

Italy and the Low Countries: current research and digitization projects at the Dutch Institute in Florence

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Since its foundation in 1958 the Dutch University Institute for Art History in Florence has promoted research into Dutch and Flemish art and artists in Italy, and on the rich tradition of artistic exchange and mutual influence between Italy and the North. Within the international academic community it clearly has a spearhead function: it pursues a progressive research policy, which is epitomized by a number of projects. Current projects focus on different aspects of artistic production: painting, tapestries, drawing and printmaking. New volumes of the *Repertory of Dutch and Flemish Paintings in Italian Public Collections* are on the verge of publication. Also, a special study is being made of *Art Works Sold in Italy During the Years 1800-1914*. The Italian 19th-century art market was much more dynamic, richer and more extensive than was previously assumed. Many of the more than 100,000 publicly sold art works in Italy were of Dutch or Flemish origin, finding their way into public and private collections elsewhere at a later stage. With the *Repertory of Flemish Tapestries in Italian Public Collections* and a project on *Watermarks and Paper Used for Prints and Drawings c. 1450-1800* other fields of art production are also being covered.

Furthermore, the Institute has recently developed an online research tool within the context of the digitization of its rich Photographic Archives (comprising the rare materials assembled by Benedict Nicolson, Hermann Georg August Voss, Gerhard Ewald and Luigi Magnaguagno). The database of the Photo Study Collection (nikipics.library.uu.nl) includes more than 50,000 descriptions of (photographs of) works of art. It facilitates research for the study of Western art from the late Middle Ages to the modern period. The collection's strength lies in the photographic reproduction of paintings and drawings from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Internet users can conduct productive research on individual artists, iconography, the history of collecting (provenance, art market) and historiography (connoisseurship).