowiecki's work and we know of similar letters to other enthusiasts.³ As the years passed, the artist was approached increasingly often by collectors who wanted to complete their oeuvres. Due to pressure of work Chodowiecki had to break off for four weeks halfway through writing the letter, which is dated 27 April 1793 at the end. Something of his work pattern can be inferred from his opening words, in which he gently ridicules Becker's concern for his well-being: 'You do not want me to sit up so late writing to you as the last time I wrote, but what, then, am I to do? Drawing, etching and printing my etchings is even worse for the eyes and I do it every winter evening till three, sometimes four in the morning... It has never hurt my eyes.' Such long days were essential because Chodowiecki, as he reports not without pride, provided for his five children and eight grandchildren. At the age of sixty-seven, he shouldered this burden as cheerfully as the good humoured Wille with his small family.

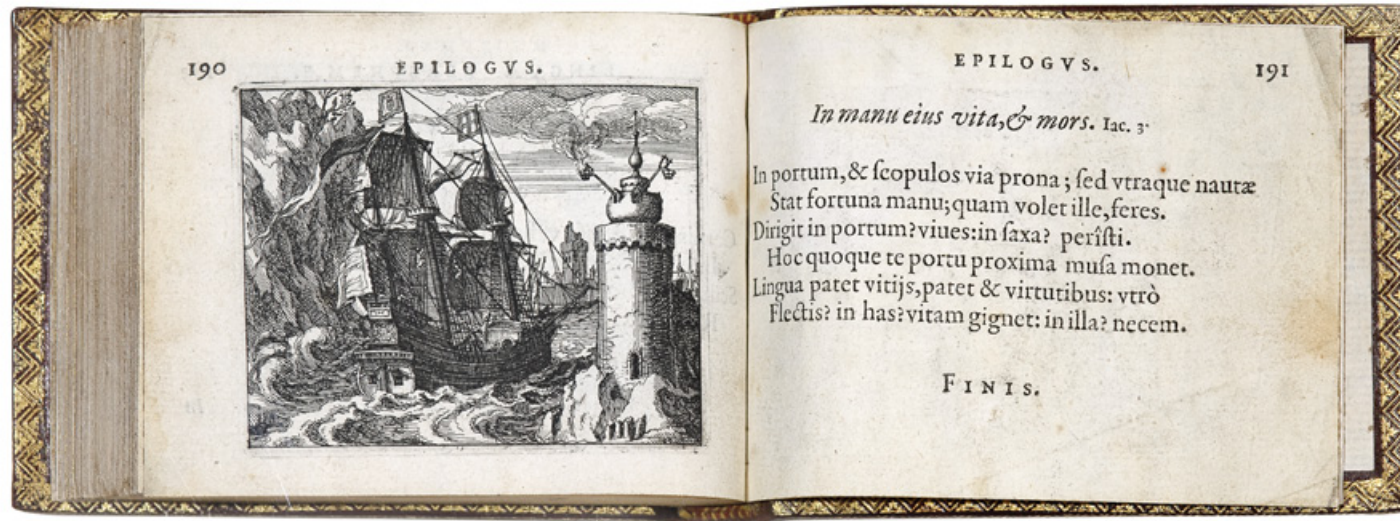


2. Daniel Chodowiecki, letter to Wilhelm Gottlieb Becker, Berlin, 27 April 1793

1. Johann Georg Wille (1715–1808). *Briefwechsel*, ed. Elisabeth Decultot, Michel Espagne & Michael Werner, Tübingen 1999.
 2. *Mémoires et journal de J.-G. Wille, graveur du roi*, ed. Georges Duplessis, 2 volumes, Paris 1857. On the recently surfaced volume of the diary see Peter Fuhring & Hans Buijs, 'Quelques relations de Wille en Hollande. Lecture préliminaire d'un volume du Journal récemment

apparu', in *Johann Georg Wille (1715–1808) et son milieu. Un réseau européen de l'art au XVIII^e siècle*, ed. Elisabeth Decultot, Michel Espagne & François-René Martin, Paris 2009, pp. 223–46.
 3. The Fondation Custodia owns several, including a likewise recently acquired letter to the Nuremberg publisher Johann Friedrich Frauenholz dated 15 November 1800.

From Nonsensical Chatter to Blasphemy and What to Do About It



THIS year the Fondation Custodia was able to add a fine copy of the first edition of the seventeenth-century emblem book *Linguae vitia et remedia* to its collection.

The little book, which fits in the palm of a hand, was published by Joannes Cnobbaert in Antwerp in 1631. The author, Antonius a Burgundia (1594—1657), the descendant of a bastard of the Duke of Burgundy, describes the evils and sins of the spoken word in forty-five mottoes and accompanying verses. In the second part, the correct use of speech is explained in the same number of emblems. Interestingly, this small pedagogic work on language and speech was admired chiefly for the magnificent prints after

Abraham van Diepenbeeck (1596—1675), originally a stained glass artist from Den Bosch, but known principally as a painter in Antwerp and praised as such by the poet Joost van den Vondel. More than ninety very varied *picturae*, engraved by Jacob Neefs and Andries Pauwels, illustrate the author's warnings and advice. Among the Flemish interiors, mythological scenes and seascapes, there are birds, snakes, an elephant and many other animals trying to instruct the reader—actually primarily the 'viewer'. For the ultimate goal, as we see on the last pages (fig. 1), is to arrive in the safe haven of Heaven. As the admonition in Proverbs 18:21 tells us, words have power over life and death. The tongue is like the

1. Antonius a Burgundia, *Linguae vitia et remedia*, Anvers 1631, pp. 190–191



helmsman of a ship. He can run you on to the rocks with death as the consequence, or ensure a fortunate end to life's journey. Knowing what one can and cannot say was not just crucial to the salvation of one's soul, it was also an important aspect of the everyday life of the respectable citizen.

Frits Lugt himself had already acquired the other emblem book by Antonius a Burgundia, *Mundi Lapis Lydius*, likewise with prints after Van Diepenbeeck. Custodia is now one of the few institutions in France to have both lit-

tle masterpieces of emblem art from the Low Countries on their shelves. This acquisition is also a valuable addition to the representation of prints to designs by Van Diepenbeeck in the collection. One of the highlights among them, the 1655 *Tableaux du Temple des Muses* by Michel de Marolles (1600—1681), was acquired in 2007, in an author's presentation copy, in the original binding and with a holograph dedication.

Our old books can be consulted by appointment.

2. Antonius a Burgundia, *Linguae vitia et remedia*, Antwerp 1631, pp. 102—103



1. Martin Monnickendam,
Self-Portrait in White Tie and Tails, 1929.
Black chalk, 179 × 107 mm

Gift:
Martin Monnickendam
(1874–1943)

THANKS to the efforts of the Amsterdam notary Ruud van Helden, Martin Monnickendam's legacy is well cared for (fig. 1). He assumed responsibility for finding a good home for the drawings, paintings and etchings of this Amsterdam artist, whose daughters—now dead—he had known well. He set up an association of friends, which published an oeuvre catalogue weighing several kilos in 2009. A large proportion of the drawings of importance to the topography of Amsterdam were given to the City Archives there. The Fondation Custodia was recently allowed to make a selection from the still very extensive collection. Monnickendam was a prolific draughtsman. Quality was the watchword when it came to making the choice, and special attention was focused on drawings the artist did in France. The wide-ranging selection consists of twenty-four works that are a valuable addition to the early twentieth-century drawings in the collection.



2. Martin Monnickendam, *View of Pont-Neuf, Paris*, 1896.
Pen and brown ink, watercolour, 310 × 447 mm

In 1895 Monnickendam went to Paris, where he shared a studio with the draughtsman and printmaker Pieter Dupont (1870—1911). As well as topographical studies and countless sketches he made finished drawings, among them a striking view of Pont-Neuf with a superb effect of bright sunlight (fig. 2). Eighteen months later he went back to Amsterdam, where he pursued a career as a painter of elaborate works in often exuberant colours. He rediscovered himself in his drawings,



3. Martin Monnickendam, *View of the Woods in Markelo*, 1928. Black chalk, 267 × 380 mm

particularly his carefully observed landscapes (fig. 3). He returned to France a few times—in 1926, for instance, he took a trip to Normandy and Brittany. Later in his life Italy was to become an important destination. He stayed there five times between 1929 and 1938. In 1931 he went by way of the South of France, producing a series

of surprisingly free watercolours in Vence. The drawings Monnickendam made on his travels are often dominated by the architecture and picturesque skylines. The watercolours from Vence must have been made when he was in a relaxed mood; they have something uninhibited about them and are enchantingly poetic (fig. 4).



4. Martin Monnickendam, *Garden in Vence*, 1931. Coloured chalk and watercolour, 385 × 262 mm



A new face at the Fondation

IN October this year, Lukas Nonner joined the Fondation Custodia as an assistant curator. Lukas studied art history at the University of Amsterdam where he graduated with a Master's *cum laude* after writing a thesis on the drawing collection of the Museum Catharijneconvent in Utrecht. For this previously unstudied collection, Lukas established a catalogue raisonné including various attributions for a number of Italian and Dutch pieces. His specialisation in Old Master drawing made him an obvious choice as a new member of the Frits Lugt Collection team. The internships that he has followed at the Rijksmuseum and at Sotheby's have also prepared him well for the tasks awaiting him at the Fondation Custodia.

Lukas is in charge of the study room during the hours it is open to the public (mornings from 10 am to 1 pm). The rest of the time, he brings precious aid to all conservation activities for the prestigious collection (acquisitions, exhibitions, research...).

The position held by Lukas Nonner was created in 2010 to meet growing demand from persons wishing to study works or documents conserved at the Fondation Custodia. During Frits Lugt's lifetime, it was the art collector himself who would receive visitors and show them around. Subsequently, it was the Fondation's cu-



rators who would welcome researchers and prepare their visits. However, the online launch, in 2000, of part of the autograph collection brought the wealth of the Fondation's contents to the attention of many art historians. A swell in requests for study appointments, compounded by increasing conservation activities, necessitated the appointment of a staff member dedicated to visitors.

Lukas Nonner replaces Sarah Van Ooteghem who held the position for one and a half years before being appointed scientific assistant at the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels, where she is working on a research project aiming to establish a catalogue raisonné of its Old Master drawing collection.

Sarah Van Ooteghem and Lukas Nonner in the drawing reserve area

A Conversation with Carlo James

FOR thirty-two years, from 1973 until he retired in 2005, the restorer Carlo James was responsible for taking care of the material condition of the Fondation Custodia's drawings and prints. No one else has left such a mark on the look of this part of the collection. Especially the drawings' coloured mounts often come as a surprise to visitors to the Hôtel Turgot and to the exhibitions

staged by the Fondation. Browsing through the albums in which the nucleus of the collection is still kept, one sees that all the sheets have their own distinctive mounts, each with a different, specially chosen decoration in various shades (fig. 1). It is a form of presentation perfected by Carlo James.

James came into the profession by chance. In 1963 he moved from Amsterdam to Paris to study mathematics, and took drawing lessons on the side from Joseph Texeira de Mattos (1892—1971). His artistic aspirations soon gained the upper hand. In 1967 he went to Florence for a month to work as a volunteer on the rescue operations for the libraries after the disastrous flood of the previous year. He ended up staying for five years. He gained his diploma in the graphic arts at the Istituto Statale d'Arte, but at

least as important was his meeting with Sergio Boni, head of the Uffizi's prints and drawings conservation workshop, who spent three years initiating him into the mysteries of paper restoration. In 1973 James returned to Paris, this time as the Fondation Custodia's conservator.¹ One of his increasingly rare visits to the French capital provided an opportunity to look back on his work in and on the collection.



¹ For a more extensive biography, and a list of James's publications, see Matteo Panzeri & Cinzia Gimondi (eds.), *Amplius vetusta servare*, Il Prato 2006, pp. 261–267.

1. Mount by Carlo James for Rembrandt van Rijn, *The mill on the bulwerk « Het Blauwhoofd » in Amsterdam*



How did you come to join the Fondation Custodia? Carlos van Hasselt, the successor of Frits Lugt at the head of the Fondation, was looking for a restorer to replace Peter Poldervaart, who had returned to Amsterdam to take charge of the Rijksprentenkabinet restoration department. He turned to his friend Fernandina Bramanti-Nieuwenhuis, Director of the Istituto Universitario Olandese di Storia dell'Arte in Florence. I happened to be staying at her place at the time while working on the conservation of her husband's prints, and she introduced me to

Van Hasselt. We ended up coming to an agreement on my contract: I insisted on working six months per year full time in order to be able to continue devoting myself to my own art projects on which I worked far from Paris, on the Larzac plateau. But I was already long familiar with the Fondation: during my first years of study in Paris, I had been received there by Frits Lugt himself, who showed some interest in me and kindly presented his drawings to me!

In what state did you find the collection and what did your work consist in?

At first I dedicated myself consistently to the prints, many of which were still mounted on acidic cardboard and conserved in black boxes or portfolios of inadequate quality. For the mounting, my predecessor had already introduced Van Gelder cardboard, used by the Rijksprentenkabinet. Before proceeding to make restorations, I secured the collection by mounting the prints in false margins kept in place by Japanese-paper bands. As for the drawings, I initially turned my attention to them when preparing for exhibitions. Following the house tradition, drawings were always presented in antique frames. Carlos van Hasselt and myself chose the frames together, then the colours and decorations suitable for the mounts. The first successful exhibition from this viewpoint was the one on Venetian drawings at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, in 1981. Work conditions were often restrictive. For the exhibitions, I worked alone most of the time on the restora-

tion of works and frames, mounting, framing, hanging, lighting...

Van Hasselt's great taste and expertise in this area enabled me to develop a system of mounts decorated according to the spirit of the tradition of the great collectors of the past without being pastiches of antique mounts. When Van Hasselt expressed a desire to change the system for storing drawings in favour of the one used in most museums, that of uniform boxes and standardised mounting without decorations, I did not agree. The most precious part of the collection was housed in old albums — a collection in themselves — and thanks to this system, it still included many historical collectors' mounts. So I ordered the purchase of thin Van Gelder cardboard, on which I pasted a sheet of watercoloured Ingres laid paper. This fine cardboard, used for the window and for the backing board, allowed me to keep down the thickness of mounts inside albums. I used two types of dépassant or false margin: one fixed temporarily, consisting of a band of Japanese paper attached to the verso of the work, that can be removed without humidity, and one fixed permanently when the drawing has undergone a complete restoration (fig. 2). This policy ended up being adopted and was perpetuated under the directorship of Mária van Berge-Gerbaud, the successor of Van Hasselt.



2. Mount of an etching by Rembrandt van Rijn showing the *dépassant* or false margin

Did you have a workshop at this stage?

Yes, and it was even the first one to exist in France for a graphic arts collection. But at the start, it was quite primitive. It was only around the 1980s that a book press was acquired — to stick paper onto cardboard — then a bevel-cutting machine and a paper cutter for cardboard. Conditions improved when the workshop was renovated in 2000 by Axel Mény who took into consideration all of my opinions and desires.

You also taught and published works at the same time...

Carlos van Hasselt participated in the jury selecting candidates for the Institut Français de Restauration des Œuvres d'Art (IFROA), now part of the Institut National du Patrimoine (INP), ever since the Graphic Arts Department was launched in 1979. He put my name forward as a teacher. This is how I came to be part of the first generation of graphic arts conservation teachers in France. I taught at the INP until 2011 (with a break between 1986 and 1995), taking care to transmit to my pupils my professional ethics and a careful approach to conservation treatments. From the 1970s onwards, a new vision of conservation and restoration emerged, based on scientific research and theoretical study, which I integrated into my methods. In 1980, during the first Institute of Paper Conservation Conference, held in Cambridge, I presented a paper on conservation and mounting policy at the Fondation Custodia². Other conferences and publications followed as my research progressed. In 1986, I began drafting, in collabora-

tion with a few colleagues — in fact former pupils of mine —, my major work: a manual on the preservation and conservation of prints and drawings, published in Italian (*Manuale per la conservazione e il restauro di disegni e stampe antichi*, Florence, Leo Olschki, 1991), then in English (*Old Master Prints and Drawings. A Guide to Preservation and Conservation*, Amsterdam University Press, 1997). More recently, *Visual Identification and Analysis of Old Master Drawing Techniques* (Florence, Leo Olschki, 2010) presents the research I have been carrying out for years on works at the Fondation and other institutions.

We add that in 2005, on the occasion of Carlo James' retirement, the Fondation Custodia and the Institut National du Patrimoine jointly organised a symposium, the contributions of which were published in 2008 (*Les Arts graphiques : restauration/recherche. Journée d'études en l'honneur de Carlo James*, Paris, Fondation Custodia, 2008).

2. Carlo James, 'Methods of mounting and storage at the Fondation Custodia, Institut Néerlandais, Paris', in

Abstracts and Preprints of the International Conference on the Conservation of Library and Archive Materials and the Graphic Arts, London, 1980, pp. 141–143.

An intern at the conservation workshop

AFTER my art history and museology studies in Lille — a French city where Dutch art is so present at the Museum of Fine Arts and in university teaching —, finishing with a Master's to prepare me for the competitive examination for conservators, I finally joined the department of conservators at the Institut National du Patrimoine (French National Institute of Cultural Heritage). This profession requiring solid training in history, scientific knowledge and technical knowhow seduced me by marrying my passion for art history, my interest in chemistry, a rare intimate relationship with the artwork, a penchant for precise gestures and contact with materials, and an element of research that is too often unacknowledged but yet is so utterly important and stimulating.

I already knew the Fondation Custodia from the works it lends, that I had admired at various exhibitions. Its involvement in the training of pupils in the Graphic Arts Department of the INP



and my meeting Corinne Letessier, who teaches there, led to me stepping through the doors of its beautiful conservation workshop where I was welcomed — very warmly I am keen to stress — for my third-year internship. Under supervision, I participated in the daily work of restoration, preventive conservation, and mounting, particularly for works newly acquired by the Fondation, such as the drawings by Cornelis Schut. My work also led me to intervene on prints and artists' letters; this was how I came to mount a remarkable autograph document by Manet illustrated with his own watercolour drawings. As the first INP intern to be hosted by the Fonda-

tion Custodia conservation workshop, I heartily advise pupils in the years below me to come and receive training here if they ever obtain such an opportunity, so that they might also benefit from the privileged working conditions offered to me. I myself hope to be able to prolong this happy experience of contact with Dutch works next year by carrying out my fourth-year internship overseas, as scheduled on the INP programme, at the Rijksmuseum. I also like to imagine that my end-of-study subject is possibly conserved in the Fondation Custodia's reserves or will shortly be acquired by the Fondation.

Céline Delattre, *student at the Institut National du Patrimoine*

Fig. 1



The colours of chiaroscuro

IN September 2012, Nancy Ash, an art conservator from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, spent two days in the study room at the Fondation Custodia, examining chiaroscuro prints in the collection. This visit was one of several paid by Ms. Ash to institutions holding this very distinctive type of woodcut, her “tour” taking place in the context of preparations for an exhibition of sixteenth-century Italian chiaroscuro woodcuts to be presented at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2016.



Fig. 2

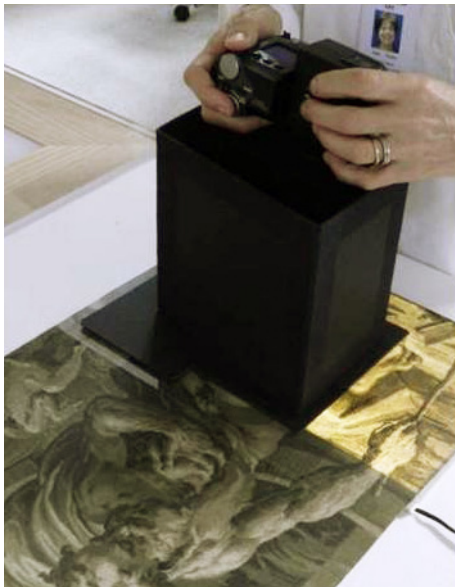


Fig. 4

With the goal of advancing knowledge about these works, Nancy Ash — along with curatorial, conservation and scientist colleagues collaborating on this project from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Library of Congress — is studying chiaroscuro prints to deepen understanding of their printing techniques (the order in which different wood blocks were applied to paper and with how much pressure; the character of the inks used, namely chemical composition and the degree of ink penetration into the paper; colour variations in individual blocks used for different print “editions”). To analyse the ink colours, Nancy Ash uses Munsell Soil Colour System charts (fig. 1) and a small handheld spectrophotometer, an instrument that can measure the light reflected from an ink (fig.2). This technique allows all the colours used by the artists to be compared, named and recorded systematically for the first time, as well as helping to establish the chronology of different printings of the woodblocks.

This research on printing techniques and inks is accompanied by a study of watermarks in the papers used for the prints. For this type of analysis, Nancy Ash places a thin light sheet beneath the print (fig. 3), then positions a three-dimensional frame to reduce ambient light on the paper, thus allowing the watermarks to be photographed with greater precision (fig. 4 and 5).



Fig. 3



Fig. 5 Photograph by Nancy Ash of the watermark in *Christ Healing the Lepers* by Giuseppe Nicolò Vicentino (Fondation Custodia, Frits Lugt Collection)

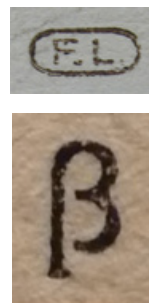
Fig. 2–5 © Philadelphia Museum of Art

COLLECTORS' MARKS

how to stamp a mark

ON 22 August 1967, Frits Lugt (L.1028) → wrote a letter to the collector Curtis O. Baer (L.3366) → offering a few tips on the latter's future collector's mark, namely on its fabrication ("there must be careful cutters in brass in New York or Boston"), the ink to use ("there exists an oilless ink which secures net printing and which avoid stains"), and the positioning of the mark ("I am convinced that a man like you will put the mark on the back of the prints"). Like the founder of the Fondation Custodia, we would like to share a few key recommendations for the delicate operation of stamping a mark on paper, as we regularly receive questions on this issue.

First of all, it is preferable to have a stamp made in metal. As Lugt often advised, the stamp should remain discreet, ideally being small in size. It is necessary to use an ink that is not water-soluble; for example an ink suitable for printing prints or else the ultra-fluid ink used in franking machines produced by the Herbin-Sueur company recommended by the Bibliothèque nationale de France. Rubber stamps and stamping-pad inks are to be avoided at all costs. The ink should be uniformly distributed over the embossed sections of the stamp, with the stamp requiring cleaning before and after every usage. The spot where the mark is to be placed should be carefully selected, preferably on the verso of the work. In order for the mark to be printed correctly, the handle of the stamp should be held as indicated on the photograph, and the



inked stamp firmly pressed on the chosen spot by lightly shifting the weight of the hand from left to right and back and forth ↓. *Do not apply too much pressure*, otherwise the stamp risks embossing the work. As such, pressure should be adapted to the thickness of the paper, and adequate support should be provided beneath the work by placing it on a cardboard that is neither too hard nor too soft. Some recommend the application of blotting paper after the operation on the stamped zone. It goes without saying that we strongly advise you to carry out a few trial runs on blank paper before tackling the print or drawing itself. Frits Lugt also reassured Curtis O. Baer on the originality of the form that he chose for his mark. The characteristics of each mark adopted by collectors are easy to check today on www.marquesdecollections.fr.



Loan: Indian miniatures in Rome and Paris

ON 15 October eighteen Indian miniatures left the Fondazione Custodia and were flown to Rome. They were destined for the Palazzo Sciarra, which is staging an exhibition devoted to Akbar (1542–1605), one of the very earliest and most important Mughal emperors. *Akbar. Il grande imperatore dell'India* is organized by the Fondazione Roma and runs from 22 October 2012 to 3 February 2013.

Akbar was a great patron of the arts. He encouraged the development of the imperial studios and commissioned many illustrated manuscripts. Portraiture also flourished. This portrait of Zain Khan Koka (1542–1601), the son of Akbar's wet nurse and hence his foster brother is a magnificent example (fig. 1). It is one of the earliest equestrian portraits in India, a type that was later to become very popular at the Mughal court.

Emperor Akbar, himself a Muslim, was very tolerant when it came to other religions such as Hinduism and Christianity, and part of the exhibition is consequently devoted to the subject of religion. This section includes a number of loans from the Fondazione Custodia, for the Frits Lugt Collection owns numerous miniatures reflecting the presence and influence of Europeans in India. The first European missionaries visited Akbar's court in 1580. They brought with them



a number of religious prints that aroused the emperor's interest, who had them copied. This miniature (fig. 2) of a winged man was made after a small engraving of St Luke by the German artist Hans Sebald Beham (1500–1550). The ox, Luke's symbol, was replaced with two small dogs.

As well as the Fondazione Custodia's important loan to the exhibition in Rome, there are presently another six Indian miniatures from the collection on display in the Institut du monde arabe in Paris, which is staging an exhibition on



1. Mughal school, around 1590–1600, *Zain Khan Koka on Horseback*. Gouache, heightened with gold, 159 × 114 mm (painting), 214 × 155 mm (album sheet)

2. Mughal school, around 1580–1585, *Winged Man with two Dogs in a Landscape*. Gouache, heightened with gold, 159 × 114 mm (painting), 214 × 155 mm (album sheet)

the *Thousand and One Nights* (27 November 2012 to 28 April 2013). It is showing many works of art and manuscripts that illustrate the history of this literary masterpiece—a number of the stories in it have an Indian origin. The Fondazione Custodia's Indian miniatures evoke the fairy-tale world of a *Thousand and One Nights*—a beautiful palace garden painted in pastel shades; an elaborately decorated royal barge at sea and a man who is saved from sea monsters in the nick of time—images that still capture the imagination.

Miniature enigmas

To conclude a two-day symposium organised by Nathalie Lemoine-Bouchard, the Fondation Custodia welcomed, on 12 October, around twenty portrait miniature specialists. Indeed, the Frits Lugt collection contains eighty or so small-format portraits, a widespread genre in England, France, then Europe between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Often holding sentimental value when exchanged between lovers or relatives, these portraits also served as diplomatic gifts made from one sovereign to another.

About thirty portrait miniatures from the collection were exposed to the gazes of these international experts, in the hope of resolving certain problems regarding attribution and identification. For example, we were curious to find out the identity of this mysterious woman depicted on the portrait by Wilhelm August Christian Abel (1748—after 1803). The question still remains unanswered...

A catalogue of the Fondation Custodia's portrait miniatures is currently being prepared by Karen Schaffers, and scheduled to be published in 2014.



W.A.C. Abel, *Portrait of an Anonymous Woman*, around 1800. Watercolour and gouache on vellum, 66 × 55 mm, 2011 acquisition

Autour des Van Loo book launch

On 19 November, the salon of the Hôtel Turgot was the stage for an evening with eighteenth-century overtones. To mark the launch of the book *Autour des Van Loo : Peinture, commerce des tissus et espionnage en Europe, 1250–1830*, edited by Christine Rolland and published by Publications des Universités de Rouen et du Havre, three speakers (Christine Rolland, Leslie Miller and Christophe Henry) presented the trajectory of the Van Loo dynasty, the cultural and political networks in which they participated, as well as their activities in the textile domain. This enjoyable programme was interspersed with musical interludes featuring the harpsichord, highly appreciated by the many visitors in attendance.

Edited by Christine Rolland
Autour des Van Loo
Publications des universités de Rouen
et du Havre, 2012
398 pp.; repr. in colour; hard-back
ISBN 978 2 87775 501 6





*'The library is indispensable to
scholarship, serious study
and business'*

Portrait of a library user.

AFTER a university career and experience in the art trade in New York and elsewhere, Nathalie Motte Masselink embarked on her great adventure: she started her own gallery.

'The most important thing for me is contact with the work of art. That's where it all starts. It was crucial to Frits Lugt, too. At the Ecole du Louvre we were fortunate enough to study amidst that magnificent collection. In the trade, too, everything revolves around the work itself. And the client, of course. When I finished writing my dissertation at the Sorbonne, I realized that being an art dealer would allow me to work with drawings and artworks every day. At the very first exhibition I staged—in my home at that point—I sold four sheets to the Metropolitan. I now have a gallery in Rue Jacob in Paris. We are currently working on what has become our traditional spring exhibition during the Salon du Dessin.

'The first time I see a drawing I often have an idea about the school and the period. The next step is to test this by comparison and close examination. The aim, of course, is attribution. Fortunately, the library of what is one of the finest private collections of drawings in the world is open to everyone. If I'm working on an early nineteenth-century German sheet, for instance, I can count on the staff bringing the most important, relevant catalogues to me in the reading room. It really helps me to work efficiently.'

Library opening hours:

Mon: 1.00 — 9.00 p.m.

Tue — Fri: 1.00 — 7.00 p.m.

tel : 0033 (0)1 53 59 12 43

→ [Online catalogue](#)

→ [Galerie Nathalie Motte Masselink](#)

The Fondation Custodia in Paris is a unique, accessible and still growing art collection, created by the extraordinary Dutch collector Frits Lugt. It consists of more than 100.000 works of art: mainly drawings, prints, artists' letters and paintings. The Fondation Custodia is also renowned for its extensive publications and research as well as its exhibitions, which are generally staged in the adjacent Institut Néerlandais. If you wish to study the collection and its library, you will find more information on our website: www.fondationcustodia.fr At regular intervals there are guided tours of the salons in the eighteenth-century Hôtel Turgot where the paintings, antique furniture and other works of art in the Frits Lugt Collection are displayed. The guided tour, which takes about an hour, is free of charge.

Guided tours in 2013 :

Saturday 19 January at 3 p.m. (*fully booked*)

Saturday 16 February at 3 p.m. (*fully booked*)

Saturday 23 March at 3 p.m.

Saturday 20 April at 3 p.m.

Reservation (*essential*):

coll.lugt@fondationcustodia.fr

The Fondation Custodia as well as the library

will be closed to visitors from 24 December to 2 January.

Our entire staff wishes you happy holidays.

Fondation Custodia / Collection Frits Lugt

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