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Connoisseurship and the Knowledge of Art
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Connoisseurship – once foundational, then controversial, and currently critically reconsidered – is fundamentally about knowledge. Focusing on the distinctive history of the connoisseurship of Netherlandish art, this volume investigates early modern connoisseurship as revealed through pictorial practice, texts, and pictures featuring art lovers. An interplay between possessing and knowing about art emerges in the collecting of Chinese porcelain in the eighteenth century. With the professionalization of art criticism in the nineteenth century, Rembrandt’s art becomes a locus of scrutiny. In the twentieth century, the introduction of scientific data complicates the art historian’s expertise, whereas the case of Mondrian shows how modernist criticism and connoisseurship are intricately interwoven. Finally, persisting tensions between connoisseurship, authorship, and the market are brought to the fore.

Table of Contents
2. E. Melanie Gifford. Pieter Bruegel’s afterlife. A visual metaphor in seventeenth-century landscape
4. Alexander Marr. Ingenuity and discernment in The cabinet of Cornelis van der Geest (1628)
5. Tiarna Doherty. Painting connoisseurship. Liefhebbers in the studio
6. Angela Ho. Exotic and exclusive. The Pronk porcelain as products for the connoisseur
7. Antoinette Friedenthal. John Smith’s Rembrandt research project. An art dealer establishes the first catalogue raisonné of the paintings (1836)
8. Catherine B. Scallen. Rembrandt print connoisseurship, Sir Francis Seymour Haden, and the etching revival of the nineteenth century
10. Marek Wieczorek. Greenberg’s connoisseurship in Mondrian’s space
11. Anne-Sophie V.E. Radermecker. The market reception of ‘new connoisseurship’. The impact of recent advances in art scholarship on the selling and buying of early Flemish paintings

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