

Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek Vol. 75 (2025)

Deadline: Jun 23, 2023

Edward Wouk

Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek / Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art, Vol. 75 (2025):
The Dutch Americas: art histories of the Atlantic world.

This issue of the Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art seeks to advance the art historical understanding of how the Dutch presence in the Americas contributed to the art and material culture produced in the transatlantic sphere. That presence was largely driven by the Dutch West India Company, which played a profound role in shaping both Dutch and broader Netherlandish (and American) visual experience but has been only marginally recognized in scholarship to date. Founded in 1621 as the Geoctroyeerde Westindische Compagnie, the West India Company (GWC or WIC) traded across the Atlantic and helped to establish Dutch footholds in regions including present-day New York, Curaçao, Guyana, Suriname, Brazil, Ghana, and Benin – dealing primarily in fur, tobacco, sugar and gold. Enslaved Africans were also treated as commodities to be shipped and traded.

The last thirty years have seen an ever-increasing amount of work on the material culture and artistic production enabled by the long-distance trade of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), with numerous studies and exhibitions analyzing the porcelain, lacquerware, carved ivory, polished and decorated seashells, and aromatic spices that yielded from it. The connections between Flanders and the Americas, via their shared Spanish Habsburg governance, have also emerged as a fertile area of scholarship. Yet with only a few notable exceptions, far less art historical attention has been paid to the activities of the Dutch West India Company—and to the resultant Dutch presence in and imagination of the transatlantic world. This despite the fact that the WIC played a vital role in the shaping of the Americas and the transatlantic traffic of raw materials, refined artistic products, and people (both willing settlers and enslaved laborers), all of which impacted visual culture and consumer tastes in the Netherlands as well as across Europe.

Volume 75 of the NKJ aims to assemble and reassess the visual and material corpus related to Dutch trading companies and the broader Netherlandish experience in the Americas. We solicit contributions that treat the visual and material culture of the Low Countries as it was inspired by the Americas or took shape in these geographies. Potential topics include: the activities of migrant artists who traveled along Dutch-established trade routes, products of botanical expeditions and illustrations, plantation architecture, the material culture of slavery, mapping and navigation (particularly of complex waterways), engineering projects, inter-imperial artistic influence (critical to zones of contact and piracy like the Caribbean where Dutch, Habsburg, and other imperial forces competed), religious architecture and material culture, the patronage and role of the Jewish diaspora in the Americas, the collection of Americana in the Netherlands, and the mobilization

of American artistic resources (brazilwood, pearls, shells, pigment, etc.).

The inconsistent efforts of the Dutch in the Americas and the considerable financial and military failures of the WIC have obscured our understanding of the art produced in these spheres. Only eight years after Johan Maurits arrived in Brazil with a team of artists and cartographers – most notably Frans Post and Albert Eckhout—he was headed back to Europe, and the territories he governed were recaptured by the Portuguese. However, the ongoing artistic production of those who served with him in Brazil kept the Americas alive for decades in the Netherlandish imagination. Relatedly, even after ceding New Netherland to the English in 1674, former colonists continued their demand for Dutch goods, maintaining these tastes deep into the eighteenth century. While the WIC's first iteration lasted for less than a century, Dutch merchant companies' role in the transatlantic slave trade continued through into the nineteenth century. Suriname only achieved independence in 1975. We see the WIC's intermittent presence across this *longue durée* as a considerable methodological opportunity for Dutch art history, a field often overly focused on the so-called "Golden Age." We are therefore particularly interested in papers that engage themes of temporality, delay, and rupture at both historical and historiographic levels; and we encourage papers whose chronological range extends well beyond the seventeenth century to reflect these historical realities.

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 June 23rd, 2023 to all volume editors:

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Schedule of process:

- Deadline for submission of proposals: June 23rd, 2023
- Notifications about proposals: July 2023
- Submission of articles for peer review: January 2024
- Decision on acceptance based on peer reviews: Late spring 2024
- Final articles, including illustrations & copyrights: January 2025
- Publication Fall 2025

Reference:

CFP: Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek Vol. 75 (2025). In: ArtHist.net, Apr 21, 2023 (accessed Jul 15, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/39116>>.