

# Friends of CODART

## Newsletter, Summer 2019

Dear CODART Friends,

For CODART and the Friends of CODART Foundation, 2018 was a memorable year. George Abrams, Tom Kaplan, and Rose-Marie and Eijk de Mol van Otterloo decided to mark CODART's twentieth anniversary by becoming Patrons for Life. In doing so, they expressed their trust in and support for CODART, for which we are very grateful.

In October 2018, CODART's director, Gerdien Verschoor decided that it was time to step down from her position at CODART and to go in search of new challenges. At the beginning of 2019, the CODART board appointed Maartje Beekman as the new director, as from 1 March 2019. You can read more about the change in this Newsletter. Some of you attended the festive farewell reception that was held in Gerdien Verschoor's honor at the Mauritshuis on Thursday, 7 March. The CODART team presented her with the digital publication "Celebrating Gerdien" as a farewell gift. Several members contributed to it by writing on subjects in which Gerdien takes a particular interest or that are close to her heart. You can find this publication on the CODART website.

It is thanks to its Patrons that CODART can continue to improve its website, provide financial support to members for attendance at the CODART congress, and meet the financial obligations accruing from a range of CODART projects and activities.

On Saturday, 16 March 2019, the annual Patrons Salon took place during TEFAF. The focus was on the question: "Real or Fake? Questions of Authenticity." This Newsletter contains a more detailed report of the Patrons Salon, as well as a brief account of the BRAFA Day for Friends that took place in February.

From 2 to 4 June, the CODART 22 Congress took place in Berlin. This year, the Friends of CODART Grant Program made it possible for seven CODART members from five different countries to attend the Berlin Congress. They work at museums with limited travel budgets but were able to attend the Congress thanks to the financial support of the Friends. CODART 22 attracted the maximum number of Patrons that could attend this event, focusing on the theme "Back to Berlin – And What It Means to Be a Curator Today". The interaction between CODART members and



Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Pedlar Selling Spectacles (Allegory of Sight)*, c. 1624, Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden.

Patrons brings people together in exchanges of ideas and knowledge and in their shared passion for Flemish and Netherlandish art.

The program for the coming autumn includes several exciting projects and activities. CODART presents the CODART Canon, the CODART eZine will be replaced by the new CODART features, and especially for our Friends, we will be organizing an exclusive museum visit. We warmly invite you to a Friends afternoon in Museum De Lakenhal in Leiden, which recently reopened following major renovation work. We will be visiting the exhibition "Young Rembrandt - Rising Star" there, together with the curators. Keep an eye out for alerts in your inbox and at [www.codart.nl](http://www.codart.nl) to stay abreast of all events.

With best wishes,

Titia Vellenga  
Chair, Friends of CODART Foundation

Maartje Beekman  
Director, CODART

# Friends Activities

## 2018-2019

### BRAFA Day for Friends

On Friday 1 February 2019 we had a Friends afternoon during BRAFA, the Brussels art fair.

A group of twenty CODART Friends received a hospitable welcome in Brussels. They were given a guided tour of the art fair followed by lunch. The program concluded with an “Art Talk” by Professor Manfred Sellink, General Director and Head Curator of the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp. He spoke on the subject of “Bruegel: Recent Developments and Discoveries.”

His talk was filmed and can soon be found on BRAFA’s YouTube channel.

It was an interesting afternoon and an excellent occasion for Friends to meet up. We look forward to next year’s event!

### Patrons Salon Maastricht

This year’s Patrons Salon during the art fair TEFAF was devoted to a discussion of the technical examination of materials in relation to questions of authenticity. Why is this subject relevant to private collectors? How can collectors enlist the aid of specialists in this area? How can they themselves develop a “technical” gaze when looking at materials? Is that skill crucial to distinguishing between real and fake, or to establishing the artist’s identity? Are such matters best left to the experts? Or can a true connoisseur manage perfectly well without any technical knowledge of materials?

On Saturday, 16 March 2019, CODART Patrons and Business Sponsors met in the MECC, Maastricht, to listen to three perspectives on this subject. The first speaker was Robert van Langh, Chair at NICAS (Netherlands Institute for Conservation, Art and Science), Head of Conservation and Restoration at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, and a member of the TEFAF Vetting Committee. He discussed the vetting committee at TEFAF, the current scope for technical examination, and developments anticipated in the future. His main point was that scientific expertise can never replace connoisseurship: the two go hand in hand.

The second speaker was Emilie den Tonkelaar, Old Master Paintings specialist at the art dealership Hoogsteder & Hoogsteder in The Hague. In 2018 she discovered an oil sketch by no one less than Peter Paul Rubens: her expert eye was key to this discovery. The materials needed for technical examination are not always available and they are often quite expensive.



Peter Paul Rubens, *The Secular Hierarchy in Adoration*, c. 1625. Private collection via Hoogsteder&Hoogsteder

The ability to recognize an artist’s work with the naked eye is therefore the first step. After Emilie discovered the work and had studied its historical background, she asked Friso Lammertse to take a look. He endorsed her conclusions and presented the discovery to an international group of Rubens experts in January 2019. The painting contains sections of visible overpainting. Technical research will be conducted to date the instances of overpainting and to demonstrate the extent to which the original paint layer beneath them is still intact.

Finally, the participants were addressed by David Lainé, Senior Partner Painting Conservation and Research at IPARC, the International Platform for Art Research and Conservation, on IPARC’s work for museums as well as for the private sector. Using Multispectral Infrared Reflectography and Macro X-Ray Fluorescence, the researchers can establish the elements constituting the color pigments of an artwork. This enables them to trace restorations and to ascertain whether “modern” ones were added at a later stage. They provide the client with factual information on the technical materials of an artwork, but do not make any pronouncements on the work’s authenticity. With the aid of the data they supply,

other experts, such as art historians, can reach a verdict on the matter of authenticity.

The discussion that followed the three talks was skillfully moderated by Mireille Pondman, managing director of the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD). The RKD is currently digitizing its entire art-historical visual documentation collection. She briefly showed how the RKD is tackling this project, after which she opened up the discussion between speakers and audience.

One of the subjects raised was the risk that works may become damaged in the course of research.

Robert van Langh emphasized that every researcher must always think extremely carefully about what they are doing and why, as well as the possible consequences, and must document each step properly for the future. It is unavoidable that materials will undergo changes with the passage of time. That makes it essential to study how fast these changes occur and under what conditions the work can be conserved in the best condition.



The speakers and members of the audience engaging in discussion

Another topic was the reliability of condition reports supplied by auction houses. Emilie den Tonkelaar noted that auction houses often lack the time and capacity to examine and describe all the works offered to them in detail. That means that you must always be vigilant yourself – you may be able to make a wonderful discovery!

Finally, Mireille Pondman asked what the future has in store for us. Will buyers be roaming the art fair with their own devices to check artworks' authenticity? The speakers did not think that any such innovation was likely to appear soon, in any case not within the next ten years. You have to ask yourself how technical equipment can be deployed usefully. Ultimately you always need a physician to make the right diagnosis, says Robert van

Langh: in other words, you need an expert who is capable of interpreting data correctly.

Tools are useful, because they help us to gain a better understanding of what we have and how we can preserve it in good condition. In ten years' time, technology will have an even greater impact, but everything will be based on combining technological capabilities with art-historical scholarship.

Next year we will be organizing another Patrons Salon during TEFAF, on Saturday, 7 March 2020.

Please save the date!

### A New CODART Director



As of 1 March 2019 Maartje Beekman succeeded Gerdien Verschoor as director of CODART. After almost 14 years of directorship Gerdien handed over the magic wand to Maartje at a festive farewell reception at the Mauritshuis in The Hague. Maartje has worked for CODART since 2010 as a project coordinator and is greatly looking forward to ushering CODART into its new future. You may find more information on [www.codart.nl](http://www.codart.nl) (newsitem 14 February 2019).

### Changes in the Board

We welcome Christi Klinkert, Curator at the Stedelijk Museum Alkmaar. She recently joined the Board of the Friends of CODART Foundation and took over from Norbert Middelkoop, Curator of Paintings, Prints and Drawings at the Amsterdam Museum in Amsterdam. His mandate ended last January. We thank Norbert for all his efforts in connecting new friends to our network these past eight years. Chair of the Board Titia Vellenga, along with the other members Rob Vellekoop, Bob Haboltd and Till-Holger Borchert, is very pleased to have Christi on board and looks forward to cooperating with her.



Norbert Middelkoop



Christi Klinkert

# CODART Friends

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## Business Sponsors

BRAFA Art Fair  
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Sotheby's *New*  
TEFAF (The European Fine Arts Fair)

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## Partner

RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History

These museums support **CODART** as institutional member:

Centraal Museum, Utrecht | Denver Art Museum, Denver | Drents Museum, Assen | Fondation Custodia, Collection Frits Lugt, Paris | Glasgow Museums, Glasgow | Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge | King Baudouin Foundation, Brussels | Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna | Mauritshuis, The Hague | Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York | Musea Brugge | Museum of Fine Arts, Boston | Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden | Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam | Nationalmuseum, Stockholm | Patrimonio Nacional | Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam | Royal Łazienki Museum, Warsaw | Het Scheepvaartmuseum, Amsterdam | Stedelijk Museum Alkmaar | Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest | Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam | Vlaamse Kunstcollectie (Museums of Fine Arts: Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent, Leuven, Ostend)

Do you also want to support **CODART**? Please send an e-mail to [friends@codart.nl](mailto:friends@codart.nl) or enlist via [www.codart.nl/friends](http://www.codart.nl/friends)

## CODART Calendar

### 2019

#### 18 November

**CODART Public symposium** at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Please check [www.codart.nl](http://www.codart.nl) for up-to-date information

#### 6 December

##### **Friends Museum Visit**

Guided visit to the exhibition *Young Rembrandt – Rising Star* at Museum De Lakenhal in Leiden

### 2020

#### 7 March

##### **Patrons Salon**

An exclusive lecture or exchange of expertise in the field of the Old Masters, during TEFAF Maastricht

#### 14-16 June

##### **CODART 23 congress Stockholm**

The yearly **CODART** congress will be organized in conjunction with the Nationalmuseum

Please consult [www.codart.nl](http://www.codart.nl) for up-to-date information about **CODART** events.