

We learn from the catalogue that Mr. Hannema has brought together in his beautiful new Museum building the very best of all the works of art, pictures and drawings which have been collected in Holland during the past forty years—during the reign of Queen Wilhelmina—except the acquisitions of museums and public galleries. In consequence, there is no artistic unity in this exhibition ; it gives no fresh knowledge or insight into a specific period or artistic problem. If, nevertheless, the visitor greatly enjoys it, that is due to Mr. Hannema, who with good taste and great skill has made a selection of fine works of art of exceptionally high quality.

Since the old Dutch collections—a few excepted, as that of the family Six—no longer contain any important art treasures, this exhibition is representative of what the Dutch collections of to-day possess as a whole in paintings and drawings. In addition to the Dutch collectors, we find in the Netherlands resident foreigners from neighbouring countries who have brought their collections with them and who have naturally contributed to this exhibition. After nearly every important piece in private hands had been lost to Holland during the past centuries, collecting started again about fifty years ago. First of all, Holland collects the works of her own golden era : more than half of the two hundred pictures exhibited here belong to the Dutch school of the seventeenth century. To buy important paintings by Rembrandt, Frans Hals and Vermeer seems to be beyond the means of even the wealthiest Dutch collector. If Dr. Bredius and the public galleries, assisted by many friends, had not interfered at the right moment, the number of these works would have decreased rather than increased in the last decades. The average Dutch collector was happier in purchasing good examples, even outstanding works, by artists of slightly less importance. Public interest shifted a little from the genre picture to the landscape, and among the landscape painters the artists of the Both and Berchem group are now less *en vogue* than the painters of the national school, such as Jacob van Ruisdael, M. Hobbema and Jan van Goyen. Of the genre painters, Terborch is to-day more highly

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esteemed than Metsu, and Ostade more than Dou. After the pictures of the Dutch school, the modern collector asks for their predecessors, the Dutch and Flemish primitives and Flemish paintings of the seventeenth century. It is certainly not by chance that of the latter van Dyck and Teniers are not represented at all in this exhibition, whereas Rubens and Brouwer are. All the French paintings shown belong to the eighteenth century, as do also the best of the Italian ones. With the drawings, the emphasis lies in the same place, but this collection is still more important since the drawings embrace a wider field and even the greatest draughtsmen are represented by wonderful examples of their art. We wonder whether any other country could form such a proud series of Rembrandt and Rubens sketches from its private collections as is to be seen here. We notice that four-fifths of the two hundred drawings exhibited come from the collections of Mr. F. Koenigs and Mr. F. Lugt.

There is not much more to say about the works themselves. The attributions generally appear to be correct.<sup>1</sup> The main piece of the early Netherlands school is undoubtedly the *Tower of Babel* by Pieter Brueghel, which is the smaller version of the well-known picture in Vienna. It was found in Paris some years ago and Mr. D. G. van Beuningen was successful in adding it to his rich collection (No. 1A). To the same collector belongs the *Madonna and Child* by Q. Massys (No. 13), which has been published by Dr. Friedländer in the last volume of his *Alt-niederländische Malerei*. Both works are on exhibition here for the first time. German art is also represented by some excellent examples. Mr. van Beuningen bought not long ago the two small Stefan Lochner wings from the Pannwitz collection (No. 31A and B). The wonderful and well-known *Crucifixion* by Matthias Grünewald from the Koenigs collection is also there to be admired (No. 31). Among the works of Lucas Cranach we may note especially a carefully executed *Venus* (No. 26; E. Proehl collection).

Three well-known and well-established early works by Rembrandt are shown, of which the *Portrait of Maerten Looten* (No. 126; Estate of the late A. W. M. Mensing), has a somewhat cold splendour after cleaning. More important is the *Portrait of a Man* in warm red colour, just acquired by the Museum Boymans from the Schwab collection (No. 127). Some pictures of the school of Rembrandt (F. Bol, Ph. Koninck, A. de Gelder and N. Maes) are hung in the same room. The climax of the exhibition is the other acquisition by Mr. Hannema, *Christ and the Disciples at Emmaus*, a large picture by Vermeer van Delft which Dr. Bredius published in this Magazine (November, 1937, p. 211).

It is curious to note how many Dutch paintings have returned from England to the Netherlands. The most important landscape in this exhibition is certainly *The Watermill* by Hobbema, from the former Wantage collection; the very best Jan van Goyen is the *View of Arnheim* from the former Stoop collection (Nos. 88 and 79; both in the H.E. ten Cate collection). The

<sup>1</sup> We have some doubts about the attributions of Nos. 64A, 71, 152 (perhaps A. v. Borssum) and 185 (the old attribution to P. Longhi seems better). It is to be regretted that apparently through lack of time the first edition of the catalogue is in parts too superficial and incomplete to serve the visitor as a good guide. Furthermore, we share the disappointment of some owners whose pictures have not been distinguished in the catalogue by the title "masterwork" which was arbitrarily given to other paintings.

charming Paulus Potter from the Holford sale is back in Holland (No. 123; F. H. Fentener van Vlissingen collection), and hangs as a companion piece to a small, brilliantly painted Wouverman (No. 166; D. G. van Beuningen collection). Altogether the landscape, marine and cattle-painters, such as A. Cuypp (especially Nos. 64 and 67), A. v. d. Neer, J. v. d. Cappelle and J. v. d. Heyden are capably represented here by small pictures.

Two landscapes by A. v. Ostade may now be mentioned, showing the artist as a landscape painter from an almost unknown side. The very early one, dated 1630 (No. 115; W. v. d. Vorm collection), makes it clear that the artist has seen and studied the works of H. Seghers. The other (not dated), (No. 117; E. A. Veltman collection), probably painted only a few years later, reveals the influence of Rembrandt's art in light and colouring, an influence which is also traceable in A. v. Ostade's early genre paintings. His younger brother Isaak starts his artistic career under the same star<sup>2</sup>. From both of them we see good pictures of their later periods. Ten very varied paintings by Jan Steen prove that this artist has lost nothing of his popularity with the modern collector, a popularity which is fully justified by the pictorial and narrative qualities. On the other hand, there is only one picture by P. de Hooch (also from the Wantage collection), (No. 91; H.E. ten Cate collection). His good paintings of the middle period are too expensive for the average Dutch collector. The same can be said of Metsu's works. No picture by him is included in the exhibition, but his style can be found in an H. E. v. d. Neer, for which a collector was prepared to spend 1,450 gns. (No. 108; B. de Geus v. d. Heuvel). Good pictures by Terborch are not infrequently encountered in Dutch collections (Nos. 148-151). In still-life painting the modern taste manifests his predilection for the works of W. Kalff, whose art is represented here by three examples of high quality (Nos. 92-94).

After having passed through a room with Flemish paintings we come to the works of the eighteenth century. A landscape by Francesco Guardi (No. 186; H.E. ten Cate collection) and a *Flight to Egypt* by G. B. Tiepolo (No. 189) are most prominent in this section of the exhibition.

The drawings are the real pride of the exhibition. The choice from the collection Koenigs (which is on loan to the Museum) is excellently made. Mr. F. Lugt has formed a special exhibition of seventy studies and portraits taken from his own collection. The first four items, a *Portrait of a Woman* by Dürer (never yet reproduced), portraits by Rubens, Lucas van Leyden and Gossaert, belong to the most important works in this exhibition. The exhibition will remain open until October 15th.

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## IRANIAN ART AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

Until the end of August there is on view in the Bibliothèque Nationale one of those exhibitions in which the French excel, more limited in scope than our great Burlington House shows but more precise in intention. The title "Les Arts de l'Iran: l'ancienne Perse et Bagdad" requires some explanation. The exhibition is

<sup>2</sup> For example, the *Christ and the Woman of Samaria*, which was on view at the Exhibition of Seventeenth Century Art in Europe, London, 1938 (No. 136, erroneously attributed to Adriaen van Ostade. Vide: *Maandblad v. Beeldende Kunsten*, 15 [1938], p. 104).