

Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art, Vol. 73: Wet Land.

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Wet Land. Shaping Environments in Netherlandish Art & Architecture, 1400 to 2021

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With a sudden intensity, early modern Dutch artists began picturing their own environment, launching an entirely new category of representation that tested the boundaries between humans and nature, representation and truth, and past and future. In particular, the resulting art works depicted both habitable land and the water that permeated and surrounded this environment, alternately threatening and supporting local ways of life. These images produced -- and still produce -- a quintessentially Dutch landscape, real and imagined. A land of water, dikes, dunes, skies dotted with rain-filled clouds as well as with old and new technologies (windmills, canals, sluizes, and boats) that enabled claiming/exploiting the land and traveling through it. These artworks are not passive representations of Dutch nature, but also continue to shape the Dutch land and perceptions of it. Since, thousands of landscape paintings, prints, photographs, drawings, video installations, and works of land art interrogate the boundaries between nature and human making. Architecture and engineering developed in tandem, making the Netherlands a global center of expertise for water infused landscapes: a feature that is visible in cultural heritage sites and created landscapes, from dikes and polders to the Stevinsluizes of the IJsselmeer.

The rich corpus of an art and an architecture of the 'wetland' not only maps out what the Dutch landscape looks like today, but also what it looked like in the past and how it is being shaped for the future. And it places us humans in the midst of it.

Representations of landscape intersect with a set of early modern and contemporary questions about how to use and preserve the land. They open up new venues of sight from a use-perspective (of farmers in the dirt, fishermen on the beach); they draw visual attention to the boundaries between landscape and the dunes (once called the *wildernisse*); they speak of the erosion of the coast; they visualize what humans did with and to nature; they distinguish classes of looking at, extracting, and utilizing the land (from strolling city-dwellers to a bent-over sower). Apart from the visual wealth of information about living in and of cultured nature, an untapped variety of Dutch early modern textual sources speaks to the ecology of human life and the land humans occupy, a source base that is understudied with regard to landscape painting.

The Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art has been committed to Dutch landscape representations since at least 1997, when volume 48, *Natuur en landschap in de Nederlandse kunst, 1500-1850*, came out. But the particular engagement with land- and waterscapes is now more current than ever. This concern remains a constant in Netherlandish art, regularly resurfacing in 19th century landscape painting as well as modern and contemporary art. Landscape in relation to

water can be seen as a transhistorical hallmark of Netherlandish art, a motif and topic that continually resurfaces in the oeuvre of iconic artists such as Van Gogh and Mondriaan, as well Land Art projects or new media. In the face of ecological crises, and rising sea levels in particular, the rich history of art and architecture that represented and shaped the wetland, deserves a fresh look. Including, but also moving beyond iconographic interpretation, aesthetic appreciation and historical-geographical contextualisation, this issue of the NKJ asks researchers to interrogate the shaping of land and water through art and architecture against the background of eco-critical discourses. Contributions might address but are not limited to the following topics:

- Land/water as artistic materials and natural resources
- Human intervention in nature
- Waterworks, coastlines
- Uses of water/land for artistic and architectural ends
- Depictions of human industry in nature
- Visualizations of erosion, bare lands, floods
- Visual/material efforts to demarcate nature from culture
- Use point-of-views of nature
- Exploitation of (New World) natural resources

The NKJ is dedicated to a particular theme each year and promotes innovative scholarship and articles that employ a diversity of approaches to the study of Netherlandish art in its wider context. For more information, see <https://brill.com/view/serial/NKJ>

Contributions to the NKJ (in Dutch, English, German or French) are limited to a maximum of 7,500 words, excluding notes and bibliography. Following a peer review process and receipt of the complete text, the editorial board will make final decisions on the acceptance of papers.

Please send a 500-word proposal and short CV by 20 February 2022 to all volume editors:

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- Deadline for submission of proposals: 20 February 2022
- Notifications about proposals: by 20 March 2022
- Submission of articles for peer review: 3 August 2022
- Decision on acceptance based on peer reviews: fall of 2022
- Copy edited articles, including illustrations & copyrights: spring 2023
- publication end of 2023

Reference:

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