

Recent acquisitions at Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2008–20)



IT HAS BEEN NEARLY two decades since the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen contributed an acquisitions supplement to *The Burlington Magazine*. The opening in November 2021 of our new, publicly accessible storage facility, Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen, pictured above, provides an excellent occasion to reflect on acquisitions we have made over approximately the past ten years.

The Depot, sited directly adjacent to the museum, will make the collection accessible on many different levels during the nine years from 2019 that the museum will remain closed for major renovations and expansion. Visitors will be able to wander freely through the Depot building and look into the storage spaces through large windows, or they may opt for a guided tour of the storage compartments. They will be able to learn more about the collection in dedicated areas with touch screens next to the storage spaces or consult a special smartphone app

Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen, designed by Winy Maas, MVRDV Architects. (Photograph Ossip van Duivenbode).

that is connected to our collection registration system, The Museum System (TMS). Collections that, for conservation reasons, are normally less accessible will be made available in a variety of ways: digitally and through study rooms, where works on paper and films and videos may be consulted in the original.

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen's holdings number more than 152,000 objects, ranging from old-master paintings and sculpture to decorative arts and design and a substantial collection of works on paper spanning seven centuries from medieval to modern and contemporary art. Although our previous supplement in *The Burlington Magazine*, in 1992, was dedicated exclusively to old-master paintings acquired in

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the years 1988–91, the Boijmans collection – which we often describe as expressing unity in multiplicity – specifically emphasises crossing disciplinary boundaries and making connections between art and design and between the art of the past and that of the present. We have therefore selected recent acquisitions from all periods and disciplines.

Since the museum opened in 1849, two years after Frans Jacob Otto Boijmans bequeathed his art collection to the city of Rotterdam, it has maintained close connections with private collectors, even augmenting its name in 1958 following the purchase of the vast collection of the late Daniel George van Beuningen. It is partly through the museum's enduring bond with collectors and partly through the expertise and interests of successive generations of curators and directors – the incumbent director, Sjarel Ex, has been at the helm since 2004 – that the museum has managed to acquire numerous exciting works of art that amplify the connections and associations between different aspects of the collection.

In the lead-up to the opening of the Depot and with the museum closed for refurbishment, we have published a pocketbook with highlights

from the collection, *Best of Boijmans*, a book devoted to the new Depot, which will be available at the grand opening, alongside this beautiful supplement for *The Burlington Magazine*.

The authors of the individual entries, who are identified by their initials, are Peter van der Coelen, curator of prints and drawings [PvdC]; Alexandra van Dongen, curator of historical design [AvD]; Albert Elen, senior curator of drawings and prints [AE]; Sjarel Ex, Director [SE]; Saskia van Kampen-Prein, curator of modern and contemporary art [SvKP]; Annemartine van Kesteren, curator of contemporary design [AvK]; Sandra Kisters, head of collections and research [SK]; Francesco Stocchi, curator of modern and contemporary art [FS]; Ruben Suykerbuyk, curator of old-master paintings and sculptures [RS]; and Mienke Simon Thomas, senior curator of applied arts and design [MST]

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MUSEUM BOIJMANS VAN BEUNINGEN, ROTTERDAM

1. *Infinity Mirror Room – Phalli's Field (Floor Show)*, by Yayoi Kusama (b.1929). 1965 [1998]. Textile, MDF and mirror, 311 by 476 by 476.5 cm.

Purchased with the support of the Willem van Rede Foundation, Mondriaan Fund and the BankGiro Lottery, 2010; inv. no. BEK 1859 a-y (MK).

Kusama's magnificent installation is the 1998 iteration of a work that the artist presented at the Castellane Gallery, New York, in 1965. Although she had already worked with the concept of infinity for more than a decade, this was Kusama's first fully immersive environment. Whereas the 1965 installation was presented in an octagonal space with a walkthrough path, the 1998 variant is contained in a square room with a single door that serves as both entrance and exit. It was the first of the iconic series of square infinity mirror rooms for which Kusama is now famous. Since its acquisition in 2010 the installation has been on view almost continuously and is a firm favourite among visitors, though they are no longer allowed to lie down on the field of fabric phalli as Kusama herself used to do. [SK]



2. *Collector's Cabinet*, by Herman Doomer (1595–1650?). c.1640–50. Oak with ebony veneer, pressed and coloured whalebone, ivory, silver, various woods and mirror, 168 by 105 by 54 cm.

Purchased with the support of the Rembrandt Association and the Stichting Bevordering van Volkskracht, 2009; inv. no. Div. M 90 a-b (KN&V).

In 2009 the museum was alerted to the availability of this unique collector's cabinet, for which a German dealer sought a buyer. The ebony-veneered cabinet was made in Amsterdam by Herman Doomer, originally from Germany. When its doors are open the somewhat simple-looking cabinet exhibits a manner of decoration that is as surprising as it is refined. The black panels that are revealed, some of which are the facings of drawers and some of which conceal a central door that reveals yet more drawers, bear a delicate vine motif executed in whalebone. Doomer conceived the process of pressing and colouring this material – widely available because of the booming whaling industry – in a metal mould and applied for a patent for it in 1641. Although Doomer employed the whalebone as an inexpensive substitute for costly ebony, the material turns out to have a charm all of its own: the batch-produced ornaments are razor sharp, highly detailed and completely identical. [MST]

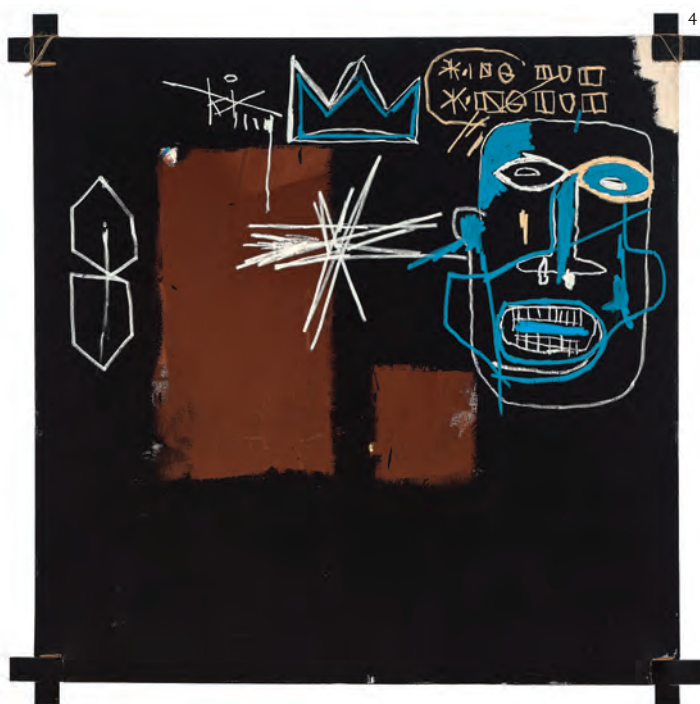




3 and 4. *Kings of Egypt II* and *Kings of Egypt III*, by Jean Michel Basquiat (1960–88). 1982. Oil on canvas, 183,5 by 183,5 cm each.

Loan from the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation, gift of Hans Sonnenberg, 2012; inv. no. 3686 (MK) and 3687 (MK).

In 1982 the Museum's former Director Wim Beeren travelled to New York to visit the legendary Annina Nosei Gallery on Prince Street in SoHo, accompanied by the Rotterdam-based gallerist and entrepreneur Hans Sonnenberg. The museum was interested in acquiring works by high-profile graffiti artists such as Basquiat, Blade, Keith Haring and Rammellzee. Sonnenberg had been showing emerging artists on a regular basis in his Galerie Delta since the early 1960s. In early March 1982 Beeren acquired a Basquiat painting and four drawings for \$7,040 after a twenty per cent museum discount. Sonnenberg bought five works by Basquiat, including two versions of *Kings of Egypt*, to be shown at his gallery in December of that year in what would be Basquiat's first solo exhibition in the Netherlands. The paintings did not find buyers and when the market finally caught up with him, Sonnenberg decided to keep these two works for himself with the intention of ultimately gifting them to the museum. We honour Hans Sonnenberg, who died in 2017, among the more than seventeen hundred patrons of the museum since 1849. [SE]



5. *D'red Dwarf B'lack Hole*, by Jim Shaw (b.1952). 2010. Acrylic on muslin, and polystyrene, 500 by 1482 cm.

Purchased with the support of the Rembrandt Association (through the Titus Fund) and the BankGiro Lottery, 2013; inv. no. 3744 a-g (MK).

'I'd like to be, under the sea, in an octopus's garden in the shade'. Do you hear these lyrics by Ringo Starr while looking at this monumental painting by Jim Shaw? That is no coincidence. Shaw is a West Coast synaesthetic artist, musician, writer and collector of Outsider art who focuses on the underbelly of the American Dream and his country's film and pop culture history. Around 2004 he discovered a cache of monumental painted backdrops used in early Hollywood productions in a second-hand shop in Los Angeles; he recognised them as the ideal base for new paintings that would represent his mystical worldview. A group of these new works was featured in the exhibition *XXXL Painting* held in 2013 in an old submarine wharf in Rotterdam's docklands, which the Boijmans Museum used as a temporary exhibition space. The museum acquired this painting and several others as the starting point for a growing collection of works by this inexhaustible artist, whose themes and obsessions can be related to those of other artists well represented in our collection, such as Matthew Barney, Robert Gober, Mike Kelley, Paul McCarthy, Bruce Nauman and Cindy Sherman. [SE]





6. Album with 328 prints compiled by Thomas Herbert, 8th Earl of Pembroke (1656–1733). c.1683–1733. Bound in gold-tooled red morocco, 45.5 by 37.5 by 8.5 cm. Purchased with the support of the Lucas van Leyden Foundation, 2012; inv. no.L 2012/3 (PK). This album comes from one of the oldest known English print collections, assembled in the seventeenth century by the Earls of Pembroke at Wilton House, near Salisbury. The majority of the prints were collected by the 5th Earl, Philip Herbert (1621–69), but it was his son Thomas who arranged the collection into fourteen beautifully bound albums. They were sold at Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge in 1917 and were acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Library of Congress, Washington, and other collections. Many of the albums were taken apart, but this volume, entitled *Gravers by Pictures – Not Italian*, containing works by English, French, German and especially Dutch printmakers, remained intact. [PvdC]

7. *Mercenaries and Turks*, by Sebald Beham (1500–50), Erhard Schön (c.1491–1542), Niklas Stoer (c.1500–1562/63) and Peter Flötner (c.1485–1546). c.1530. Two series of woodcuts, hand coloured with watercolour, and letter press, each approx. 30 by 20 cm. Purchased with the support of the Lucas van Leyden Foundation, Mondriaan Fund, the Rembrandt Association and the SVBFonds, 2010; inv. nos.MB 2010/1 and 2. These two series of thematically related woodcuts were published by Hans Guldenmund and Niclas Meldeman in Nuremberg shortly after the siege of Vienna in 1529. One series comprises twenty sheets depicting 'lansquenets', Swiss and German mercenaries who played a key role in early modern warfare. The other series features eighteen images of Turkish soldiers and their leaders. Although prints of mercenaries and Turks must have been widespread at the time, they are now extremely rare, especially such spectacularly hand-coloured and well-preserved impressions as these. The two series were believed to be missing for more than half a century after they were sold from the Liechtenstein collection in 1948. [PvdC]





8. *Studies of a reclining male nude*, by Abraham Bloemaert (1566–1651). c.1625. Black chalk and stumping heightened with white on light brown paper, 14.6 by 26.3 cm.

Purchased with the support of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation, the Rembrandt Association (through the Stortenbeker Fund), the National Art Collections Fund, the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund and the SVBfonds, 2014; inv. no. St 316.

Bloemaert drew every day of his long working life. His motto was *nulla dies sine linea* (not a day without a line), which explains why nearly two thousand sheets have come down to us, although many more must have been lost. He made this wonderful study in preparation for the central figure in the *Lamentation of Christ*, a painting dated 1625. The artist drew two variants for the position of Christ's feet, choosing the subsidiary one at the top for the final composition drawing, which, like the painting, is also in the museum's collection. The two preparatory drawings allow a fascinating insight into the elaborate creative process that resulted in the painted composition. It was a long-cherished desire to reunite this rare functional trio. The figure study was finally acquired at the spectacular first sale of the Van Regteren Altena collection at Sotheby's, London. [AE]

9. *Triptych with the embalming of Christ, St Anthony and St John the Baptist*. Southern Netherlands (possibly Bruges), c.1410. Oil on panel, 33.3 by 32 cm. (central panel); 31 by 13 cm. (left wing); 31.2 by 12.8 cm. (right wing).

Purchased with the support of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation, the Rembrandt Association, Mondriaan Fund, the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund (through the Breeman Talle Fund), the SVBfonds, Fonds 21 and the BankGiro Lottery, 2013; inv. no. 3723 (OK).

10. *Triptych with Madonna and saints with scenes of the Passion on the wings; when closed: Christ carrying the Cross*, by the Master of Saint Veronica (active c.1400–20). c.1410. Oil on panel, 70 by 32 cm (central panel), 70 by 16 cm. (wings).

Purchased with the support of the Rembrandt Association (through the Fund for Classical Art, the Middle Ages and Renaissance Fund and the annual contribution of the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund), Mondriaan Fund, the BankGiro Lottery, the Stichting Bevordering van Volkskracht, the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund (through the Breeman Talle Fonds), the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation including funds from an anonymous legacy, Prof. Dr H.W. van Os and private donors who wish to remain anonymous, 2018; inv. no. 4232 (OK).

In the wake of the museum's successful exhibition *The Road to Van Eyck*, held in 2012–13, the museum succeeded in adding two extremely rare pre-Eyckian triptychs to its collection of early Netherlandish paintings. The first, probably painted in Bruges, was previously entirely unknown and depicts an uncommon subject, while the second can be considered one of the high points of Cologne painting. Just like the museum's *Norfolk Triptych*, probably from Liège, both the new acquisitions must have been painted around 1410 and thus provide an idea of the art that Jan van Eyck (c.1400–41) might have seen during his formative years. [RS]



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11. *Bath tub*, by Studio Makkink & Bey (Rianne Makkink, b.1964 and Jürgen Bey, b.1965). 2007. Glazed stoneware and wood, 150 by 102 by 102 cm.

Purchased with the support of Mondriaan Fund, 2017; inv. no.V 3171 a-d (KN&V).

This is no ordinary bathtub. The soft-grey glazed ceramic exudes both luxury and a sense of tradition. On the lid, a girl crouches to wash her clothes with a smile on her face. When it is lifted, it reveals drawings of bathers inside the bathtub. Studio Makkink & Bey designed *Bath tub* in response to the throwaway culture in which more and more mass-produced items are made with little sense of lasting value. The studio designed a series of objects entitled *Cleanliness is Next to Godliness*, with the aim of encouraging greater dedication to the cult of cleaning and tidying. *Bath tub* is a very special addition to the museum's collection of ceramics, which includes Studio Makkink & Bey's tea and coffee service, *Minutes*, from 2010. [AvK]

12. *La poupée (Doll)*, by Hans Bellmer (1902–75). c.1933. Gelatin silver print, 28.3 by 23.7 cm.

Purchased with the support of the BankGiro Lottery, 2014; inv. no.3752 (MK).

This vintage print depicting one of Hans Bellmer's well-known handmade erotic dolls formerly belonged to the Surrealist artist Mario Prassinos (1916–85). The texts and poems of his sister, Gisèle, were 'discovered' when she was fourteen by the Surrealists, who believed they saw in her a *femme-enfant*. Bellmer and Gisèle Prassinos developed a close bond. In 1935 he designed the frontispiece for her book *Une demande en mariage (A Proposal)*, and in the following year she dedicated several texts to him. The museum acquired this print to complement Bellmer's hand-coloured photographs, prints and artist's books already in the collection. In 2018 the museum was also able to acquire Bellmer's 1958 painting *Disarticulation on a striped background (Désarticulation sur fond rayé)*. [SvKP]

13. *Woman with a veil*, by Medardo Rosso (1858–1928). 1895 (1919–23). Wax over plaster, 72.1 by 60.3 by 29.8 cm.

Purchased with the support of the Rembrandt Association (through the Dura Art Fund and the dedicated Sculpture Fund), Mondriaan Fund, the SVBfonds, the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation, the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund (through the Breeman Talle Fund), the BankGiro Lottery, the G. Ph. Verhagen Foundation; the Dorodarte Foundation; and the generous gifts of individual members of the Van Eyck Circle and the Bas Jan Ader Society, 2014; inv. no.BEK 1941 (MK).

Throughout his career Medardo Rosso repeatedly returned to certain objects, creating variations rather than repetitions. Made on a similar plaster core, these versions (Rosso called them 'visions') are never identical and vary in size, colour, expression and even composition. He often gave different titles and dates to the same work, blurring further the distinction between the original and the copy. Stylistically, he underwent a transition from a naturalist idiom towards what would become shifting 'impressions'. The theme confronted in *Woman with a veil*



is central to the artist's exploration of building 'a monument to the instant'. Rosso made several attempts to capture the fleeting image of a woman descending the stairs of a church in Paris. He spent almost thirty years refining his expression of that emotional vision, and this version, completed in 1923, was his definitive attempt. [FS]

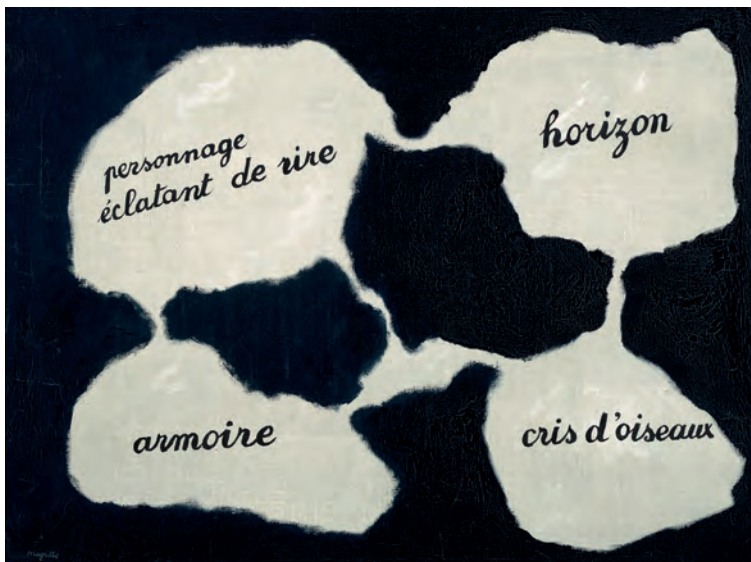
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14. *The Balcony Room at Spurveskjul*, by Vilhelm Hammershøi (1864–1916). 1911. Oil on canvas, 42.3 by 52.5 cm.

Purchased with the support of the Rembrandt Association (through the Maljers-De Jongh Fund), the BankGiro Lottery and a gift from a private donor from Rotterdam, 2014, inv. no. 3750 (MK). Hammershøi's work is noted for its tranquillity, austere simplicity and tonal studies of light and shade. The artist's many silent interiors or views from windows suggest a melancholic suspension of time, where imagination and representation merge. The atmosphere is usually emotionally charged, human presence is rare and the palette is restricted, with a preference for subdued tonal combinations. Light and its effects are the fundamental aspect of Hammershøi's oeuvre. Like photographs, his paintings suggest a frozen moment in time. In 1911 Hammershøi rented a villa, Spurveskjul (Sparrows' Refuge), outside Copenhagen, where he spent the summer with his wife. There he painted this study, which he would later use for a self-portrait. As a young man the artist travelled widely in Europe; in the Netherlands he was profoundly impressed by seventeenth-century Dutch painters such as Pieter de Hooch and Johannes Vermeer. [FS]

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15. *Le miroir vivant (Living mirror)*, by René Magritte (1898–1967). 1928. Oil on canvas, 54.3 by 73 by 1.8 cm.

Purchased with the support of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation, the Rembrandt Association (through the Dura Art Fund and the dedicated Sculpture Fund), Mondriaan Fund, the VSBfonds, the Willem van Rede Foundation, the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund (through the Breeman Talle Fund), the BankGiro Lottery and private donors, 2015; inv. no. 3825 (MK).

Living mirror is part of a small group of word paintings that Magritte made between 1927 and 1929. It is considered an experimental work for its exclusive use of semantics: four white interconnected cloudlike shapes, each featuring a short, enigmatic text. The texts *personnage éclatant de rire* (person roaring with laughter), *horizon*, *cris d'oiseaux* (bird calls) and *armoire* (wardrobe) evoke familiar yet uncanny personal associations, but the relationship between the words and the meaning of this distinctly non-figurative painting remains difficult to interpret, leaving to the viewer the construction of the image. This work is an extraordinary example of Magritte's seminal practice that influenced subsequent generations, acting as a bridge between Dada, Surrealism, Conceptual art and Pop Art. [FS]

16. *Le tabernacle*, attributed to Yves Tanguy (1900–55). Found by the artist in 1927 or 1928. Wood, ceramic, metal, fur, glass, leather and traces of wax, 64.5 by 59 by 31.5 cm.

Purchased with the support of the BankGiro Lottery, 2018; inv. no. BEK 2012 (MK). This fur-covered assemblage, which Tanguy found in a flea market, was featured on the cover of the June 1929 issue of the Belgian Surrealist magazine *Variétés: Revue mensuelle illustrée de l'esprit contemporain*. It was subsequently illustrated in several leading Surrealist publications, underlining the object's importance to the first generation of Surrealists. Several of these journals and publications, including the *Dictionnaire abrégé du surréalisme* (1938), are part of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen's extensive bibliographic collection. The acquisition of this *objet trouvé* thus creates a bridge between the museum's collections of Surrealist art and literature. Furthermore, it fits with our plans for a new museum library that will be largely devoted to Surrealism. [SvKP]



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17. *The astronomer (Work Cycle)*, part of the Professions series, by Arthur Segal (1875–1944). 1919. Oil on canvas, 86.7 by 106.6 cm.

Purchased with the support of the BankGiro Lottery, 2017; inv. no. 3712.

During the First World War the Romanian artist Arthur Segal found refuge in the Swiss town of Ascona, where in 1919 he painted this remarkable work entitled *The astronomer*. Do you see him in the lower left corner, peering through a telescope at the stars? Segal's position in the early avant-garde, as a collaborator with the Zurich Dadaists in 1916 and as a member of the November Group in Berlin in the early 1920s, cannot be overestimated. He developed a distinctive style, rejecting the academic notion of foreground and background, avoiding depth and aiming for the equivalence of all imagery: an abstract style based on a figurative viewpoint. Looking to the moon, the stars and the halos, the astronomer is part of an interesting inversion of the positions of heaven and earth executed in the frame, brown at the top and blue at the bottom. This powerful painting is an excellent companion to works by Segal's contemporaries in the museum's collection, such as Lyonel Feiniger, Wassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc and Piet Mondrian. [SE]

18. *Moonlit landscape*, by Johan Christian Dahl (1788–1857). 1823. Oil on paper mounted on cardboard, 18.1 by 24.6 cm.

Purchased with the support of the BankGiro Lottery, 2017; inv. no. 4231 (OK).

Despite its small size, this oil sketch by the Norwegian painter Johan Christian Dahl convincingly captures the vastness of a mountainous landscape, lit by a full moon that colours the clouds. In the foreground a solitary wanderer contemplates the impressive scene, much as Dahl was wont to do. Born in Bergen, he moved in 1818 to Dresden, where he became a close friend of Caspar David Friedrich, with whom he shared an enthusiasm for the direct observation of nature. Friedrich's famous *Two men contemplating the Moon* (1819–20; Galerie Neue Meister, Dresden) was a gift to Dahl, to which our *Moonlit landscape* was evidently a reply. The first painting by Dahl to enter a Dutch public collection, it beautifully illustrates the international character of Romanticism. [RS]

19. *Crucifixion*, by Jan van Eyck (1390/99–1441) or a member of his workshop. c.1440–50. Silverpoint, goldpoint, pen and black ink on prepared paper, 25.4 by 18.7 cm.

Purchased with the support of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation, the Rembrandt Association (through the Dura Art Fund), Mondriaan Fund and the SVBfonds, 2014; inv. no. MB 2014/T.1.

This extraordinary early drawing was discovered in 2011 during the preparations for the museum's exhibition *The Road to Van Eyck* (2012–13). It caused a sensation in the art world and attracted considerable media attention, as well as many visitors. Following the exhibition it was acquired from the owners – three brothers whose late father had bought the drawing in a small village sale in 1971 for only ten guilders – just in time to be also included in the exhibition *Bosch to Bloemaert: Early Netherlandish Drawings in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen* and its accompanying catalogue (2014). The drawing was the subject of a special publication in the Boijmans Studies series, *An Eyckian Crucifixion Explored: Ten Essays on a Drawing* (2016), and was exhibited along with Van Eyck's New York *Crucifixion* diptych in *A New Look at a Van Eyck Masterpiece* held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 2016. [AE]

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20. Drawing book with plants, insects, birds, animals and landscapes, by two anonymous draughtsmen. Northern Italy, c.1425–50 and c.1525–50, respectively. Leadpoint, pen and brown ink, watercolour and bodycolour on parchment, 12.1 by 7.5 cm. Fols.26v and 27r.

Loan from the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation, 2016; inv. no. St 331.

This extremely rare intact drawing book was first recorded on the art market in 1916. Its earlier provenance is unknown, but the cover bears the mark (Lugt 737) of an anonymous collector, whose collection was acquired by Don Livio Odescalchi around 1700. The museum purchased it from descendants of Franz Koenigs (1881–1941), whose famous collection of over two thousand drawings is one of the museum's treasures. The pocket-size volume contains forty-eight numbered parchment leaves. It was first used for coloured model drawings of animals, insects and plants on alternate spreads, leaving at least half of the pages empty. A century later the booklet was further enriched by another draughtsman, who added landscapes and other subjects with pen and brown ink on most of the empty pages. The drawings of a cheetah and another wild cat are remarkable for their exquisite rendering of details, including the collars and chains that suggest they were domesticated at some princely court. [AE]

21. *Caesar ordering the burning of Pompey's letters*, by Antonio Fantuzzi (active c.1535–50) after Giulio Romano (c.1499–1546). c.1542–43. Etching, 33.7 by 51.9 cm.

Purchased with the support of the Lucas van Leyden Foundation, 2019; inv. no. L 2019/23 (PK).

That the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen has one of the better collections of Fontainebleau printmaking is thanks in large part to the collector Johan Bierens de Haan and the special purchase fund for prints that he established, the Lucas van Leyden Foundation. With the support of this foundation, the museum acquired many important prints of the School of Fontainebleau in the 1960s and 1970s. This thread has been taken up again in recent years with purchases of works by Léon Davent, Antonio Fantuzzi and Jean Mignon. The highlight of this group of acquisitions is this large sheet by Fantuzzi after a design by Giulio Romano. [PvdC]

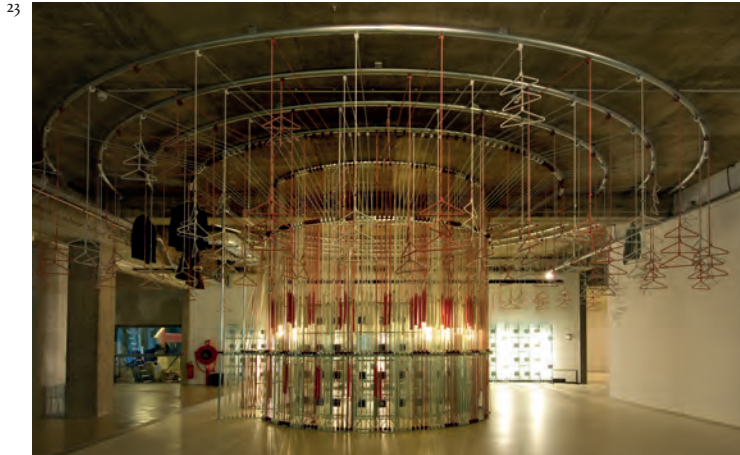
22. *Les songes drolatiques de Pantagruel (The funny dreams of Pantagruel)*, attributed to François Desprez (d. before 1587). 1565. Book with letterpress text and 120 woodcut illustrations, published by Richard Breton, Paris. 15.5 by 10.1 cm.

Purchased with the support of the Rembrandt Association (through the Middle Ages and Renaissance Fund) and the Lucas van Leyden Foundation, 2020; inv. no. MB 2020/22 (PK).

This book features a parade of ten dozen bizarre creatures – combinations of people, animals, plants and objects – that immediately call to mind the hybrid monsters of Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Indeed, they are more closely related to these Netherlandish masters than to *The Life of Gargantua and of Pantagruel* by the French satirist François Rabelais referred to in the title. In the twentieth century *Les songes drolatiques* was seized upon by the Surrealists, who recognised a kindred mentality in these grotesque figures. The book thus forms a link in the history of fantastic art, a focal point in the museum's acquisitions policy. [PvdC]



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23. Merry-Go-Round Coat Rack, by Studio Wieki Somers (Wieki Somers and Dylan van den Berg). 2008. Metal, coloured rope, plastic and metal lockers, 400 by 1200 cm.

Commissioned by the museum with the support of the Adessium Foundation, 2008; inv. no.V 2669 a-o (KN&V).

The *Merry-Go-Round Coat Rack* serves as an interactive cloakroom for Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen. It was inspired by a system used by mineworkers, whose clothes would be hoisted back up to the surface once they had descended the shaft, in order to protect them from coal dust. The suspended jackets in the carousel transform a functional fixture into an animated installation that acts as a mirror of the museum: the number of coats, the colours and kinds of fabric hint at the crowds inside the building. The commission was part of the redesign of the museum's entrance area carried out by a one-off collective, *Haunting Dogs Full of Grace*, a collaboration between Jurgen Bey, Frank Bruggeman, Simon Heijdens, Ted Noten, Bertjan Pot and Studio Wieki Somers. [AvK]



24. Proserpina abducted by Pluto, by Paolo Farinati (1524–1606). c.1573.

Black chalk, pen and brown ink, brown wash, squared for transfer, on paper, 13 by 26.5 cm.

Purchased with the support of the BankGiro Lottery, 2019; inv. no.MB 2019/T 45.

This charming drawing is a preparatory study for a section of an elaborate fresco cycle in the main rooms on the first floor of the Palazzo Giuliani, Verona. What may look like a group of cheerfully frolicking young ladies are, in fact, four friends of the young goddess Proserpina, running around in panic because Pluto has just abducted her. Pluto's right leg and that of Proserpina, whom he is carrying off, are just visible in the background on the right. The lower right corner bears the number 98, a mark (Lugt 3612) of the famous French collector Pierre Crozat (1665–1740). This acquisition fills a gap in the museum's prominent collection of Italian drawings, which is currently being researched for publication in an online collection catalogue, supported by the Getty Foundation as part of The Paper Project. [AE]



25. A shepherd, by Salomon de Bray (1597–1664). 1638. Oil on panel, 65.7 by 50.2 cm.

Purchased with the support of the BankGiro Lottery, 2019; inv. no.4240 (OK).

Prior to the acquisition of this dreamy shepherd, Haarlem-based Salomon de Bray was a notable absentee from the museum's rich holdings of Dutch seventeenth-century paintings. This delicately executed panel now makes up for that long absence and it does so exquisitely. Signed and dated 1638, it epitomises the richness of De Bray's oeuvre. Besides being a gifted painter, he was also active as a poet and architect, and expressed his interests in classical art and culture in each of these fields. Pastoral love themes thus not only occur in his poems, but also in his paintings and it can be assumed that this arcadian shepherd initially addressed his amorous gaze to a now-lost female companion piece. [RS]

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26. *Seated figure*, by Eileen Agar (1899–1991). 1956. Oil on canvas, 184 by 163 cm. Loan from the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation, 2018; inv. no. St 528.

The paintings that the British Surrealist Eileen Agar made in the 1950s resemble giant collages. It is as if she has painted an image, cut it into pieces and rearranged the parts to create a new composition, in this case a seated figure. Because much of her work was determined by chance, she was branded a Surrealist by the selection committee in the lead-up to the International Surrealist Exhibition in London in 1936. In addition to this painting, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen owns several of Agar's works on paper in which chance also plays an important role. Within the museum's extensive collection of Surrealism, they form part of a cluster of works by such British artists as Leonora Carrington and Conroy Maddox. [SvKP]

27. *Semi-closed eyelid*, by Co Westerik (1924–2018). 2018. Tempera, alkyd and oil on canvas, 60 by 75 cm.

Purchased with the support of Mondriaan Fund, 2019; inv. no. 4230 (MK).

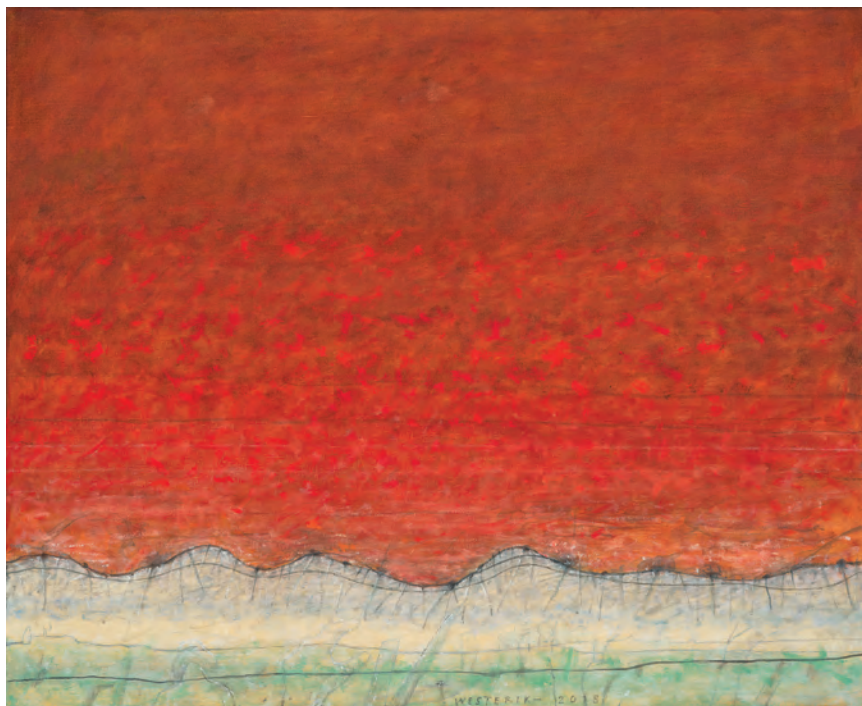
Semi-closed eyelid is a striking demonstration of Co Westerik's highly personal and fascinating way of representing the human form. Depicting the inside of the eyelid, blurred at the top and progressively sharp towards the opening, Westerik focuses our awareness on the eyelashes and the light seeping in from the outside. He thus allows us to share in his sensitive appreciation of human physicality and flesh, themes that run throughout his oeuvre. From his first canvas in 1946 Westerik established a highly idiosyncratic form of realism, depicting both human and natural subjects. This work is one of his last: he applied the finishing touches just weeks before his death in September 2018. [FS]

28. *Serpent-stemmed winged goblet*. c.1650–1700. Lead glass with enamel decoration, 21.8 by 8.9 cm.

Loan from the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation, 2019; inv. no. St 566.

In 2019 the museum acquired this unique seventeenth-century goblet. Because of the elaborate design of the stem, this type of *façon de Venise* wine glass is sometimes called a 'serpent glass'. A remarkably special feature of this example is the floral decoration on the bowl in white and brick-red enamel, comprising an oval fantasy flower, honeysuckle and a daisy-like flower. Some serpent glasses have engraved motifs, but there were previously no known examples with enamel painting. There is, however, a jug (private collection) made from the same type of crystalline glass with a lily of the valley in enamel painting by the same hand, bearing the date 1676. Snake glasses are usually attributed to the Low Countries or to Germany, but the colour of this glass and certain details in the design of the stem suggest that it could also have been made in Southern Germany, Austria or Switzerland. [AvD]

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Recent acquisitions at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen

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29. *Apollo* (formerly *Dream in the caves*), by Max Beckmann (1884–1950). 1942. Oil on canvas, 69.5 by 89.5 cm.

Partial purchase with the support of the Rembrandt Association (through the Modern Art Fund, the Dura Art Fund and the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund) and the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation, and partial gift of the Marie Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust, 2020; inv. no.4253 (MK).

The Expressionist painter Max Beckmann lived in exile in the Netherlands for ten years from 1937 after the Nazis confiscated his paintings from German museums and declared his works *entartete kunst* (degenerate art). In Amsterdam he found a supporter and good friend in the art dealer Helmut Lütjens. The museum acquired Beckmann's impressive portrait of Lütjens and his family in 2009 from the family's heirs. In 2017 the museum received a large gift from the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust. Von Motesiczky, who was of Jewish decent, fled from Vienna to England via the Netherlands. She had trained with Beckmann at the Städelschule in Frankfurt, where she introduced him to his second wife, Mathilde Quappi. The two women remained lifelong friends, and Quappi left *Apollo* to Von Motesiczky. The trust afforded the museum the opportunity to acquire this powerfully symbolic painting in 2020. [SK]

30. *Diptych with Madonna and Child, St John the Baptist and St Christopher, and the Crucifixion*. Paris, c.1350–75. Ivory with silver hinges, 11.6 by 14.3 by 1.5 cm. (open).

Loan from the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation (formerly in the Schoufour-Martin collection), 2012; inv. no. St 268.

Since 2000 the museum's collection of late medieval sculpture has been greatly enriched by the generous gift of eighty-five pieces from the collection of Jacques Schoufour and his wife Ingeborg Martin. One of the highlights is this precious ivory diptych, which is notable both for its technical and its iconographical refinement. A multitude of floating angels – weeping, censuring and playing music – enliven the two devotional scenes and the exceptionally deep relief carving helps draw them out of the flat surface. The fact that the Virgin on the left panel is flanked, unusually, by St John the Baptist and St Christopher suggests that it was a specially commissioned piece. [RS]

31. *Again, the Gemini are in the orchard*, by Leonora Carrington (1917–2011). 1947. Oil on panel, 91 by 60 cm.

Purchased with the support of Mondriaan Fund, the Rembrandt Association (through the Desirée Lambers Fund and the Dura Art Fund), the BankGiro Lottery, the Willem van Rede Foundation, the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Foundation and the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund (through the Breeman Talle Fund), 2019; inv. no.4220 (MK).

In the 1970s Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen acquired fourteen extremely important paintings and gouaches by Salvador Dalí and René Magritte from the collection of their most important patron in the 1930s, the British poet, publisher and collector Edward James. James sold the works in order to finance several personal projects but kept the finest pieces by female artists such as Leonora Carrington until his death. Recent acquisitions of works by Unica Zürn, Eileen Agar and Carrington have enabled the museum to provide a more diverse representation of Surrealism. [SvKP]

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