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Contents and Abstracts

Short notice
Illusion on Paper: A Rediscovered Eighteenth-Century Chinese Trompe-l'oeil Still Life
CHING-LING WANG AND JULIET BAINES

This short notice reassesses A Cupboard Containing Various Objects, an eighteenth-century Chinese trompe-l'œil still life in the Rijksmuseum's collection. Conservation and infrared imaging revealed a hybrid production method combining woodblock-printed outlines with hand-applied colour, suggesting collaborative workshop practices and possible multiple versions. The composition depicts a cupboard filled with scholarly objects, fruits, porcelain and leisure items, reflecting Qing material culture and evoking themes of learning, prosperity, refinement and sociability. As such, it fits within contemporary pictorial traditions of wenfangtu (images of scholarly objects) or bogutu (images of antiquities). Stylistic and iconographic evidence points to a mid-eighteenth-century Cantonese origin, linked to export workshops and regional practices. The work also exemplifies cross-cultural exchange, incorporating a European-influenced perspective while engaging Chinese court aesthetics and parallels with Korean chaekgado. This study emphasizes the still life's significance as an illusionistic image that merges print and painting, local production and circulation, and decorative and intellectual meanings.

'And a Branch shall grow out of his roots': Rosary and Marian Devotion as Context for The Tree of Jesse
RENS TIENSTRA

The Tree of Jesse in the Rijksmuseum is a panel painting from circa 1500, attributed to (the circle of) Geertgen tot Sint Jans. Numerous studies have already been devoted to this panel, the majority of which centred on the question of its attribution. The present study's endeavour, however, is to determine the panel's function and the origin of the unique combination of the iconography of the Tree of Jesse with elements of the Rosary devotion. Consultation made clear this composite iconography cannot be traced to contemporary (para)liturgical and devotional sources, not even those concerning this Marian devotion. The Tree of Jesse iconography was by no means an obvious choice to visually express the Rosary theme, as is the case with the Rijksmuseum panel. In acknowledgement of the virtually exclusive occurrence of this iconography in breviaries and books of hours originating from the Low Countries (including the only other example of Jesse in an enclosed garden in a Lowland breviary), it is posited that the combined iconography arises from the practice of the Hours of the Virgin, and the breviaries and books of hours used for that purpose. Based on a unique visual correspondence to a Haarlem gradual and the Van Schoten trip-

tych (consulted in drawings) combined with historical context, the man on the right of the panel can tenably be identified as Master Willem van Schoten. This would explain the figure's unconventional attire and the distinctive background architecture; it also allows a possible identification of the young religious woman. Most importantly, it provides an argument for situating the panel in the church of the St John's convent in Haarlem, linking it to the institution's inventories.

Lou Loeber: Archivist of her Own Oeuvre
CERI-ANNE VAN DE GEER

In 1983, the artist Lou Loeber (1894-1983) donated over two hundred of her own characteristically abstracted and constructivist prints and drawings to the Rijksmuseum Print Room. In close consultation with museum curators, she provided handwritten annotations for a significant number of her sketches, which at the time and still today provide insight into the interpretation of her work. The present article situates this unique donation within the context of the renewed appreciation for Loeber's work that emerged in the nineteen seventies, arising from a growing interest in both interwar abstract art and women artists. It shows how Loeber navigated a new network of artists, galleries and museums, and how – when confronted with various interpretations of her work – she consistently returned to her own socialist vision of art. Only very rarely did Loeber herself take steps for her artworks to be acquired in public collections. By means of her donation to the Print Room, the publication of her memoirs and bequeathing her artist's archive, Loeber lent her artistic legacy an autobiographical quality, enabling her to shape the public perception of her person and her existence as an artist effectively. This case study therefore contributes to our knowledge of women acting as custodians and donors of artists' legacies, on their own behalf as well as that of others.

Recent Acquisitions: Asian Art
JAN VAN CAMPEN, MENNO FITSKI, ANNA A. ŚLĄCZKA, WILLIAM SOUTHWORTH AND CHING-LING WANG

Reference:
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