

ARTSTALK

Colour Supplement

Number 38

December 2025



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Our biggest issue yet with 60 pages full of reviews and great pictures. With a bias towards the visual arts we meet René Jacobs who has re-created Vermeer's *View of Delft* using tiny plastic figures. We were at exhibitions at Het Schip and the Stedelijk museums in Amsterdam, Kunstmuseum in The Hague and The Depot in Rotterdam. We enjoyed Opera Zuid's *The Threepenny Opera* and were at Korzo Theater in The Hague to see *Danslokaal*. To round it all off we take a trip around the canals to see Amsterdam's *Festival of Light*.

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DANSLOKAAL 13
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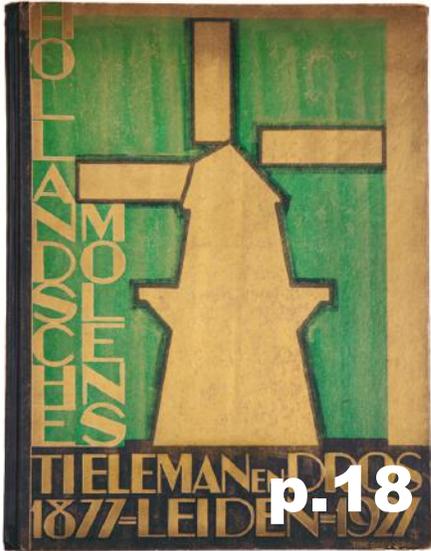
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René Jacobs re-creates Vermeer's *View of Delft*



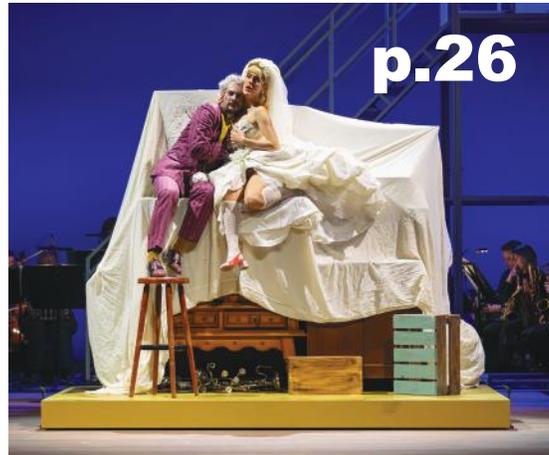
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Another VIEW OF DELFT

Artist René Jacobs has recreated Vermeer's famous painting using thousands of tiny plastic figures. Michael HASTED went along to find out more and take some photos







René Jacobs is well-known in Delft. From his gallery/studio he produces his often humorous, frequently satirical but always socially aware pieces of art which are frequently displayed in public spaces like the local hospital. His smiling face is often seen in the local newspapers and more recently, for reasons we shall discover, in the national press and on television too.

For the past three or four years most of his work has involved tiny plastic figures which are about fifteen, give or take, millimetres high (I imagine originally intended for architects' models or model railways and suchlike) to create complex tableaux, often representing a maze of some sort, exploring the human condition and the herd instinct. Over the years the works have gradually become more and more complex, building up to the biggest, most ambitious and most expensive work so far.

René has always been conscious of, and referred to, Delft's most famous son, Johannes Vermeer. He has made dozens of works pastiching *Girl With a Pearl Earring* so it is perhaps only fitting that he should commemorate the anniversary of the old master's death and at the same time involve the city in which he lived and died.

So, using the miniature figures René has re-created Vermeer's *View of Delft* and, by way of tribute to the city, there is one tiny figure for each member of Delft's population – all 110,851 of them. I wondered if he scanned the births and deaths page in the local newspaper every day and adjusted the number, but I didn't like to ask.

Each little figure is hand painted even though for nearly all of them all you can see are the top of their heads. But how did René keep tally of the figures, how could he be sure he had the right number? Well, he buys them, ready painted, in bags of one hundred from China and bundles up the empty bags, first in tens, then in hundred and then in thousands. Each bag cost €20 so a quick tap on your calculator will tell you that he has spent over €22,000, plus all the other bits and pieces. He started the actual work in May 2025, but there had been a lot of planning beforehand. So, one way or another, it has been quite an investment. But not to worry, the work was commissioned by the Vermeer Centre in Delft where it will take pride of place on the second floor after it goes on public view on 13th December exactly, more or less, 350 years after Vermeer's death on 15th December 1675. The Centre is a stone's throw from the town's main square and will be open with free admission for that weekend.



A man with a mustache, wearing a grey sweater, is smiling and looking towards the camera. He is standing in what appears to be an art studio or gallery. In the background, there are various art supplies, including brushes and a palette. The lighting is warm and focused on the man.

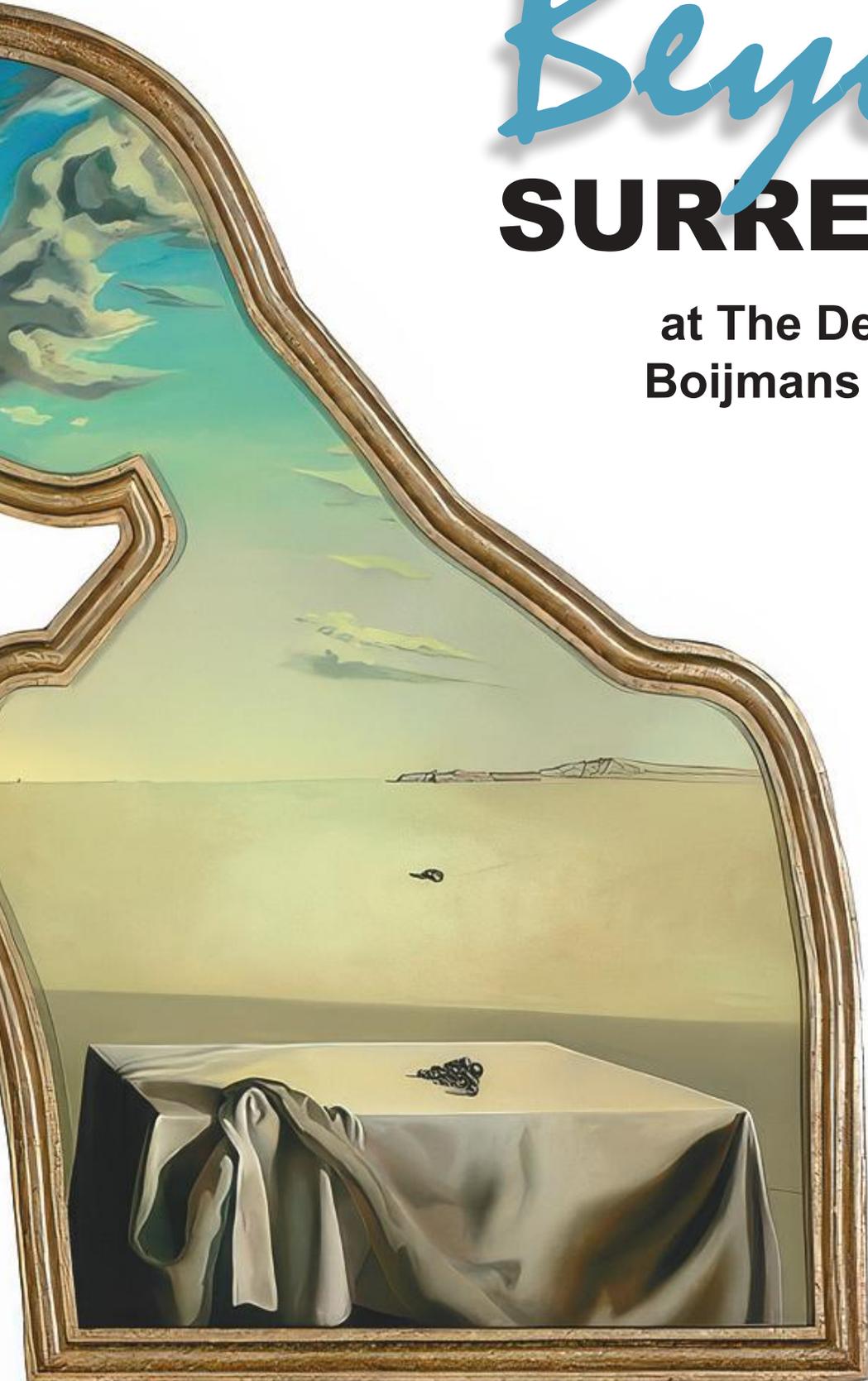
Now, you may think that sticking all those thousands of little figures onto the sixteen wooden panels which make up the final picture measuring three by two and a half meters was an undertaking that bordered on obsession, masochism even. But René is no fool and an integral part of the plan was that the people of Delft should be involved and do a lot of the work, that it should be as much a community project as a piece of art. So he went out to schools, offices, factories, community centres, football matches and even the street with the panels, a pocket full of figures and some glue and invited anyone who cared to stop to stick on a figure. He reckons that maybe three thousand people have helped him and feels it important that when it's finished every inhabitant will feel they have some sort of attachment to it. "The deeper message of this work is not that I want to make a reproduction of Vermeer's *View of Delft*, the deeper message that I want the whole society in Delft to come together and form one image rather than always disagreeing and fighting with each other. Society is being ripped apart mainly by social media and there is no way I can stop that, but it is something that worries me. I wanted to make an artwork where everybody comes together peacefully to form one image with one unity."

But most of the work has taken place in René's gallery/studio in Nieuwelangendijk in Delft where anyone could pop in and watch the work taking place and make their own contribution. The sixteen panels had been marked out like a painting-by-numbers picture and broken down into twenty-four colours by a computer. It was then just a matter of painting the heads in one of those colours and sticking the figure on in the right place. Simple □



Beyond **SURREALISM**

at The Depot of Museum
Boijmans van Beuningen
in Rotterdam



Salvador Dalí *Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages*. Oil on wood panels. 1936



MONSTER C...

Boijmans commissioned six young artists to select Surrealist works from the collection and take inspiration from them. The results are astonishing.

Text by Michael HASTED

The word Surrealism is over-used and misunderstood. Surrealism was an art movement, but also a philosophy whose aim was to allow the unconscious mind to express itself, at times, but not always, resulting in the depiction of illogical or dreamlike scenes and ideas. Surrealism does often result in illogical or dreamlike scenes and ideas, but illogical or dreamlike scenes and ideas are not necessarily Surrealist. Surrealism, according to its founder André Breton, was intended to "resolve the previously contradictory conditions of dream and reality into an absolute reality, a super-reality". The influence of Surrealism, one hundred years after its creation, is still evident even though Surrealism with upper case "S" and according to Breton's dogma, is not widely understood. It was not just soft watches, men in bowler hats floating in the sky or naked ladies wandering around railway stations at night. A lot of Surrealists, like Miro, Matta and Tanguy painted abstract, non-figurative pictures. Stories and poems could be Surrealist and a lot of the inspiration for the movement came from the likes of Edgar Allan Poe, Arthur Rimbaud and above all, Lautréamont's *Maldoror*.

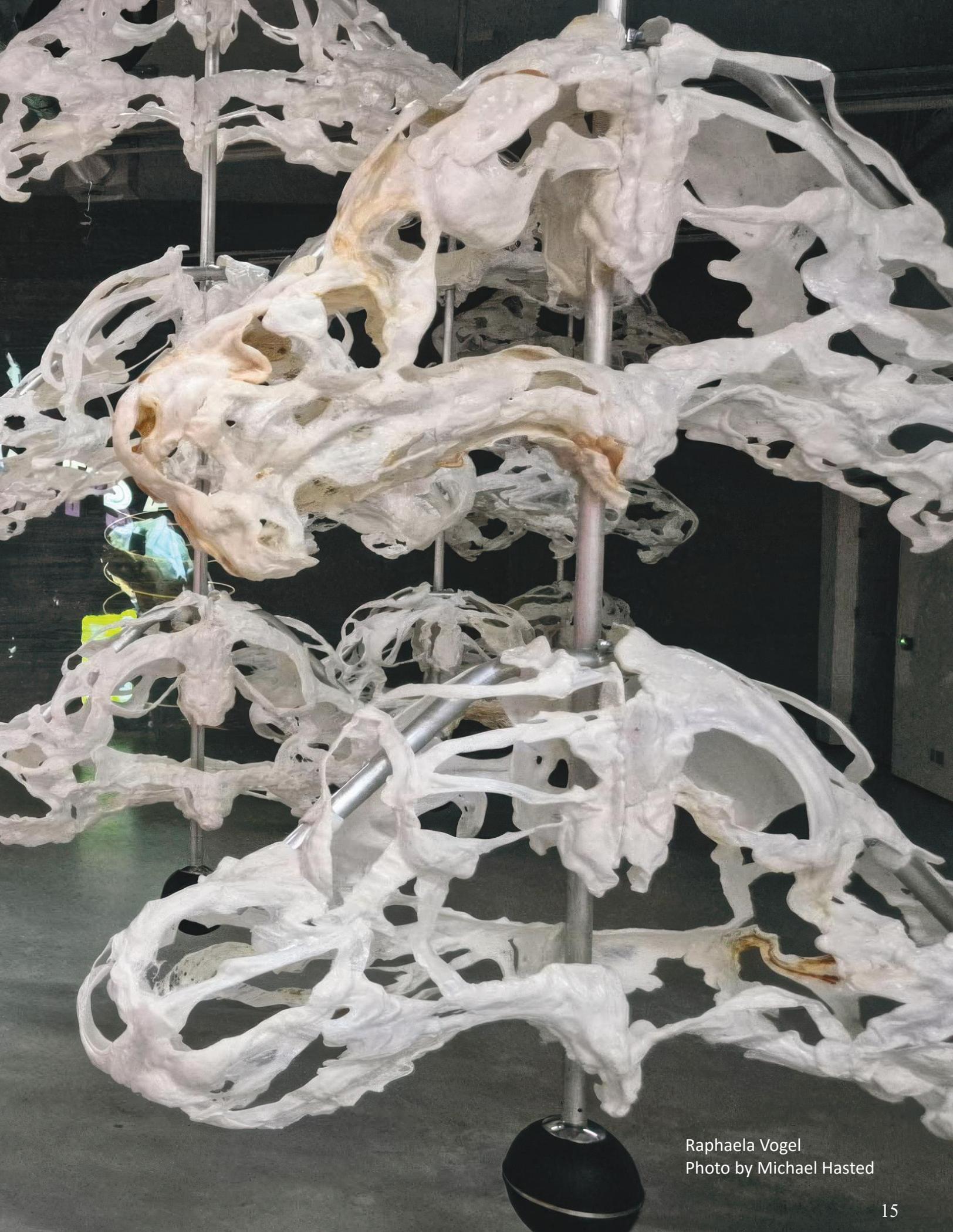
But is Surrealism relevant today, does it have something to say that relates to now? This was the question pondered by curator Saskia van Kampen-Prein. She approached six young artists, not necessarily those claiming to be Surrealist, to provide answers. She invited them to wander through Boijman's extensive collection of Surrealist work and choose a piece, or pieces, which would inspire them or set them on the road to create a work of their own. The result is not so much an exhibition, more a giant installation of the resulting works, all of which are in themselves installations. And very impressive they are too. It was interesting to see how the work of artists, three of whom were British, related to or were inspired by the Surrealist pictures which hung on the walls nearby.

Salvador Dali, not surprisingly, was much in evidence. Two of his paintings, the well-known diptych, *Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages* and the little known *Shirley Temple, le plus jeune monster sacré du cinéma de son temps* was the starting point for probably the largest piece in the show, by German artist Raphaela Vogel. About twenty white objects like animal or giant bird skulls hung from the ceiling while a video played on a large screen at the back.



Dali also figured in the work by English artist Monster Chetwynd who had chosen Dali's red sofa, *Mae West's Lips*, and some *papillons surréalistes*, small pieces of paper containing a Surrealist message (as though from a Surreal fortune cookie) which were circulated by the *Bureau de recherches surréalistes* in Paris in 1924/5. Another English artist, Tai Shani whose work and approach perhaps most closely aligns with Surrealism was showing *The Neon Hieroglyph*, a ghostly white figure on a white island which reminded me of a chalk drawing by Georges Hugnet of a similar figure. The third English artist, Emma Talbot, was showing *Magical Garden, Everything in Transformation*, a huge painted/printed silk curtain inspired by Leonora Carrington whose *Again, the Gemini are in the Orchard* is hanging on the wall nearby.

Laura Prouvost from France uses for her work the interaction between words and images, taking inspiration from Magritte's *Le Mirroir Vivant*. Her installation was of a pond surrounded by plants and backed by a large painting. The sixth artist in *Beyond Surrealism* is German Kerstin Brätsch who used *Viens avec moi là-bas*, a 1948 painting by Francis Picabia as her starting point along with works by Magritte, Yves Tanguy and Hans Bellmer.



Raphaela Vogel
Photo by Michael Hasted



Laura Prouvost



This is an impressive and important walk-through installation and it was interesting to see what the six artists involved had found and took from the rich and varied collection of Surrealist works available from the Boijmans store room. Impressive though the installation is, I found myself being drawn to the original works which inspired it. In addition to the works already mentioned there are collages from Max Ernst's *Une Semaine de Bonté*, a rather untypical Joan Miró, a tiny Joseph Cornell and lots more besides. All worth seeing just in their own right but together with the new works make this a special and very worthwhile exhibition.

Beyond Surrealism continues at The Depot of Museum Boijmans van Beuningen until 6th April



Louise "Lous" Elisabeth Beijerman



UNSEEN TALENT

Women of the Amsterdam School

Museum Het Schip in Amsterdam dedicates the exhibition to the overlooked work and lives of female artists within this artistic and architectural movement.

Text by Jay MANSILLA



EXLIBRIS

ONTW. M. DE KLERK

The Amsterdam School has always conveyed a deliberate theatricality: brickwork that bends into curves, windows that refuse straight lines. Walking into *Women of the Amsterdam School* at Het Schip, that same dramatic geometry is translated into an exhibition layout. The space unfolds in sharp angles and tight corridors, intentionally echoing the twists and blind corners where these women's histories once disappeared. Those blind corners hold work that at last takes its rightful space.

The exhibition gathers together architects, ceramists, textile designers, and sculptors; women whose work shaped the Amsterdam School but rarely entered its historical spotlight. Some names are familiar, most are not. Margaret Kropholler's architectural furniture sits beside Tine Baanders's graphic work, Louise Beijerman's sculptures beside Marie Kuyken's textiles. The effect is the chorus of a movement made polyphonic.

As you follow the layout deeper, the quiet metaphor for the movement's own archival gaps comes into focus. Tatyana van Walsum's scenography works like a maze that refuses to compress their histories into a straight narrative. Instead, it lets you wander through the corners where their work was overshadowed. The experimentation across mediums is palpable: lamps that treat light as sculpture, ceramics that slip between industrial and expressive, birds stitched or painted with an almost mythic curiosity. You can feel the artists grappling reality enough to start bending it, forcing gendered power to shift hands.

Taken together, it's not simply "Women of the Amsterdam School," it's a study of work, care, and the conditions under which both are allowed to survive. There is an insistence on craft, the kind that takes time, muscle, repetition, and patience. In a cultural moment obsessed with speed, the exhibition pulls you into the slow labour of making. And layered underneath all of it is the ache of a world that almost existed. The museum hands the past back to the present and asks how we choose to carry it forward.

However, the curation doesn't stay inside aesthetics for long. It plunges you directly into the interwar years. From craft to politics without warning: suffrage banners from Apeldoorn, expressionist networks and early modernist city-making. What becomes clear is how much these women were work-ing against their own era. And as the politics open up, the stakes of their disappearance sharpen.

The museum hands the past back to the present and asks how we choose to carry it forward . . .







Tine Baanders at the wheel of her car

These women didn't retreat because they lacked talent, they evaporated because their era wasn't designed to hold them. From the section on the 1813–1913 exhibition *The Woman*, the sentence "The woman as human being wants to be free" lands as uncomfortably contemporary.

Then, sharply and unexpectedly it opens outward to the world. Black women's experiences, cultural appropriation, Asian influences in Dutch ceramics, the friction between socialism and feminism. Nothing is diluted. Nothing is treated as an afterthought. The interwar Netherlands is the anchor, but its currents extend outward: into feminism, socialism, colonial entanglements, queer Amsterdam, craft revived through precolonial techniques. Refuses the comfort of staying local.

Unseen Talent - Women of the Amsterdam School invites you, whether you know the Amsterdam School intimately or not at all, to stand inside the possibility of a world that could have been, and to recognise how much of it can still be built □

Unseen Talent - Women of the Amsterdam School continues until 28th June 2026

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TIELEMAN EN DROS
1877-LEIDEN-1927



Die Dreigroschenoper

or *The Threepenny Opera* by Bertold Brecht and Kurt Weill returns in a new touring production by Opera Zuid. Michael HASTED went to see it at Amare in The Hague

Photos by Joost MILDE



In 1928 the long dark shadow of the First World War made Germany a harsh, deprived place creating immense suffering and hardship for the German people. The Nazi jack boots could be heard in the distance but the arts were predominantly left wing, communist even. The visual arts were particularly strong at this time but so was drama, Bertold Brecht being preeminent. When he joined forces with composer Kurt Weill their vowed intent was to bring art to the masses. The pair collaborated in the first manifestation of “epic theater” with the *Mahagonny Songspiel* and their use of *Gebrauchsmusik* in this (and the subsequent *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*) and *Die Dreigroschenoper* they introduced “cheap” music into what was perceived as elitist opera and theater.



Talking about their second collaboration Weill made his intentions clear, "With the *Die Dreigroschenoper* we reach a public which either did not know us at all or thought us incapable of captivating listeners ... Opera was founded as an aristocratic form of art . . . If the framework of opera is unable to withstand the impact of the age, then this framework must be destroyed ... In the *Die Dreigroschenoper*, reconstruction was possible insofar as here we had a chance of starting from scratch".

The most famous of the Brecht/Weill pieces, known in English as *The Threepenny Opera*, was based on John Gay's 18th century *The Beggars Opera* and four ballads by François Villon. Brecht's girlfriend at the time, Elisabeth Hauptmann, had discovered Gay and set about translating it - although Brecht took most of the credit as sole author with Hauptmann mentioned only as translator. On 31st August 1928 *Die Dreigroschenoper* was premiered at Theater am Schiffbauerdamm in Berlin. Weill's innovative approach to music, characterized by the concept of *gestic* music, aligned with Brecht's efforts to make drama more accessible by emphasizing social messages over psychological depth influenced theatre worldwide for decades afterwards.

One always thinks of sub-culture in pre-war Berlin as being a bit grey and seedy, taking place in dark basements and drab, ill-lit theatres. Opera Zuid's production is a very different affair, lots of bright colours and the humour brought out whenever possible.

I remember from my childhood Bobby Darin's record of *Mack the Knife* and I was involved in the first UK production of *Happy End*, so I have rather a soft spot for Brecht and Weill and consequently the bar was set quite high.

It must be said that *Die Dreigroschenoper* is not an opera, it is a play with songs. In this production the text was spoken in Dutch but the songs were in their original German. A bit confusing, but there were sur-titles to clarify things.





Most of the company were, of course, opera singers acting, but the main character, Macheath – Mack the Knife - was played by Maarten Heijmans, an actor who could sing. And he was brilliant, a five star performance which I shall remember for some time. He really captured the essence of this roguish but charming London gangster. He looked the part, moved beautifully and dominated the stage. And although there were fine performances by the ladies, particularly Maarjte Rammeloo as a mini-skirted Polly Peachum, it was the men who dominated. Both Huub Claessens as Peachum *père* and Marcel van Dieren as police chief Tiger Brown turned in heavyweight performances, both of which gave Mr Heijmans a run for his money.

Originally scored for twenty-three instruments, lots of doubling-up is often involved – in the first performances seven musicians managed to play all the parts. The onstage Philzuid orchestra for OperaZuid's *Die Dreigroschenoper*, last night under the baton of Lochan Brown, numbered about twenty and created a completely authentic sound.

Although all the performances were excellent I was less convinced by the production. The décor consisted of four main elements, all of which moved around the stage on wheels to be used when needed. There was a mini stage with fine red curtains, a domestic interior, a low platform onto which things were piled as necessary, and a giant metal staircase. The problem was that when they weren't being used they were lurking in the background looking a bit untidy and distracting. The costumes looked as though they had been assembled from the company's dressing-up box without any real style or consistency. Some looked very much pre-war with lots of almost music-hall loud checks and stripes which shared the stage with mini-skirts and blue leather thigh boots. That said, this was a fun production so they were quite acceptable and worked well in a non time-specific way.

And although I was not keen on the production visually, it would be hard to find fault with the music, singing or acting and the show managed to clear the bar that I had set. Very enjoyable □

Opera Zuid's tour of *Die Dreigroschenoper* continues until 14th December.





#13
DANSLOKAAL

Dance as a reflection of the present with three innovative artists. Conny Janssen Danst presented a new generation of choreographers at Korzo in The Hague followed by a national tour

**Text by Eva LAKEMAN
Photos by Martijn KAPPERS**

Danslokaal 13 at Korzo in The Hague showcased three emerging choreographers in a programme that emphasised clarity, physicality, and presence. The afternoon offered short works by Faizah Grootens, Sheree Lenting and Andrea Costanzo Martini, each bringing a distinct approach to movement, space, and the relationships between performers.

Grootens opened with *Nothing But Here*, a deceptively simple premise: four dancers are asked only to wait. Yet as the minutes stretch, restlessness grows, priorities shift, and subtle tensions emerge. The choreography captures this quietly escalating unease, balancing precision with fluidity and showing how even the simplest of tasks can expose the complexity of human interaction. The dancers rolled, stretched, and leaned into one another with careful attention to weight and rhythm, their gestures sculptural and deliberate. Each sequence highlighted the relationships between bodies and the surrounding space, revealing how stillness and expectation can carry as much drama as overt action.

Lenting followed with *Songs of the Soil*, a reflective exploration of brotherhood, vulnerability, and resilience. Two young men, dressed in white tank tops and loose blue jeans, began by playfully pushing a skateboard toward one another. What started as a game slowly evolved into movement that was more intricate and emotionally charged, tracing a journey from youthful camaraderie to the layered, sometimes tense experience of adulthood. Lenting's choreography combined ritual, memory, and subtle gestures to convey strength and fragility, inviting the audience to witness masculinity as lived and evolving rather than as a fixed idea. The interplay of humour, tension, and vulnerability gave the piece a textured emotional resonance.





Andrea Costanzo Martini's *Danceplaining*



Six women in purple leotards performed under the endless instructions of a male voice-over, told to smile, not to smile, to make a face, to suppress a face, to appear political or neutral



Andrea Costanzo Martini concluded the programme with *Danceplaining*, a theatrical and provocative work. Six women in purple leotards performed under the endless instructions of a male voice-over, told to smile, not to smile, to make a face, to suppress a face, to appear political or neutral. The dancers repeated the sequences over and over, navigating control, compliance, and absurdity with meticulous precision and a comic undertone. The choreography blurred the line between performance and reality, turning mundane instructions into a physical melodrama that explored authority, collaboration, and power dynamics. By the close, the tension between rigid instruction and the subtle individuality of each performer made the work feel alive, urgent, and unexpectedly playful.

Danslokaal 13 lingers after the performance. Each piece offers a distinct rhythm and emotional register, but together they emphasise the fragility and strength of collaboration, the beauty of attentive movement, and the surprising ways bodies communicate. It is a brief programme, yet one that leaves the audience wanting to inhabit its world just a little longer □



Willem Martens, *Rêve d'amour* (detail), circa 1892-1895. Collection Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam



BLUE DOTS

A new exhibition at Stedelijk in Amsterdam reveals how the museum sought to guaranteed the safety of its paintings



Nola Hatterman, *Louis Richard Drenthe Op het terras, (On the Terrace)* 1930, Oil on canvas.
Collection Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

In 1951, in the shadow of the Cold War, the Dutch government introduced a system requiring museums to categorize their collections for evacuation in times of war. Through ‘evacuation dots’ it was determined which works should be saved first: red stood for ‘very important’, white for ‘important’, and blue for ‘less important’. This exhibition in the IMC gallery focuses on the forgotten blue dots. What does it say about a work of art—and about us—when a work was once labeled as “less important”?

Blue Dots features work by renowned 19th-century artists like Jozef Israëls and Thérèse Schwartz, as well as lesser-known names like José Maria Rodriguez-Acosta and Marie de Roode-Heijermans. At the time, the work of Nola Hatterman — an almost forgotten artist who is celebrated today — was also given a blue dot.

Rein Wolfs, director Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam: “If the exhibition tells us anything, it is how the vision of a collection can change over time. For several years, *Op het terras*, (*On the Terrace*), a portrait of Louis Drenthe by Nola Hatterman, has been one of the key works in the Stedelijk’s permanent collection. Last year, it was even featured in the groundbreaking exhibition about The Harlem Renaissance at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Stories about art are rewritten and reinterpreted all the time.”

In total, between 1951 and 1965, roughly 10% of the artworks — mostly (floral) still lifes, landscapes, and cityscapes — were allocated a blue dot. The dots bear witness to the Stedelijk’s modernist orientation: abstraction and expressionist paintings were considered of greater importance. Willem Sandberg, the director at the time, believed that artists should be ‘forward-thinking’ and concentrate on innovation. Traditional painting and modern figurative painting were often relegated to the side-lines.

Seventy-five years on, *Blue Dots* invites us to think about what is important. And about what, when it comes down to it, we would like to preserve for future generations □

Blue Dots runs at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam until 15th March 2026



Else Berg, *Vrouw met gitaar*, 1929. Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam



Back of Else Berg's *Vrouw met gitaar*, 1929, with blue dot at the top right corner.
Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam



JAN VAN DER VAART at Kunstmuseum Den Haag

Leading 'potter' who made design for everyone

Photography by Erik and Petra HESMERG





*Making ceramics is a tough craft and
not a profession of hands held by
God. Jan van der Vaart*

Jan van der Vaart, the self-proclaimed 'potter', did not like art with a capital A. Yet no one left such a mark on post-war Dutch ceramics as he did. In order to make his works accessible to a large audience, he worked in series production, a choice detested by fellow ceramists and collectors. But the approach made design accessible to everyone.

In the almost fifty years that he was active, Van der Vaart (1931-2000) received recognition from all sides: critics, museums, government and collectors. In addition, as a teacher at the Rietveld Academy, he trained more than a hundred ceramists, with which he exerted a lasting influence on new generations of makers. From hard-core art collectors to thrift hunters, Van der Vaart's vases and other utensils have always been embraced.

Kunstmuseum Den Haag is mounting *Jan van der Vaart: For Everyone*, a retrospective on the ceramist - the first major exhibition of Jan van der Vaart since 1991. The exhibition coincides with the publication of an extensive monograph, *Jan van der Vaart: Master Potter* by the Cometa Foundation and brings together more than 250 works from important museum collections, but also from the collections of private individuals.

Van der Vaart has never had to complain about recognition for his enormous craftsmanship. An endless series of exhibitions, commissions and prizes emphasized his prominent position. From 1967 onwards, he started serial production of his vases, flower towers and candlesticks under the name 'multiple'. Using geometric shapes as a starting point and a small palette of glowing glazes, Van der Vaart made thousands of vases and other utensils. His approach is always topical, given that Van der Vaart, himself self-taught, trained more than a hundred ceramists as a long-time teacher at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy.

Van der Vaart was a ceramist without pretensions. He had 'potter' noted as a profession in his passport and in an interview he said: 'I'm that little man who makes flower vases.' At exhibitions – also in museums – there were regularly flowers in his vases; his objects were sculpture and utensils. As a teacher, he was horrified by students who had a business card printed with 'ceramic artist' on it. He did not see the vase as an art object in itself, the thing only comes into its own with flowers in it, people around it. Both the monograph and the exhibition *Jan van der Vaart: For Everyone* show that Van der Vaart's recognizable designs can be found in countless households. In addition to special unique pieces, spectacular tulip towers and designs for Royal Leerdam are shown.

Running in parallel to the Kunstmuseum exhibition, the Princessehof Museum of Ceramics in Leeuwarden presents a digital exhibition about Van der Vaart on its website. His former studio has been part of the museum's permanent exhibition since 2008 □

Jan van der Vaart: for Everyone is at Kunstmuseum Den Haag until 5th July 2026



I CONTAIN MULTITUDES by Marinella Senatore –

Perched at the gateway to Amsterdam's UNESCO canal district is an art installation from Italy that echoes the very origins of festive lights in Europe.

AMSTERDAM FESTIVAL OF

Light

Photos by Janus van den Eijnden

Italy

artform



FRACTURE POINT by Filip Roca, Montenegro

Precisely mapped to the copper cladding of the NEMO Science Museum, Roca takes on the details of this iconic building to explore the relationship between rigid forms and new possibilities. Huge grids appear for a moment before they start to fracture, bend and shift, bringing with them a sense of openness and freedom. It's the point of departure, where old habits start to break down and reveal new ways of seeing and experiencing. For Roca, the work poses a personal question: are we truly evolving or are we merely reinforcing the same patterns with new tools? Using computational models, he renders 3d structures that mimic those found in the physical world. Yet under the stress placed upon them, they start to buckle and twist. The tension builds to the fracture point, where it cannot support itself any longer, and must finally give in, releasing waves, and ripples of colour.

Amsterdam Light Festival has been a yearly tradition for the last twelve years, lighting the city in the darkest months of the year. The coming edition is special, as it coincides with Amsterdam's 750th anniversary and has been named *Rituals*. For a whole year, all over town, residents, districts and institutions commemorate and celebrate the unique spirit of Amsterdam. What custom is more appropriate to mark this special milestone than a ritual?

Rituals have traditionally helped us through all kinds of transformations; from past to future, from winter to summer, from youth to adulthood. Light plays a vital role in many rituals, as a vibrant symbol of joy, energy and life. We use fireworks to usher in the New Year, candles to commemorate, and midsummer fires to welcome the solstice. Light adds something mystical and sacred to a ritual like no other element can. And rituals unify. Rituals bring people together.

This year, twenty unique light artworks will be created by artists from all around the world. The artworks can be admired by boat, by foot or by bike. We offer many experiences with which you will get to know more about the artworks, artists and the theme. Visit our ticket shop for an overview, and get more information about departure times and locations by selecting a product

The 13th edition of the Amsterdam Light Festival runs until 19th January.

SWANS by Jon Voss – Great Britain

Swans have long symbolised devotion, grace, and the enduring strength of partnership. Known for forming lifelong bonds, their shared care for their young speaks to a cycle of love, learning, and continuity. Through Swans, artist Jon Voss captures not just the form of two swans about to take flight, but the spirit of their connection, lifting into the air together, beginning their new journey south. Crafted from stainless steel and plexiglass, the sculpture balances strength with delicacy. Voss bends and welds the metal into sweeping curves that evoke the swans' powerful wings mid-beat. Despite the industrial materials, there is an unmistakable lightness—a sense of lift and movement that animates the steel. Even though it's a frozen moment in time, it's full of momentum.







THE SUN by Zenisk - Norway

The sun rises on tomorrow, marking the start of a new day. Since the beginning of time, the sun has shaped our daily rhythm and guided life's natural flow. But this electric sun by Studio Zenisk, asks us to pause and reflect on the use of light around us.

Using a low-tech approach, The Sun is made from hundreds of incandescent bulbs. The intensity of each bulb can be individually controlled, like the pixels of a screen, to produce dynamic patterns that mimic solar storms. When fully lit, the bulbs shine a crisp white, radiating the brightness of daylight. As they dim, they cast a deep, golden glow, evoking the warmth we crave in winter.



**ONGEKEND
TALENT**

**26 | 28
09 | 06
2025 | 2026**



**VROUWEN
VAN
DE AMSTERDAMSE
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