

Obituary

Only two years after his early retirement, Bram Meij died on 2 December 2005, after having been hospitalized with heart problems for two weeks. He had already suffered a heart attack a month before his farewell party in 2003, but after several weeks in intensive care he recovered at a pace that surprised even his doctors. Bram left the hospital full of energy, ready to continue research for a book he was planning to publish with his wife, Noortje de Roy van Zuydewijn, on the history of the Noordereiland, the small island in the River Meuse, in the center of Rotterdam, where they had lived for many years.

Bram, who preferred to publish under his initials A. W. F. M., studied art history in Utrecht under Jan van Gelder, Emil Reznicek, and Pieter Singelenberg. He was inspired by J. Q. van Regteren Altena to specialize in Old Master drawings. He entered the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in 1970 to work on the collection catalogue of fifteenth- to seventeenth-century German drawings, which was published in 1974. Two years earlier (1972), he had succeeded Hans Hoetink as Keeper of the Department of Drawings, a position he held for thirty-one years. During this long period, he contributed to several exhibitions of drawings from the museum, including those of Jacques de Gheyn II as a draftsman (1985–86), nineteenth-century French drawings (1986–87), and *From Pisanello to Cézanne* (1990–91), all of which were shown at US

venues as well. His last contribution to our field was the collection catalogue of the museum's seventeenth-century Flemish drawings, which accompanied the exhibition *Rubens, Jordaens, Van Dyck and Their Circle* (2001–2), which likewise traveled abroad. In his capacity as keeper of the Rotterdam print room, Bram served on the Editorial Advisory Board of *Master Drawings* from 1981 to 2005.

In the 1970s Bram was the first to press the Dutch government to pursue actively the old claim to the drawings from the Koenigs collection, which were illegally acquired by the Nazis during World War II. Together we were present at the official identification of 308 missing drawings found in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow in 1993 and collaborated on the exhibition *Counterparts* (a small selection of Koenigs drawings from Rotterdam) in Moscow in 1995–96. For many colleagues, the last meeting with Bram was during the eighteenth conference of the International Advisory Committee of Keepers of Public Collections of Graphic Arts (the “50 Lux Club”), held in Rotterdam and Antwerp in June 2002. He will be remembered for his scholarship, his hospitality, his human interest, and his efforts to facilitate visitors, making the treasures of the print room of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen widely available for research and exhibitions.

Albert J. Elen



BRAM MEIJ
(1939–2005)