

## Max J. Friedländer (Amsterdam, 8 Jun 17)

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Jun 08, 2017

Registration deadline: Jun 5, 2017

Matthias Ubl

Max J. Friedländer (1867-1958):

art-historian, museum director, connoisseur

The 5th of June 2017 marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Max J. Friedländer (1867-1958). This milestone offers an excellent opportunity to reflect on the legacy of this still well-esteemed art historian.

Friedländer was appointed director of the Kupferstichkabinett in 1908, then subdirector of the Gemäldegalerie in 1912 and finally director of the latter in 1929. Under the energetic leadership of Wilhelm Bode, general director of the Berlin museums, Friedländer developed into a recognised connoisseur and author of over eight hundred publications, of which *Die Altniederländische Malerei* (Early Netherlandish Painting) and *Von Kunst und Kennerschaft* (On Art and Connoisseurship) are the best known.

In the history of art history Friedländer is primarily associated with "connoisseurship", a competence which he considered most important. According to Friedländer, connoisseurship embodies a subjective form of scholarship and can only be gained by practice. The lack of a theoretical underpinning and the impossibility of factual verification, however, gradually led to the decline of connoisseurship as a scholarly method, especially in the academic field.

The symposium aims at highlighting Friedländer's merits for the history of art. Specialists from Belgium, Germany, the United States and The Netherlands will present a diverse range of papers that will call attention to Friedländer's work as museum official, scholar and connoisseur. Moreover, the relevance of connoisseurschip for today's art history will be discussed.

The organization of this international symposium is in collaboration with the RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague, the University of Bamberg and the CVNK (Contactgroep Vroege Nederlandse Kunst/Network for specialists in early Netherlandish art).

### PROGRAMME

09.00-09.30 Registration and coffee

09.30-09.40 Welcome

09.40-10.00 Suzanne Laemers: Max J. Friedländer, an introduction to a renowned art historian

Friedländer's activity at the Berlin museums and his relation with his colleagues, art dealers and collectors

10.00-10.20 Sandra Kriebel: Exhibiting Berlin private collections: Max J. Friedländer as curator of loan exhibitions

10.20-10.40 Claire Baisier: Max J. Friedländer and the Antwerp collector and connoisseur Fritz Mayer van den Bergh (1858-1901)

10.40-11.10 Coffee

11.10-11.30 Catherine B. Scallen: Max J. Friedländer and Duveen Bros.

11.30-11.50 Dr. Timo Saalman: Connoisseurship in doubt: Max J. Friedländer, the art market and antisemitism in the early 1930s

11.50-12.20 Discussion

12.20-13.30 Lunch

13.30-13.40 Bart Fransen: Friedländer 3.0: Max J. Friedländer's Early Netherlandish Painting as online database

Evaluation of Friedländer's scholarly contribution to the history of art

13.40-14.00 Simon Elson: The poet or Max J. Friedländer's art commentary

14.00-14.20 Eveliina Juntunen: Max J. Friedländer and modern printmaking in Germany. Some thoughts about his influence on its reception and on the art market

14.20-14.50 Discussion

14.50-15.20 Coffee

The importance of connoisseurship as a method in art history, including the field of technical study and its rivalry with the learned eye, and the necessity of teaching connoisseurship

15.20-15.40 Katrin Dyballa: Connoisseurship: A precondition for writing a collection catalogue

15.40-16.00 Carol Pottasch/Kirsten Derks: The Lamentation by Rogier van der Weyden (Mauritshuis, The Hague) in the context of traditional connoisseurship and technical research

16.00-16.20 Milko den Leeuw/Oliver Spapens: Connoisseurship and technical examination: opposites or complimentary methods?

16.20-16.30 Daantje Meuwissen: Connoisseurship as MA-specialisation at the VU University Amsterdam

16.30-17.00 Discussion and closing remarks

17.00-18.00 Drinks and possibility to visit the Middle Ages and Renaissance Galleries

For more information please visit: <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/friedlander>

Reference:

CONF: Max J. Friedländer (Amsterdam, 8 Jun 17). In: Arthist.net, Mar 17, 2017 (accessed Sep 13, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/14970>>.