

The 17th-century
Dutch paintings in
the Rijksmuseum:
two centuries
of collecting
and cataloguing

Seventeenth-century Dutch painting has been at the heart of the Rijksmuseum for the 200 years of its existence. When the Nationale Konst-Gallery was founded at the end of the 18th century, it was already recognised that the 17th century was the Netherlands' economic and artistic heyday. The Konst-Gallery, which occupied five rooms in Huis ten Bosch Palace between 1800 and 1805, contained more than 200 objects illustrating the country's history and art, with the emphasis on the Golden Age. Today, the scale and variety of the Rijksmuseum collections have grown out of all recognition, and in the process the picture that the museum presents of the painting of that period has been transformed dramatically. The collection of paintings has grown since the museum's foundation in 1800 through donations, purchases and long-term loans (some of them from the City of Amsterdam) from, roughly speaking, 200 works in 1800, 450 in 1809, 600 in 1875, 1,700 in 1887, 3,000 in 1903, 4,000 in 1920, 4,500 in 1934 to 5,500 in 2000.

The great surge between 1875 and 1920 was due to the directors' ambition to create the most comprehensive overview of Dutch painting possible, and to own at least one signed (and preferably dated) work by every painter known by name. After 1920 the emphasis shifted to improving the quality of the Dutch School and strengthening the international look of the collection. Most of the pictures were on permanent display until the early decades of the 20th century, but from the 1920s an emphasis on the artistic and historical qualities of the works made for a more selective choice. From the 1950s the public could view around 800 pictures that represented the very best works. Paintings that were of historical importance were displayed in the Dutch History Department, and there were another 800 in the study collection. Other paintings were loaned to museums elsewhere or placed in the reserves. The main focus in the post-war period was on the purchase of first-rate works in order to raise the standard of the overview of Dutch painting from the late middle ages to the 19th century even further. Today the 17th-century collection consists of some 2,000 pictures, the core group of which is on permanent display.

The provenances of the paintings in this catalogue show how the collection, which started off as the remnants of the former holdings of the princes of Orange, was then enlarged and bolstered in the course of 200 years through the acquisition of several other collections, the permanent loan from the City of Amsterdam, purchases and donations. Sheer chance, changing circumstances and new ideas all played an important part in this. Even more than for other parts of the collection, the acquisition policy for the Golden Age was heavily influenced by evolving art-historical insights, which are just as strongly reflected in the manner of presentation, in the museum's catalogues, and even in conservation policy.

Although the history of the paintings collection has already been described at length elsewhere,¹ it seemed appropriate to combine a brief sketch of it with a discussion of the various generations of the catalogue.

The study of museum catalogues is another recent development, which was sparked off in particular by the art historian Frits Keers (1936-2000).² He and Geert-Jan Koot compiled the bibliography of the catalogues of the Rijksmuseum's paintings for the supplement to *All the paintings* that was published in 1992. It is not only the most comprehensive list of all the editions of the catalogues that appeared between 1809 and 1976 (almost 150 in all) but also a brief characterisation of their successive generations, which will be followed here.³ The first catalogue written by Cornelis Apostool in 1809, in which 459 paintings are described on 95 pages in octavo format, but without their dimensions and additional data, is a lightweight pocketbook that could easily be consulted during a visit to the museum. By contrast, the most recent catalogue weighs in at almost five kilograms. *All the paintings of the Rijksmuseum*, compiled by Pieter van Thiel and others and published in 1976, contains 911 closely printed pages in a royal folio format and describes around 5,000 paintings, and was the first one to be fully illustrated with black-and-white 'passport' photographs. The series of catalogues (fig. 1) presents a fascinating picture of the growth of the collection, its curators, the accumulation of knowledge and changing art-historical concerns.⁴

The Nationale Konst-Gallery

The creation of a national gallery was part of the policy of the new Francophile regime of the Batavian Republic to encourage the Dutch to become more aware of their history. Although the collections of Stadholder Willem V

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¹ The most recent history of the Rijksmuseum is Van der Ham 2000. Van Thiel 1976, and Van Thiel 1992 provided excellent surveys of the history of the paintings collection up to 1991; Bergvelt 1998 takes a closer look at the collection policy up to 1896.

² See Keers 1997. The art historian Frits Keers (Utrecht 29 January 1936 - 9 September 2000 Amsterdam), who worked for many years as a curator at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, donated more than 5,000 museum catalogues from the period 1750-1918 to the Rijksmuseum library in 1999, thereby demonstrating the exceptional importance of that kind of publication for the study of museum history and art history. For the donation see Koot 2006.

³ Keers/Koot 1992.

⁴ As far as the 19th century is concerned, grateful use was made of Bergvelt 1998, in which a great deal of attention had already been focused on the nature and content of the catalogues, the models on which they were based, and the compilers.

had been carried off to Paris, there were still plenty of paintings and objets d'art in palaces and public buildings. These, together with various historical artefacts, formed the collection of the new museum, which opened its doors in Huis ten Bosch Palace in The Hague on 31 May 1800.

The first two rooms were devoted to the nation's history, which was mainly illustrated with portraits, among others of naval heroes like Maerten Tromp and Michiel de Ruyter by Ferdinand Bol (SK-A-44). Then there were 'national relics' like De Ruyter's sabre (which later turned out to have been made in India in the 18th century), Tromp's commander's baton, the so-called sea-beggars' beaker and a 'gold cannon'. Adriaen van de Venne's *Fishing for souls* (SK-A-447/no. 290), which was still attributed to Hendrik van Balen and Jan Brueghel the Elder at the time, was given the title *Vischvangst der onderscheidene Secten van het Christendom* (*The fishing catch of the various sects of Christendom*). The next three rooms were given over to paintings by Italian, French and Dutch masters. A good number of the 17th-century Dutch pictures had come from the palaces of Het Loo and Soestdijk. As a result, the display was dominated by late 17th-century decorative works by artists like De Lairese and De Hondecoeter, which had originally been part of the fixtures and fittings in the palaces.⁵ The tour of the Nationale Konst-Gallery ended with a visit to the Oranjezaal, which was decorated with allegories glorifying Prince Frederik Hendrik. This room, which still exists today, with works executed between 1648 and 1652 by such artists as Jacob Jordaens, Caesar van Everdingen, Jan de Bray and others, is a unique monumental ensemble of 17th-century Dutch history painting (fig. 2).⁶

All in all, though, the Nationale Konst-Gallery gave an extremely one-sided picture of the painting of the

Golden Age, with its emphasis on history pieces and decorative work. Not only were most of the great 17th-century masters missing, but there were few of the cabinet pictures that typified most 18th-century Dutch collections. The people running the museum must have been aware of this, for the scores of purchases made in the early years included works that were not only of interest from the point of view of Dutch history but were also aimed at giving painters like Ludolf Bakhuizen, Jacob van Ruisdael, Aelbert Cuyp, Paulus Potter, Jan Steen, David Teniers, Rembrandt and Rubens a place in the Konst-Gallery. The sums involved were rarely large. The gallery's first purchase, two weeks after it opened, was Jan Asselijn's *The threatened swan* (SK-A-4), which was interpreted as being an allegory of the Dutch Republic led by Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt in its struggle against the House of Orange and England. *The beheading of John the Baptist* (SK-A-91), bought as a Rembrandt in 1801, was long attributed to Carel Fabritius but is now considered to be an anonymous work from Rembrandt's studio.⁷ One notable coup was the acquisition in 1804 of important paintings from the Haarlem civic collection by Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (*Adam and Eve*, SK-A-129, and *The wedding of Peleus and Thetis*, now in Haarlem), Jan van Scorel (*Mary Magdalen*, SK-A-372) and Hendrick Cornelisz Vroom (SK-A-602/no. 336).⁸

However, the Nationale Konst-Gallery in Huis ten Bosch had only a short life. Grand Pensionary Rutger Schimmelpenninck moved into the palace in 1805, so that summer the gallery was forced to decamp to the Buitenhof in The Hague. In April 1808, Louis Napoleon, King of Holland from 1806 to 1810 and the brother of the French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, coupled his announcement that Amsterdam would henceforth be the capital of the country with the decision to move the gallery there, and to rechristen it the Koninklijk Museum (Royal Museum).⁹

fig. 1
The Rijksmuseum's painting catalogues of 1809, 1858, 1880, 1885, 1887, 1903, 1934, 1960, 1976 and 1992



The Koninklijk Museum

The Koninklijk Museum opened in Amsterdam on 15 September 1808 in the former town hall on Dam Square, which was now the Royal Palace. It was housed mainly in the chambers of the Small and Great Councils

⁵ See Moes/Van Biema 1909, pp. 1-80, Van Thiel 1976, pp. 10-14, Van Thiel 1981a, Grijzenhout 1984, and most recently, Bergvelt 1998, pp. 34-39, and Van der Ham 2000, pp. 17-32.

⁶ See Peter-Raupp 1980 and Brenninkmeijer-De Rooij 1982. For the recent conservation programme see Rijksgebouwendienst 2001.

⁷ Moes/Van Biema 1909, pp. 29-36, 43-46, 54-64, 66-67, 77-80, 83-85,

and Bergvelt 1998, pp. 39-51, 393-96. Recent publications on *The beheading* are Bikker 2006a and Bikker 2006c.

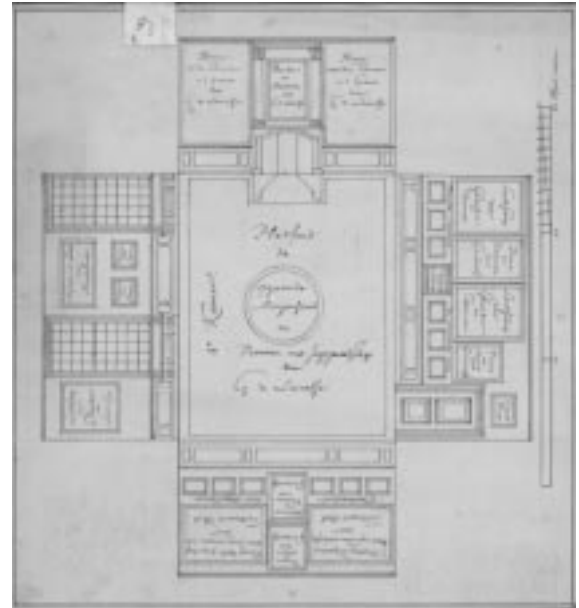
⁸ Moes/Van Biema 1909, pp. 77-79; Bergvelt 1998, pp. 49, 396.

⁹ Moes/Van Biema 1909, pp. 85-91, 95-110, Bergvelt 1998, pp. 55-62, and Van der Ham 2000, pp. 35-51. A considerable number of paintings, particularly the larger ones, remained in The Hague when the museum moved to Amsterdam.

fig. 2
View of works by Jacob Jordaens and other artists in the Oranjezaal in Huis ten Bosch, devoted to the triumphs of Stadholder Frederik Hendrik, 1648-52, after the restoration of 1998-2001. Zeist, Rijksdienst voor Archeologie, Cultuurlandschap en Monumenten



fig. 3
J.G. Waldorp, drawing of room 4 in the Nationale Konst-Gallery, with a ceiling painting and pictures by Gerard de Lairesse, Glauber, Honthorst, Ferdinand Bol and others. The Hague, Nationaal Archief



of War, where numerous paintings belonging to the city had been hanging since the days when the building was the town hall. At Louis Napoleon's insistence, seven of them were added to the museum's holdings, including Bartholomeus van der Helst's *Celebration of the Peace of Münster* (SK-C-2), *The IJ off Amsterdam with the 'Gouden Leeuw'* by Willem van de Velde the Younger (SK-C-7), and Rembrandt's *Night watch* (SK-C-5) and *The syndics* (SK-C-6).¹⁰

Louis Napoleon's brief reign (1806-10) was a period of unprecedented growth for the museum, with the number of paintings being almost doubled. Loans from the City of Amsterdam of several distinctive masterpieces, and the purchase of more than 200 paintings from two 18th-century Dutch cabinets considerably changed the look of the collection, with the emphasis now being firmly on Dutch painting of the Golden Age. Sixty-five works were bought at the Van der Pot auction in 1808, the majority being works by classic 17th-century Dutch masters. The most expensive was Gerard Dou's *Night school* (SK-A-87), followed by Paulus Potter's *Herdsmen with their cattle* (SK-A-318). In June 1809 the Van Heteren Gevers cabinet of 137 paintings was bought in its entirety, and it too consisted almost exclusively of Flemish and above all Dutch cabinet pieces, among them such public favourites as *The paternal admonition* by Gerard ter Borch (SK-404) and Jan Steen's *Feast of St Nicholas* (SK-A-385).¹¹ The museum's catalogue of 1809 lists more than 370 paintings under the name of an artist, of which almost 240 were acquired between 1808 and 1810 (including the loan from the City of Amsterdam). Most of the 100 or so works listed as by unknown masters, generally not very important portraits, came from the former stadholders' collection. These purchases meant that there was now an abundance of 17th-century Dutch cabinet paintings.

Artists like Ludolf Bakhuizen, Nicolaes Berchem, Jan Brueghel, Gerard Dou, Karel Dujardin, Jan van der Heyden, Johannes Lingelbach, Adriaen van Ostade, Paulus Potter, Jan Steen, David Teniers and Philips Wouwerman were represented with several good works each.

Cornelis Apostool's 1809 catalogue of the Koninklijk Museum

The museum's first printed catalogue of 1809 was preceded by two manuscript lists of the paintings on display in the Nationale Konst-Gallery. The one of 1800/01 consists of floor plans drawn by the supervisor J.G. Waldorp (1740-1808) specifying the paintings exhibited in Huis ten Bosch (fig. 3). There were some 200 paintings in the gallery, and the identifications are limited to the titles and, usually, the artist. The handwritten catalogue with the title *Beknopte Beschryving* (Short description) compiled by C.S. Roos (1754-1820) in 1801 seems to be a little more complete, listing 234 paintings and some 20 sculptures and historical artefacts, but is not really any more detailed.¹²

¹⁰ On the Koninklijk Museum see Moes/Van Biema 1909, pp. 85-130, Van Thiel 1976, pp. 14-15, Grijzenhout 2000, and most recently Bergvelt 1998, pp. 59-68, and Van der Ham 2000, pp. 36-58. For the works from the City of Amsterdam see Bosch 1996 and note 16 below.

¹¹ For the purchases made under Louis Napoleon see Moes/Van Biema 1909, pp. 110-14, 145-52, 179-

87, 190-95, Bergvelt 1998, pp. 68-73, 396-400, and Grijzenhout 2000, pp. 46-50; and further the articles on the Van der Pot and Van Heteren Gevers collections, Zeedijk 2007 and Geudecker 2007 respectively.

¹² This list is cited as 1801 in the Rijksmuseum catalogues. See Moes/Van Biema 1909, pp. 39-43 for Waldorp's list, and pp. 47-53 for Roos's catalogue.

The first printed catalogue of the works hanging in the Royal Palace was compiled by Cornelis Apostool (1762-1844), who was appointed director of the Koninklijk Museum in August 1808. Apostool, who returned from Italy at the end of December that year to take up his post, must have set to work on the catalogue almost immediately. He completed the text in August 1809, which also includes the paintings transferred from the Van Heteren Gevers collection that same month. This catalogue probably appeared when the collection in the Royal Palace was reopened to the public in September 1809. It describes 583 works of art, 459 of them paintings, 72 antiquities and objets d'art, and 40 drawings. The text of the catalogue of the paintings, which takes up 95 pages, provides concise information about all the works exhibited. There are 372 listed alphabetically by the maker's name, the entry per painting often amounting to little more than that name and a brief description of the work in one or two sentences. There are slightly lengthier descriptions of the civic guard pieces and several works that were considered important (figs. 4, 5).¹³ The paintings by living masters that the king began buying for the museum in 1808 are omitted, probably because they were exhibited elsewhere in 1809/10.¹⁴

Apostool's catalogue resembles that of the Louvre in Paris, in the 1799 edition of which the pictures are listed alphabetically by regional school with their titles and brief descriptions, but also with biographical information about the artists.¹⁵ The catalogues and guides to other public collections were generally arranged room by room, but that was not an attractive option for the Koninklijk Museum, since the paintings had not yet been given a fixed location. Apostool's catalogue enabled the visitor to use the numbers on the paintings to get to know a little more about them. The dates of the works are rarely given, and the artists' dates are absent altogether, unlike the Louvre catalogue (in which, however, the dimensions and support are also not specified). Only a few changes

were made to the catalogue when the paintings moved to the Rijks Museum in the Trippenhuys in 1817. It was not until the first French edition of 1825 and the Dutch one of 1827 that the artists' dates were included. The government, Apostool and his public were evidently satisfied with the catalogue as it was, for the entries on the paintings were reprinted with only minor alterations up to 1843, and in an abbreviated form even until 1856.

Apostool's catalogue combined summary descriptions of the pictures (merely the names of the sitters in the case of portraits), with more detailed information here and there. Occasionally there is something about the historical event that gave rise to the painting, or about its reputation, and sometimes (but often not) there are remarks about its quality or a description of the scene. Apostool appears to have compiled the information from previous lists, sale catalogues and descriptions with little in the way of an original contribution on his part, and without much sense of consistency.

¹³ There are several versions of the 1809 catalogue, in each of which the layout of the title page is different; see Keers/Koot 1992, p. 22. The Rijksmuseum library has the following copies.

- 2nd version, with the price given as 11 stuivers and with Apostool's signature: shelfmark 610 G 36 (incomplete);

- 3rd version, with the price given as 14 stuivers and the publisher as Gebroeders van Cleef: shelfmark 19 D 1, with much later pencilled annotations (possibly made in or around 1880) giving dates of acquisition, provenances (Pot, vH[eteren], Bicker etc.), and mentioning the 1828 sale and altered attributions;

- 4th version: shelfmark 19 D 2, interleaved copy with pencilled annotations indicating which paintings were transferred to Amsterdam in 1808 and which ones came from the 'vdPot and vanHeteren' collections.

In common with the notes about provenances in the other catalogues, these are not always accurate.

The first version has not been traced. The publication mentioned as being the first catalogue of 1808 is a list of the works by living masters exhibited in that year. The Rijksmuseum library also has copies of the Dutch editions of 1816, 1819, 1821, 1825, 1827 (see note 35), 1828, 1830, 1832, 1833, 1836, 1837, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1843 (see note 18), 1846, 1849, 1851, 1853 (see note 39), and the French editions of 1825, 1827, 1830, 1834, 1838, 1847, 1849, 1850, 1855; shelfmarks 19 D 1-19, and shelfmarks 452 A 26-41 from the Keers donation.

¹⁴ They were exhibited briefly in Paviljoen Welgelegen in Haarlem in 1809/10 before returning to Amsterdam in 1810, when they were displayed in a separate room in the palace. In the Trippenhuys, to which the museum moved in 1816, they could only be viewed on request in the printroom. It was only from 1838 (until the opening of the new Rijksmuseum building in 1885) that the contemporary paintings went on permanent display in Paviljoen Welgelegen in Haarlem, which was accessible as a museum with ordinary opening hours. See Bergvelt 1998, pp. 74-76, and Van der Ham 2000, pp. 85-92; See also Bergvelt 1984 and 2006. When the presentation of works by living masters was opened in 1838, it was accompanied by a concise catalogue in Dutch titled *Notitie der koninklijke verzameling van schilderijen van levende meesters* (Notice of the royal collection of paintings by living masters), and one in French. See Keers/Koot 1992, pp. 27-28, for a list of the various editions, the last of which was published in 1878, followed by a more detailed descriptive catalogue by G.J. Gonnet in 1880.

¹⁵ For example, coll. cat. Paris 1799. The arrangement of the catalogue was retained in the subsequent editions of the *Notice*, with the name of the museum being changed from Musée Royal to Musée Impérial. The descriptions became more detailed later in the 19th century, and the dimensions of the paintings were added, which ultimately resulted in the fairly extensive systematic catalogues of Frédéric Villot, coll. cats. Paris 1849, 1852 and 1855.

fig. 4
Title page of the *Catalogus der schilderijen, oudheden, enz.* of 1809

fig. 5
Catalogus der schilderijen, oudheden, enz. of 1809, pp. 68-69





fig. 6
Augustus Jensberg, Rembrandt's
'Night watch' in the Trippenhuis,
oil on canvas, 1880.
Malmö, Konstmuseum

This is seen, for example, in the fairly detailed entries on the four civic guard pieces by Govert Flinck, Van der Helst and Rembrandt on loan from the City of Amsterdam. They were based on Van Dyk's guide to the paintings hanging in the town hall of Amsterdam, which was first published in 1758.¹⁶ In many cases Apostool simply copied the texts in the Van der Pot sale catalogue of 1808 (such as the long one on Gerard Dou's *Night school*) and in the French manuscript list of conveyance of Van Heteren Gevers's paintings of the same year.¹⁷ This is why the catalogue entries on the Van der Pot paintings are often longer

¹⁶ Van Dyk 1758, pp. 42-47, 39-40, 58-61, respectively.

¹⁷ See the sale catalogue of the Gerrit van der Pot van Groenevelt collection, Rotterdam, 6 June 1808, and Zeedijk 2007, as well as the *Catalogue Raisonné d'un collection de tableaux appartenant à Monsieur A.L. Gevers, Page de Leurs Majestés le Roi et la Reine de la Hollande*, manuscript 1808 (Moes/Van Biema 1909, pp. 145-51) and Geudecker 2007.

¹⁸ Cf. Bergvelt 1998, pp. 78-83.

¹⁹ According to the 1976 catalogue, the C. Bega (no. 19 in the 1809 catalogue) is by Salomon Koninck (SK-A-23), the portrait of P.C. Hooff (no. 42) is not by L. Bramer but a copy after Von Sandrart (SK-A-56), the Aelbert Cuyp (no. 67) is by A. van Calraet (SK-A-79), the Van den Eeckhout (no. 86) is by J.A. Backer (SK-A-157), the J. van der Hagen (no. 107) is now called Northern Netherlands, c. 1660 (SK-A-132), the Frans Hals (no. 110) is now Northern Netherlands, c. 1610. The still life by J.D. de Heem (no. 112) with a false signature was called Pieter Claesz, but is clearly

a good early work by Willem C. Heda (SK-A-137/no. 119). The portrait of Vice-Admiral Stellingwerf is not by Bartholomeus van der Helst (no. 119) but by his son Lodewijk (SK-A-148). The 'Hendrik de Keizer' (no. 165) is now called Northern Netherlands, c. 1620 (SK-A-201/no. 421), the N. Koedijk (no. 168) is Northern Netherlands, c. 1620-25 (SK-A-204/no. 430), the 'Vermeer of Delft' (no. 187) is now attributed to E. van der Poel (SK-A-117), the female portrait (no. 213) is now called Northern Netherlands, c. 1630 (SK-A-585/no. 429), B. Peeters (no. 231) is now catalogued as by P. van der Velden (SK-A-307), and the painting in the manner of Paulus Potter (no. 245) turned out to be a C. Netscher (SK-A-319). The *Self-portrait* by Jacob van Geel (SK-A-115) was given to Carel de Moor (no. 211), which Dubourcq corrected in 1858. The *beheading of John the Baptist* (SK-A-91), acquired as a Rembrandt in 1800, was attributed from 1858 to W. Drost and later to 'and/or' Carel Fabritius (no. 252). The portraits given to

than the others and are written in sale catalogue jargon, in contrast to the more neutral entries on the works from Van Heteren Gevers. It is doubtful, then, whether one can deduce Apostool's personal opinion of the paintings from these catalogue entries and qualifying remarks.¹⁸

Since the accent in the collection was on Dutch painting of the Golden Age, it is not surprising that that makes up the most informative part of the catalogue, particularly as regards the civic guard pieces, marines, landscapes (the Italianates, chiefly) and genre scenes. Attribution was no problem for most of the works by 17th-century Dutch and Flemish masters in the Trippenhuis, partly because many of them were signed. The incorrect attributions are relatively few in number.¹⁹ However, it was a different matter with the 15th and 16th-century Dutch painters. *The Holy Kinship* from Van der Pot's collection was regarded not only as a work by Jan and Hubert van Eyck but also as one of the very earliest oil paintings. The attribution was incorrect, as it was in the case of the two other so-called Van Eycks in the catalogue. A *Mary Magdalen* by Jan van Scorel turned out to be a copy after Guercino, and a *Madonna* by Quinten Massys was described as being by or in the manner of Mazzuoli (Parmigianino).²⁰ In the

Rembrandt were also reduced when the portrait of Uytenbogaert (no. 253) was attributed to Flinck (SK-A-582), and the 'portrait of Lumeij' (no. 254) is now regarded as a copy after Rembrandt, possibly a portrait of his father (SK-A-358); see recently Bikker 2006b and Wallert 2006. The *Interior of the church of St Bavo in Haarlem* by Isaac van Nickelen (SK-A-360) was called Pieter Saenredam (no. 271). The Esaias van der Velde (no. 313) is by Van Hillegaert (SK-A-435/no. 126) and another (no. 314, 'ceene Kat de Bel aanbinden', 'belling a cat') is as follower of A. van der Venne (SK-A-434/no. 306). The Vinckboons (no. 333) is by Van Hillegaert (SK-A-452/no. 122), and the Simon de Vlieger (no. 335) is by Jan van de Cappelle (SK-A-453). Two paintings by Jan Weenix (SK-A-464 and SK-A-462) are listed as being by Jan Baptist Weenix (nos. 340 and 242). A church interior by H. van Vliet (SK-A-455) is listed as Emanuel de Witte (no. 349), and a painting by J. Olis (SK-A-296) as H.M. Sorgh (no. 372). Among the Flemish 17th-century paintings, David Ryckaert III (SK-A-357) was called Van Arp (no. 1), the *Fishing for souls* by Adriaen van der Venne (SK-A-447/no. 290) was assigned to Hendrik van Balen and Jan Brueghel (no. 13). The Rubens (no. 265) and Snijders (no. 286) are copies after Rubens (SK-A-346 and SK-A-600 (destroyed)). The Teniers (no. 297) is by N. van Eyck (SK-A-619) and the Teniers *Peace of Münster* (no. 305) is a copy after Gerard ter Borch (SK-A-405).

²⁰ See Filedt Kok/Bergvelt 1998, esp. pp. 126-31, 194-95, and Bergvelt 1998, p. 83. Of the three Van Eycks, no. 87, *The Holy Kinship* (SK-A-500), is now attributed to Geertgen tot Sint Jans, no. 88, the *Virgo inter Virgines*, has been given to the Master of the Virgo inter Virgines (SK-A-501), and the *Adoration* (no. 89) proved to be a copy after Hieronymus Bosch (SK-A-124). Jan van Scorel's *Mary Magdalen* (no. 277) has been demoted to a copy after Guercino (SK-A-593), while his genuine *Mary Magdalen* (SK-A-372) was described as an *Emblematic woman* (no. 278: *Zinnebeeldige Vrouw*). The *Madonna* attributed to Parmigianino (no. 285), which was regarded as Gossaert when it hung in Het Loo Palace, is now regarded as a copy after Quinten Massys (SK-A-247). The *Portrait of Philip of Burgundy* (no. 176) by Lucas van Leyden, turned out to be a *Portrait of Floris van Egmond* by Jan Gossaert (SK-A-217). The attributions of many other 16th-century portraits have also been changed. The *Portrait of Alba* (no. 16) by Barendsz is now seen as a copy after W. Key (SK-A-18); The *Portrait of Erasmus* is not a Holbein (no. 135), but a copy after Quinten Massys (SK-A-166), and another 'Holbein' portrait (no. 136) can be attributed to Joos van Cleve (SK-A-165). The *Portrait of Elizabeth I* by Frans Pourbus (no. 246) is now called School of Fontainebleau (SK-A-320).



fig. 7
Room with Bartholomeus van der Helst's *Celebration of the Peace of Münster* in the Trippenhuis, photograph of c. 1880

light of current knowledge, not one of the attributions of the Italian paintings was correct, with many of the works regarded as originals turning out to be copies.²¹

The Rijksmuseum in the Trippenhuis

In 1815, after the return of the House of Orange and the accession of King Willem I to the throne, it was decided to house the museum in the Trippenhuis, along with the Koninklijk Nederlandsch Instituut (Royal Netherlands Institute, which later became the Koninklijke Nederlandse Academie van Wetenschappen, or Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, KNAW for short), where it opened its doors in February 1817. After the departure in 1825 of the 'relics' and 'antiquities' to the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden (Royal Cabinet of Rarities) in The Hague and the Museum voor Oudheden (Museum of Antiquities) in Leiden, the Rijks Museum became a museum for paintings with a printroom attached. The building was very cramped for the more than 500 pictures on display on the first and second floors. The antechamber on the first floor, which was the largest room in the building, was given over to 'the outstanding paintings relating to the nation's history and the portraits of our country's most famous sons'. Rembrandt's *Night watch* and Van der Helst's *Celebration of the Peace of Münster* faced each other on the side walls (figs. 6, 7). Both were among the most celebrated works in the museum, and in the course of the 19th century the public's admiration shifted from the Van der Helst to the Rembrandt. The earlier paintings and other large history pieces were displayed in the antechamber on the second floor (fig. 8), and included works by De Lairese, Caspar de Crayer (fig. 9) and others. The smaller rooms at the back were filled with still lifes, landscapes and genre paintings.²² There was little change in the structure of the collection until the move to the new Rijksmuseum building in 1885. Thanks to the purchases of Louis Napoleon and the loan

from the City of Amsterdam, the museum had several famous masterpieces from the Golden Age. The composition of the collection, though, was rather one-sided. There were now numerous small works by masters like Nicolaes Berchem, Jan Steen, Jan van der Heyden, Philips Wouwerman and others, but Frans Hals, Meindert Hobbema, Aert van der Neer, Pieter de Hooch and Johannes Vermeer were absent.

In the meantime, the Netherlands had gained another museum of paintings, the Mauritshuis in The Hague, to which the government transferred the nationalised stadholders' collection, much of which had been returned from France after being carried off as booty. Here, too, the emphasis was on the art of the Golden Age. The directors of both museums set out to have at least one typical painting by every Dutch and Flemish master, and it was with that end in view that they made an exchange of works and in 1828 sold paintings by artists who were already well represented in both collections.²³ King Willem I, on whom both museums depended for support, clearly favoured the Mauritshuis when it came to proposed purchases. For instance, he ignored the advice of both directors when he decided that Vermeer's *View of Delft*, which had been bought in 1822, was to go to The Hague. On the other hand, the famous *Hut* by Adriaen van de Velde (SK-A-443), which was bought that same year for considerably more money at the Brentano auction, was given a place in the Rijksmuseum. However, in 1828 Willem I gave the Mauritshuis Rembrandt's *Anatomy lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp*, from the collection of Amsterdam's surgeons' guild, despite the fact that it was Apostool who had done everything in his power to bring about the purchase, which was largely financed with money raised from the sale of superfluous paintings from the Rijks Museum.

Amsterdam was more fortunate in its acquisition of two masterpieces by Frans Hals, whose reputation was not very high at the time: *The merry drinker* (SK-A-135/ no. 105) in 1816, and the *Portrait of Isaac Massa and Beatrix van der Laen* (SK-A-133/ no. 104) in 1852. Other purchases like *The beautiful shepherdess* by Paulus Moreelse (SK-A-276/ no. 220) in 1817, a sumptuous still life by

²¹ Barely one of the Italian attributions has survived. The Correggio (no. 62) is a copy after Titian (SK-A-595), C. Ferris (no. 90) is now an anonymous Italian of the second half of the 17th century (SK-A-109), the Garofalo (no. 95) has been placed in Ferrara, second half of the 16th century (SK-A-109), the Lanfranco (no. 174) is attributed to Matthias Stomer (SK-A-216), Schiavone's *Adonis* (no. 280) is Netherlands School, 17th century (SK-A-512), Spagnoletti (no. 287) is attributed to A. Seridone

(SK-A-332), and the Veronese (no. 328) is now listed as a copy after Palma Vecchio (SK-A-594).

²² On the Rijks Museum in the Trippenhuis see Van Thiel 1983c, which is a summary, with supplementary information on the purchasing policy and hang, of a series of seven articles published in the *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum*: Van Thiel 1981b-c, 1982a-b, 1983a-b, 1984a. See also Van Thiel 1976, pp. 15-23, Bergvelt 1998, pp. 88-184, and Van der Ham 2000, pp. 68-88.

²³ Filedt Kok 2007.

fig. 8
Gerrit Lamberts, *Interior of the antechamber in the Rijks Museum in the Trippenhuis*, watercolour, 23.5 x 41 cm, c. 1838.
Amsterdam City Archives

fig. 9
Gerrit Lamberts, *Interior of the large room in the Rijks Museum in the Trippenhuis*, watercolour, 23.5 x 41 cm, c. 1838.
Amsterdam City Archives



Willem Kalf (SK-A-199), and the *Merry violinist with wine-glass* (SK-A-180/no. 135) by Gerard van Honthorst in 1824 illustrated aspects of 17th-century Dutch painting that had not been present in the museum until then. It would be a long time, though, before early 17th-century Haarlem landscape and still-life painters like Esaias van de Velde and Avercamp, Pieter Claesz and Willem C. Heda entered the museum, let alone history paintings by Dutch Caravaggisti like Hendrick ter Brugghen, Dirck van Baburen and Honthorst. In this period however, the museum made every effort to acquire work by 17th-century Flemish artists. An exchange with the Mauritshuis brought pictures by Rubens (SK-A-345) and Anthony van Dyck (SK-A-101) to Amsterdam, while the acquisition of several Italian and Spanish works shows that both museums had international ambitions.²⁴

The purchasing policies of both institutions, which had been fairly modest to start with, stagnated in the

period 1830-1875, when they were allocated hardly any funds at all. King Willem II, who ruled from 1840 to 1849, was only interested in his own private collection, and the Dutch government restricted itself to administering the existing collections. As a result, the period up to 1875 was one of marking time. The number of major acquisitions was very small: the two Bicker portraits by Bartholomeus van der Helst (SK-A-146-47) in 1848, Ferdinand Bol's *Self-portrait* (SK-A-42), which was bequeathed by Albertus Brondgeest in 1849, the Frans Hals portrait of Isaac Massa and his wife in 1852, and the *Portrait of a girl*, known as 'The little princess' by Paulus Moreelse (SK-A-277/no. 217). Sadly, almost nothing remained in the Netherlands of the superb private collection that Willem II had put together in the first few decades of the 19th century. That classic royal collection, with important works by great masters like Jan van Eyck, Raphael, Titian, Rubens, Van Dyck, Claude Lorrain, Murillo and Rembrandt, would have given a Dutch museum the international collection that not one of them has today. In addition, the paintings by Rembrandt, Van Ruisdael, Hobbema and Van der Helst were of a quality and stature that were missing in Dutch museums. The king's collection was auctioned in The Hague after his death in 1849, and almost all of it went to foreign buyers.²⁵ The minister turned down the Rijksmuseum's request to buy two important paintings by Teniers and Hobbema, although in 1885 the Teniers did come to the museum with the Van der Hoop collection (SK-C-298).²⁶

The later editions of Apostool's catalogue, 1816-55

As stated above, Cornelis Apostool's catalogue was reprinted without any substantive changes between 1816 and 1843. From 1827 it was titled *Aanwijzing der schilderijen* (Information on the paintings), and the French edition, which was also reprinted regularly, was called *Notice des tableaux*.²⁷

²⁴ Bergvelt 1998, pp. 401-02. Works bought for the Rijksmuseum in 1822 were *A satyr* by Jordaens (SK-A-198) and *The apotheosis of the Virgin* (SK-A-598), which was attributed to Anthony van Dyck at the time before later being assigned to the Spanish painter José Antolinez, and recently to Thomas Willeboirts Bosschaert. Purchases in 1823 included a Garofalo (SK-A-114) and a Murillo (SK-A-282).

²⁵ Hinterding/Horsch 1989.

²⁶ Bergvelt 1998, pp. 169-73.

²⁷ Here and there in the 1825 French edition information is included about the provenance of paintings from the Van Heteren Gevers and Van der Pot collections, and the dates of most of the artists

are given. Cf. shelfmarks 19 D 6 and 452 A 29 in the Rijksmuseum library. In the RMA archive in the Noord-Hollands Rijksarchief, no. 138, are two manuscript versions of a French catalogue and an incomplete manuscript of an English version of it that was never printed. The French versions follow the numbering of the 1809 catalogue, but biographical data were added to the artists' names in the text and information on the provenance of some of the pictures. These data were included in the printed French catalogues from 1825 on, but the provenances (which were rather unreliable) were removed in the 1838 edition.

fig. 10
Interleaved copy of the *Aanwijzing der schilderijen, berustende op 's Rijks Museum te Amsterdam* of 1827, p. 9



fig. 11
Interleaved copy of the *Aanwijzing der schilderijen* of 1843, p. 48, with notes about the condition of the paintings



What is interesting when studying the successive editions is that one can see how the collection was thinned out. Some of the pictures that Apostool did not put on display had already been removed from the catalogue of 1818. In 1825, seven (among others by Bakhuizen, Lingelbach and Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem) were exchanged with the Mauritshuis for three by Van Dyck, Rubens and Potter.²⁸ On 4 August 1828 there was an auction in Amsterdam of 46 paintings which Apostool regarded as being of inferior quality or as duplicates, in the sense that the artists in question – Bakhuizen, Berchem, Dou, Van der Heyden, Adriaen van Ostade, Van Poelenburch, Potter, Teniers, Willem van de Velde and Wouwerman – were already represented with several better works. Most of these were cabinet pieces, many of them from the Van Heteren Gevers collection. In retrospect, the most regrettable step was the deaccessioning of several works by Jordaens, Rubens and Gerard de Lairese from the stadholders' collection. The 22,000 guilders raised by the sale exceeded all expectations.²⁹

Few acquisitions were made in the following decades, and the 1830 edition of the *Aanwijzing* lists only 415 paintings compared to 459 in 1809. Apostool died in 1844, and the editorship of the catalogue passed to Albertus

Brondgeest (1786-1849).³⁰ From 1846, the *Aanwijzing* (in which the paintings were renumbered) gave no more than a list of artists (with their dates) and short titles. The layout was altered and the book was slimmed down from 88 pages to 44.³¹ In this series of catalogues the information was reduced to a single sentence for each picture, and there is nothing to indicate that knowledge of the collection, art-historical or otherwise, was changing or growing. A number of annotated copies in the Rijksmuseum library give a better idea of the collecting policy in this period. One of the 1827 edition contains notes about the locations of the paintings in the six rooms of the Trippenhuis, about provenances, and about the pictures to be sold in 1828 (fig. 10).³² Another annotated copy, of the 1843 edition, has notes about the condition of the paintings, and occasionally about attributions. Many of the works are described as 'in good condition' ('gaaf'), while in the case of others there is mention of damaged areas and overpaints, or remarks like 'badly lined' ('slegt verdoekt'), 'has suffered from cleaning' ('heeft door schoonmaken geleden'), 'the canvas severely cracked' ('het doek zwaar gebarsten'), 'heavily cleaned' ('zwaar schoongemaakt'), and so on (fig. 11). It was said of *The night watch* that it 'had been subjected to inexpert restoration in 1795, and a strip was cut off on the left, there is painting in some places in the background, a carpenter's hammer was dropped on it when benches were being installed for the meeting of the Institute recently, leaving a hole'. And about Gerard Dou's *Night school* we read: 'has suffered in many places, some of which have blanched, the background is largely over-

²⁸ Bergvelt 1998, pp. 113-14, 402.

²⁹ On this see Bergvelt 1998, pp. 115-17. In an interleaved copy of the *Aanwijzing* of 1827 in the Rijksmuseum library (shelfmark 19 D 8) Apostool noted down the numbers of the rooms in which the paintings hung in the Trippenhuis, the purchase prices of those from the Van der Pot collection, pencilled in which pictures could be sold, and later entered what they had fetched in pen. See further Filedt Kok 2007.

³⁰ Brondgeest was an art dealer and auctioneer, and from 1844 a member of the museum's supervisory committee; see Bergvelt 1998, pp. 146-50.

³¹ For a fully annotated survey see Keers/Koot 1992, pp. 22-24. The catalogue first lists the paintings of the 'Dutch School', then those of the 'Various schools', and finally the anonymous works, which led to a renumbering. This was followed by a list of portrait sitters. The number of works was reduced to 386 in 1846 (compared to 415 in 1843). Starting in the 1830s, the

catalogue included several paintings by Dutch masters who had died in the first few decades of the 19th century (N. Bauer, A. J. Brandt, W. Hendriks, J. Hulswit, J. Kobell, J. Lauwers, A. de Lelie, H. van Limburg, J. Linthorst, P. Noël, J. van Os, H. Prins, J. C. Schotel, H. Stokvisch, A. and J. van Strij). Some of them had already been removed from the *Aanwijzing* in 1843, to be joined by most of the remainder in 1849 when they formed part of the presentation of works by modern masters in Paviljoen Welgelegen in Haarlem. Despite this, the numbers increased slightly to 395 in 1849, and to 403 in 1853. Acquisitions were thereafter inserted in the alphabetical sequence and marked with an asterisk.

³² Two copies of the 1809 catalogue with notes on provenances were mentioned in note 13. Those notes, however, were made considerably later, probably prior to the sale of 1828 in the case of shelfmark 19 D 2, and only late in the 19th century in the case of 19 D 1.

painted, there is craquelure in the varnish on this over-paint, this can be corrected to some extent but not repaired without hazarding a great deal with this costly piece'. These notes were very probably made by the supervisor H.A. Klinkhamer in 1844-45, and it is likely that this copy of the catalogue served as the basis for the restorer Nicolaas Hopman (1794-1870) when he carried out the overdue conservation of the Trippenhuis pictures in 1845.³³ Surprisingly, the annotated copy of the 1853 edition contains a valuation of all the paintings (fig. 12). This was probably done to bolster the case for building a new museum by stressing the financial value of the collection. It was estimated to be worth 2½ million guilders, including *The night watch* and Van der Helst's civic guard piece, which were valued at half a million guilders each.³⁴



fig. 12
Copy of the *Aanwijzing der schilderijen* of 1853, with valuations, pp. 26-27

It is astonishing that Apostool's hastily compiled catalogue of 1809 continued to serve for the next 40 years with virtually unaltered attributions in the successive editions.³⁵ When the famous connoisseur Théophile Thoré, alias W. Bürger, discussed the museum in the first volume of his *Musées de la Hollande* in 1858, he made it clear that a new building, a new hang of the paintings and a new catalogue were needed in order to do justice to the glories of 17th-century Dutch art.³⁶ In that same year, Apostool's catalogue was finally replaced by a new one written by P.L. Dubourcq.

Dubourcq's catalogues of the Rijksmuseum, 1858-76

After the resignation of the director and history painter Jan Willem Pieneman, the museum was run from 1847 to 1875 by an unpaid board of governors of between

three and four members, one of whom was Pieneman. As a brand-new member of the board, the painter Pierre Louis Dubourcq (1815-73) wrote a letter on 5 June 1856 to his fellow members, P.E.H. Praetorius, J. de Vos Jbsz and N. Pieneman, with a detailed proposal for a new catalogue of the collection of paintings in the Trippenhuis, which he would write. It was to be modelled on the one of the Dutch pictures in the Louvre by Frédéric Villot, which had been published in 1852.³⁷ Between July 1856 and April 1858, Dubourcq, assisted by the supervisors H.A. Klinkhamer en W.J.M. Engelberts, wrote the first detailed catalogue of paintings: the *Beschrijving der schilderijen op 's Rijks Museum* (Description of the paintings in the Rijks Museum; fig. 13). As Keers and Koot observed in 1992, it 'contains the various categories of information



fig. 13
Title page of Dubourcq's *Beschrijving der schilderijen* of 1858

³³ Rijksmuseum library, shelfmark 19 D 17. These notes, which were based on Hopman's observations, were probably written out in a fair copy by Klinkhamer, because the handwriting is similar to that in the copy books of this period (RMA archive, no. 37). See Bergvelt 1998, pp. 149-50. Neither Van Thiel 1983a nor Bergvelt knew of the annotated copies.

³⁴ Rijksmuseum library, shelfmark 19 D 23; see Bergvelt 1998, pp. 174-76.

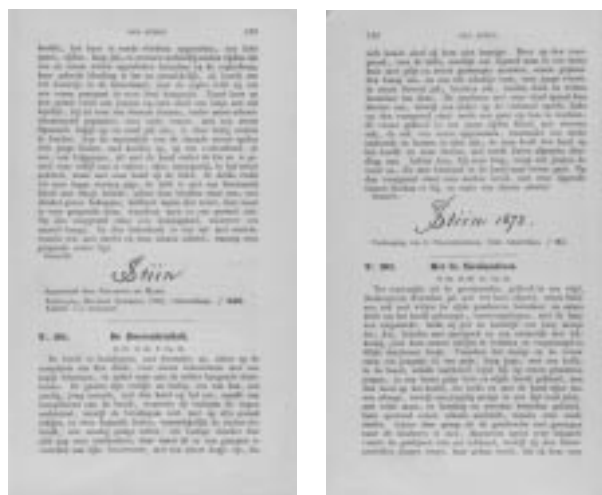
³⁵ It is odd that the errors and omissions in managing the collection were not corrected. For example, Frans Hals's *Merry drinker* (SK-A-135/no. 105), which was acquired in 1816, is listed as *The portrait of a man* in the catalogue of that year (p. 27, no. 103), and in those of 1818, 1821 and 1825, in addition to the *Portrait of Captain Ripperda*, which was wrongly described as a Frans Hals, as it had been in 1809, p. 27, no. 110; SK-A-576/no. 414). From 1827 on

the portrait of Ripperda remained in the catalogue as a Frans Hals, but *The portrait of a man* was dropped altogether. This omission was rectified in the *Aanwijzing* of 1846, with it being listed as *The portrait of a man* under no. 92, with Ripperda's portrait relegated to the unknown masters. It was not until the catalogue of 1858 that it was listed as *A merry man* painted by Frans Hals. The *Landscape* by Griffier, which was sold in 1828, was not removed until the *Aanwijzing* of 1846 (in 1843, p. 22, no. 102). *The egg dance* by Pieter Aertsen (SK-A-3), which was bought in 1839, is not mentioned in the catalogues until 1858, when it is listed under the anonymous works, and is only given to Aertsen in the 1864 edition.

³⁶ See Thoré-Bürger I, 1858, p. 4; on Thoré, see also Van Thiel 1983c, p. 269, Filedt Kok 1998, p. 134, and Bergvelt 1998, pp. 184-90.

³⁷ Coll. cats. Paris 1849, 1852 and 1855.

fig. 14
Double page in Dubourcq's
Beschrijving der schilderijen of
1858, pp. 136-37



which have formed the basis of scholarly cataloguing right up to the present day'.³⁸

An introduction explaining the basic principles of the catalogue is followed by a 'Korte geschiedenis van den oorsprong en de lotgevallen van 's Rijksmuseum' (Brief history of the origins and fortunes of the Rijksmuseum), which started a tradition that found its apotheosis in the 1976 catalogue in Van Thiel's masterly 'Chronological history of the Rijksmuseum painting collection'. This is followed, alphabetically by artist, by the descriptions of the works by known masters, and then those by the unknown artists in chronological order. Finally, there was a list of the portraits. The structure of the individual catalogue entries followed the system adopted for the Louvre catalogue: the name of the artist, the title, the dimensions (height, width, and the size of the figures in the painting), the support (canvas, panel or copper), a description with a mention of any inscriptions, and a not very accurate facsimile of the signature, the provenance (with the prices fetched at auction), and reproductive prints, if any, were listed (fig. 14). In contrast to the Louvre catalogue, the artists' biographies are limited to the years of birth and death and the names of their teachers.

Now, for the first time, the paintings were given short, clear-cut titles. In the case of the genre works, in particular, they stress the unique nature of the scene – often wrongly. For example, to take Gerard Dou: *De Nieuwsgierige* (*The inquisitive person*, SK-A-89), *De Kluzenaar* (*The hermit*, SK-A-88), *De Avondschoon* (*The night school*, SK-A-87),³⁹ Jan Steen: *De Schuurster* (*The scourer*, SK-A-391), *Het vrolijk huiswaartskeeren* (*The merry homecoming*, SK-A-389), *De bakker Oostwaard* (*Oostwaard the baker*, SK-A-390), *De Kwakzalver* (*The quack*, SK-A-387), *De Papegaai's-Kooi* (*The parrot cage*, SK-A-386), *De Boerenbruiloft* (*The peasant wedding*, SK-A-388), *Het St. Nicolaasfeest* (*The Feast of St Nicholas*, SK-A-385), and Philips Wouwerman: *De Rijschool* (*The riding school*, SK-A-477), *De Hoefsmid* (*The blacksmith*, SK-A-478), *De Reigerjagt* (*The heron hunt*, SK-A-481), *Het Paardenwed* (*The horsepond*,

SK-A-485). *The fishing catch of the various sects of Christendom* from the 1809 catalogue, which Dubourcq now attributed to Adriaen van de Venne, is retitled *De Zielenvisschers* (*Fishing for souls*, SK-A-447/no. 290). These titles were retained in the following generations of Rijksmuseum catalogues until well into the 20th century. In the 1976 edition most of them were replaced with descriptive titles.

The rather inaccurate drawn facsimiles of the signatures, dates etc., which were not yet a feature of the Louvre catalogue of 1852, were included in imitation of the catalogues of the museums in Vienna and Antwerp. Like almost all the serious collection catalogues of the day, improved versions would remain a standard part of the ones published by the Rijksmuseum up until the Second World War. In the 1960 edition they were replaced with a selection of photographed signatures.⁴⁰ The descriptions of the scenes are, as Bergvelt has put it, image substitutes. In contrast to the neutral tone of Villot's catalogue, some of them express an opinion about the quality of the work, but as yet there was no question of a broader art-historical treatment.⁴¹ Unlike Apostool's descriptions, those in Dubourcq's catalogue made an unambiguous identification possible for the first time, when taken in conjunction with the dimensions. Despite the lack of illustrations, from 1858 on there was no doubt about which painting it was. The Paris catalogue ends with a chronological table of the artists, but the Amsterdam one has an 'Alphabetische lijst van bekende personen, wier portretten op 's Rijks Museum in schilderij aanwezig

³⁸ Coll. cat. 1858. See Keers/Koot 1992, pp. 22, 24, for the six successive editions, which were published in both Dutch and French between 1858 and 1876. In the Rijksmuseum library they are shelfmarks 19 D 31-40 and, from the Keers donation, 452 A 43-52. There is an interleaved copy of the 1858 edition (shelfmark 19 D 31) with a few annotations, and one of the French edition of 1866 (shelfmark 19 D 37a) with notes by A.H. de Vries. A good picture of the genesis of the catalogue is provided by letters to Dubourcq from P. Scheltema, H.A. Klinkhamer and G. Lamberts (RMA archive, nos. 142-43, and no. 26/76), in reply to Dubourcq's requests for information. The manuscript for the catalogue is in the Rijksmuseum archive, 141-A-B.

³⁹ In Apostool's 1809 catalogue these are, respectively, no. 76, 'A young girl showing herself in front of a niche with a burning lamp in her hand', no. 73, 'A monk praying in a cave, leaning on his arms and with a rosary between his folded hands, his eyes fixed on the crucifix before him', and no. 71, 'This painting, famous in every respect, shows

a night school: the master, seated at a table on which there is a lectern, appears to be admonishing a boy'.⁴⁰ Such facsimiles of signatures make their first appearance in the Antwerp painting catalogue coll. cat. Antwerp 1857, and on a very modest scale in that of the Belvédère in Vienna of 1858, coll. cat. Vienna 1858. From the 1880s up to the Second World War they are found in almost every thorough catalogue of European museums (Berlin, Dresden, Kassel, Munich, Vienna, London, etc.). These drawings are absent from most post-war catalogues. The quality of the drawings improved over time in the Rijksmuseum catalogues. A new set of models was made in 1880 (see Bergvelt 1998, p. 337, note 133), and it is stated in the foreword to the 1903 catalogue that many of them had proved to be incorrect and had been replaced by better ones. True accuracy only came with the photographs of signatures in the 1960 catalogue.

⁴¹ For a detailed analysis of the catalogue entries see Bergvelt 1998, pp. 179-82.

zijn' (Alphabetical list of known individuals whose portraits are in paintings in the Rijks Museum), which makes it clear how much importance was still being attached to portraits of historical figures, most of them Dutch.

Dubourcq's catalogue is considerably more accurate than its predecessors, but only to a limited extent is there evidence of maturing art-historical and iconographic insights. Only the most glaring misattributions are corrected. In 1858 the museum lost two of the three paintings ascribed to Jan van Eyck, the number of works given to anonymous artists increased, and several others were roundly labelled as copies. *The beheading of John the Baptist* bought as a Rembrandt in 1801 was transferred to Willem Drost, to which 'and/or Carel Fabritius' was added after 1864. *Fishing for souls*, which according to Apostool was a joint work by Hendrik van Balen and Jan Brueghel, was revised to Adriaen van de Venne and Jan Brueghel, with the latter supposedly supplying the sky and the water. In 1876 it was given to Van de Venne alone.⁴²

The next six editions corrected errors and incorporated new information about identifications and attributions.⁴³ New acquisitions led to changes in the numbering in the editions of 1864, 1870 and 1876, and an increase in the size of the catalogue. L. Dupper's bequest of 64 mostly 17th-century Dutch paintings were included in the 1870 edition. Dubourcq died in 1873, and J.W. Kaiser, who became the museum's director in 1875, took on the task of overseeing the catalogue. The 1876 edition includes the bequest of fifteen pastels and one enamel by Liotard. Although new acquisitions were placed at the end of the catalogue with provisional numbers, in later editions they were included with consecutive numbers in the main body, alphabetically by artist's name.⁴⁴

The prospect of a new Rijksmuseum building

One of the consequences of the flourishing art trade was that many paintings by Dutch masters had been going abroad, even since the 17th century. The Berlin museum director Wilhelm von Bode wrote in 1871 that 'Anything in the numerous Dutch private collections that was not part of the fixed furnishings has been hawked abroad, apart from a tiny fraction'. However, it was around now that the tide started to change. In 1870 the large bequest of the Dordrecht collector L. Dupper Wz entered the Rijksmuseum: more than 60, largely 17th-century Dutch cabinet paintings.⁴⁵ It was the first in a series of gifts and bequests that further reinforced the emphasis on the 17th-century Dutch School. In addition, in the years that followed there was a prospect of a new building for the museum.

The cluttered and crowded hang of the Rijks Museum in the Trippenhuis was attracting growing criticism.

It has been noted above that Théophile Thoré had slated it in 1858. In his *Musées de la Hollande* he laid the foundations for an entirely new appreciation of the art of the Golden Age, with the emphasis on everyday realism, and Frans Hals, Rembrandt, Jan Steen and Vermeer singled out as the great masters. He had little good to say about the one-time favourites like Van Mieris, Dou, Wouwerman and De Laresse. Rembrandt's *Night watch*, which Thoré considered to be the most beautiful painting in the world, finally carried the day over Van der Helst's *Celebration of the Peace of Münster*, which Thoré felt was too slick and detailed.⁴⁶

It was to be a long time before Thoré's views were adopted in the Netherlands. For the time being, interest in the art of the glorious past was primarily historical and antiquarian in nature, and directed towards the preservation of the nation's historical heritage. In his famous article of 1873, 'Holland op zijn smalst' (Holland

⁴² See Filedt Kok/Bergvelt 1998, pp. 134-35. It is curious that Pieter Aertsen's *Egg dance* (SK-A-3) is listed as anonymous in 1858 (pp. 174-75, no. 384) and was only listed under the artist's name in the 1864 edition. The two former Van Eycks are described under the unknown 14th and 15th-century masters, while the Bosch copy, *Adoration of the Magi* (SK-A-124) from the Van Heteren Gevers collection was still being attributed to Hubert and Jan van Eyck in 1858 (p. 38, no. 83) but was given to Jan Gossaert in the 1864 catalogue (p. 50, no. 101). In that same 1864 edition the *Madonna and Child* that had been attributed to Parmigianino in 1858 (p. 106, no. 234) was reassigned to Quinten Massys. *The beheading of John the Baptist* (SK-A-91) that had been bought as a Rembrandt was called W. Drost in the editions of 1858, p. 32, no. 69, and W. Drost and/or Carel Fabritius in that of 1864, p. 35, no. 72. *Fishing for souls* (SK-A-447/no. 290), listed as being by Van Balen and Jan Brueghel in Apostool's catalogue of 1809, p. 5, no. 13, was given to Van der Venne and Jan Brueghel in the 1858 edition, pp. 151-52, no. 338, and to Van de Venne alone in that of 1876, p. 132, no. 217. Dubourcq gave Apostool's Correggio and Veronese (see note 21) to anonymous Italian masters, and the so-called Van Dyck (SK-A-598) became anonymous, Spanish School.

⁴³ In his foreword to the 1872 edition, Dubourcq thanks W. Burger (= Bürger [Thoré]) and the archivists P. Scheltema and A. van der Willigen, among others, for 'many reproofs'. Reference is made to Van der Willigen for the identification of the sitters in De Bray's group portrait (SK-A-58).

⁴⁴ For the successive editions of the catalogue see Keers/Koot 1992, p. 24. They show the gradual growth of the collection. The Dutch edition of 1858 contains 198 pages and 432 entries, while four pages with the purchases of seven paintings (A-G) from the M.C. van Hall sale in 1852 were added to the 1858 French edition. In the Dutch edition of 1859 those A-G numbers were inserted in the alphabetical sequence. The Dutch edition of 1864 and the French one of 1866 run to 208 pages, with 444 and 451 entries respectively. In the Dutch and French editions of 1870 and the Dutch one of 1872, the 64 paintings of the Dupper Bequest (I-LXIV) were inserted at the back (the manuscript of the Dupper additions is RMA-439). In the last Dutch edition of 1876 (276 pp., 538 nos.) the Dupper pictures were inserted in alphabetical and numerical sequence, and the Liotard Bequest of 1873 is catalogued on pp. 116-18 as nos. 233 a-q. The 1884 inventory of the paintings in the Rijksmuseum commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior broadly follows the 1876 edition of Dubourcq's catalogue up to and including inv. no. A-636 (within which the Liotard pastels were inserted in the alphabetical sequence as nos. 233 a-q, and from inv. no. A-660 the new acquisitions made from 1877 on are inventoried by their date of accession. Paintings belonging to the museum got an A prefix, and loans a C prefix (B numbers were used for furnishings and fire-fighting equipment).
⁴⁵ On Dupper see De Hoop Scheffer 1958, pp. 84-86.
⁴⁶ Thoré-Bürger 1858-60, I, pp. 37-40.

fig. 15
Double page in Kaiser's
Beschrijving der schilderijen
of 1880, pp. 290-91



at its meanest), Victor de Stuers (1843-1916), a lawyer who worked tirelessly to promote art, appealed for more government involvement in preserving these national monuments of history and art. In 1875 he was appointed head of the department of museums and monuments at the Ministry of the Interior, a job he tackled with great energy. His concern was the cultural heritage in the broadest sense. In 1872, when the Lower Chamber of parliament decided to build a new Rijksmuseum, it was thanks to him that there would be an active acquisition policy in all the collections to be housed in the new building.⁴⁷ In the preceding decades the museum had been run remotely from the ministry, and had offered only limited means for purchases, but now De Stuers became directly involved in the administration, purchases and restoration policies of the national museums.

In the meantime, Johann Wilhelm Kaiser (1830-1900), who had been a member of the board of governors since 1861, was appointed director of the Rijks Museum in the Trippenhuis in 1875. He had trained as a reproductive engraver, and made large prints of works like Rembrandt's *Night watch* and *The syndics*. Until its closure in 1870 he had been director of the engraving school of the Koninklijke Akademie van Beeldende Kunsten (Royal Academy of Visual Arts), in which year he was made a professor at the academy. In 1876 he became director of paintings in the Rijksmuseum, with J.P. van der Kellen being made director of the Rijksprentenkabinet (National Printroom). In 1883, F.D.O. Obreen, the director of the Museum Boymans in Rotterdam, took over as director-general of the new Rijksmuseum.⁴⁸

In this period an active purchasing policy was launched that was largely directed by De Stuers. Dozens of interesting, rarely expensive paintings, most of them from the 17th century and earlier, were earmarked by De Stuers and bought, often with a financial advance from De Stuers himself. Many others were purchased on his instructions. His aim was to present Dutch painting in all its aspects as well and as completely as possible. The most expensive acquisition was Adriaen van de Venne's so-called *Visit of Prince Maurits to the kermis in Rijswijk* of 1618 (SK-A-676/ no. 294), which was bought in France for around 8,500 guilders in 1880. De Stuers lobbied vigorously for this purchase, mainly because of the historical portraits in the picture.⁴⁹ Antiquarian considerations still governed the acquisitions to a large extent, most of which were made with very modest means.

In this period the Rijksmuseum received the first of a series of bequests of paintings which would continue until late in the 20th century. The Dupper Bequest of 1870, which included Jan van Goyen's *Landscape with two oaks* (SK-A-123/ no. 90), was followed by an equally impressive one from Jonkheer J.S.H. van de Poll in 1880 that brought Thomas de Keyser's *Portrait of Pieter Schout* to the Trippenhuis (SK-A-697/ no. 162), as well as the famous

Portrait of Elisabeth Bas (SK-A-714), which was attributed to Rembrandt at the time but has been regarded as a work by Ferdinand Bol since 1991.⁵⁰ This bequest was supplemented in 1885 with 35 family portraits from the same source that were left to the museum by J.S.R. van de Poll, among them two by Frans Hals (SK-A-1246-47/ nos. 106-07). Also in 1885, the arrival of the Nederlandsch Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst (Netherlands Museum for History and Art) in the new Rijksmuseum building brought with it the first group of 50 family portraits from the 1876 bequest of Jonkheer Jacob de Witte van Citters (SK-A-906-11, 913, 918-19/ nos. 169-70, 194-95, 181, 178, 173, 176-77). These bequests and gifts, large parts of which consisted of family portraits, gave the 17th-century portrait a far more prominent place in the collection than it had had up until then.

Kaiser's catalogue of the paintings of the Rijksmuseum, 1880-81

After finishing work on the sixth edition of the catalogue in 1876, Kaiser went on to produce a completely new, quite extensive *Beschrijving der schilderijen* (Description

⁴⁷ On Victor de Stuers see Perry 2004, and on the part he played in the creation of the new Rijksmuseum building, Van der Dunck 1994.

⁴⁸ For Kaiser see Bergvelt 1998, pp. 207-10.

⁴⁹ The correspondence between the directors of the Rijksmuseum and the Ministry of the Interior from 1875 on in the Rijksmuseum archive (RMA, now in the Rijksarchief, Haarlem) provide a detailed picture of De Stuers's involvement with the purchases for the Rijksmuseum. The transcriptions for the period up to 1895 were generously made available to the compilers

of this catalogue by Dr E. Bergvelt of the University of Amsterdam.

⁵⁰ See Bergvelt 1998, pp. 211-15, for Kaiser's acquisition policy, with a list of the paintings acquired on pp. 404-07. The growing interest in early Netherlandish painting was reflected, among other things, in two exceptional purchases in 1879: *Saul and the witch of Endor* (SK-A-668), which was attributed to Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen on the evidence of its monogram and was bought at auction in Valenciennes, and *The adoration of the Magi* (SK-A-671), which is now ascribed to Jan Mostaert; see Filedt Kok/Bergvelt 1998, pp. 141-43.

of the paintings), which was published in 1880.⁵¹ It was commissioned by Victor de Stuers, who suggested that it be modelled on his own 1874 catalogue of the paintings in the Mauritshuis.⁵² Ellinoor Bergvelt analysed the difficult circumstances surrounding the writing of this new version under De Stuers's watchful eye, and rightly concluded that Kaiser's popularising approach to history had been overtaken by the modern discipline of art history.⁵³ Despite the lengthy introduction, the accurate facsimiles of the signatures, the detailed historical information in the entries (fig. 15), and the far more extensive biographies of the artists, the catalogue contains hardly any new art-historical information or insights. Kaiser lacked the frame of reference of the younger generation, of De Stuers, Bredius and Obreen, as regards both the art-historical literature and the developments taking place in other European museums. Kaiser was an amateur and a relative outsider in the world of Dutch art history, with its emphasis on documentary research, although it should be added that it was not yet being practised as a formal discipline.

The advantages of the new catalogue lay in the historical information about portraits and past events, and in the iconographic explanation of biblical scenes, with reference to the relevant passages in the Bible. Another innovation was that it listed not only reproductive prints but reproductive photographs ('Photographed by A. Braun of Dordrecht'). Most of Dubourcq's titles and attributions are retained, but a few new insights are incorporated, chiefly in the field of portraiture.⁵⁴ The collection was also renumbered, starting with the Dutch School, alphabetically by artist, and then the anonymous works, followed by the Flemish, German, French, Italian and

Spanish schools, and closing with the 512 paintings that entered the museum in 1880 with the Jonkheer J.S.H. van de Poll Bequest. One year later, in 1881, an abbreviated edition of this catalogue was published, with the paintings from the Van de Poll Bequest now inserted in their alphabetical position, with the family portraits from the 1881 Bicker Bequest added in a supplement. Victor de Stuers never gave his permission for a more concise French edition, the manuscript of which was completed in 1881, because he found too many errors in the translation.⁵⁵ The general public did not like the full version of the catalogue, and few copies of it were ever sold.⁵⁶

The Rijksmuseum for paintings in the new Rijksmuseum building

The decorative programme on the exterior of the Rijksmuseum building that was opened in 1885 traces the origins and flowering of the culture of the northern Netherlands in the form of reliefs, tile pictures and inscriptions. The high point is the Golden Age, but the middle ages and the Renaissance also feature prominently. Seventeenth-century painting is represented first and foremost by Rembrandt, and there are several depictions of him on the exterior of the building, such as a tile picture on the south front (which was later covered up by the Night Watch Extension (fig. 16). In the stained-glass window in the front hall he is the representative of the entire Golden Age, as Lucas van Leyden is for the earlier period. Frans Hals first appears in the medallions of the window, along with Memling and Raphael. Seventeenth-century art also played a prominent part in the museum galleries. Although it is true that all the paintings from the 15th up to the 19th century were displayed on the first floor, most of the rooms were devoted to the 17th century. Rembrandt's *Night watch* was

⁵¹ Coll. cat. 1880, with 548 paintings. The supplement was issued in 1881 by the same publisher with the title *Tweede vervolg van de Beschrijving etc.* (Second continuation of the Description).

⁵² Coll. cat. The Hague 1874.

⁵³ See Bergvelt 1998, pp. 218-25, and earlier Duparc 1975, pp. 90-91, 148-49, notes 66-74).

⁵⁴ The *Portrait of Joost van de Vondel* (SK-A-218) that had been attributed to Jan Lievens became a Govert Flinck. Four previously anonymous Frisian portraits were attributed to Wybrand de Geest (SK-A-569-72/nos. 81, 84, 82, 205), and remarkably, the portraits by Gerard van Honthorst (SK-A-176-79/nos. 137, 148, 143-44) were given to his brother Willem (1603-83). Two canvases with historical subjects

(SK-A-251-52) were rightly assigned to Hendrik de Meyer, while a group of peasants by Vincent Malo (SK-A-590), which Apostool had given to Van Dyck, was equally wrongly reattributed to Karel van Mander. ⁵⁵ RMA archive, no. 438, and for De Stuers's reaction a letter of 7 April 1881 (file N 1881, 37).

⁵⁶ There was an appreciative review of it in the weekly *De Nederlandsche Spectator* of 15 October 1881, p. 362. Kaiser's reaction to it in a letter to De Stuers of 2 November 1881 (RMA archive, no. 163/149) shows that he hoped that a new edition would soon be published in which he could correct any errors. On the catalogue's modest sales see Bergvelt 1998, pp. 221-23, and the museum's annual reports.

fig. 16
François Gillet, *Rembrandt surrounded by his colleagues with The syndics*, late 19th century, enamel on lava, attached to the south front of the Rijksmuseum, now in the Night Watch Extension



hung in a central position at the end of the Gallery of Honour (fig. 17). On the ground floor, the Nederlandsch Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst sketched a picture of the various aspects of the history of Dutch art and culture.

Since the painting collection had grown steadily as a result of gifts, bequests and purchases, and because the 200 modern pictures from the Paviljoen Welgelegen in Haarlem and the loans from the City of Amsterdam had been given a place in the museum, the total number of paintings had increased tremendously, to almost 1,700 in 1887. As a result, the galleries in the new museum were of a very different nature from those in the Trippenhuis.

The loan from the City of Amsterdam brought a large group of Amsterdam civic guard and regent portraits into the museum, and 17th-century group portraiture, particularly that of Amsterdam, was represented in abundance. As a result of that, and the acquisition of several large collections of family portraits, Dutch portraiture had found an important place in the collection. The presentation of classic Dutch 17th-century painting had been strengthened considerably by purchases and bequests, and in particular by the loan of the Van der Hoop collection from the City of Amsterdam.

The collection of the Amsterdam banker Adriaan van der Hoop had been left to the city in 1854, and was housed from 1855 to 1885 in the Museum Van der Hoop in the Oudemanshuispoort. The praise lavished on the collection by Théophile Thoré in his *Musées de la Hollande* of 1858 gives an idea of its importance. In the very period when the Rijksmuseum had hardly any money for new purchases, Van der Hoop used his wealth to put together a remarkably fine collection of 17th-century paintings, many of which are still focal points of the Rijksmuseum,

such as Vermeer's *Woman reading a letter* (SK-C-251), Rembrandt's *Jewish bride* (SK-C-82), Jacob van Ruisdael's *Windmill at Wijk bij Duurstede* (SK-C-210), and many other masterpieces.⁵⁷

The riches of the painting collection were displayed in no fewer than 67 galleries and cabinets on the first floor of the museum (fig. 18). The tour began on the left side of the Night Watch room. As in the Trippenhuis, the walls were hung with pictures from floor to ceiling (fig. 19). After a large gallery with international paintings, mainly Flemish and Italian, there were two devoted to Dutch 15th and 16th-century works, and then many rooms with 17th-century Dutch art, with the Dupper, Van de Poll and Van der Hoop bequests each occupying a gallery of its own. The tour ended with a few rooms of modern art, much of it from the 19th century. As a result of the arrangement of the rooms by theme (such as a large gallery with portraits and a smaller one with self-portraits) and by collection, visitors were unable to get a coherent picture of the development of 17th-century painting. The same applied to the work of the most important artists, which in most cases was spread over several rooms.

Frederik Daniël Otto Obreen (1831-1896), who was appointed director-general of the museum in July 1883, and who succeeded Kaiser as director of the Rijksmuseum of Paintings in October 1883, belonged to a new generation of archive researchers and art historians. The archival research carried out by him, N. de Roever, A.D. de Vries, Abraham Bredius and others laid the documentary foundations for research into Dutch painting.⁵⁸ This body of knowledge, which grew rapidly in the closing decades of the 19th century, was reflected in the Rijksmuseum's purchasing policy, the aim of which was to present 17th-century Dutch painting in all its variety. With archival research bringing many new facts to light about painters of the period, the museum set out to buy dated and signed works by hitherto unknown artists as a basis for the reconstruction of their oeuvres.

Dozens of masters entered the collection in this way, with many of the purchases being primarily of a documentary value. The acquisition of a first-rate work like *The ferry* by Esaias van de Velde in 1885 (SK-A-1293/no. 287) was thus exceptional. Rarely could large sums be spent on acquisitions. It was only thanks to the support of the Vereniging Rembrandt that Vermeer's *Love letter* (SK-A-1595) could be bought in 1893, a classic cabinet piece like *The grey* by Wouwerman in 1894 (SK-A-1610), Avercamp's *Winter landscape with skaters* in 1897 (SK-A-1718/no. 10), and in 1915 Torrentius's exceptional still

⁵⁷ See Amsterdam 2004 for the Van der Hoop collection.

⁵⁸ Bergvelt 1998, pp. 225-30.

fig. 17
View of *The night watch* from the Gallery of Honour, 1898



fig. 18
Plan of the first floor of the
Rijksmuseum in *Wegwijzer*, 1898

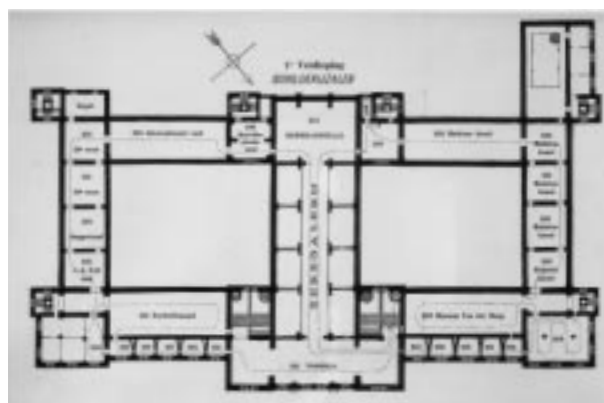


fig. 19
The 'Old Netherlandish art'
room, illustration in *In en om
het Rijksmuseum*, 1909



life (SK-A-2813/no. 280). It was also due to the Vereniging Rembrandt that a successful bid was made for Rembrandt's *Stone bridge* (SK-A-1935) at a London auction in 1900. It was the first painting by the master that the Rijksmuseum acquired, because up until then it had only had four on loan, three of them from the City of Amsterdam. Support from the Vereniging Rembrandt and the government also made it possible to add 39 pictures from the Six collection in 1907, among them *The serenade* by Judith Leyster (SK-A-2316), *The skaters* by Adriaen van Ostade (SK-A-2332) and *The kitchen maid* (the so-called *Milkmaid*) by Johannes Vermeer (SK-A-2344). In 1921 a fourth Vermeer entered the Rijksmuseum: *The little street* (SK-A-2860), which also came originally from the Six collection but this time was a gift from the oil magnate H.W.A. Deterding.

All these paintings are among the finest of the almost 2,000 pictures bought, donated or bequeathed between 1885 and 1920. Some of this growth was due to Dutch 19th-century painting, which was heavily reinforced by loans (Drucker-Fraser) and bequests (Reinhard, Baron van Lynden, J.B.A.M. Westerhoudt, W.J. van Randwijck, A. van Wezel), but these will not be discussed further here. In addition to individual works, close-knit ensembles were purchased, such as the De Ruyter de Wildt collection of 26 family portraits and many personal belongings of the famous admiral, Michiel Adriaensz de Ruyter, in 1895.

Both Victor de Stuers and Abraham Bredius regularly gave the museum paintings which they felt it should have. The series of bequests and donations that began in the final decades of the 19th century continued into the 20th. The bequest in 1899 of Daniel Franken Dzn (1838-98), an antiquarian and expert on Adriaen van de Venne, enriched the collection with 47 paintings, including no fewer than ten by Van de Venne (SK-A-1767-76/nos. 292, 295, 304, 303, 297, 296, 298-99, 291, 293). In 1903 the museum received 22 paintings from the bequest of A.A. des Tombe, including still lifes by Balthasar van der Ast (SK-A-2103/no. 9) and Adriaen Coorte (SK-A-2099), as well as the second half of the 1876 bequest of Jonkheer

Jacob de Witte van Citters, consisting of 24 family portraits that had remained with his sister in usufruct (SK-A-2067-69, 2073, 2075-76/nos. 188, 174-75, 179, 445, 424). In 1905 Miss M.E. van Brink, a descendant of the marine artist Ludolf Bakhuizen, left the museum several portraits of the artist and his family (SK-A-2186-2210).

Bredius's catalogues of the paintings in the Rijksmuseum, 1885-1901

A far handier and more critical catalogue than Kaiser's is the concise, illustrated one written by Abraham Bredius (1855-1946), which was first published when the new museum building opened in 1885.⁵⁹ In his foreword, Bredius directed his readers to the 'lengthy biographies and descriptions of the paintings' in Kaiser's 'official catalogue', which was evidently far from sold out. The four collections of paintings in the Rijksmuseum, which were exhibited separately, were 'the Rijksmuseum of Paintings, the Van der Hoop Museum, the national collection of paintings by modern masters (formerly in Paviljoen Welgelegen in Haarlem), and the 'collection of paintings belonging to the Society for the Formation of a Public Collection of Contemporary Art in Amsterdam' (the Vereeniging tot het Vormen van eene Openbare Verzameling van Hedendaagsche Kunst, or VVHK, which moved to Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum in 1895). All four still retained their original numbering and names. Any new insights on Bredius's part can only be deduced from the biographical information and occasional remarks.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Between 1880 and 1888 Bredius was deputy director of the Nederlandsch Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst in The Hague, which moved to the new Rijksmuseum building in 1885, and director of the Mauritshuis from 1889 to 1909. On him see Louise Barnouw-de

Ranitz, 'Abraham Bredius, een biografie', in coll. cat. The Hague 1991a, pp. 13-27, and The Hague 1992c.

⁶⁰ Coll. cat. 1885. A French edition also appeared in 1885, and there was a second, improved impression in 1886.

fig. 20
Title page of the first edition of Bredius's *Catalogus van het Rijks-Museum van schilderijen* of 1885, with plates drawn by C.L. Dake

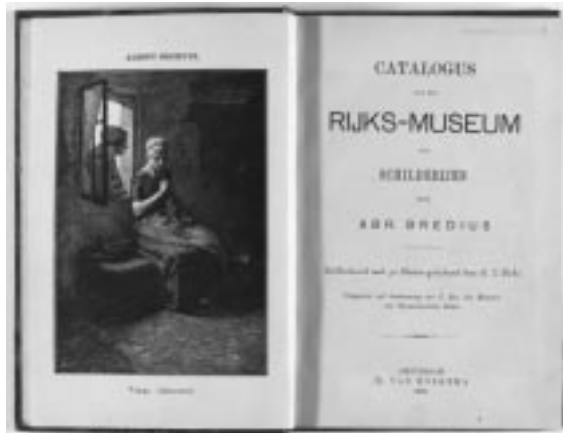


fig. 21
Double page in the first edition of Bredius's *Catalogus van het Rijks-Museum van schilderijen* of 1885, pp. 48-49



In his foreword he states that the purpose of the catalogue was to be a guide for the visitor and 'a lasting memento of that visit'. The 50 plates after drawings by C.L. Dake (figs. 20, 21), which were replaced in 1887 by slightly more accurate wood engravings by Johannes Walter (figs. 22, 23), made the catalogue a more attractive souvenir. In fact, though, it is little more than a highly condensed and critically edited version of the one by Kaiser and his assistants. The compiler's new approach and his improvements only become apparent in the 'third, completely revised impression' of 1887, for that was the first completely alphabetical catalogue of the

fig. 22
Title page of the third edition of Bredius's *Catalogus van het Rijks-Museum van schilderijen* of 1887, with new plates by Johannes Walter



fig. 23
Two pages from the third, 1887 edition of Bredius's *Catalogus van het Rijks-Museum van schilderijen*, with new plates by Johannes Walter, p. 162, and a reproduction of Jan Steen's *Merry family*



paintings housed in the new Rijksmuseum.⁶¹ New archival findings were incorporated in the brief biographies, and Bredius's reattributions are only made explicit in this edition. He followed Dubourcq and Kaiser in giving the dimensions and provenances (as well as the prices). Any inscriptions and signatures are quoted but not reproduced as they had been in the earlier catalogues (figs. 21, 23). In his foreword of 1885 Bredius had said that the 'outstanding Berlin catalogue' was his model, and so in this period it is no longer the French but the German catalogues, of Berlin, Dresden and Munich in particular, that formed the vanguard from the art-historical point of view.⁶²

In Germany and France, in addition to catalogues of paintings with text alone there were lavishly illustrated, de luxe *Galeriewerke*. In the 18th century they were print albums, but later they contained photographs and reproductions.⁶³ The 1880s also saw the publication of two illustrated albums of paintings in the Rijksmuseum. There was a large one published by F. Hanfstaengl in Munich with more than 200 photogravures and an explanatory text by Bredius, while the second, containing more than 250 photographs by A. Braun with commentaries by Obreen, was published in seven instalments between 1887 and 1894.⁶⁴

Bredius's catalogue of 1887 was the first one to contain a floor plan of the Rijksmuseum galleries. These were already customary in foreign catalogues, and were to remain a feature of the Amsterdam one until 1934

⁶¹ Coll. cat. 1887, with 1,671 numbers. A French edition of it was published in 1888.

⁶² Coll. cat. Berlin 1875. On the Berlin catalogues see Tümmers 1975.

⁶³ See Katherina Krause, 'Galeriewerke', in Mainz 2005, pp. 253-327.

⁶⁴ Bredius's undated album entered the Rijksmuseum library in 1889, which is why it has been

given the short form Bredius 1889. His explanatory text is in fact a history of Dutch painting arranged city by city. The fairly detailed explanatory texts in Obreen 1887-94 are comparable to Kaiser's catalogue entries, but are more critical and better informed. Both de luxe editions give a better idea of the knowledge about the Rijksmuseum pictures than Bredius's catalogues of the period.

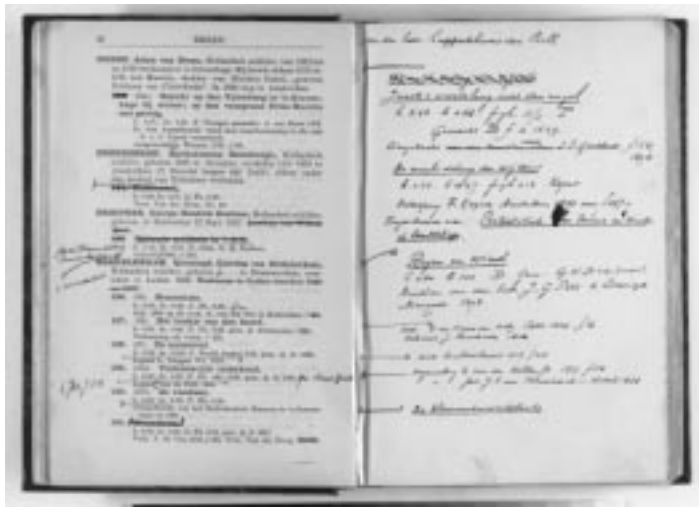


fig. 24
Two pages from the interleaved copy of the third, 1887 edition of Bredius's *Catalogus van het Rijks-Museum van schilderijen*, with annotations and corrections by Van Riemsdijk in preparation for the catalogue of 1903, p. 24

(fig. 18). There are much better plans of both floors in Obreen's illustrated *Wegwijzer* (Guide), which was first published in 1887 and takes the visitor on a tour of the museum room by room, paying particular attention to the interior decoration. Alongside the catalogue, the *Wegwijzer* was a helping hand extended towards the interested visitor.⁶⁵

The museum's painting collection expanded rapidly thanks to loans, gifts and purchases, with more than 1,000 paintings being added between 1885 and 1903. As mentioned above, there was a concerted effort in this period to acquire at least one signed and preferably dated work by every documented Dutch painter. This made the Rijksmuseum of Paintings a compendium of Dutch painting, as it were. In this period, archival and art-historical research produced a mass of new discoveries which it was hoped would find their way into museum

fig. 25
Title page of the *Catalogus der schilderijen, miniaturen, pastels, omlijste teekeningen, enz. in het Rijks-Museum te Amsterdam* of 1903



catalogues. Abraham Bredius, who became director of the Mauritshuis in The Hague in 1889, regularly gave the Rijksmuseum signed paintings by minor masters which he then included in later editions of the catalogue. However, he must have been too busy to add other acquisitions to the subsequent Dutch and French editions or to report new art-historical findings. The editions published after 1887 (the last French one appeared in 1904) lack the meticulousness of their predecessors.⁶⁶ It is perfectly understandable that Bredius concentrated solely on his own Mauritshuis, of which he produced a superbly illustrated catalogue with commentary in 1895.⁶⁷ In the meantime, Obreen carried on working on a *catalogue raisonné* of the paintings in the Rijksmuseum, which was left unfinished on his death in 1896.⁶⁸

Van Riemsdijk's catalogues of the paintings, miniatures, pastels and framed drawings in the Rijksmuseum, 1903-20

In 1897, Obreen was succeeded as director-general of the Rijksmuseum and director of the Rijksmuseum of Paintings by Jonkheer Barthold Willem van Riemsdijk (1850-1942), who was responsible for a new, concise catalogue which he based on the one of 1887 by Bredius (fig. 24). From 1899 he was assisted by Willem J. Steenhoff (1863-1932), who was deputy director of the Rijksmuseum of Paintings from 1905 to 1924, and who must have played an important part in compiling the entries on the modern, 19th-century pictures.⁶⁹

Van Riemsdijk's catalogue of 1903 (fig. 25) contains almost 3,000 works arranged alphabetically in the categories listed in the title – over 1,300 more than in the Bredius catalogue of 1887, which did not list the approximately 200 miniatures, enamels, framed drawings and so on. There was also a complete renumbering.⁷⁰ In the

⁶⁵ Obreen 1887a (123 and XX pp.) in a second, expanded edition, Obreen 1890 (188 + 20 pp.), with more and improved illustrations. The fourth, expanded and last edition appeared under the same title in 1898. The first and last editions were also published in English.

⁶⁶ See Keers/Koot 1992, p. 25. Apart from Bredius's donations to the museum, no new acquisitions were included in the later editions, and in 1897 the contemporary paintings of the VVHK were omitted after they went to the Stedelijk Museum.

⁶⁷ Bredius 1895 in collaboration with Cornelis Hofstede de Groot (576 pp. with approximately 60 colotype reproductions). The Rijksmuseum library has

a second copy from the Keers donation (shelfmark 453 B 63) with 40 albumin prints pasted onto thick cardboard which only partially correspond to the collotypes.

⁶⁸ In the RMA archive, nos. 441-42, in a cover bearing the title *Catalogus Obreen* (Obreen catalogue), there is a loose-leaf manuscript of a painting catalogue in which the acquisitions of 1896 were the last to be described. Van Riemsdijk and his colleagues undoubtedly consulted this manuscript, but decided not to use the lengthy descriptions or the provenances.

⁶⁹ Heijbroek/Henkels 1991, esp. pp. 170-72. Steenhoff is also credited as joint compiler in the introduction to the first edition of coll. cat. 1903.

⁷⁰ Coll. cat. 1903.

fig. 26
Page 64, corresponding to
fig. 24, in the *Catalogus der
schilderijen, miniaturen, pastels,
omlijste teekeningen, enz. in het
Rijks-Museum te Amsterdam*
of 1903



fig. 27
Double page in the illustrated
edition of the *Catalogue of the
pictures etc. in the Rijks-museum at
Amsterdam* of 1905, p. 198, and
page of reproductions



supplements published in the subsequent editions, newly acquired (and newly attributed) works were given a, b, aa, bb numbers that fitted them within the alphabetical order by artists' names in the 1903 catalogue; for example, 302bb, to be inserted after 302b.⁷¹ It was only in the 1926 edition that paintings from the supplements, if they were exhibited, were inserted in their numerical position in the main catalogue. This complex system was used until the 1960s, and was only replaced by numbers based on the original inventory numbers in the catalogue of 1976.

The introductions to the catalogue are longer than in the previous publications, and contain 'a historical survey of the collections, the catalogues, the management and the buildings'. The catalogue (fig. 26) is very close to Bredius's in its arrangement and the information it supplies, but in many cases brief descriptions were added to the titles, while the facsimiles of inscriptions, signatures, coats of arms and so on from the catalogues of Dubourcq and Kaiser were reinstated in an improved form. Against this, the prices in the provenance sections were omitted, and the earliest provenances were only given in exceptional cases. In common with Bredius and almost all foreign publications of this kind, the data on the provenances and the scanty art-historical information is set in a smaller typeface. Illustrated editions have fold-out floor plans and some 200 small photographic reproductions (fig. 27).

The catalogue was also published in German, French and English with the same layout as the Dutch edition, including supplements.⁷² Since the stream of acquisitions continued unabated in the early decades of the 20th century, and art-historical knowledge increased, supplements were added to the Dutch catalogue almost every year. In 1918, the paintings acquired in the previous 15 years, as well as altered attributions etc., were combined into a single supplement, and in 1920 the catalogue contained a second supplement. That edition was the last complete catalogue of the paintings until the publication

of *All the paintings* in 1976. The user of the 1920 catalogue first had to look for the ordinary numbers in the main, alphabetised body of the book, and then turn to the two supplements for the later acquisitions with their a, b and c numbering.

There was no change as regards the layout, the descriptions, or the nature of the data and information. Objective, rather dry comments on the painter and the scene had already been the main feature of the 1903 catalogue, and where necessary this was supplemented and corrected in the subsequent editions. A number of interleaved copies of various successive editions give an interesting picture of how the 1903 edition came into being and of the way in which the curators did their editing. On the first 35 pages of a copy of Bredius's 1887 catalogue, in Van Riemsdijk's meticulous hand, one can see how the 1903 edition was prepared (fig. 24).⁷³ This makes it even clearer

⁷¹ Even in the 1903 catalogue there were several a, b and c numbers. Three supplements with additions and improvements were added in 1905, 1907 and 1908. The additions and improvements were inserted in the text of the 1903 catalogue in the 1907 edition, but the three supplements continued in use until they were consolidated into a single volume in 1909, to which a second supplement was added in 1910, and a third one in 1914. Each supplement also contains a list of additions and improvements. In the 1918 edition, these three supplements were combined into a single alphabetical one, in which the additions and errata were also incorporated. Shortly after the completion of the 1918 edition a supplementary sheet was inserted on p. 7 with no. 46a, *The seven acts of mercy* (SK-A-2815), which had been acquired in 1918 with support from the Vereniging Rembrandt. That polyptych was included in the second supplement

in the 1920 edition with a new list of additions and errata, a list of 'Paintings removed from the collection since the edition of 1903' (which covered both returned loans and paintings loaned out), and an updated concordance with the catalogues of Kaiser and Bredius.
⁷² For the various editions see Keers/Koot 1992, pp. 25-26. In the Rijksmuseum library, shelfmarks 19 D 59-63 and 452 A 64-76 and B 1-4 (Keers donation). There are also many copies of these catalogues in the Department of Paintings, some of which are annotated; see notes 73, 76 and 81.
⁷³ The copy of Bredius's coll. cat. 1887 (which was later given a green binding) in the Department of Paintings contains handwritten additions and corrections on pp. 1-35, up to cat. no. 769, Delacroix, which were incorporated in the 1903 catalogue. From p. 36 on the annotations, deletions and corrections are sparse.

that it was a continuation of Bredius's version, with the factual data like dimensions, inscriptions and so on, and the artists' dates, being checked and corrected where necessary.

For the directors in this period, the painting collection was a compendium of Dutch art, and this was reflected in the catalogue, with new facts and insights being incorporated as swiftly as possible. Shortly after the 1903 catalogue appeared, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot published a postscript in *Oud Holland* to a series of articles about Dutch art in Dutch museums in which he expressed his opinion about the attributions in a table that takes the form of a concordance between the numbers in Bredius's catalogue, those in the new one, and his own published views.⁷⁴ Other specialists also gave their opinions of the catalogue, and the staff of the museum duly noted them down in a desk copy and included the findings in a subsequent supplement.⁷⁵

The way in which the editors went about their work can be seen from two interleaved copies of the catalogue, one of 1903 (with the supplement of 1906) and one of 1907 (with the second and third supplements of 1908 and 1909). In addition to numerous notes, references to literature and corrections made with pen and pencil, the copies contain many isolated annotations, newspaper cuttings, letters, postcards etc. inserted at the appropriate places

(figs. 28, 29). Notes, letters and cards written by colleagues (most of them, in fact, by Bredius himself) testify to the great involvement of the art-historical community in keeping the catalogue up to date.⁷⁶

It seems that this activity came to a halt when Frederik Schmidt-Degener took over as director-general. He was not very interested in the compendium function of the painting collection, and with the forced departure of W.J. Steenhoff in 1924 the continuity of updating the catalogue was broken.

The Rijksmuseum under Schmidt-Degener

The appointment of Frederik Schmidt-Degener (1881-1941) as director-general of the Rijksmuseum in 1922 heralded a rearrangement of the displays, and a considerable part of the painting collection disappeared into the reserves.⁷⁷ Under his directorship from 1922 to 1941, the emphasis shifted from art-historical and historical comprehensiveness to selection quality. In the two decades leading up to the Second World War the presentation was completely reorganised, with the works of art being displayed in a roomier and more evocative way, with art and history being firmly separated.

⁷⁴ Hofstede de Groot 1904 is the conclusion of a series of articles with 'Critical remarks' about paintings in the Rijksmuseum and 'our museums'. See Hofstede de Groot 1899a and 1901, to which reference is made in the concordance in the 'Postscript' of 1904.

⁷⁵ Because it was impracticable to publish a new edition of the catalogue each year, additions, corrections, errata and so on were listed in a supplement along with the acquisitions. Since the numbering was based on the alphabetical sequence of the artists' names, a new attribution entailed adding a new 'a' number, under which the painting was described in the supplement. The old number was then deleted in the reprinted 1903 catalogue. While the additions, corrections, errata etc. in the previous supplements were incorporated in the 1907 catalogue and were again combined into a single supplement in 1918, to which additions were also made, the distinction between the paintings listed in the catalogue of 1903 and in the supplements continued until 1927. Despite the editors' good intentions and meticulousness, it was becoming a cluttered corpus that seemed to reflect the untidy and unbalanced impression that the painting galleries must have made as a result of the constant addition of newly acquired works.

⁷⁶ The two copies in the Department of Paintings were later bound in brown leather. The first has Van Riemdsdijk's signature on the worn cover, and many of the annotations and corrections are in the same hand as the interleaved version of the 1887 Bredius catalogue (see note 73). The numerous notes, letters and postcards in telegrams from Bredius mostly relate to archival discoveries about the artists in question, and have his distinctive underlinings, exclamation marks and the like. To take just one example from the other correspondence: a letter dated 1 May 1909 from the housekeeper of the artist Marius Bauer to Steenhoff led to the correction of his date of birth from 1862 (as given in the second supplement of 1907) to 1867 (which is how it appeared in the 1909 supplement). Both copies must have been the desk copies of the director-general that were used to compile the successive editions of the catalogue. It seems that corrections of a later date were included in the copy of 1906/07. There is another interleaved copy of the 1903 edition with Steenhoff's signature containing annotations and corrections that were also included in later editions.

⁷⁷ See, above all, Luijten 1984 and Meijers 1977.

fig. 28
Interleaved copy of the *Catalogus der schilderijen enz. in het Rijks-Museum te Amsterdam* of 1903, p. 198, with a postcard from Bredius and other correspondence



fig. 29
Letter from Bredius to Van Riemdsdijk, about Vermeer, the restorer J.A. Hesterman, and other subjects, from the interleaved desk copy of the 1903 catalogue



The painting collection was displayed selectively, and for the first time in a more or less chronological order from the late middle ages to the end of the 17th century in the rooms and galleries on the first floor (fig. 30). The paintings were now hung far further apart in clear chronological, thematic and aesthetic groupings (fig. 31). Most of the rooms were given over to the Golden Age, preceded by early Netherlandish art and supplemented with a few rooms containing Italian, Spanish and Flemish paintings. For the first time visitors were now given a coherent, chronological picture of 17th-century Dutch art. The rooms with paintings alternated with others displaying 17th-century sculpture (by De Keyser, Verhulst and Quellinus) and the decorative arts (silver by Van Vianen and Lutma, and engraved glass). Delftware was exhibited in the Gallery of Honour, the cabinets of which were used to display the larger ‘decorative’ paintings along with 17th-century furniture. The other works in the decorative arts collection and the Dutch History Department retained their places on the ground floor and in the South Wing, which also housed 18th and 19th-century pictures.

In Schmidt-Degener’s view, the aesthetic experience of a work of art was of primary importance. He wanted to display ‘the lasting image of Dutch art’, in which the principal roles were reserved for the great masters: Hals, Steen, Rembrandt, Saenredam, Vermeer and Ruisdael. He valued ‘natural’ realism, and alien influences were taboo. As long as painters ‘remained outside the European mainstream, their creations are always new and fresh’, he wrote.⁷⁸ Mannerists, the Caravaggisti, Italianates, the painters of the *beau fini* and Classicists did not fit happily within that image. Although several important works by

Caravaggisti, like Van Baburen’s *Prometheus* (SK-A-1606/ no. 14), were loaned to the Centraal Museum in Utrecht, these less representative movements were not banished entirely, and the Italianates and the equally disdained *beau fini* painters were actually given (smaller) rooms of their own. Most of the history paintings were hung with the decorative works in the cabinets lining the Gallery of Honour, together with a selection of 17th-century furniture.

It is not surprising that Schmidt-Degener was far choosier in his purchases than his predecessors had been. His options were restricted by the tight acquisitions budget, which was pared to a minimum during the Depression, and purchases of sculpture, decorative art, prints and drawings came to a virtual standstill. At the beginning of his directorship he made efforts to strengthen the international nature of the painting collection, and with the help of the Vereniging Rembrandt and some Dutch businessmen he did succeed in buying a number of first-rate Spanish and Italian works, largely from the collection of the Augusteum in Oldenburg.

The Vereniging Rembrandt and several collectors were also prepared to help acquire Dutch paintings from the Golden Age in time of need. They were involved in the purchase of Verspronck’s *Portrait of a girl dressed in blue* (SK-A-3064) and Gabriel Metsu’s *Sick child* (SK-A-3059), both of which arrived in the museum in 1928, further reinforcing the ‘lasting image of Dutch art’. The purchase of Willem Buytewech’s *Elegant couples on a terrace* (SK-A-3038/ no. 41) in 1926 gave the museum a work that was a little outside the traditional image of the Golden Age, but it did confirm the new interest in early 17th-century Haarlem realism.

Schmidt-Degener was a great admirer of Rembrandt. At a time when special exhibitions were rarely held in the Rijksmuseum, he devoted two to the master’s work (in 1932 and 1935), and acquired no fewer than seven of his paintings, two of them from Russian collections (SK-A-3137-38). Rembrandt’s work was also at the core of the collection that Mr and Mrs Buijn-van der Leeuw put together during the interbellum in close consultation with Schmidt-Degener. In addition to a large collection of Rembrandt etchings they assembled a select group of 17th-century pictures, including works by Ter Borch, Van Goyen (SK-A-4044/ no. 95), Rembrandt, Steen and Abraham de Vries (SK-A-4053/ no. 332), which was bequeathed to the Rijksmuseum in 1961. It was the last large and important gift that the museum received in the way of painting collections. Of comparable importance was the gift of 17 pictures by Sir Henry Deterding, who had already given the museum Vermeer’s *Little street* in 1921. They included Adriaen van Ostade’s *Fishwife*

⁷⁸ Schmidt-Degener 1949, pp. 1-23, esp. p. 9.

fig. 30
Plan of the first floor of the Rijksmuseum in the *Gids met afbeeldingen* of 1928 and the *Catalogus* of 1934

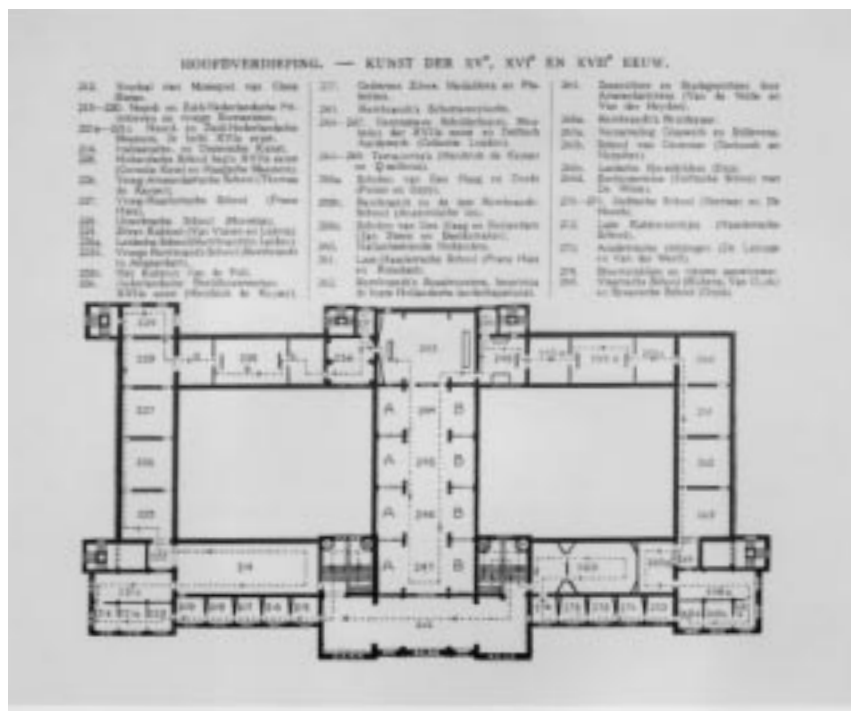




fig. 31
The room with early
Haarlem paintings,
photograph of c. 1930

(SK-A-3246), Van Goyen's *View of Arnhem* (SK-A-3250/ no. 94) and the *River view by moonlight* by Aert van der Neer (SK-A-3245). Although the donation by A.C.M. Kessler-Hülsmann in 1940 was far more uneven in quality, it did contain a few interesting Italian and early Netherlandish paintings, as well as Rembrandt's *Oriental* (SK-A-3340). The 1940 bequest of J.W. Edwin van Rath consisted solely of Italian art, including 74 paintings which, with the collection of Otto Lanz that was recuperated after the war, would form an important part of the post-war presentation of Italian art in the Rijksmuseum.

The catalogues of the paintings, miniatures, pastels and framed drawings in the Rijksmuseum under Schmidt-Degener, 1926-34

In the 1926 catalogue, which was supervised by Schmidt-Degener, the supplements have disappeared and the paintings with a, b, aa and bb suffixes have been inserted in the consecutive numbering. Despite this integration of the supplements, this edition is considerably slimmer than its predecessor (295 pages as opposed to 529 in 1920), largely because paintings that were not on display at the time were omitted. The new director's explanation was brief and to the point. 'This reprint of the catalogue, published during the reorganisation, follows the existing text as closely as possible. This time the supplements have been incorporated in the text, while account has been taken of loans that have been reclaimed and of duplicates sent out on loan, or of temporary removal to the reserves.'

It is only on the title page of the last edition of the catalogue in 1934 (which runs to 400 pages) that the reader is told that the entries are restricted to the works actually

on display in the museum, although that still made for an impressive 2,500 paintings, pastels, framed drawings, miniatures and so on.⁷⁹ Less than half of the pictures listed in the catalogue belonged to the chronological survey of Dutch and foreign art from the 15th to the 17th centuries on the first floor. The remainder were 19th-century works on display in the Drucker Extension, paintings in the decorative arts and history departments on the ground floor, and others in the newly opened study collection.⁸⁰

Steenhoff's job as editor of the catalogue passed to Jonkheer David C. Röell (1894-1961), who was taken on as assistant in 1922 and was curator of paintings (and deputy director of the Rijksmuseum of Paintings) until 1935. In Schmidt-Degener's foreword titled 'Het karakter der schilderijen-verzameling in het Rijksmuseum' (The nature of the collection of paintings in the Rijksmuseum) in the 1934 edition, he stresses that for the sake of continuity 'the appearance of this indispensable publication was left unchanged, and the contents – that is to say the biographical and the iconographic, the attributions and the provenances – were revised and augmented, an extensive undertaking carried out by the Curator of the Department of Paintings, Jonkheer D.C. Röell'.⁸¹ Schmidt-Degener expressly states that 'the utmost restraint' had been observed in the biographies and descriptions, and that this catalogue did not take the place 'of the explanatory Guide, which cautiously tries to prepare the way for the enjoyment of art'.⁸²

Compared to the earlier illustrated editions of the catalogue, in which the illustrations were ordered by the numbers of the paintings, there are 250 reproductions in the 1934 edition (fig. 32) in the more or less chronological order of the new arrangement that Schmidt-Degener had introduced in the galleries. Although the emphasis was still on 17th-century Dutch painting, considerably more notice was being paid to 19th-century Dutch and French

⁷⁹ Coll. cat. 1934.

⁸⁰ The floor plans and entries in the last, fully revised *Rijksmuseum: gids met afbeeldingen*, Amsterdam 1938 give a good idea of Schmidt-Degener's rearrangement. The study collection, which could be inspected on request, was situated on the second floor, above the painting galleries at the front of the building, which is where the reserves and conservation studio were housed after the Second World War.

⁸¹ Röell's interleaved desk copy of the 1927 edition contains only a few pencilled annotations and shows that his interest was far less archival in nature. The pencilled annotations in the interleaved 'directors' copy' of the 1934 cata-

logue are mainly about new acquisitions, including the Kessler-Hülsmann Bequest of 1940. Another interesting desk copy, signed J. Cleveringa, gives the locations of all the paintings during the evacuation and the Second World War, such as Paaslo.

⁸² Coll. cat. 1934, pp. VII-XV, esp. pp. XIV-XV. David Röell, working under the supervision of Schmidt-Degener, wrote one such guide, *Rijksmuseum: gids met afbeeldingen* (Rijksmuseum: guide with illustrations), Amsterdam 1928. Updated versions were published in 1931 and 1938 (see note 80). A desk copy of the 1931 edition shows that it was quite drastically rewritten by Schmidt-Degener.

fig. 32
Double page in Schmidt-
Degener's catalogue of 1934,
pp. 268-69, and a page
of illustrations



art than in the past, and more justice was being done to early Netherlandish artists, Flemings, Italians and Spaniards. In Schmidt-Degener's early years as director-general, the far more selective acquisition policy had focused chiefly on foreign schools.⁸³ Early Netherlandish painting, knowledge of which had increased by leaps and bounds in the early decades of the 20th century, took on clearer shape with the identification of several artists (fig. 32).⁸⁴ New art-historical insights were incorporated in the catalogues, mainly in the areas of attribution and iconography. Attention was rarely paid to early provenances, or to the stylistic aspects of the paintings described. In that respect the catalogue trailed far behind international collection catalogues and the French *catalogue raisonné* of the Mauritshuis that Bredius had had published in 1895, which remained in print until 1935, having been updated by W. Martin.⁸⁵

fig. 33
Double page in the illustrated
catalogue of the Kaiser-
Friedrich-Museums in Berlin
compiled by Hans Posse in
1909-11, pp. 174-75

A truly model catalogue for the period was that of the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museums in Berlin of 1909-11, which was fully illustrated (fig. 33). Compiled by Hans Posse, it followed the arrangement in the museum by being chronological within each school. Colour plays an impor-

tant part in the descriptions in order to supplement the black-and-white photographs. Each entry opens with a fairly short biography of the artist followed by technical information and the provenance. Reference is also made to other versions, and occasionally there is a brief comment on the attribution and an attempt to place the work within the artist's oeuvre. This catalogue was the first one to give an outline of the art-historical knowledge about a painting, turning it into an instrument for the art historian.⁸⁶ Its size and weight made it unwieldy for the interested museum-goer, so it became a book to be read in the study, like numerous post-war collection catalogues. As a model it was copied in many German and English catalogues between the two world wars, and they were generally easier to carry, although rarely as attractive.⁸⁷ In order to reduce the weight, the text and illustrations were often published in separate volumes.



⁸³ Schmidt-Degener acquired more than 200 paintings, including several important foreign works and five Rembrandts; see Luijten 1984, pp. 417-25. The Kessler-Hülsmann Bequest of 1940 added another 86 pictures to the collection.

⁸⁴ See Filedt Kok/Bergvelt 1998, pp. 150-58.

⁸⁵ Coll. cat. The Hague 1895, with later editions in 1914 (W. Martin) and 1935 (W. Martin and H. Schneider), to which a supplement was added in 1939. The catalogues contain medium-length biographies of the artists, fairly detailed descriptions of the paintings, full-size facsimiles of inscriptions, provenances, and lists of literature and reproductions.

⁸⁶ Coll. cat. Berlin 1909-11. On this and the earlier Berlin painting catalogues see Mainz 2005, pp. 272-75.

⁸⁷ See Tümmers 1975 for a survey of the Berlin and Munich painting catalogues. The catalogues of Kassel, Dresden and Vienna follow the same pattern. The first fully illustrated catalogue was published by the National Gallery in London in 1899. In addition to the *Catalogue of pictures at Trafalgar Square*, with its concise artists' biographies, descriptions and very brief provenance and art-historical data, there were three volumes of *Illustrations to the catalogue*. From 1945 the gallery published partial catalogues covering the various schools (see note 93).



fig. 34
The Gallery of Honour
in the Rijksmuseum after
the renovation by W. Quist,
photograph of c. 1990

fig. 35
Arrangement of the *Masterpieces*
exhibition in the Philips Wing,
the room with early
Rembrandts, 2007

The Rijksmuseum after the Second World War

From 1939 the collections of the Rijksmuseum were moved into air-raid shelters. In 1941, Schmidt-Degener died. He was succeeded in 1946 by Jonkheer D.C. Röell, who had been Schmidt-Degener's assistant from 1922 to 1935, and director of Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum from 1936 to 1946. Arthur F.E. van Schendel (1910-1977) was responsible for the Department of Paintings, first as curator, and from 1950 as director. He had worked in the Rijksmuseum before the war, and from 1959 to 1975 he was Röell's successor as director-general. Starting in 1945, the Rijksmuseum was renovated in stages and the displays were reorganised. The aesthetic approach continued to predominate, but the mixed display introduced on a modest scale by Schmidt-Degener was abandoned.

A strict distinction was made in the permanent display between the departments of paintings, Dutch history, decorative arts, and sculpture.

After the war, the Department of Paintings retained the eastern galleries and the Gallery of Honour for the permanent exhibition, while until 2001 the 18th and 19th-century paintings were displayed in the South Wing. After the presentation of 15th and 16th-century northern Netherlandish paintings, the extensive survey of 17th-century Dutch art began in the Frans Hals gallery and ended in the Night Watch room, and that remained unchanged until 1983. Seventeenth-century Flemish works were hung in the Gallery of Honour, along with Italian and Spanish paintings and, until 1970, with the Haarlem Mannerists and Utrecht Caravaggisti. Under the directorship of Simon L. Levie, who was director-general from 1975 to 1989, *The night watch* was restored to its central position in its room as the visual culmination of the view down the Gallery of Honour. This was done after the renovation of this part of the museum in 1983-84, when the larger 17th-century works were moved to the gallery (fig. 34). The Rijksmuseum celebrated its bicentenary under Ronald de Leeuw, who succeeded Henk van Os as director in 1997. The jubilee exhibition of 2000, *The glory of the Golden Age*, presented a multifaceted survey of 17th-century Dutch art with 200 paintings, sculptures and objets d'art that filled the Gallery of Honour and all the painting galleries. After they had been renovated in 2001, 18th and 19th-century painting was given a place in the permanent exhibition in the main building until it closed at the end of 2003. While the main building was closed (2004-10), the Philips Wing⁸⁸ was used for a presentation of 17th-century Dutch art and history under the title *Masterpieces*, containing a selection of some 100 paintings (fig. 35).

The active exhibition policy followed after the war devoted considerable attention to aspects of the art of the Golden Age which had previously been underrated, such as genre (*Tot lering en vermaak* [To instruct and delight], 1978), history paintings (*Gods, saints and heroes*, 1980-81), picture frames (*Prijst de lijst* [Praise the frame], 1984), painters of the *beau fini* (*Fijnschilders*, 1989-90), Mannerism and the rise of realism (*Dawn of the Golden Age*, 1993-94), and *Still-life paintings from the Netherlands, 1550-1720*, 1999). In addition, there were no fewer than four major exhibitions devoted to Rembrandt (in 1956, 1969, 1991-92, 2006), as well as monographic exhibitions on Jan Steen (1996), Aelbert Cuyp (2001), Michael Sweerts (2002), Gerard ter Borch (2005) and others.

⁸⁸ This extension, which was built in three stages in the early decades of the 20th century, was originally called the Fragments Building,

then the Drucker Extension, and in 1995, after extensive renovation, the South Wing (now called Philips Wing).

fig. 36
The cover and double pages
288-89 in the *Catalogue of paintings
Rijksmuseum Amsterdam*,
design by Dick Elffers, 1960



Many of these exhibitions resulted in purchases that rounded out the picture of 17th-century art. They included paintings by Hendrick Goltzius (SK-A-4866), Hendrick ter Brugghen (SK-A-3908/no. 37), Pieter Codde (SK-A-4844/no. 47) and Caesar van Everdingen (SK-A-4878). In addition, a considerable number of classic 17th-century Dutch masterpieces were acquired, among them large still lifes by Floris van Dijck, Pieter Claesz and Willem Heda (SK-A-4821/no. 55; SK-A-4646/no. 43; SK-A-4830/no. 120), as well as monumental landscapes by Aelbert Cuyp and Philips Koninck (SK-A-4118; SK-A-4133). The latter two were bought in England, which is where the majority of this type of classic work went in the late 18th century. Once, again, several Rembrandts entered the museum, boosting the representation of his early work in particular. The purchasing policy for paintings became increasingly selective in the post-war period, and was geared to enriching the permanent collection with works of exceptional quality. Donations, apart from that of Mr and Mrs Bruijn-van der Leeuw noted above, played only a minor role.

One sizable expansion of the collection came from an unexpected quarter in the form of works of art that had been recuperated after having been sold illegally to the Germans during the Second World War or simply looted, often from Jewish owners. The works recovered through the Stichting Nederlands Kunstbezit (Foundation for Dutch Art Holdings, SNK) that could not be returned to their rightful owners were distributed over Dutch museums by the Dienst voor 's Rijks Verspreide Kunstvoorwerpen (National Service for State-Owned Works of Art: DRVK). It was in this way that the collections of Otto Lanz and Fritz Mannheimer, with their international scope, came to the Rijksmuseum. In 1960 and 1972, most of these recuperated paintings were transferred to the Rijksmuseum after a long time on loan. This also happened with some of the recovered paintings from the stock of the former art dealer J. Goudstikker. After a long

legal battle, the Dutch government decided at the end of 2005 to return the Goudstikker paintings to his heirs, with the result that the Rijksmuseum lost several paintings from its collection, among them the *River landscape with a ferry* by Salomon van Ruysdael (SK-A-3983) and Jan Steen's *Sacrifice of Iphigenia* (SK-A-3984).

Röell's and Van Schendel's catalogues of exhibited paintings, 1948-60

Because of the Second World War, the Rijksmuseum's paintings were withdrawn from display from September 1939 to July 1945, and from the autumn of 1945 only a small selection of some 100 masterpieces was exhibited.⁸⁹ When the Department of Paintings reopened in the western galleries on the first floor in the summer of 1948, some 400 works were on display. The catalogue of that year, by Röell, speaks of 'the best part of the collection of Dutch paintings from the 15th to the end of the 17th century, and a selection from the foreign schools'. It also announces that 'an equally carefully selected group of paintings, pastels and watercolours from the 18th and 19th centuries will be put on display' (in the Drucker Extension). These were then included in the 1951 edition of the catalogue (some 700 items). It is also stated that 'other galleries are being fitted out to take the other pieces, which are of art-historical rather than of aesthetic interest', and that when this 'enlarged study collection' was ready a 'fully revised, complete edition' of the catalogue of paintings would be published. In anticipation of that, the 1948 catalogue incorporated 'major and minor

⁸⁹ In the summer of 1946 there was an exhibition of the acquisitions made in the period 1940-46, which included paintings from the Kessler-Hülsmann (1940) and Edwin vom Rath (1941) bequests.

Interestingly, the catalogue *Aanwinsten 1940-1946*, includes lists of literature and exhibitions as well as short descriptions, dimensions etc.

discoveries yielded by the discipline of art history since the previous publication of 1934'. Concisely, but in more detail than in 1934, a short description of the work is followed by the provenance, datings, versions and models. The neutral tone and the brief remarks about the style of individual paintings make this publication very comparable to the pre-war German catalogues.

The 1951 edition states that 'circumstances have prevented [implementation of] the plan for setting up an Art-Historical Collection that was announced in 1948'. In 1956 an art-historical study collection was put together, albeit in a provisional form, and 300 works were added to the catalogue. They were joined by a further 400 in 1960 in the English-language *Catalogue of paintings Rijksmuseum Amsterdam* (fig. 36), with its blue paper cover. The title might suggest that this was a complete catalogue, but although it runs to more than 400 pages it contains only those works on display.⁹⁰ With its approximately 1,400 paintings and other works, this was the most comprehensive catalogue so far. As regards the provenances and art-historical information, the various editions were improved and expanded from 1948 on. However, the information did remain concise. The descriptions are rarely more than three sentences long, and the factual data, provenances and art-historical information are still always set in a smaller typeface, but were a little more detailed, especially in the 1956 and 1960 editions. They contain accurate and relevant details, which were rarely elucidated, however, any more than they were in most of the German and English catalogues between the wars. The rather complex numbering system (for example: 980 A 1, 1538 E 1) was based on the one in the 1903 catalogue and on the numerous additions that were included in the supplements up to 1920.⁹¹ One innovation was the detailed indexes and the 16 pages of photographs of some 200 signatures (fig. 37), which were an effective substitute for some of the facsimiles published between

1858 and 1920. The 1960 catalogue still looks very plain, those photographs notwithstanding. Despite its length of 400 pages, it was a convenient size and could be taken to the museum by the visitor and consulted there. The demand for a souvenir of such a visit was met by separate illustrated albums and, as in earlier periods, by more expensive books with reproductions.⁹²

Ease of handling was a key requirement for museum catalogues for a very long time. The first lengthier, annotated partial catalogues of painting collections, like those of the National Gallery in London, had separate volumes with the plates. In Munich and Vienna, the partial catalogues of the 1960s and 1970s had a modest paperback format.⁹³ In addition, concise, one-volume, illustrated

⁹⁰ See Keers/Koot 1992, pp. 26-27, for the survey of the catalogues published between 1948 and 1960: [D.C. Röell], *Catalogus van de tentoongestelde schilderijen*, Amsterdam 1948, 111 pp.; idem, 1951, 200 pp.; idem, 1956, 276 pp.; and in 1960 [A. van Schendel and B. Haak], *Catalogue of paintings - Rijksmuseum - Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 1960, XV + 430 pp., with indices, and photographs of 134 selected signatures. It is stated in the foreword that 'The present edition has also been substantially enlarged by the inclusion of the pictures in the National History department, of acquisitions of the past four years and of a number of pictures from the study department. This edition contains approximately 400 numbers more than the 1956 edition'. There are several interleaved and annotated copies of the 1956 and 1960 catalogues in the Department of Paintings, by J. Cleveringa and C.J. de Bruyn Kops, among others.

⁹¹ In the supplements, the new acquisitions were inserted in the alphabetical sequence of artists' names with the relevant number. In other words, a painting to be placed between 688 and 689 was numbered 688a. In the post-war editions of the catalogue a number (688 A 1) or other combination was added to this, which could result in such complex numbers as 688 B E 1. In the case of reattributions, the painting would move to another part of the alphabet and would get a new number. The catalogues published between 1948 and 1960 have concordances with the 1934 catalogue, and from 1951 a list of the new attributions with the associated change in number.

⁹² The *Album schilderijen* with Dutch, French, German and English captions was published from 1948 with black-and-white illustrations of paintings, of which there were 100 in 1948, 120 in 1950, and 122 in 1956. Starting in the

1970s there were similar publications with 100 paintings in colour, which were later given the title *100 golden memories*. A de luxe album with colour reproductions pasted in, and with an introduction by A.F.E. van Schendel and entries by B. Haak, *Art treasures of the Rijksmuseum*, was published in various languages from 1965 on.

⁹³ Work started on the new series of *National Gallery catalogues* shortly before the Second World War, with separate volumes for the regional schools, the first being the *French school* as 'a series produced under the editorship of the Keeper to replace the catalogue of 1929'. They were the work of the National Gallery curators Martin Davies, Cecil Gould, Michael Levey, Neil MacLaren, Gregory Martin and others. In addition to the text volumes, which were of a handy size for consulting on a visit to the National Gallery, there were large volumes with reproductions. Most of these catalogues were revised and reprinted up until the 1970s. New editions began appearing in the 1980s in which more attention was devoted to the condition of the pictures and to technical research. They also contained colour illustrations. In addition to these partial catalogues, there is an *Illustrated general catalogue*, which was first published in 1973 and ran to 842 pp., with small reproductions and informative entries on all the pictures in the gallery. Between 1963 and 1968, the Alte Pinakothek published four volumes of an illustrated *catalogue raisonné* in a small format that included the *Holländische Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* of 1967. The Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna also produced partial catalogues in a slightly larger size, two being the *Holländische Meister* of 1972 and the *Flämische Malerei von Jan van Eyck bis Pieter Bruegel D.Ä.* of 1981.

fig. 37
Double pages 416-17 with photographs of signatures in the *Catalogue of paintings Rijksmuseum Amsterdam*



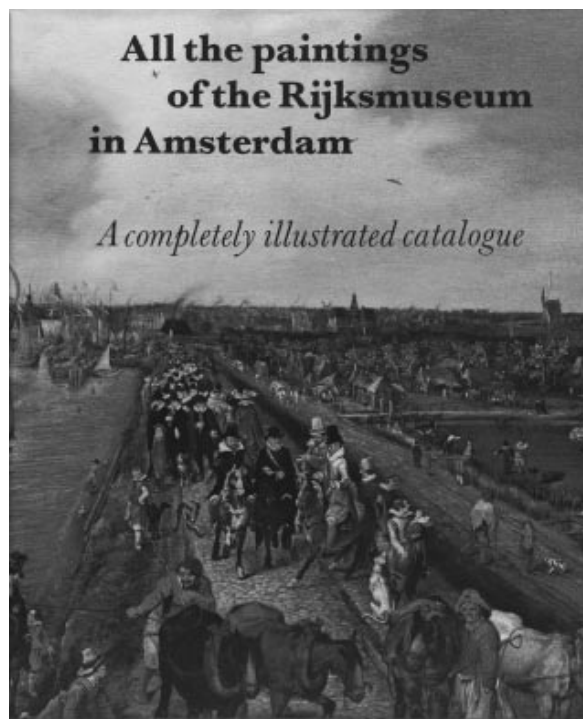


fig. 38
The covers of *All the Paintings of 1976* and *All the paintings – First supplement 1976-91 of 1992*, both designed by Alje Olthof

catalogues of the collections on display in important museums in Dresden, Munich and Berlin were published up until the 1980s.⁹⁴

‘All the paintings’ by Pieter van Thiel et al., 1976-92

Plans for annotated partial catalogues along the lines of the ones published by London’s National Gallery were laid around 1960 within the Department of Paintings by Van Schendel and curator Bob Haak (1926-2005). When the latter left for the Amsterdams Historisch Museum in 1963 he was succeeded by Dr Pieter J.J. van Thiel, who came from the University of Utrecht. He led the department from 1964 (as head of department until 1977, and from then until the end of 1991 as director of paintings). In consultation with the director-general, Arthur van Schendel, he decided to compile and publish a completely illustrated catalogue of the entire collection of paintings. Under his leadership, work on it was carried out for ten years by the staff of the department: Jola Cleveringa, Kees (C.) J. de Bruyn Kops, Annemarie Vels Heijn and Wouter T. Kloek. In the final stage between 1973 and 1976, the publisher Gary Schwartz and the designer Alje Olthof played important parts in the realisation of the project.⁹⁵

In its scale, size and weight, *All the paintings* outdid all its predecessors, and internationally, too, it was a heavy-weight among museum catalogues (fig. 38). This English publication was the first complete and fully illustrated catalogue of all the museum’s paintings, pastels and miniatures in the inventory of the Department of Paintings, including loans, and lists some 5,000 works.

It was decided to replace the complex numbering system with the original inventory numbers. The entries are arranged alphabetically by artist’s name, followed by the anonymous masters, which are ranked by country or town of origin and then chronologically, and then come the miniatures, pastels, watercolours and so on.⁹⁶ Despite the size of the book, the works are dealt with fairly

⁹⁴ See, among others, Berlin (*Gemäldegalerie: Katalog der ausgestellten Gemälde des 13.-18. Jahrhunderts*, 1975), Munich (1986), Dresden (1992), with concise biographies and entries about the paintings on display.

⁹⁵ Wouter T. Kloek, at the time an art history student at the University of Utrecht, drew up a plan for such a catalogue in 1966 during his internship in the Rijksmuseum. He based it on the fully illustrated *Katalog der Alten Meister der Hamburger Kunsthalle* of the same year. In 1967 Annemarie Vels Heijn joined the Department of Paintings as a young curator with the task of working on the catalogue, and she continued to be involved even after her move to the Education Department in 1972. Her successor was Wouter T. Kloek, who joined the project in 1973. In addition to Pieter J.J. van Thiel, as editor and compiler of the indexes, Jola Cleveringa, the department’s documentalist from 1946 to 1983, played a key role in the realisation of the catalogue. C.J. de Bruyn Kops, the curator of 18th and 19th-century

paintings from 1961 to 1988, made a substantial contribution to the cataloguing of the collection of miniatures.

In 1973, the museum asked the young publisher Gary Schwartz of Maarsse to issue the catalogue. Together with Marianne de Boer, he also acted as translator and English editor of the manuscript, which was largely in Dutch. As the designer, Alje Olthof (1934-95) ‘did much to improve the composition and the design of this complicated book’, as Van Schendel wrote in his foreword.

⁹⁶ An edition of the collection catalogue titled *Alle schilderijen van het Rijksmuseum te Amsterdam* was published by De Haan in Haarlem, in which the front matter and introductions were translated into Dutch, with the rest being left in English. The only exception is that the titles of paintings are given in both languages in the English and Dutch editions. See pp. 54-55 for a detailed explanation of the principles underlying the composition of the catalogue.

briefly. Compared to the catalogues of 1903-34, the artists' biographies were reduced to the places and years of birth and death, there are no descriptions of the works, and the identities of portrait sitters are given in the titles. Innovations were the black-and-white 'passport' photographs of all the works and a list of the relevant literature, occasionally with brief notes in brackets about attributions and dates. Only the latest provenance is given, together with the date of acquisition, as well as the source of funding (fig. 39). The catalogue proper is preceded by the meticulous and detailed 'Chronological history of the Rijksmuseum painting collection' with bibliography, written by Van Thiel, as well as a guide to the catalogue. The book closes with a large number of indexes (iconographic, topographical, historical, individuals, provenances etc.) and concordances.

All the paintings has completely opened up the Rijksmuseum's collection. The last complete catalogue dated from 1920, and in the meantime some 1,400 works had been added. Up until then the catalogue had only been sparsely illustrated. The publication represented an enormous advance in the sphere of collection management. Many hundreds of paintings were photographed for the first time, a number of works in the museum's reserves had not been inventoried before, and the data on the inventory cards were checked, if necessary by consulting the originals. This was made all the more complicated by the fact that part of the collection was out on loan, not only in other Dutch museums but in government buildings like embassies and ministries. The many indexes were compiled with great precision, and that in the days before computers.

The clear layout, the high standard of the small illustrations and the detailed indexes were innovations within the genre of museum collection catalogues. It is true that there were already complete publications of the holdings of more modest museums with small illustrations, but they contained far fewer works and were of lesser quality. The Rijksmuseum catalogue was a new phenomenon and served as a model for others, as is expressly stated in the Uffizi's complete catalogue of 1980.

The production of the 1976 catalogue must have taken a tremendous effort, so in view of the small staff of the paintings department it is perfectly understandable that its completion did not immediately lead to new catalogue projects. Individual paintings were subjected to deeper analysis within the framework of exhibitions like *Kunst voor de Beeldenstorm* (Art before the iconoclasm, 1986) and *Dawn of the Golden Age* (1993-94), and later in publications focusing on specific periods like *Netherlandish art in the Rijksmuseum (1400-1600 in 2000, 1600-1700 in 2001, and 1700-1800 in 2006)*, and *The poetry of reality: Dutch painters of the nineteenth century* (2000).

The year 1992 saw the publication of the 140-page supplement, *All the paintings of the Rijksmuseum in Amster-*

dam - First supplement 1976-1991, of exactly the same format, design and editorship as the 1976 catalogue (fig. 38). The introduction describes the history of the Department of Paintings between 1976 and 1991, followed by a complete bibliography of the museum's catalogues compiled by Frits Keers and Geert-Jan Koot. In addition to the more than 200 acquisitions in this period, and a few paintings that had not been included previously, the supplement contains corrections, additions and changed attributions.⁹⁷ The relatively large number of the latter makes it clear that readers cannot rely solely on the 1976 catalogue but should consult the supplement as well. It is true that the entire collection of paintings can be viewed in colour on the Rijksmuseum's website, but there the information in Dutch is very limited.⁹⁸

Towards a new series of partial catalogues of the paintings

The scholarly appraisal of the Rijksmuseum's paintings did not bear fruit in the form of annotated catalogues after the publication of *All the paintings* but in specialist studies, monographs and exhibition catalogues. As regards collection catalogues, the Rijksmuseum lagged behind the many museums at home and abroad that did present their works in partial catalogues. Those of the National Gallery in London are exemplary in this respect. Its first series, devoted to the various European schools, appeared between 1940 and 1960, and was reworked between 1960 and 1990. The museum is now preparing a new series which will examine the paintings in even greater depth.⁹⁹ Many European and American museums are following this lead with all sorts of variants.

The main models for the present partial catalogues of the Rijksmuseum's paintings have been those of the 17th-century collections in the National Gallery in London and in Washington.¹⁰⁰ The basic principle was that the museum can provide accurate information about a painting, particularly about its physical state, that was unavail-

⁹⁷ Coll. cat. 1992.

⁹⁸ A subsidy from the *Geheugen van Nederland* made it possible to update the basic information, add short descriptions and make digital colour photographs of all the paintings. This was done in 2001 by Dr Daniel Horst in consultation with the curators of the Department of Paintings. The updating with new acquisitions was done by Fennelies Kiers, the department's documentalist from 1984 to 2005.

⁹⁹ The first volumes in the series of *National Gallery catalogues* by Martin Davies were published in and shortly after the Second

World War. The 17th-century Dutch pictures were treated by Neil MacLaren in coll. cat. London 1960, with a revision by Christopher Brown appearing in 1991 (coll. cat. London 1991). In the most recent series, of which several volumes on the Italian paintings have appeared, as well as Lorne Campbell's exemplary 1998 catalogue of the 15th-century Dutch pictures, there is a great emphasis on scientific and technical research.

¹⁰⁰ See coll. cat. London 1960 and 1991, and coll. cat. Washington 1995.

fig. 39
 Double pages 522-23 in *All the Paintings of 1976*, designed by Alje Olthof



able to outsiders. As far as the art-historical approach is concerned, the aim was to emulate the concision of the first series of London catalogues. The deeper analysis that typifies the latest London series was unfeasible, and was not considered strictly necessary. In addition, it was decided to treat all the paintings in the same way.¹⁰¹

In view of the great interest in the international world of art history for the collection of more than 2,000 17th-century Dutch paintings in the Rijksmuseum, it was decided in 2001 to publish them spread over four catalogues. Thanks to financial support from the Dutch Post-Graduate School for Art History, two (later increased to three) researchers could be appointed for the project in April 2002, and a start was made with the preparations for the first volume. The basic principles of the project were laid down by the scholarly supervisory committee in consultation with the curators and authors, entries and information were exchanged, while an eye was kept on the standard and progress. With discussions of more than 450 paintings by Dutch artists born between 1570 and 1600, the present book is the first of the four partial catalogues in which more than 2,000 17th-century Dutch paintings will be assessed in the light of the latest scholarship.

The point of departure was that, given the size and nature of the collection, the catalogue could never be exhaustive. Building on the existing literature, the entries have been kept matter-of-fact yet critical, without detailed descriptions or in-depth analysis. Only a limited amount of new source and archival research or scientific examination could be conducted. However, particular attention has been paid to two aspects: the physical condition of the paintings and the provenances. All 450 paintings were examined jointly by the authors and one of the museum's conservators, and as a result of loans

and other factors this involved travelling to more than 20 locations. This technical examination has resulted in 'Technical notes' and a brief description of the state of each work ('Condition'). Both were written in consultation with the conservator. Previous technical findings were incorporated, and in some cases the authors could profit from research currently being undertaken by colleagues. Most of the panel paintings were subjected to dendrochronological examination by Peter Klein of Hamburg (see the complete list on pp. 511-23).

This and other research provided data that sometimes led to new attributions or datings, and in a few cases to the conclusion that the work in question no longer belonged in this volume because of its date or attribution.¹⁰² Unfortunately, technical limitations meant that no systematic examination could be made using infrared reflectography, X-radiography or similar methods. It is the intention that this type of examination will play a greater part in the subsequent volumes. The efforts and involvement of the conservators will be vital here. Physical data, such as information on the backs of the pictures and frames, together with the department's documentation and archival discoveries, were of great

¹⁰¹ It was decided not to publish thematic partial catalogues like coll. cat. The Hague 1980, 1993 and 2004, nor to discuss the major works at length and the rest only briefly, as in the Hague catalogues and in coll. cats. Utrecht (Centraal Museum) 1999, Utrecht (Catherijne-convent) 2002a and 2002b, and Haarlem 2006.

¹⁰² These included Wuestman 2004 (SK-A-861; which was formerly in manner of Palamedesz and is now

Delft). Other examples are Dirck van Delen's *Five ladies in an interior* (SK-A-4246), which was formerly attributed to Bartholomeus van Bassen, and *Portrait of Machteld Bas* (SK-A-1623), which was believed to be by Anthonie Palamedesz but is now given to Dirck van Santvoort. These two new attributions were made by Gerdien Wuestman, who also identified the sitter in SK-A-1623.

help in tracing the provenances.¹⁰³ Reference systems like the Getty Provenance Index and annotated auction catalogues also proved to be extremely valuable.

The concise biographies that precede the discussion of the paintings by each artist form a framework for the entries, which are grouped chronologically. In addition to photographs of the signatures (which replace the facsimiles published between 1860 and 1934), a few comparative illustrations have been included.

The work on the Rijksmuseum's new catalogue of paintings is a long-term project that will involve different generations of researchers and specialists. In 2007, thanks to support from the Getty Foundation and Japanese funding, work started on the second partial catalogue, which will contain around 650 paintings by artists born between 1600 and 1625, among them Rembrandt and his pupils. It is expected that the second volume will be finished in 2011.

At the beginning of 2006 work also began on the catalogues of the early Netherlandish paintings and the Flemish 17th century, and in 2006 a start was made on the catalogue of Italian works.¹⁰⁴ All these catalogues will go online on the Rijksmuseum's website, which will make it possible to incorporate new acquisitions and fresh data and insights about paintings that have already been published. The website could also provide a forum for critical comments from outside the museum, with the catalogues being presented as works in progress, and could involve a wider group of interested people in their realisation.

Jan Piet Filedt Kok

¹⁰³ In order to get a better idea of the nature, composition and provenance of the collections that entered the Rijksmuseum in the 19th century, the department has taken on interns in the past few years to chart the composition of those collections and to trace the provenances within them. In the case of the collection of Adriaan van der Hoop, which was bequeathed to the City of Amsterdam in 1855 and loaned to the Rijksmuseum in 1885, this research bore fruit in the shape of a fine exhibition and publication, Amsterdam (AHM) 2005. Several interns also investigated the Van der Pot (see Zeedijk 2007) and Van Heteren Gevers (see Geudecker 2007) collections, the Dupper Bequest, the De Witte van Citters collection of family portraits, and the Van de Poll Bequest, which yielded a number of theses and articles. This has provided a clear-cut picture of the provenances of

these collections from which the following 17th-century catalogues can benefit.

¹⁰⁴ Since February 2006, thanks to funding from the Mondriaan Foundation, Jan Piet Filedt Kok, with the assistance of Micha Leeftang and Margreet Wolters, has been working on the catalogue of the early Netherlandish artists born before 1500 (approximately 160 paintings). It is planned to put this catalogue on the Rijksmuseum website in mid-2008, and to publish it in book form together with the paintings by Netherlandish artists born between 1500 and 1570 (some 200 works) some years later. Gregory Martin has also been working on the 17th-century Flemish paintings (around 120) since February 2006, and in the summer of that year Duncan Bull started on his catalogue of the Italian paintings, of which there are approximately 200.

Directors and staff members of the Department of Paintings in the Rijksmuseum and their predecessors

C.S. Roos, inspector of the Nationale Konst-Gallery in Huis ten Bosch, The Hague, 1799-1806

J.D.N. van der Trappen, deputy director of the Nationale Konst-Gallery 1800-06

J.G. Waldorp, supervisor 1800-08

C. Apostool, director of the Koninklijk Museum from 1808, and of the Rijks Museum 1815-44

R. de Bruijn, assistant 1808-10

J.G. Teissier, supervisor 1809-21

J.N. Hodges, supervisor 1815-25

B. Wolff, supervisor 1815-25

F.J. Mahy, supervisor 1821-25

F.J. Mensart, supervisor 1822-24

G. Lamberts, supervisor printroom 1824-50

M.H. Lighthart, supervisor 1825-36

H. van Santen, supervisor 1825-43

J.W. Pieneman, director 1844-47, and member of the Board of Governors 1847-52

Members of the Supervisory Board 1844-47, the Board of Governors 1847-75, and the Supervisory Board 1875-83:

A. Brongdeest 1844-49

J. de Vries 1844-50

P.E.H. Praetorius 1844-75

N. Pieneman 1849-60

P.L. Dubourcq 1853-73

J. de Vos Jbsz 1853-76

J.W. Kaiser 1861-76

L.M. Beels van Heemstede 1873-83

Jonkheer W. van Loon 1875-83

C. Cunaeus 1876-83

G.A. Heinecken 1876-83

Jonkheer J.P. Six 1876-83

H.A. Klinkerhamer, supervisor 1836-72

W.J.M. Engelberts, supervisor 1847-74

P. Kiers, supervisor 1872-76

A.D. de Vries, supervisor 1876-85

J.W. Kaiser, director of the Rijksmuseum (paintings and printroom) 1875/76, and of the Rijksmuseum of Paintings 1876-83

F.D.O. Obreen, director of the Rijksmuseum of Paintings 1883-85, and director-general of the Rijksmuseum 1883-96

Jonkheer B.W.F. Riemsdijk, director of the Rijksmuseum

of Paintings, and director-general of the Rijksmuseum 1897-1921

C.G. 't Hooft, assistant 1897-98

W.J. Steenhoff, assistant 1899-1905, and deputy director

of the Rijksmuseum of Paintings 1905-24

F. Schmidt-Degener, director-general of the Rijksmuseum, and head of the Department of Paintings 1922-41

E.H. ter Kuile, assistant 1928-29

Jonkheer C.H. de Stuers, assistant 1931-48

A.B. de Vries, assistant 1934-41

O.L. van der Aa, assistant 1936-39

K.E. Schuurman, assistant 1940-46
D.J. de Hoop Scheffer, assistant 1943-46
Jonkheer D.C. Röell, curator 1922-35, and director-general of the Rijksmuseum 1946-59

A.F.E. van Schendel, curator 1933-50, director of the Department of Paintings 1950-59, and director-general of the Rijksmuseum 1959-75
H. van Hoorn, assistant 1946-48
J.L. Cleveringa, documentalist 1946-83
F.S.E. Baudouin, curator 1949-50
J. Bruyn, curator 1950-54
E.R. Meijer, curator 1952-53
B. Haak, curator 1954-63
J. Offerhaus, curator 1959-61
C.J. de Bruyn Kops, curator 1960-88

P.J.J. van Thiel, head of the Department of Paintings 1964-77, and director of the Department of Paintings 1977-91
A.A.E. Vels Heijn, curator 1967-72
F.E. Kiers, documentalist 1984-2005
W.A.P. Hoeben, assistant 1985-2000
W.F. Loos, curator 1989-99

W.T. Kloek, curator 1973-91, and head of the Department of Paintings 1991-2000
G.J. Jansen, curator 1991-2001
A. Wallert, research curator 1996-2006, and curator scientific research since 2006

J.P. Filedt Kok, head of the Department of Paintings 2000-05, and curator 2005-08
D. Bull, curator since 2001
Jenny Reynaerts, curator since 2003

T. Dibbits, curator 2002-05, head of the Department of Paintings 2005-06, and head of the Department of Fine Art since 2006
J. Bikker, research curator since 2006
P. Roelofs, curator since 2006
C. Wittop Koning, documentalist since 2006

Painting restorers and conservators in the Rijksmuseum 1799-2006

The painters Egbert van Drielst (1746-1818), Jacobus Johannes Lauwers (1753-1800), Jan Spaan, Cornelis van Cuylenburg (1758-1827) and J. de la Vigne treated paintings before the opening of the Nationale Konst-Gallery in 1799. The Hague art dealer P.C. Huybrechts treated a group of 25 paintings with a staff of 3 to 4 people, 1805/06.

In the Trippenhuys, the director Cornelis Apostool and the supervisors Teissier and Wolff treated some paintings in the first decades of the 19th century.

N. Hopman was a freelance restorer for the Rijksmuseum, Paviljoen Welgelegen and the Mauritsshuis, 1845-70. W.A. Hopman assisted his father and succeeded him as a freelance restorer, 1866-97.

Retouching and inpainting was done by Prof. B. Wijnfeld in 1888-89, Prof. Sybrandt Altman (1822-90) in 1885-87, David van der Kellen Jr in 1885-87, Jan de Groot in 1890, and Jonkheer H. Teixeira de Mattos in 1903. A few paintings were restored by F.J.A. Vos, P.T. van Wijngaardt, Haarlem, A. Levelger in 1898, and A. Hauser (Berlin 1857-1919) in 1903.

J.A. Hesterman Sr, freelance restorer 1898-c. 1915, from 1906 as J.A. Hesterman & Zonen with his sons J.A. Hesterman Jr (1877-1955) and F.C. Hesterman on a freelance basis until c. 1920; H. Heydenrijk, assistant of W.A. Hopman, mentioned 1901-13

B. van Heusden, technical assistant and framemaker 1898-1927; W.F.C. Greebe, in the Rijksmuseum 1889-1930, as technical assistant/liner from 1914, and as painting restorer 1920-30; P.N. Bakker, in the Rijksmuseum 1909-30, as technical assistant from 1916, and as painting restorer 1920-30

C.H. Jenner, in the Rijksmuseum 1923-46/ 47, as technical assistant/liner, later also called painting restorer 1930-50(?); H.H. Mertens, technical assistant/painting restorer 1931-50, and chief painting restorer 1950-70; H. Plagge, in the Rijksmuseum 1949-70, as technical assistant 1950-70; A.J.H. Vorrink, as technical assistant/liner 1950-57; D. Middelhoek, as technical assistant/liner 1955-64; J.F.J. Nagtegael, painting restorer 1957-58; Q. Persijn, in the Rijksmuseum 1963-69, and as technical assistant/framemaker 1969-72; A.E. van Zanten, in the Rijksmuseum 1971-84, as technical assistant/frame restorer 1972-84

From 1970 the title painting restorer was replaced by painting conservator and head of painting conservation: L. Kuiper, chief painting conservator 1970-89; W. Hesterman, painting conservator 1971-81; E. Bosshard, painting conservator 1971-73; H.C. Coen, technical assistant/painting conservator 1971-87; M. Zeldenrust, painting conservator since 1974, and head of the department since 1990; M.P. Bijl, painting conservator from 1980, and head of the department 1990-2000; H. van der Grinten, frame conservator 1984-90; M.A.A.M. van de Laar, painting conservator since 1989; M. Berends-Alberts, documentalist 1990-2001; H.W. Kat, painting conservator 1990-2001; H. Baija, frame conservator since 1990; L. Sozzani, painting conservator since 1990; G. Tauber, painting conservator since 1990; W. de Ridder, painting conservator since 1995; M. Chavannes, painting conservator 2003-05; A. Swart, assistant 2003-06; I. Verslype, painting conservator since 2004