



Visualizing Feminism

Women's Exhibitions and the First Feminist Wave in the Netherlands

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Research Master's Thesis
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Abstract

This master's thesis explores how the participation and representation of women artists and their artworks in six inaugural all-women exhibitions between 1871 and 1913 embodied the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands. The research delves into the socio-historical context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, focusing on the intersections between women's artistry and feminist activism. Through a detailed examination of archival materials, publications from the first feminist movement, exhibition catalogs, artists' letters, and critiques, this study reveals how these exhibitions provided platforms for challenging societal constraints and advocating for women's rights.

The methodology includes a comparative analysis of the exhibitions, highlighting organizational dynamics, exhibition themes, and the role of feminist agendas. The findings demonstrate that these exhibitions not only showcased women's artistic talents but also served as arenas for feminist advocacy, promoting educational and professional opportunities for women. By analyzing the artworks and the participation of women artists, this thesis illustrates how these exhibitions reflected and advanced the objectives of the first feminist wave, contributing to the broader movement for women's emancipation in the Netherlands.

The study concludes that the six inaugural women's exhibitions played a role in visualizing feminist ideals, advocating for women's rights, and challenging the gender norms of their time. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the historical relationship between the feminist movements and women's artistry.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	II
Abstract	III
List of Figures.....	VI
Introduction.....	1
<i>State of the field</i>	2
<i>Research question</i>	6
<i>Methodology and structure</i>	7
Chapter 1. How did the socio-historical context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shape women's artistry in the Netherlands, particularly within the framework of the first feminist movement?	11
1.1. <i>Pre-feminist era: women's artistry in the Netherlands</i>	12
Art education for women	12
Exhibition opportunities and artistic communities	14
Social constraints and gender norms in the art world.....	17
1.2. <i>The first feminist wave in the Netherlands (1870-1920)</i>	20
Contextualizing the first feminist wave	20
Objectives and transnational feminist agendas	22
1.3. <i>The role of feminism in emancipating women's artistry in the Netherlands</i>	26
Art education for women during the first feminist wave	26
Shifting aesthetic paradigms.....	27
Propagating change and intersections with the feminist movement	29
<i>Conclusion</i>	33
Chapter 2. How did the unfolding events of these six exhibitions (1871-1913) contribute to the outcomes of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands?	34
2.1. <i>Organizational dynamics</i>	34
The organization	34
Professionals or dilettantes?	37
2.2. <i>Changing feminist approach</i>	41
Entanglement with women's associations	41
Education equality	46
Women's suffrage.....	47
Royal cooperation	50
Composition of audiences and exhibiting artists	51
Colonial perspectives.....	52
2.4. <i>Results for the first feminist movement: Impact and legacy</i>	55
Practical outcomes for the first feminist movement	55
Critics	57
Reviews of feminists.....	58
<i>Conclusion</i>	60

Chapter 3. What artists and artworks were featured in these six exhibitions (1871-1913), and to what degree did the artworks embody the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands?"	61
3.1. <i>The Tentoonstellings-bazaar van Vrouwelijke Nijverheid en Kunst (1871)</i>	62
3.2. <i>The Tentoonstelling van Voorwerpen van Nijverheid en Kunst uitsluitend door Vrouwen vervaardigd (1878)</i>	65
3.3. <i>The Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd (1882)</i>	68
3.4. <i>The Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd (1891)</i>	74
3.5. <i>The Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid (1898)</i>	77
3.6. <i>De Vrouw 1813-1913 (1913)</i>	82
<i>Conclusion</i>	86
Conclusion	87
<i>Historical context and women's artistry</i>	87
<i>The six inaugural women's exhibitions (1871-1913) and the first feminist movement in the Netherlands</i>	88
<i>Artists and artworks: reflecting feminist objectives</i>	89
<i>Discussion</i>	90
<i>Contribution to art historical and feminist research</i>	91
<i>Limitations and suggestions</i>	92
<i>Final thoughts</i>	93
Bibliography	95
Appendix 1. Exhibited women artists	105
<i>The Tentoonstellingsbazaar van Vrouwelijke Nijverheid en Kunst 1871</i>	105
<i>The Tentoonstelling van Voorwerpen van Nijverheid en Kunst door Vrouwen Vervaardigd 1878</i>	106
<i>The Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd 1882</i>	110
<i>The Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd 1891</i>	114
<i>The Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid 1898</i>	115
<i>De Vrouw 1813-1913</i>	118

List of Figures

Figure 1. Therese Schwartz, *Maria Magdalena*, 1861-1887, etching on paper, 317 x 226 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1887-A-12314. (Photo: Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?q=therese+schwartz+maria+magdalena&p=4&ps=12&st=Objects&ii=2#/RP-P-1887-A-12314,38>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 2. Nelly Bodenheim, *Annoncekaart van de tentoonstelling "De Vrouw, 1813-1913"*, in or before 1913, paper, 122 x 210 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1937-161. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-1937-161>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 3. Hendrik or Hermanus Numan, *Zo mans- als vrouwen-werk, van kunstenaars, ambachtsliên, / En winkeliers, kunt gy, ô kinderen! hier zien*, 1794, etching on paper, 161 x 126 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-84.331. (Photo: Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?q=RP-P-OB-84.331&p=1&ps=12&st=Objects&ii=0#/RP-P-OB-84.331,0>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 4. Gerarda Matthijssen, *Interior of the Manege in Leeuwarden 1878 during the Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen*, 1878, photograph. Collection of Gemeentearchief Leeuwarden. Reproduced by Frans Andringa. Karstkarel, Peter. "Gerharda Henriëtte Matthijssen En de Eerste Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen." *De Vrije Fries* 68 (1988): 85-92. (Photo: Gemeentearchief Leeuwarden, http://images.tresoar.nl/wumkes/periodieken/dvf/DVF_1988_68.pdf, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 5. Minca Bosch Reitz, *Stenenkruierende vrouw*, 1898, photograph. Collection of Atria, F91-93. Whereabouts unknown. (Photo: Atria, <https://collectie.atria.nl/bibliotheek/item/285493-foto-van-een-beeld-van-een-stenenkruierende-vrouw-gemaakt-door-minca-bosch-reitz-die-dit-aan-de-nationale-tentoonstelling-van-vrouwenarbeid-schonk-in-1898-1898?offset=1>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 6. Unknown photographer, *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid*, 1898, sepia photograph. Collection of Atria, F88-93. (Photo: Atria, <https://collectie.atria.nl/bibliotheek/item/284434-nationale-tentoonstelling-van-vrouwenarbeid-1898?offset=36>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 7. Unknown photographer, *Hall of Women's Suffrage*, 1913, photograph. Collection of Atria, 100005075. (Photo: Atria, <https://collectie.atria.nl/bibliotheek/item/292544-zaal-van-vrouwenkiesrecht-1913?offset=83>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 8. Unknown artist, *Map of the exhibition "De vrouw 1813-1913"*, 1913, illustration. Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913", "Meerhuizen"-Amsteldijk, Mei-October 1913 Amsterdam. Collection of UvA Erfgoed. (Photo: UvA Erfgoed, <https://uvaerfgoed.nl/beeldbank/nl/xview/?identifer=hdl:11245/3.33731#page/21>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 9. Unknown photographer, *The Ladies from left to right, D. Del Court, W. Polenaar, W. C. Drupsteen, A. Tollenaar, T. Baanders, C. Berlage, who performed the statistics*, 1913, photograph. Gedenkboek van de tentoonstelling De Vrouw, 1813-1913, Meerhuizen, Amsterdam, p. 24. Collection of Delpher. (Photo: Delpher, <https://www.delpher.nl/nl/boeken/view?coll=boeken&identifier=MMKB24:079380000:00038&objectsearch=druipsteen&pres%5Bmaxperpage%5D=36&pres%5Bpage%5D=2&pres%5Bno%5D=bottom>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 10. Unknown photographer, *Nationale tentoonstelling van vrouwenarbeid, 'Insulinde'*, 1898, photograph. Collection of Atria, 100004691. (Photo: Atria, <https://collectie.atria.nl/bibliotheek/item/292875-nationale-tentoonstelling-van-vrouwenarbeid-insulinde-1898?offset=4>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 11. Unknown photographer, *Nationale Tentoonstelling Vrouwenarbeid 1898, 's Gravenhage. In the photo: Sassa, Mulatto woman*, 1898, cyanotype. Collection of Atria, 100004681. (Photo: Atria, <https://collectie.atria.nl/bibliotheek/item/289963-nationale-tentoonstelling-vrouwenarbeid-1898-s-gravenhage-1898?offset=47>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 12. Unknown photographer, *The Indian House. The Servants' Room*, 1913, photograph. Collection of Atria, 100005069. (Photo: Atria, <https://collectie.atria.nl/bibliotheek/item/290886-het-indisch-huis-1913?offset=72>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 13. Suze Fokker, *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid 's-Gravenhage. 1898 Juli-September*, 1898, poster, paper, 1100 x 705 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1912-2433. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-1912-2433>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 14. Jan Toorop, *Labor for Women. Tickets for the Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid available for 50 cents on the premises and in the depots. First prize: a jeweled ornament worth f.1000,-*, 1898, lithograph, paper, 1160 x 665 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1912-2398. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/RP-P-1912-2398>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 15. Annie Ermeling, *Design for an advertisement for the celebration program of the exhibition 'De Vrouw 1813-1913' in Amsterdam*, 1913, lithograph, paper, 470 x 385 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1937-243. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?q=annie+ermeling&p=1&ps=12&st=Object&ii=0#/RP-P-1937-243,0>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 16. Johan Michaël Schmidt Crans, *Caricature of an Exhibition of Female Artworks in Amsterdam*, 1882, lithograph, paper, 215 x 275 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-90.285. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/RP-P-OB-90.285>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 17. Teunsijna Johanna Albertine Kranenburg, *Portrait of Teunsijna Johanna Albertine (1827-1878), Jantina Hendrica (1821-?) and Wemelina Anna (1824-?) Kranenburg*, ca. 1850, oil on canvas, 129 x 104 cm (with frame 153 x 132 x 10.5 cm). Centraal Museum, Utrecht, 26650. (Photo: Centraal Museum/Ernst Moritz, <https://www.centraalmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/26650-portret-van-teunsijna-johanna-albertine-1827-1878-jantina-hendrica-1821-en-wemelina-anna-1824-kranenburg-teunsijna-johanna-albertine-kranenburg>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 18. Maria Vos, *Still Life with Fruit and Dead Poultry*, 1873, oil on canvas, 70 x 77 cm. Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam, 1933 (MK). (Photo: Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum, <https://www.boijmans.nl/en/collection/artworks/2934/still-life-with-fruit-and-dead-poultry>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 19. Clémence Pruijs van der Hoeven, *In Venice*, date unknown, pencil and watercolor on paper, 27.5 x 18.0 cm, signed with initials 'CH'. © Simonis & Buunk. (Photo: Simonis & Buunk, <https://www.simonis-buunk.nl/kunstwerk/clemence-pruijs-van-der-hoeven-aquarel-tekening-in-venetie/16749/>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 20. Jan Bos Wz., after Antonie Johannes Groeneveldt, *Portrait of Mrs. Wilhelmina Ludovica Philippo Jonxis-Laurillard Fallot*, 1870, tone lithograph in black with tone block in beige, paper, 484 x 354 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1911-721. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/RP-P-1911-721>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 21. Thérèse Schwartz, *Portrait of a Young Woman with a Red Headscarf*, 1861-1918, brush, chalk, and watercolor on paper, 610 x 444 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-T-1960-144. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-T-1960-144>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 22. Henriëtte Geertruida Knip, *A Bouquet*, ca. 1820, watercolor on paper, 462 x 338 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-T-FM-73. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-T-FM-73>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 23. Unknown artist, *Portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman, born in Cologne on November 5, 1607, writer and poet in Utrecht, died in Wiewerd on May 5, 1678*. Bust from the front, between January 1, 1630 and December 31, 1650, pencil drawing on parchment. Collection of Prentenkabinet van de Rijksuniversiteit Leiden (inv.nr. 902). (Photo: Het Utrechts Archief, <https://hetutrechtsarchief.nl/beeldmateriaal/detail/f5c18f07-d24a-5ffd-94a6-424862706ae8>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 24. Barbara Elisabeth van Houten, *Petunias in a Glass Vase*, 1877-1950, etching, paper, 208 x 165 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-16.726. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-OB-16.726>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 25. Henriette Ronner-Knip, *A Cat at Play*, 1875, oil on canvas, 38 x 30 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-A-3089. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/SK-A-3089>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 26. Henriette Ronner-Knip, *When Two Dogs Fight Over a Bone*, date unknown, watercolor on paper, 45.5 x 65.0 cm, signed lower right. © Simonis & Buunk. (Photo: Simonis & Buunk, <https://www.simonis-buunk.nl/kunstwerk/henriette-ronner-aquarel-tekening-als-twee-honden-vechten-om-een-been/23111/>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 27. Margaretha Roosenboom, *A Vase with Roses*, 1853-1896, brush on paper, 790 x 500 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-A-2741. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/SK-A-2741>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 28. Marie Bilders-van Bosse, *Pond in the Forest*, ca. 1860-1899, chalk on paper, 493 x 369 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-T-2010-43-932. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-T-2010-43-932>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 29. Thérèse Schwartze, *Three Girls from the Amsterdam Orphanage*, 1885, oil on canvas, 81.5 x 96 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-A-1190. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/SK-A-1190>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 30. Wally Moes, *Meal Hour*, 1885, oil on canvas, 97 x 149 cm. Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam, 1529 (MK). (Photo: Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum, <https://www.boijmans.nl/en/collection/artworks/2322/meal-hour>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 31. Hendrika Wilhelmina Jacoba van der Pek, *Stilleven (Still Life)*, date unknown, oil on canvas, dimensions unknown. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 10560. (Photo: Stedelijk Museum, <https://www.stedelijk.nl/nl/collectie/10560-hendrika-wilhelmina-jacoba-van-der-pek-stilleven>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 32. Jo Koster, *Maria (Portrait of an Old Woman)*, 1927, oil on canvas, 79 x 58 cm. Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam, 3435 (MK). (Photo: Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum, [https://www.boijmans.nl/collectie/kunstwerken/3435/Maria-\(portret-van-een-oude-vrouw\)/Jo-Koster](https://www.boijmans.nl/collectie/kunstwerken/3435/Maria-(portret-van-een-oude-vrouw)/Jo-Koster), accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 33. Barbara Elisabeth van Houten, *Evening from the series Six Etchings by Mlle B.E. van Houten (Six eaux-fortes par Mlle B.E. van Houten)*, 1886, etching on paper, 36 x 54.3 cm. The Mesdag Collection, The Hague, hwm0967e. (Photo: The Mesdag Collection, <https://demesdagcollectie.com/en/collection/hwm0967e?v=1>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 34. Sientje Mesdag – van Houten, *Schaapskooi bij ondergaande zon*, ca. 1880, oil on canvas, dimensions unknown. Museum Panorama Mesdag, The Hague. On loan from the Mesdag-van Houten Foundation; private donation. (Photo: Museum Panorama Mesdag, <https://panorama-mesdag.nl/pers/persberichten/nieuwe-aanwinst/>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 35. Gerardina Jacoba van de Sande Bakhuyzen, *White Roses*, ca. 1842-1895, watercolor and pencil on paper, 32.1 x 47 cm. The Mesdag Collection, The Hague, hwm0301. (Photo: The Mesdag Collection, <https://www.demesdagcollectie.nl/nl/collectie/hwm0301?v=1>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 36. Thérèse Schwartze, *Portrait of Wilhelmina of the Netherlands*, 1898, oil on canvas, dimensions unknown. Koninklijke Verzamelingen, The Hague, inventory number: inv.nr. RV-861. (Photo: Koninklijke Verzamelingen, <https://www.koninklijkeverzamelingen.nl/collectie-online/detail/cacbcfd0-b084-5ded-9a4a-d7acf159440b>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 37. Charlotte Bouten, *A Flower Still Life*, 1887, oil on canvas, 78 x 64.5 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-A-2729. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/SK-A-2729>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 38. Bramine Hubrecht, *Weaving Loom and a Woman in the Background*, ca. 1880-1900, pencil on paper, 380 x 290 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-T-1976-96. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?q=hubrecht&f=1&p=5&ps=12&principalMaker=Bramine+Hubrecht&st=Objects&ii=4#/RP-T-1976-96,52>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 39. Suze Robertson, *Antiques Stall*, ca. 1900-1901, oil on canvas, 43.5 x 69.5 cm. Centraal Museum, Utrecht, 10134 c. (Photo: Centraal Museum, <https://www.centraalmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/10134-c-oudhedenstalletje-suze-robertson>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 40. Henriette de Vries, *Meerbuizen on the Amsteldijk, where the exhibition 'De Vrouw 1813-1913' was held*, 1913, pencil on paper, 400 x 300 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1913-651. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?q=henriette+de+vries&p=1&ps=12&st=Objects&ii=1#/RP-P-1913-651,1>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 41. Jo Vermijne, *Stilleven met Wajangpop, kris en Budaibeeld*, 1896-1937, etching on paper, 133 x 163 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1937-395. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-1937-395>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 42. Wilhelmina Drupsteen, *Cover for the program booklet of the exhibition 'De Vrouw 1813-1913'*, 1913, photograph. Archief (verzameling) Internationaal Archief voor de Vrouwenbeweging. RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague, image 122311. (Photo: RKD, <https://research.rkd.nl/nl/detail/https%3A%2F%2Fdata.rkd.nl%2Fimages%2F122311?c=q%3Dde%2520vrouw%25201813-1913%26filters%255B0%255D%255Bfield%255D%3Ddb%26filters%255B0%255D%255Bvalues%255D%255B0%255D%3Drkdimages%26filters%255B0%255D%255Btype%255D%3Dall&n=i%3D0%26p%3D1%26rpp%3D3%26tp%3D1>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 43. Gerarda Wilhelmina ten Hoet, *Heather Field with Birches and Pines. Sand Hills near Hilversum*, 1867-1939, etching on paper, 248 x 192 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1939-18. (Photo: Rijksmuseum, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?q=Gerarda+Wilhelmina+ten+Hoet+&p=2&ps=12&st=Objects&ii=6#/RP-P-1939-18,18>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Figure 44. Roline Maria Wichers Wierdsma, *Still Life with Flowers*, 1921, lithograph on paper, 250 x 190 mm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1921-1200. (Photo: © Heirs of Roline Maria Wichers Wierdsma, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?q=wichers+wierdsma&f=1&p=5&ps=12&principalMaker=Roline+Maria+Wichers+Wierdsma&st=Objects&ii=3#/RP-P-1921-1200,51>, accessed June 5, 2024).

Introduction

In September 2023, I commenced my research internship at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, working within the Print Room department and the research project ‘Women of the Rijksmuseum.’ These endeavors aligned with my aim to investigate the role of the revival, commercialization, and collecting of graphic arts in the emancipation of women’s artistry at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Netherlands. While my initial focus lay on the representation of graphic art at the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913*, I swiftly encountered the phenomenon of ‘women’s exhibitions’ and its evolutionary trajectory. Over the past five years, numerous examples include *Vrouwen op Papier* at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam (2023), *Het Vrouwenpalet* at Museum the Wiegier and Dr888 (2023), *De Nieuwe Vrouw* at Singer Laren (2023), *Vrouwen aan het Front* at Fotomuseum Den Haag (2023), *Vrouwelijke kunstenaars uit de collectie 1885-1935* at the Drents Museum (2019), *Meesterlijke Vrouwen* at the Stedelijk Museum Schiedam (2019), *Nieuwe Nuances* at the Cobra Museum (2019), *What is Left Unseen* at Centraal Museum in collaboration with MOED (2019), and *1001 Vrouwen* at the Amsterdam Museum (2019). Notably, during the first feminist wave, there were six consecutive women’s exhibitions in the Netherlands from 1871 to 1913. However, more than a decade later, the persistent focus on addressing the women’s issue through all-women exhibitions prompts the question: what is the origin story of this popular phenomenon in the museum world in the Netherlands?

The first feminist wave unfolded between 1870 and 1920 in the Netherlands, centering on objectives such as securing women’s admission to all forms of education, suffrage, improvement of labor conditions and rights, right to guardianship and administration, and control of shared assets.¹ At the end of the nineteenth century, not only was the position of working women under scrutiny, but a demographic phenomenon known as the “surplus of women” emerged in 1860, prompting women from prosperous backgrounds to remain unmarried and seek entry into the workforce, despite existing prohibitions.² Simultaneously, another shift occurred in the upper class of society, witnessing a notable increase in the number of active women artists in the art world within this group.³ Within this societal landscape, six all-women exhibitions emerged rapidly,

¹ “eerste feministische golf,” Atria, accessed September 10, 2023, [https://atria.nl/tag/eerste-feministische-golf/#:~:text=De%20eerste%20feministische%20golf%20in,universitair\)%20onderwijs%20en%20betaald%20werk;Marja+Borkus,+et+al,+Vrouwenstemmen:+100+jaar+vrouwenbelangen+\(Zutphen:+Walburg+Pers,+1994\),+25-26.](https://atria.nl/tag/eerste-feministische-golf/#:~:text=De%20eerste%20feministische%20golf%20in,universitair)%20onderwijs%20en%20betaald%20werk;Marja+Borkus,+et+al,+Vrouwenstemmen:+100+jaar+vrouwenbelangen+(Zutphen:+Walburg+Pers,+1994),+25-26.)

² Mieke Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Henriëtte Coppes, and Hanneke Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan: vijf schilders aan het begin van deze eeuw: Thérèse Schwartz, Betsy Rezora Berg, Jacoba van Heemskerck, Ans van den Berg, Betsy Osieck* (Heerlen: De Voorstad, 1991), p.7.

³ Ingelies Vermeulen, and Ton Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900: een leven voor kunst en vriendschap* (Oosterbeek: Konstrast, 2008), 23-24.

including *De Tentoonstellingsbazar van Vrouwelijke Nijverheid en Kunst* in 1871, *De Tentoonstelling van Voorwerpen voor Nijverheid en Kunst door Vrouwen Vervaardigd* in 1878, *De Tentoonstelling van Kunstwerken door Vrouwen Vervaardigd* in 1882, *De Tentoonstelling van Kunstwerken door Vrouwen Vervaardigd* in 1891, *De Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* in 1898, and *De Vrouw 1813-1913* in 1913. The latter was the last all-women exhibition before women in the Netherlands gained active suffrage in 1919.⁴

These exhibitions served as vital arenas for challenging societal constraints and advocating for the emancipation of women's rights to the public. Women from diverse societal strata and professions collaborated in organizing these exhibitions, with over four hundred women artists participating in these six exhibitions.

State of the field

As articulated by historians Maria Grever and Berteke Waaldijk in 1998, the intersection of the women's movement with the art world has received insufficient attention.⁵ In particular, the visual representation of the feminist wave in the Netherlands remains largely unexplored. While Atria, the knowledge institute for emancipation, and its predecessor, the International Archives for the Women's Movement - established by Rosa Manus (1881-1942), Johanna Naber (1859-1941), and Willemijn Posthumus-van der Groot (1897-1989) in 1935, have laid the groundwork for understanding the history of the feminist movement in the Netherlands, the omission of the role of women artists in this context is noteworthy.

Contemporary studies on the visual imagery employed by the feminist movement exist, such as the Dutch Lithography Museum's 2019 examination of lithographs used for feminist posters.⁶ However, even as the posters from *De Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (1898) and *De Vrouw 1813-1913* (1913) are being displayed at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, they lack contextualization. Art historical literature primarily focuses on the 1898 and 1913 exhibitions. A hundred years after the 1898 exhibition, Grever and Waaldijk provided a historical overview called *Feministische Openbaarheid: De Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid 1898*.⁷ Individual studies on the exhibition *De Vrouw 18-13-1913* have been conducted by historians Mieke Aerts, Lex Heerma van Voss, and Irene Geerts. Aerts and Heerma van Voss dedicated an academic article to the

⁴ Borkus, *Vrouwenstemmen*, 25-26.

⁵ Maria Grever, and Berteke Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid: De Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid 1898* (Amsterdam: Stichting Beheer IISG/ IIAV, 1998), 223.

⁶ Lisette, Almering-Strik, *Vrouwen in zicht: Op weg naar gelijke rechten!: 100 jaar vrouwenkiesrecht* (Valkenswaard: Nederlands Steendrukmuseum, 2019).

⁷ Grever and Waaldijk, *Feministische openbaarheid*.

exhibition, primarily addressing its suffrage message.⁸ Meanwhile Geerts, conducted a similar thesis investigation into the same exhibition.⁹ Yet, these studies, while shedding light on one specific aspect of the exhibition, do not delve into a comprehensive analysis of the exhibited artworks and their visual tactics. Similarly, historian Els Kloek, in her recent comprehensive volume on feminism, argues that the exhibitions ‘would grow into one of the most successful forms of activism among early Dutch feminists.’¹⁰ Without delving into the visual aspects of the exhibitions, she briefly mentions the organization of the exhibitions in 1871, 1878, and 1898 in a few sentences.¹¹ The first and last two exhibitions in 1898 and 1913 are briefly mentioned in other feminist studies, including the previously mentioned *Van Moeder op Dochter* (1948), and *Vrouwenstemmen: 100 jaar Vrouwenbelangen, 75 jaar vrouwenkiesrecht* by Marja Borkus. However, these studies also lack insights into the visual narrative of these exhibitions.¹²

Comprehensive studies on the artworks and objects featured in these exhibitions are notably absent, possibly because only photographs from the 1898 and 1913 exhibitions are known. Historians such as Marja de Groot only place the first exhibition of 1871 and the last two exhibitions of 1898 and 1913 in the history of women’s emancipation in the Netherlands, overlooking the significance of the other three.¹³ Illustrator and researcher Elbrich Steegstra briefly discusses the importance of the 1898 exhibition without specifying artworks. Notably, she displays the 1913 exhibition poster designed by Wilhelmina (Willy) Drupsteen (1880-1966), without providing context, or any information on this exhibition.¹⁴ This is not the only issue with these brief passages in such art historical studies. In a study on Thérèse (1851-1918), Betzy Rezora Berg (1850-1922), Jacoba van Heemskerck (1876-1923), Ans van den Berg (1873-1942), and Betsy Westendorp-Osieck (1880-1968) by Mieke Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Henriëtte Coppes, and Hanneke Oosterhof is mentioned that ‘few women painters of importance’ were highlighted in the 1913 exhibition, questioning the criterion of innovativeness when looking at artworks made by women artists.¹⁵ In 2003, Kloek argued that when researching women artists one should not look for ‘the female genius (...) but focus on the historical context of their achievements.’¹⁶ This is

⁸ Mieke Aerts, and Lex Heerma van Voss, “De Vrouw 1813-1913-2013,” *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 130, no. 2 (June 17, 2015): 5–12, <https://doi.org/10.18352/bmgn-lchr.10038>.

⁹ Irene Geerts, “‘Even liefelijke als doeltreffende propaganda’: de kiesrechtboodschap van de tentoonstelling De Vrouw 1813-1913” (Amsterdam, Vrije Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2013), <https://collectie.atria.nl/bibliotheek/item/166277-even-liefelijke-als-doeltreffende-propaganda?offset=4>.

¹⁰ Els Kloek, *Feminisme*, Elementaire Deeltjes 84 (Amsterdam: Athenaeum-Polak & van Genneep, 2024), p.84.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.84-85.

¹² Groot, and Waal, de, *Van moeder op dochter*, p.110-125, 135-146; Borkus, *Vrouwenstemmen*, 37-40, 58-60.

¹³ Marjan Groot, *Vrouwen in de vormgeving in Nederland, 1880-1940* (Rotterdam: Uitgeverij 010, 2007), 98-99.

¹⁴ Elbrich Steegstra, *Collecting and Exhibiting Women’s Graphic Design in the Netherlands the Representation of Dutch Female Graphic Designers from the Period 1880-1940 in the Collection and Exhibitions at the Stedelijke Museum Amsterdam and MOTI Breda* (Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2013), p.28-29, 44.

¹⁵ Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan*, p.7-8.

¹⁶ Els Kloek, “De Muse is een vrouw,” in *Jaarboek voor Vrouwengeschiedenis 23*:

accompanied by art historian Linda Nochlin's renowned essay "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists" (1971), wherein she breaks with the myth that it was natural for women not to achieve "greatness" and conform to a more subjective role in the art world. Nochlin mentions numerous exclusionary mechanisms in the art world and society that led to the institutionalized marginalization of women artists. Perhaps her most pioneering analysis was her perception of the canon and its unjustified valuation as a neutral benchmark, a norm by which society values art that is based on white male artists.¹⁷

A similar issue arises in my analysis of art historian and artist Ingelies Vermeulen and Ton Pelkmans' study on Marie Bilders-van Bosse (1837-1900), an artist who, along with Sientje Mesdag-van Houten (1834-1909), and Barbara Elisabeth van Houten (1862-1950), was asked to arrange the art department of the 1898 exhibition. While Vermeulen and Pelkmans mention that Cécile Goedkoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk (1866-1944), noted about the exhibition that there was no 'women's issue' in terms of artistry, asserting that talent determines destiny, their study reveals nuanced points. Vermeulen and Pelkman not only cite painter, art critic, and historian Grada Herminus Marius (1854-1919), who views female artistic pursuit as a solitary pursuit but also explain that a girl aspiring to be a painter is initially perceived as a 'painter dilettante, someone who paints out of hobby.' They mention that between 1865 and 1895, approximately forty women were 'professionally' engaged in painting.¹⁸ Vermeulen and Pelkmans do not elaborate on the criteria they used to determine who was 'professionally' engaged in the arts. The number of exhibitions a person has participated in should not be a criterion, since this information cannot be derived from the lack of studies on the all-women exhibitions.

Even when examining the names of the numerous artists showcased in the six exhibitions in the artists database of the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD), the term 'amateur' frequently appears. This classification applies to Teunsijna Johanna Albertina Kranenburg (1827-1878), a board member of the first Dutch women's association, *Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht, Arbeid Adelt*.¹⁹ She exhibited in the early exhibitions of 1871, 1876, and 1882, and was the mother of artist Etha Fles. A portrait made by her is part of the Centraal Museum's collection, and in 2010, her work was sold by Christie's for £3,250.²⁰ She passed away in 1878, seven years after women

Muzen aan het werk: vrouwenlevens in de kunsten, ed. Marga Altena, et al. (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2003), 11-28.

¹⁷Linda Nochlin, *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists? 50th Anniversary Edition* (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2021), 2, 21-81.

¹⁸ Vermeulen and Pelkmans *Marie Bilders-van Bosse*, p.23-24, 89-95.

¹⁹ "Teunsijna Johanna Albertine Kranenburg," RKD Research, accessed March 2, 2024, <https://research.rkd.nl/nl/detail/https%3A%2F%2Fdata.rkd.nl%2Fartists%2F46287>.

²⁰ "Portret van Teunsijna Johanna Albertine (1827-1878), Jantina Hendrica (1821-?) en Wemelina Anna (1824-?) Kranenburg," Centraal Museum Utrecht, accessed March 11, 2024, <https://www.centraalmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/26650-portret-van-teunsijna-johanna-albertine-1827-1878-jantina-hendrica-1821-en-wemelina-anna-1824-kranenburg-teunsijna-johanna-albertine-kranenburg>; "Teunsijna Johanna

were first admitted to the Academy of Fine Arts in Amsterdam. Despite her significant contributions, she, like the six inaugural women's exhibitions, is overlooked and seen as an amateur. In 2011, The Cultural Heritage Agency questioned why there are no museums dedicated to women creators and why this question has not been answered with exhibitions.²¹ Even contemporary exhibitions on the 'women's issue,' as seen in *De Nieuwe Vrouw* (2022), do not acknowledge these historical exhibitions.²²

Art historian and curator Hanna Klarenbeek does mention all six inaugural women's exhibitions in her study but concludes that the exhibitions 'did not confer a special position for most participating women artists in their artistic careers and success.' She suggests that the exhibitions were likely seen as additional opportunities to exhibit and sell artworks, emphasizing the financial motivations in 'a country in which there was hardly any gender inequality: after all, women in the Netherlands have had access to virtually the same education and exposition opportunities as men for years.'²³ Remarkably, she mentions on the same page that except for these women's exhibitions, primarily men organized exhibitions. Women were allowed to exhibit since the first *Exhibition of Living Master* in 1808, so why did 'professional' women artists still choose to exhibit with the feminists?²⁴ Klarenbeek's study does not delve into the iconography of their exhibited works. In some cases, women exhibited art with a social theme, such as Schwartz's drawing of two orphan girls at the 1898 exhibition. Furthermore, Klarenbeek investigates 'professional' painters such as Schwartz, and as a result, she oversees the fact that the exhibitions also showed applied arts and crafts. Many disciplines attributed to women were not yet considered artistic disciplines in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Moreover, works by dilettantes were also on display, and their work may have been exhibited for the first time.

Nio Hermes, in a study focusing on Charley Toorop (1891-1955), Lizzy Ansingh (1875-1959), Lou Loeber (1894-1983), Sorella (1883-1968), Adya Rees-Dulith (1876-1959), and Jacoba van Heemskerck, highlights this problematic combination of womanhood and artistic pursuit during the nineteenth to twentieth centuries. Hermes recommends that researchers investigating women artists living and working in this tumultuous era employ individual approaches for studying and comparing them. 'Women face a commonality imposed by a culture that partly determines their experiences. On the other hand, there are significant differences among them in how they deal with

Albertine Kranenburg (1827-1878), *Lady in the Window*, Christie's, accessed March 2, 2024, <https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5292535>.

²¹ Huldigings Comité van Amsterdamsche Vrouwen, ed., *Huldeblijk aan H. M. de Koningin van de Amsterdamsche Vrouwen: 6 September 1898-1938* (Amsterdam: Het Comité, 1938), p.137-138.

²² Maaïke Rikhof et al., *De nieuwe vrouw* (Laren: Singer Laren, 2022).

²³ Hanna Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen: vrouwen in de beeldende kunst, 1808-1913* (Bussum: Uitgeverij Thoth, 2012), p.131.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p.116-131.

and give form to those experiences in their visual work, in their artistic and political engagement, and in their lifestyle.²⁵ Thus, the only way to genuinely place these six all-women exhibitions within the history of women's emancipation in the Netherlands is to comprehensively define and compare all the exhibitions, participants, and artworks.

Research question

By scrutinizing the relationships and dynamics between all six exhibitions, I seek to not only investigate the history and evolution of the first feminist wave in the Netherlands but also contextualize it within the realm of women's artistry. The central research question of this thesis is: "How did the participation and representation of women artists and their artworks within the six inaugural all-women exhibitions between 1871 and 1913 embody the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands?" The question is supported by three sub-questions, each dedicated to a separate chapter. The first chapter aims to answer the question: "How did the socio-historical context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shape women's artistry in the Netherlands, particularly within the framework of the first feminist movement?" To uncover the intricacies of the six all-women exhibitions in the second chapter, I address the question: "How did the unfolding events of these six exhibitions (1871-1913) contribute to the outcomes of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands?" In the final chapter, I examine the women artists featured in these exhibitions and their artworks, addressing the question: "What artists and artworks were featured in these six exhibitions (1871-1913), and to what degree did the artworks embody the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands?" By examining the exhibited artists and artworks, the organizational dynamics, exhibition themes, and the broader societal implications, I aim to illuminate the visual tactics employed in the first feminist movement in the Netherlands, as articulated through these all-women exhibitions.

By answering this research question, this study can serve as a model for exploring the relationships between the second and third feminist waves in the Netherlands and the art world. It can for example contribute to the ongoing debate surrounding all-women exhibitions in the museum domain. For instance, in 2007, curator Maura Reilly wondered 'whether a show dedicated exclusively to women artists, such as ours in Brooklyn, can be used, somehow, to rectify other

²⁵ Nio Hermes, *Met Verve: Charley Toorop, Lizzy Ansingh, Jacoba van Heemskerck, Lou Loeber, Sorella, Adya van Rees-Dutilh, Amazonereeks* (Amsterdam: In de Knipscheer, 1991), p.10, 15-16.

sexist and racist ones. And, if so, for how many years and how many institutions?²⁶ As previously noted, numerous all-women exhibitions are organized each year, despite growing debates surrounding their necessity, potential stereotyping, and the agency of women artists within these group exhibitions. By exploring how the feminist movement used exhibitions for artistic and political purposes between 1898 and 1913, the usefulness of this type of exhibition can be critically assessed.

Furthermore, this research contributes to the reevaluation and appreciation of forgotten or underrepresented women artists. Charlotte Bouten (1870-1895), for instance, although mentioned in reviews of the 1898 exhibition, her work is scarcely exhibited in museums. Critics appreciated her work at the exhibition because of ‘her almost masculine touch.’²⁷ Author Charlotte Hendrika Amalia Schlimmer-Arntzenius (1863-1950) critiqued the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913* for being too commercial and political like men.²⁸ So, how should we appreciate the artworks made by women that were exhibited during the first feminist wave at these exhibitions? Unraveling these complexities provides insights into how art created by women during this period should be appraised, challenging gendered notions of art and historical critiques.

Methodology and structure

The structure of this study comprises three main chapters, each addressing a distinct facet of the primary research question. Employing a multi-faceted methodology, this research comprehensively investigates the complexities of the historical context surrounding the organization of the first six all-women art exhibitions in the Netherlands. The first chapter delves into the socio-historical context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, examining how it shaped women’s artistry in the Netherlands, particularly in the framework of the Netherlands. In this section, I delve into the historical context of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands, exploring how broader socio-cultural factors impacted women’s artistry during this period. The methodology involves a comparative study of literary sources related to the first feminist wave, including weekly and monthly publications from women’s associations, such as the *Vrije Vrouwenvereniging*, de *Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht*, *Arbeid Adelt*, and manifestoes from prominent feminists such as

²⁶ Maura Reilly, and Linda Nochlin, *Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art* (London: Merrell Publisher, 2007), 11-43.

²⁷ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.222.

²⁸ Charlotte Hendrika Amalia Schlimmer-Arntzenius, “De Tentoonstelling ‘De Vrouw’ 1813-1913 I,” *De Hollandsche Lelie* 27 (June 1913): 30, https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_hol003191301_01/_hol003191301_01_0013.php.

Wilhelmina Drucker (1847-1925), Naber, and Manus. I compare this analysis with archival materials detailing the establishment and progression of these associations, as well as their reception history. By infusing a gender perspective, this comparative approach aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the ideological underpinnings and reception of the feminist movement. To reconstruct this socio-political backdrop of the first feminist wave in the Netherlands, I examine literary sources, newspaper articles, cartoons, and archival material about the situation of women in the working fields and education, such as the encyclopedia *De Vrouw, de vrouwenbeweging en het vrouwenvraagstuk*. In supporting this research, I consult secondary literature on women's emancipation and gender history in the Netherlands, such as *Vrouwenstemmen: 100 jaar Vrouwenbelangen, 75 jaar vrouwenkiesrecht* by Marja Borkus.

Archival research plays a pivotal role in uncovering the intricacies of the six all-women exhibitions in the second chapter. This chapter explores the connection between the unfolding events of these six exhibitions and the outcomes of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands. Within this chapter I provide a detailed analysis of the events surrounding each exhibition, examining, and comparing their goals, missions, format, and organization to understand their relation to the first feminist wave in the Netherlands. The methodology involves an in-depth examination of exhibition catalogs, meeting minutes, commemorative books, acquisition catalogs, photographs, posters, and reviews. With this archival exploration, I aim to reconstruct the exhibitions and get a better understanding of their organization, evolution, and societal reception, with attention to the social-gendered history inherent to these records. For example, Dutch typeface designer Dick Dooijes already explained in 1953 that 'women's art' had one intrinsic problem in its definition. He mentioned that 'masculine' was seen as powerful and 'feminine' as weak and argued that art made by women can be powerful.²⁹ To better comprehend these complexities, I utilize secondary literature on women's artistic practice, including *Beroep: kunstenaars: de beroepspraktijk van beeldend kunstenaressen in Nederland 1898-1998* by Marlite Halbertsma and Wies van Moorsel (1998).

In line with this, when analyzing the exhibitions, I aim to adopt an intersectional perspective. Kimberlé Crenshaw, a prominent scholar of critical race theory, introduced the term 'intersectionality' in 1989 to emphasize the multidimensionality of Black women's experiences and to critique the so-called universal 'women's experience' articulated in feminist theories.³⁰ Even though, the term 'intersectionality' emerged towards the end of the second wave of feminism, it

²⁹ Dick Dooijes, *Nederlandse kunstenaressen rond het exlibris*, 1st ed. (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 1958), p.5-7, 82.

³⁰ Corine T Field, "Old-Age Justice and Black Feminist Histories: Sojourner Truth's and Harriet Tubman's Intersectional Legacies," in *Radical History Review* 139(2021): p.37; Bianca Martucci-Flink, "A Bite Out of History: A Feminist Reevaluation of Judy Chicago's The Dinner Party" (Master thesis, Oklahoma State University, 2019), p.13.

remains significant in this research. The exhibitions in 1898 and 1913 not only discussed Dutch women, their art, careers, and political and social situation but also encompassed perspectives from Indonesian, Surinamese, Chinese, and Moluccan women. Guided by the prevailing colonial mindset, the objects were categorized based on ‘race and class’ in the ‘Colonies’ section of the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913*.³¹ Hence, emphasizing the importance of adopting an intersectional approach when analyzing the international scope of these exhibitions.

Finally, the last chapter focuses on artists and artworks featured in these exhibitions, analyzing how their content and style reflected the objectives of the first feminist movement. In this section, I explore the characterization of women artists and their works, seeking to establish criteria for understanding their contributions within the context of the first feminist wave. My analysis encompasses artists’ exhibition participation, their backgrounds, art disciplines, and works exhibited. In addition, I examine the reception history of these exhibitions. This chapter commences with quantitative research, employing graphic visualizations of artists attributed to the six exhibitions. Components include demographics, education, occupation, and professionalization of the involved artists.

To gain more insights into a diverse array of women artists engaged in various disciplines, I employ foundational references such as *Collecting and Exhibiting Women's Graphic Design in the Netherlands* (2013) by Steegstra and the updated edition of *Vrouwen in de vormgeving in Nederland* (2023) by Groot, focusing on women makers involved in graphic arts, design, and applied arts. For women painters, I refer to sources like *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen* (2012) by Klarenbeek, and for photographers to *Everyone a Photographer* (2019) by Mattie Boom. Furthermore, I use visual analysis to define the characteristics and themes present in the exhibited artworks. This examination aims to determine whether, throughout the feminist movement, there were changes in the material, stylistic features, and iconography displayed. To ascertain the extent to which these women artists contributed by participating in these exhibitions, I utilize archival research about the artistry of these women. All women makers surveyed are included in the appendix. However, these are not all the women exhibited. Not all exhibitions published catalogs, which has resulted in my lists being incomplete.

It is important to note that the primary sources used in this research are written in nineteenth-century Dutch, so the translations provided are based on my interpretations. However, by intertwining textual and visual analyses with archival research, I seek to uncover the intricacies

³¹ Charlotte Hendrika Amalia Schlimmer-Arntzenius, “De Tentoonstelling ‘De Vrouw’ 1813-1913. IV. Zaal met inzendingen uit Oost- en West-Indië,” *De Hollandsche Lelie* 27 (June 1913): 95, https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_hol003191301_01/_hol003191301_01_0049.php; Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling “De Vrouw 1813-1913”*.

of the first feminist wave as embodied in the all-women exhibitions in the Netherlands at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. Addressing both the sub-questions and the overarching research question, this research bridges gaps in existing scholarship, providing a nuanced understanding of the intersection between the first feminist wave and the emancipation of women's artistry in the Netherlands. Perhaps, it marks the beginning of situating these exhibitions in the history of women's emancipation in the Netherlands.

Chapter 1. How did the socio-historical context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shape women's artistry in the Netherlands, particularly within the framework of the first feminist movement?

'How can you occupy yourself with something as ridiculous as the women's issue? Do you not feel how foolish you are?' This sentiment, exemplified in countless notes received by Cécile Goedkoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk, the secretary of the *Vereeniging Nationale Tentoonstelling van vrouwenarbeid* (1896-1901), encapsulates the prevailing skepticism towards engaging with what some might dismiss as 'the women's issue.'³² Within the framework of the 'women's issue,' this chapter explores how societal changes, cultural shifts, and feminist activism have shaped the landscape of women's artistry. Examining the evolution of women's artistry in the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, I seek to unravel the complexities of gender roles, institutional barriers, and artistic paradigms. By tracing the contours of women's artistry within the unfolding tapestry of Dutch feminist history, this chapter sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the six women's exhibitions and their artists.

While the conventional timeline of the first feminist wave in the Netherlands spans from 1870-1920, this examination begins from 1850, aiming to uncover early indications of feminist strides within the realm of art. This assertion finds support in research conducted on women's periodicals by the University Library of Amsterdam and the International Archive of the Women's Movement, which suggests the presence of feminist undercurrents in the 1850s.³³

³² Cornelia Mathilde Werker-Beaujon, Clara Meijer-Wichmann, and Willem Hendrik Martinus Werker, *De vrouw, de vrouwenbeweging en het vrouwenvraagstuk: encyclopedisch handboek* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1914), 306-324. The *Vereeniging Nationale Tentoonstelling van vrouwenarbeid* (1896-1901) (The Association National Exhibition of Women's Labor) was founded on June 26, 1896, to organize the exhibition in 1898 and to enhance the expansion of women's work in the Netherlands.

³³ Aalt Boeve, *Bibliografie vrouwentijdschriften 1800-1920 in het bezit van UBA en LAV* (Amsterdam: U.V.A.:Instituut voor Neerlandistiek, 1979), p.166.

1.1. Pre-feminist era: women's artistry in the Netherlands

Art education for women

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Vermeulen and Pelkmans note that one in four amateur artists in the Netherlands were women. They mention that painting was considered a suitable pastime for wealthier women and that the participation of women in public exhibitions remained limited, with only a few venturing beyond the confines of domestic display.³⁴ Klarenbeek further underscores this notion, suggesting that drawing lessons, particularly available to affluent women, were perceived as educational rather than a means of commercial contribution, thus discouraging public exhibition of their artworks. Moreover, she mentions that women from artistic families were introduced to art within familial spheres to contribute to family ateliers, reflecting a limited scope for independent artistic expression among women before 1850.³⁵ The exclusion of women from traditional art academies until the latter half of the nineteenth century further complicated their artistic trajectories. Klarenbeek elucidates that private tutoring by male artists, such as Jan Veth (1864-1925) and Philip Zilcken (1857-1930), became a prevalent means for women and girls to receive artistic instruction, albeit often as dilettantes.³⁶ Art historian Mirjam Westen points out that some women, like Louiza Aletta Hoyer van Brakel (1805-1871), found opportunities to transition from dilettantism to professionalism, driven by financial necessity and teaching drawing classes to other women.³⁷

Before 1850 women had two alternative paths to pursue art education in drawing. Klarenbeek mentions that from 1804, women over eighteen years old could attend the drawing classes for girls at the Arnhem society *Kunstoefening*, and from 1812, at the drawing society *Vlijt en Oordeel*. She explains that in 1817 the enactment of a new education law transformed drawing education into a government affair but offered minimal benefit to women.³⁸ Westen explains that municipalities' promotion of technical and artistic education, while commendable, often excluded women from scholarships and prizes.³⁹ Furthermore, Klarenbeek adds that although more drawing schools emerged, they remained generally inaccessible to women, with exceptions like the Roermond drawing school, which admitted both women and men in 1830. The second option for

³⁴ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.89, 24.

³⁵ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.34-35.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 35-41.

³⁷ Mirjam Westen, "Heilig En Ongeduld. Nederlandse Kunstenaressen in de Negentiende, En in Het Begin van de Twintigste Eeuw.," in *Elck Zijn Waerom: Vrouwelijke Kunstenaars in België En Nederland, 1500-1950*, ed. Katlijne van der Stighelen and Mirjam Westen (Brussel: Ludion, 1999), p.97.

³⁸ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.42-44.

³⁹ Westen, "Heilig En Ongeduld. Nederlandse Kunstenaressen in de Negentiende, En in Het Begin van de Twintigste Eeuw.," p.90.

aspiring women artists that Klarenbeek mentions, was self-study, facilitated by the availability of ready-made painting supplies and translated artists' manuals.⁴⁰ In line with this, Westen notes that due to the new education law, more museums opened their collections to the public, enabling women to draw after works by professional artists.⁴¹ Klarenbeek elucidates another exception for draughtswomen, explaining that affluent women could sometimes apply as honorary members of academies, albeit without the ability to become students. The Minerva Academy in Groningen began granting honorary female membership in 1798, while the Amsterdam City Academy followed suit in 1801. In Groningen, honorary female members 'who had no professional aspirations' could attend drawing classes shielded from men, while in Amsterdam, women were strictly permitted to attend annual prize ceremonies, since lectures on art theory were deemed unsuitable for women.⁴²

Art historian Marjan Sterckx suggests that the situation for women aspiring to careers as sculptors was somewhat more complex. In the nineteenth century, sculptors were associated with public spaces and monumental sculptors, excluding sculpting from the educational curriculum for women. Towards the end of the century, academies began admitting women into sculpting workshops, starting from 1889. Sterckx cites the Royal Academy in London, founded in 1768 by painters Angelika Kauffmann (1741-1807) and Mary Moser (1744-1819), among others, as an example of an academy in which women had an important role in its founding but were not admitted until the end of the nineteenth century. She concludes that the simplest way for women to learn the craft was to be part of a family where someone practiced the profession.⁴³ Sculptor Louise Elisabeth Beijerman (1883-1970) reflects on the scarcity of women sculptors in the Netherlands in her 1938 essay. Aside from noting that sculpting was not considered a 'typical female profession' due to the heavy materials involved and the lack of sculpting workshops in most households, she attributes the low numbers primarily to the absence of significant sculptural schools in the Netherlands during the nineteenth century. Beijerman praises the Burgundian school of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which originated in the Southern Netherlands. She contends that it was not until the first three decades of the twentieth century that a resurgence of sculptural art occurred in the Netherlands with occasional increases in female students in the

⁴⁰ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.42-44.

⁴¹ Westen, "Heilig En Ongeduld. Nederlandse Kunstenaressen in de Negentiende, En in Het Begin van de Twintigste Eeuw," p.97.

⁴² Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.45-48.

⁴³ Marjan Sterckx, "Obstakels en overwinningen. Over vrouwelijke beeldhouwers in de publieke ruimte in de negentiende eeuw," in *Muzen aan het werk: vrouwenlevens in de kunsten*, ed. Marga Altena et al., Jaarboek voor vrouwengeschiedenis, 23.2003 (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2003), p.127-135.

sculpting class at the *Rijksacademie* of Fine Arts in Amsterdam.⁴⁴ The inability of women to receive formal education in this field, coupled with the impracticality of pursuing sculpting at home, explains why few women engaged in sculpting during the nineteenth century.

Two other disciplines that I aim to address have a divergent history, namely photography and ‘women’s craftsmanship.’ This is simply because both have a history devoid of traditional art schooling. Photography curator Mattie Boom explains that photography flourished among amateurs in the late nineteenth century and was used to capture daily lives. Although photography studios emerged in the mid-nineteenth century, Boom asserts that amateur photography was crucial not only for the development of photography but also for the history of visual art and culture. She elucidates that even professional photographers realized that anyone who wished could purchase and use a camera.⁴⁵ This accessibility meant that photography became an art form in the nineteenth century that was accessible to women. Gallery owner Gerharda Matthijssen (1830-1907), for example, not only taught drawing classes around 1860 but was also a photographer. Art historian Peter Karstkarel believes she was the first professional women photographer in the Netherlands.⁴⁶ Applied arts have a similar history, despite being much older. Artist Erna van Osselen (1903-1989) explained in 1938 that the knowledge of traditional ‘women’s craftsmanship’ had been passed down through women in families for centuries. Despite experiencing a decline in the mid-nineteenth century due to industrialization, women in the twentieth century led the way with their knowledge of forgotten techniques. Additionally, Van Osselen notes in her essay that women have been involved in small businesses or larger working communities in craftsmanship, particularly in textiles, for centuries.⁴⁷

Exhibition opportunities and artistic communities

In the nineteenth century, the landscape of art education and exhibition transformed, shaped by both governmental interventions and evolving societal attitudes towards art. Geerts mentions

⁴⁴ Elisabeth Beijerman, “De vrouw als beeldhouwster,” in *Huldeblijk aan H. M. de Koningin van de Amsterdamsche Vrouwen: 6 September 1898-1938*, by et al. (Het Comité, 1938), p.139-140.

⁴⁵ Mattie Boom, *Everyone a Photographer: The Rise of Amateur Photography in the Netherlands, 1880-1940* (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 2019), p.15-18.

⁴⁶ Peter Karstkarel, “Gerharda Henriëtte Matthijssen En de Eerste Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen,” *De Vrije Fries* 68 (1988): 85-92, accessed March 17, 2024, http://images.tresoar.nl/wumkes/periodieken/dvf/DVF_1988_68.pdf. In 1877, Matthijssen was allowed to present a photo album to King Willem III at the *Historische Tentoonstelling* in Leeuwarden, after which she referred to herself as ‘*photographer to His Majesty the King*.’

⁴⁷ Elisabeth Osselen, “De vrouw in de kunstnijverheid,” in *Huldeblijk aan H. M. de Koningin van de Amsterdamsche Vrouwen: 6 September 1898-1938*, by et al. (Het Comité, 1938), p.147-148.

historian James Gilbert, who traces the origins of exhibitions back to medieval markets where merchandise was displayed. However, she primarily delves into the theories of historians Asa Briggs and Peter Burke, who suggest that exhibitions began to emerge around 1800 in France.⁴⁸ While historians Daniele Bleichmar and Meredith Martin explain that the history of collecting and arranging objects, artworks, and curiosities has older roots in Europe with Italian *studioli*, German *wunderkammern*, British cabinets of curiosities, and Dutch *rariteitenkabinetten* from the late fifteenth century, Geert notes in her analysis of Briggs and Burke that a shift occurred in the nineteenth century.⁴⁹ She argues that exhibiting objects took on a new significance during this period, serving as platforms to showcase France's military, industrial, and cultural inventions on an international level.⁵⁰ Sociologist Tony Bennett confirms in his study of museum history that there was a shift towards establishing museums for preserving and showcasing cultural heritage with the idea of progress and modernity.⁵¹

Colonialism also left a mark on the nineteenth-century exhibition landscape, as exemplified by art historian Ruth B. Phillips and her research on the display of stolen objects and even people from colonies in a primitivist narrative, as seen in The Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro in Paris.⁵² Bennett explains that other European countries quickly followed France's idea of establishing national museums and exhibitions.⁵³ Geerts argues that the national rivalry between the English and the French led to the first world exhibition organized by the English in 1851 in the purpose-built Crystal Palace in Hyde Park. Its successors were the exhibitions in Paris (1889) and Chicago (1893). In the Netherlands, lagging behind France and England, there was only the *International Colonial and Export Exhibition* in Amsterdam in 1883.⁵⁴ While Geerts argues that King Louis Napoleon's introduction of the French *salon* and trade and industry exhibitions in 1808 to the Netherlands failed to garner interest from the later Dutch government, Vermeulen and Pelkmans see a significant history. They perceive King Willem I's contribution in 1861 to the triennial national exhibition of *Living Masters* in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Den Haag as a direct result.⁵⁵

⁴⁸ Geerts, "Even liefelijke als doeltreffende propaganda," p.11.

⁴⁹ Daniela Bleichmar and Meredith Martin, "Introduction: Objects in Motion in the Early Modern World," *Art History* 38/4 (2015), p. 604-19.

⁵⁰ Geerts, "Even liefelijke als doeltreffende propaganda," p.11.

⁵¹ Tony Bennett, *Museums, Power, Knowledge: Selected Essays* (London: Routledge, 2017), p.187., <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315560380>.

⁵² Ruth B. Phillips, "Aesthetic Primitivism Revisited: The Global Diaspora of 'primitive art' and the Rise of Indigenous Modernisms," *Journal of Art Historiography* 12 (2015), p. 1-25.

⁵³ Bennett, *Museums, Power, Knowledge*, p.81, 187.

⁵⁴ Geerts, "Even liefelijke als doeltreffende propaganda," p.11-12.

⁵⁵ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.96-97.

Despite these developments, women's participation in exhibitions remained modest but noteworthy. Klarenbeek's analysis reveals a gradual increase in the number of women exhibiting at the *Living Masters* exhibitions (1808-1917), starting with nineteen until 1880 and fifty-nine around 1900. Klarenbeek concludes that the participation of women in exhibitions worldwide between 1820 and 1880 ranged from 3 to 9 percent and increased to 22.7 percent in 1899.⁵⁶ Vermeulen and Pelkmans similarly suggest that after 1850, 10 percent of the works offered at these exhibitions were made by women.⁵⁷ Klarenbeek adds that women artists were actively involved in correspondence regarding the sale and exhibition of their work but encountered difficulties because they were not members of the boards of the exhibitions in the first half of the nineteenth century. She further notes that applied arts were often rejected at the *Living Masters* exhibitions, and from the end of 1820, there was criticism regarding the admission of works made by dilettantes. As a result, the selection criteria were tightened, and mainly the works by women were displayed in unfavorable places, affecting their sales.⁵⁸ Women also had an unfavorable position in terms of exhibited themes and disciplines. Klarenbeek argues that mainly paintings were in demand, while embroidery, sculpture, and graphic work were rarely encountered at the exhibitions.⁵⁹ Steegstra similarly suggests that for studying the success of the career of a women graphic artist, counting the number of exhibitions in which they displayed work, is an inaccurate method. She argues that despite graphic art being the most emancipated art form in the Netherlands, women predominantly worked as illustrators and typographers within companies in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, making their work scarcely visible at exhibitions.⁶⁰

Besides exhibitions, Vermeulen and Pelkmans indicate that artist associations played an important role for artists in the nineteenth century, as art dealers only began organizing sales exhibitions from the early 1890s onwards due to increasing prosperity. They conclude that before this time, artists relied on exhibitions like the *Living Masters* exhibitions and activities of artists' associations.⁶¹ When looking at applied arts and sculpture, I conclude that these associations in the Netherlands emerged from the first feminist wave onwards. The national 'Vereeniging voor Ambachts-en Nijverheidskunst' (V.A.N.K) was founded in 1904, and 'De Nederlandse Kring voor Beeldhouwers' in 1913.⁶² Similarly, photographic magazines and societies, such as those in Haarlem

⁵⁶ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.98-100. According to Klarenbeek, 530 women exhibited 2.681 of the 31.509 works between 1808 and 1899 at the *Living Masters* exhibitions.

⁵⁷ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.89.

⁵⁸ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.98-103.

⁵⁹ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.104.

⁶⁰ Elbrich, *Collecting and Exhibiting Women's Graphic Design in the Netherlands the Representation of Dutch Female Graphic Designers from the Period 1880-1940 in the Collection and Exhibitions at the Stedelijke Museum Amsterdam and MOTI Breda*, p.18, 21-22.

⁶¹ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.96.

⁶² Beijerman, "De vrouw als beeldhouwster," p.139; Osselen, "De vrouw in de kunstnijverheid," p.147-148.

and Amsterdam, started emerging at the end of the nineteenth century.⁶³ In the early nineteenth century there were already painting and drawing associations in the Netherlands, including for women. For example, Betsy Westendorp-Osieck explained in 1938 that Pulchri Studio, Art et Amicitiae, and Sint-Lucas had been hospitable to women, and therefore argued that women painters from 1900 to 1940 experienced little evolution. In contrast, she notes in her essay that women in other countries were still not allowed to exhibit with men.⁶⁴

Despite women artists gaining immediate membership within Pulchri Studio in 1847, women were excluded from the history of the other two associations. Moreover, Westen mentions that within Pulchri Studio, women initially could not participate in art appreciation discussions. Amsterdam's Arti et Amicitiae, founded in 1839, began admitting female members in 1848 but withheld voting rights until the mid-twentieth century. Westen attributes the limited female membership to high fees, societal barriers, and women's exclusion from academies. The first drawing associations, The Hague society 'Tot Nut der 'Tekenschap' (1810-1829) and the Utrecht society 'Kunstliefde,' also barred women from membership. Westen mentions that in The Hague each man could bring two women to events, while in Utrecht, women were welcome at art discussions from 1876 but unable to become members. Westen concluded that women still corresponded with these societies and exhibition boards, hoping to expand their networks.⁶⁵

Social constraints and gender norms in the art world

Westendorp-Osieck concludes in her essay that women in art in the nineteenth century did not face the same challenges as women who wanted to work in scientific fields, such as medicine. She points out that women painters could cite historical examples like Judith Leyster (1609-1660) and Rachel Ruysch (1664-1750) to argue for equal standing. However, the main obstacle was not the profession itself but rather societal expectations that confined women to traditional roles. Westendorp-Osieck mentions that women received objections from family, claiming that a woman's calling traditionally lay elsewhere and that the freedom offered by the artist's life jeopardizes and contaminates this calling.⁶⁶ As highlighted in the introduction, Hermes also notes

⁶³ Boom, *Everyone a Photographer*, p.37.

⁶⁴ Betsy Westendorp-Osieck, "De vrouw in de schilderkunst," in *Huldeblijck aan H. M. de Koningin van de Amsterdamsche Vrouwen: 6 September 1898-1938*, by et al. (Het Comité, 1938), p.137-138.

⁶⁵ Westen, "Heilig En Ongeduld. Nederlandse Kunstenaressen in de Negentiende, En in Het Begin van de Twintigste Eeuw," p.92-95. Westen mentions a growth in the number of female members at Arti et Amicitiae after 1861, with 30 female members in 1890.

⁶⁶ Westendorp-Osieck, "De vrouw in de schilderkunst," p.137.

the perceived conflict between being a woman and an artist, which was perceived as problematic by themselves or their surroundings.⁶⁷ Similarly, Vermeulen and Pelkmans mention Marius, who observed a century ago that the combination of motherhood, public opinion, a smaller network than men, and a lack of confidence could be obstacles for women artists.⁶⁸ Beijerman, in her 1938 essay, emphasizes the unique difficulties faced by women sculptors. Unlike painters who could easily transport their supplies, sculptors were tethered to their workshops, often requiring assistance from men for heavy lifting and setting up work. Beijerman points out that this reliance on male help not only made women sculptors employers but also introduced unfamiliar administrative tasks like insurance and contracts. She concludes that women artists who were unmarried or had no children not only had more time for their art but also less responsibility for their activities and profession.⁶⁹ In line with this, Vermeulen and Pelkmans highlight the societal stigma attached to women associating with male artists. She argues that parents preferred their daughter to remain unmarried rather than married to an artist, as society accepted art but not the artist. According to her, unmarried women associating with male artists were labeled as ‘painter’s models,’ which was equivalent to ‘fallen women.’ However, Vermeulen and Pelkmans mention that attitudes towards women painters and draughtswomen began to shift in the second half of the nineteenth century, as the solitude of the studio aligned with bourgeois ideals of womanhood at home.⁷⁰

Sterckx underscores the inequality within the sculpture workshops, through the perception of sculpture as a *métier d’homme*. Sterckx starts by explaining that some women created similar sculptures as men, including ‘freestanding and façade sculptures, decorative sculptures, and allegorical and commemorative sculptures for ‘great men’ and war memorials.’ She reveals that some of these women had male workers for heavy work, while others were considered ‘unfeminine’ because they performed all the tasks themselves. Sterckx adds that despite their capabilities, women sculptors were prohibited from creating works based on nude models, confining them to decorative pieces and smaller objects. Professional artists who opposed this notion faced prejudice and criticism.⁷¹ This constraint extended across all art forms, affecting women painters as well. Even after being admitted to academies, women were barred from painting and drawing after nude models, a restriction that persisted until the late nineteenth century. Vermeulen and Pelkmans clarify that nude studies are indispensable for creating history paintings with biblical or

⁶⁷ Hermes, *Met Verve*, p.15.

⁶⁸ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.95.

⁶⁹ Beijerman, “De vrouw als beeldhouwster,” p.140.

⁷⁰ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.23.

⁷¹ Sterckx, “Obstakels en overwinningen. Over vrouwelijke beeldhouwers in de publieke ruimte in de negentiende eeuw.,” p.127-132.

mythological themes. Consequently, women could not work in what was considered the most esteemed genre in art history.⁷² After the opening of drawing schools for girls in 1861, an article appeared in the *Kunstkronijk* asserting that the ‘greatest and most sublime’ in art, including history paintings, was naturally reserved for men. Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof suggest that the opening of drawing schools for girls was justified based on the notion that women have the ‘endurance and diligence’ to draw.⁷³

⁷² Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.69.

⁷³ Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan*, p.7.

1.2. The first feminist wave in the Netherlands (1870-1920)

Contextualizing the first feminist wave

The presentation of the *Huldeblijk der Amsterdamsche Vrouwen* to Queen Wilhelmina (1880-1962) on September 9th, 1938, underscored the significant societal changes that had occurred over four decades, surpassing the developments of preceding centuries. The ceremonial gesture symbolized the collective desire among women in Amsterdam for acknowledgment of the significant changes witnessed, coinciding with the fortieth anniversary of the Queen's reign.⁷⁴ These transformative shifts find their roots in the emergence of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands. Tracing the origins of the first feminist wave, Kloek suggests that the term 'feminism' gained prominence in the nineteenth century, initially emerging in medical discourse concerning the weakening of men during severe illness. She adopts the theory of historian Karen Offen, attributing the earliest usage of the term to Frenchwomen Hubertine Auclert in 1882, who advocated for women's rights, particularly the right to speak. Kloek notes that the term gradually entered Dutch dictionaries in 1895.⁷⁵ Additionally, jurist Cornelia Mathilde Werker-Beaujon (1885-1977), editor of the encyclopedia *De Vrouw, de vrouwenbeweging en het vrouwenvraagstuk* (1918), contends that the 'women's issue' gained traction in the 1850s and 1870s in Western Europe, experiencing a surge in interest between 1870 and 1885 due to heightened inquiries into women's societal status.⁷⁶

Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof attribute the rise of the feminist movement in the Netherlands to the surplus of women from 1860, leading more women from wealthier social backgrounds to remain unmarried, unsupported by family, and desiring employment. They argue that due to the prohibition of work in these circles, only positions such as governess or teacher were deemed acceptable, even though many women were unable to pursue these careers because of a lack of educational opportunities. According to Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof, women's role within society was no longer a 'God-given order,' leading to lectures and publications on educational and employment opportunities for girls and women from a new women's movement.⁷⁷ Kloek nuances that the desire for education existed earlier in the Netherlands, citing examples from the seventeenth century with the advocacy of figures like Anna

⁷⁴ Huldigings Comité van Amsterdamsche Vrouwen, *Huldeblijk aan H. M. de Koningin*.

⁷⁵ Kloek, *Feminisme*, p.7-9. 'In 1895 staat het woord feminisme in het Nederlandse woordenboek als 'de richting welke de rechten of de emancipatie der vrouw voorstaat.' In 1901 veranderde dit naar 'de politieke strijd om vrouwenemancipatie.' En 1919 werd het 'het streven de maatschappelijke rechter der vrouw uit te breiden; vrouwenbeweging.'

⁷⁶ Cornelia Werker-Beaujon, "Hoofdstuk II. Het Hedendaagsche Vrouwenvraagstuk," in *De vrouw, de vrouwenbeweging en het vrouwenvraagstuk: encyclopedisch handboek*, ed. W.H.M. (Willem Hendrik Martinus). Werker, Clara Meijer-Wichmann, and Cornelia Werker-Beaujon (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1914), p.51.

⁷⁷ Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan*, p.7.

Maria van Schurman (1607-1678), and the emergence of a small feminist wave with feminist pamphlets in the late eighteenth century. She concludes that legal impediments, such as the Napoleonic Code of 1810 in the Netherlands, reinforced that women were legally incapacitated and stifled early feminist efforts.⁷⁸ Naber elaborates that the constitutional reforms of 1814, which established the Representation of People alongside that of the King, women remained disenfranchised, leading to growing discontent with their lack of civil rights.⁷⁹

Werker-Beaujon contextualizes the women's movement within broader societal transformations, identifying this women's issue underlies every general question, at a 'societal, economic, political, pedagogical, moral, and cultural level.' According to her, the issue grew due to the rise of factories where precise work attracted the labor of women and children. Women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were forced to work in harsh conditions in these factories, while unmarried bourgeois women, due to this new industry, could no longer engage in spinning, weaving, and making butter, soap, and candles, seeking pastimes elsewhere. Werker-Beaujon argues that as women increasingly entered the workforce, they sought avenues for empowerment, advocating for improved education and labor rights. This sentiment culminated in the women's movement motto between 1880 and 1890 'Labor, labor education, education for women.'⁸⁰

Naber commemorates writer Elise van Calcar (1822-1904), who advocated in 1873 that the one-sided education for girls, which was domestically oriented, did not meet the women's lives, especially those unmarried women.⁸¹ Historian J. Brok-ten Broek explains that Van Calcar since 1853 gave courses and lectures to governesses because she saw that women, not just mothers, had the task of developing children and needed higher education for this, and founded the magazine *De Hoop der Toekomst* (The Hope of the Future) for this purpose in 1863.⁸² In that same year, secondary education was opened to girls, and a year later, statemen Johan Rudolph Thorbecke appointed Van Calcar as inspector for kindergartens. Meanwhile, higher education remained closed to women until physician Aletta Jacobs (1854-1929) was allowed to enroll by Thorbecke in 1871

⁷⁸ Kloek, *Feminisme.*, 38–39, 60-67. Anna Maria van Schurman, humanist, linguist, theologian, poet, and artist, argued in the seventeenth century that women without families, who had the time, and the scholarly ability should have access to study for a better understanding of the Bible and God. An anonymous pamphlet Kloek refers to is called 'Ten betooge dat de vrouwen behooren deel te hebben aan de regering van het land' (1795).

⁷⁹ Johanna W. A. Naber, *Na tien jaren, 1898-1908* (G. Römelingh, 1908), p.110., <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMSFUBA02:000010920:00102>.

⁸⁰ Werker-Beaujon, "Hoofdstuk II. Het Hedendaagsche Vrouwenvraagstuk," p.42-53; Cornelia Werker-Beaujon, "Hoofdstuk I. Vrouwenbeweging en Maatschappij," in *De vrouw, de vrouwenbeweging en het vrouwenvraagstuk: encyclopedisch handboek*, ed. W.H.M. (Willem Hendrik Martinus). Werker, Clara Meijer-Wichmann, and Cornelia Werker-Beaujon (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1914), p.132.

⁸¹ Johanna W. A. Naber, *Na XXV Jaren, 1898-1923: het feminisme in zijnen bloei en in zijne voleinding* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1923), p.26., <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB02:000122807:00019>.

⁸² J. Brok-ten Broek, "De Ontplooiing in de Negentiende Eeuw," in *Van Moeder op Dochter: De maatschappelijke positie van de vrouw in Nederland vanaf de franse tijd*, ed. Willemijn Hendrika Posthumus van der Groot and Anna Waal, de, Volume 25 van SUN reprint, vol. 1 (SUN, 1977), p.43.

after several young women had infiltrated the Higher Civic School for Boys.⁸³ Brok-ten Broek concludes that Van Calcar was important for the beginning of education for girls, but she wanted to educate them unilaterally, including in her Education House. She suggests that writer Minette Storm-Van der Chijs (1814-1895) had a broader view and founded the first Industrial School for female youth in 1865 after she traveled in the United States. Not only theoretical education but also drawing, engraving, and handcrafts were part of the programs, as Brok-ten Broek explains, Storm-Van der Chijs had seen the importance of arts and crafts in the handicraft sales exhibitions in the United States.⁸⁴

Writer Betsy van der Perk (1833-1906), adopted the visions of Storm-Van der Chijs, according to Brok-ten Broek, and founded the first ‘Algemeene Nederlandsche Vrouwenvereniging’ (General Dutch Women’s Association) in 1871 with the slogan ‘Arbeid Adelt’ (Labor Adorns). Accompanying the association, she started the first magazine for the women’s movement *Ons Streven* (1870), which she transformed into *Onze Roeeping* (1871). She elaborates that the goal was to help indigent women by promoting their ‘artistic and workmanship’ through organizing similar sales exhibitions, prizes, and premiums. Brok-ten Broek calls Van der Perk ‘masculine in originality’ and appreciates her value to the movement, but argues that cooperation was impossible, so the association split into ‘Tesselschade Arbeid’ in 1872.⁸⁵

Objectives and transnational feminist agendas

Anna Jiskoot-Pierson asserts the diminishing significance of the concept of ‘Arbeid Adelt’ between 1871 and 1910. Despite its initial promise, including income, educational grants for education, and pensions, particularly benefiting physically incapacitated women, the efficacy of the concept waned over time. She mentions that within a decade, anonymity in work submissions was revoked, and married women were excluded. Furthermore, she argues that its focus shifted from supporting university education to specific ‘specific female-dominated professions,’ such as crafts.⁸⁶ Werker-Beaujon contends that despite efforts to empower women economically and demand societal

⁸³ Naber, *Na XXV Jaren, 1898-1923: het feminisme in zijnen bloei en in zijne voleinding*, p.28.; Brok-ten Broek, “De Ontplooiing in de Negentiende Eeuw,” p.44-47, 65.

⁸⁴ Brok-ten Broek, “De Ontplooiing in de Negentiende Eeuw,” p.44-47, 65.

⁸⁵ Brok-ten Broek, p.65.

⁸⁶ A. Jiskoot-Pierson, “ALG. NED. VROUWENVER. ‘ARBEID ADELDT,’” in *Huldebljck aan H. M. de Koningin van de Amsterdamsche Vrouwen: 6 September 1898-1938*, ed. Huldigungs Comité van Amsterdamsche Vrouwen (Amsterdam: Het Comité, 1938), p.262.

recognition, they catalyzed the campaign to improve women's legal status and suffrage, leading to the transformation of the women's movement into the suffrage movement.⁸⁷

The women's movement's evolution is exemplified by the proliferation of associations and publications driving its progress. Naber categorizes associations into groups based on their objectives, with the first group focused on 'promoting public morality.'⁸⁸ Grever notes the changing political landscape from 1880 onwards, with increased political identity expression, exemplified by dowager Maria Klerck-van Hogendorp (1834-1909) and damsel Anna van Hogendorp (1841-1915) founding the *Nederlandse Vrouwenbond ter Verhooging van het Zedelijk Bewustzijn* (Dutch Women's Association for the Enhancement of Moral Consciousness) in 1884, campaigning against regulations concerning prostitution, human trafficking, and the ban of paternity testing.⁸⁹ The second group comprises associations for social work, including public libraries, while the third group advocates for expanding 'women's employment opportunities,' such as *Arbeid Adelt* and *Tesselschade*. The *Nationale Vereeniging voor Vrouwenarbeid* (The National Association for Women's Labor), established for the 1898 exhibition, falls into this category.⁹⁰ Brok-ten Broek mentions the rising participation of working-class women in these associations since 1880, primarily focusing on factory conditions rather than the women's issue.⁹¹

Naber categorizes the fourth group as 'corporations working in the socio-political field,' dedicated to promoting women's participation in local and national governance. She adds that these associations challenge discriminatory practices like compulsory celibacy for female teachers and civil servants.⁹² These associations began to emerge from 1889 onwards, following the introduction of the Labor Act and Elizabeth Josephine Tilanus's (1864-1949) appointment as the first female assistant inspector of factories and workshops, which led to the Safety Act in 1897.⁹³ The most well-known associations are the *Vrije Vrouwenvereeniging* (Free Women's Association) (1889) with figures like Wilhelmina Drucker, and the *Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht* (Association for Women's Suffrage/VvVK) (1894) with Annette Versluys-Poelman (1853-1914) and Aletta Jabos (1854-1929), with members including Rosa Manus. Journalist Henriëtte Lakmaker underscores the latter association's role in challenging societal stereotypes about women's emotional incapacity for

⁸⁷ Werker-Beaujon, "Hoofdstuk II. Het Hedendaagsche Vrouwenvraagstuk," p.53-54.

⁸⁸ Naber, *Na tien jaren, 1898-1908*, p.97-98.

⁸⁹ Maria Grever, "Vorstin Voor Heel Het Vaderland? Orangisme En Feminisme in Het Laatste Kwart van de Negentiende Eeuw," *De Negentiende Eeuw*, 1, 23 (1999): p.77-79.

⁹⁰ Naber, *Na tien jaren, 1898-1908*, p.98; Henriëtte Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," in *Vrouwenstemmen: 100 jaar vrouwenbelangen: 75 jaar vrouwenkiesrecht*, by Marja Borkus et al. (Zutphen: Walburg pers, 1994), p.38.

⁹¹ Brok-ten Broek, "De Ontplooiing in de Negentiende Eeuw," p.93.

⁹² Naber, *Na tien jaren, 1898-1908*, p.10, 99, 105.

⁹³ A van den Tempel, "DE VROUWELIJKE LEDEN DER ARBEIDSINSPECTIE," in *Huldeblijke aan H. M. de Koningin van de Amsterdamsche Vrouwen: 6 September 1898-1938*, by Huldigungs Comité van Amsterdamsche Vrouwen (Het Comité, 1938), p.285.

political involvement and addressing the legal incapacitation of married women.⁹⁴ Furthermore, H. van Rijn van Alkemade-de Hartogh details the founding of the International Council of Women (ICW or IVR) in 1888, led by American suffragists Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902) and Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906), fostering international relations.⁹⁵ The fifth group comprises small women's trade unions, including associations for nurses, kindergarten teachers, and female midwives. The last group mentioned by Naber consists of sports associations, with only one known, namely the *Hollandse Dames-Zwemclub* (Dutch Female-Swimming Club).⁹⁶

Thirty-three of these associations were part of the *Nationale Vrouwenraad* (National Women's Council), founded in 1898, coinciding with Queen Wilhelmina's ascension to the throne.⁹⁷ Lakmaker highlights suffrage as the primary objective of the women's movement from 1894 to 1919, underscored by the Van Houten Electoral Law in 1896, granting suffrage to men based on literacy, taxes, income, rent, and diplomas. Furthermore, she explains that Pieter Jelles Troelstra (1860-1930), representing the *Sociaal Democratische Arbeiderspartij* (Social Democratic Workers Party/SDAP), rallied labor associations, the VvVK, and the liberal Radical Bond to establish the *Nederlandsch Comité voor Algemeen Kiesrecht* (Dutch Committee for Universal Suffrage) after the rejection of universal suffrage in 1899. Lakmaker criticizes the SDAP leader's reluctance to support women's suffrage, leading to the VvVK departure from the committee in 1905. Universal suffrage for men was eventually achieved in 1913.⁹⁸ In line with this, Naber explains that a 1904 Royal Decree mandated the dismissal of female civil servants upon marriage, rescinded briefly but reinstated in 1924 until 1955.⁹⁹ In 1907, the VvVK split, forming the *Nederlandsche Bond voor Vrouwenkiesrecht* (Dutch Association for Women's Suffrage). Lakmaker and Grever elaborate on how feminists like Jacobs intensified suffrage advocacy during the First World War when women began to play a role in the war effort, culminating in the International Congress of Women against War in 1915 in The Hague. This led to significant petitions and demonstrations, ultimately securing women's passive suffrage in 1917 and active suffrage in 1919, enshrined in the Constitution by 1922.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ Naber, *Na tien jaren, 1898-1908*, p.99.; Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.29-31, 45. Since 1836 married women were legally incapacitated. Naber notes a surge in women's association membership following the 1908 Congress of International Women Suffrage Alliance in Amsterdam.

⁹⁵ H. van Rijn van Alkemade-de Hartogh, "VROUWENRADEN, -BONDEN EN -CLUBS," in *Huldeblijk aan H. M. de Koningin van de Amsterdamsche Vrouwen: 6 September 1898-1938*, by Huldigings Comité van Amsterdamsche Vrouwen (Het Comité, 1938), p.350-351.; Naber, *Na XXV Jaren, 1898-1923: het feminisme in zjinen bloei en in zjine voleinding*, p.25.

⁹⁶ Naber, *Na tien jaren, 1898-1908*, p.99-100.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 97, 100.

⁹⁸ Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.25, 28, 31-33.

⁹⁹ Naber, *Na tien jaren, 1898-1908*, p.107.

¹⁰⁰ Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.25, 28, 31-33, 35, 61-66; Naber, *Na XXV Jaren, 1898-1923: het feminisme in zjinen bloei en in zjine voleinding*, p.126; Grever, "Vorstin Voor Heel Het Vaderland?," p.76.

Despite the common belief that the first feminist wave ended in the 1920s, historian Dineke Stam, citing jurist and politician Betsy Bakker-Nort (1874-1946) in 1938, underscores the need for continued women's movements to counter reactionary politics against women. Stam highlights governmental pressures on women's labor positions, noting that until 1956, marriage legally incapacitated women. Moreover, the rejection of equal pay conventions in the Netherlands from 1956 to 1971, citing concerns about neglecting women's household duties, illustrates ongoing challenges.¹⁰¹ This refutes the notion that the first wave's end marks the conclusion of the struggle for women's rights, highlighting its continuity into the second wave.

¹⁰¹ Dineke Stam, "2. Staatsburgeressen voor vrouwenbelangen, 1920-1945," in *Vrouwenstemmen: 100 jaar vrouwenbelangen: 75 jaar vrouwenkiesrecht*, by Marja Borkus et al. (Zutphen: Walburg pers, 1994), p.67.

1.3. The role of feminism in emancipating women's artistry in the Netherlands

Art education for women during the first feminist wave

Following the opening of drawing schools for girls in 1861, more schools followed suit including the *Dagteekenschool en Kunstambachtschool voor Meisjes* in Amsterdam (1878) led by Betsy Kerlen (1886-1916). In 1863, the secondary education law established a certificate of proficiency in drawing and modeling for girls' courses.¹⁰² Van Osselen suggests that this facilitated women's entry into arts and crafts, with schools like the *Quellinusschool* offering training in jewelry making, pottery, graphic arts, sculpture, and interior architecture for both boys and girls.¹⁰³ Despite the historical association of the 'sublime in art' with men, Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof observe a shift, noting that jewelry-making and engraving became increasingly associated with women since they were allowed professional practice.¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile, Vermeulen and Pelkmans underscore the influence of early feminism on visual arts, noting that Rotterdam admitted women to the academy in 1861, preceding Amsterdam's acceptance of female students.¹⁰⁵ In photography, women took matters into their own hands with Matthijssen establishing the 'atelier de photographie pour dames' in 1867 in Leeuwarden.¹⁰⁶ Klarenbeek mentions that in 1864, Storm-van der Chijs wrote to the Council of the Royal Academy of Amsterdam to open its doors to women, following her efforts at a European congress earlier that year.¹⁰⁷ The successor to the Royal Academy, the *Rijksacademie*, opened to women in 1871, signaling a shift in societal views on women's artistic pursuits, according to Westendorp-Osieck. She elaborates that out of 116 students at the *Rijksacademie* in 1871, forty-three were women, highlighting their enduring commitment to art even after marriage.¹⁰⁸ However, Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof point out limitations in Amsterdam, where female students were not allowed to interact with male counterparts and had limited subject options, excluding painting.¹⁰⁹

Vermeulen and Pelkmans add that other academies opened their doors to women due to the increasing number of students in Amsterdam. They explain that the academy in The Hague opened its doors in 1872 due to declining enrollment, budget cuts, and loss of prestige. Vermeulen

¹⁰² Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.64-65.

¹⁰³ Osselen, "De vrouw in de kunstnijverheid," p.148.

¹⁰⁴ Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan*, p.7.

¹⁰⁵ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.69.

¹⁰⁶ Karstkarel, "Gerharda Henriëtte Matthijssen En de Eerste Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen," p.85-92.

¹⁰⁷ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.47.

¹⁰⁸ Westendorp-Osieck, "De vrouw in de schilderkunst," p.137-138.

¹⁰⁹ Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan*, p.10.

and Pelkmans cite a quote from co-director Johannes Bosboom (1817-1891), expressing his enthusiasm for the large number of young women seeking drawing certificates.¹¹⁰ Not all academies, thus, opened their doors due to the societal feminist debate; some did so as a rescue measure in times of financial crisis. This is also evident from the regulations imposed by the Board of Direction in The Hague on March 18, 1873, which restricted the freedom of female students.¹¹¹ Klarenbeek also mentions that despite women's positive influence on male students in middle school courses at drawing schools, the informal interaction between men and women was considered too familiar.¹¹² To address this, three programs were created for women at the academy. Program A involved separate classes for women and men, focusing on drawing from objects, as women were not allowed to draw after nude models. Program B included joint education for women and men in manual, linear, and perspective drawing, as well as modeling for a secondary education qualification. Finally, Program C, a continuation of Program A, which involved drawing plaster figures and clothed models for the study of anatomy, as well as lessons in painter's perspective and composition.¹¹³ Vermeulen and Pelkmans mention that women could attend Program C with male students if parents or guardians submitted a written request to the Board of Directions. According to them, the Amsterdam board saw a positive influence of female students on male students, who were eager not to be outdone by women. Female students were also successful in The Hague. Vermeulen and Pelkmans cite a quote from Johan Gram, writer, and secretary of the Academy of Fine Arts in The Hague, who wrote in 1898 that music teachers complained about declining enrollment in their classes as women devoted themselves to visual art.¹¹⁴

Shifting aesthetic paradigms

In 1895, another shift occurred in women's artistry with the permission to work after a nude model. The prohibition against women drawing after nude models brought inconvenient situations for the academies. Vermeulen and Pelkmans elaborate that the director of the Academy in The Hague, Johan Philip Koelman (1870-1888), wrote to the Board of Directions, stating that the changing room for models was too close to the women's classroom. They add that these nude studies were

¹¹⁰ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.69.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p.61.

¹¹² Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.65.

¹¹³ Ibid, p.58-59.

¹¹⁴ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.61, 89.

not immediately available at the academies but rather at art associations such as Pulchri.¹¹⁵ However, Klarenbeek clarifies that at Koelman's academy, women had been allowed to draw after nude models in 1881 as part of a trial, including Suze Robertson (1855-1922) and Margaretha Chauvognij de Blot (1867-1936). She explains that the issue resurfaced in 1891, leading to official permission in The Hague in 1893. according to Klarenbeek, the *Rijksacademie* in Amsterdam known for its strictness, required an entrance exam and initially excluded women from drawing classes with nude models until 1895, following criticism from the Supervisory Board.¹¹⁶ Notably, before this change, artists like Schwartz, a student in 1873-1875, had already challenged conventions with an etching of a nude reading Maria Magdalena (1861-1887) (fig.1).

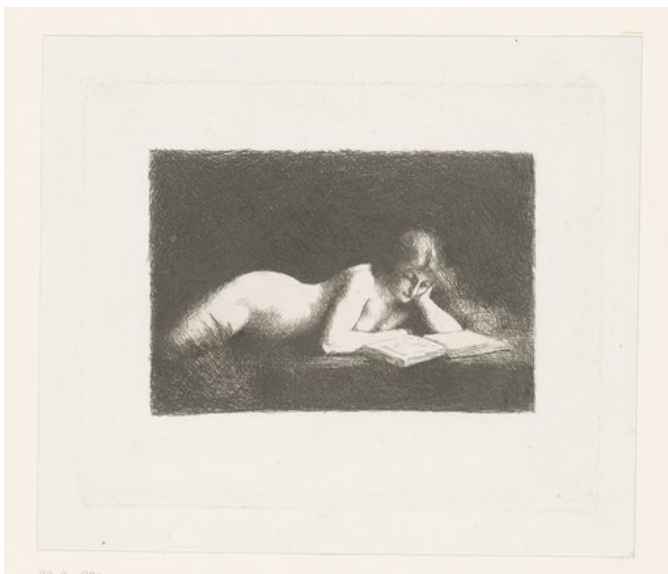


Figure 1. Therese Schwartz, *Maria Magdalena*, 1861-1887, etching on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum Amsterdam).

Even though women were allowed to draw after nude models, social constructs persisted around women's artistry. Grever and Waaldijk mention an *Eigen Haard* article from 1904 in which is argued that women were better for still life painting since they 'enjoy organizing, arranging, folding, bringing together, reconciling, and endeavoring to resolve oppositions and place everything in its proper place. They arrange flowers, the fruits, the jewelry, the household goods as they arrange their guests at the table.'¹¹⁷ Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof add that the chaperone system in the nineteenth century restricted women to outdoor landscape painting.¹¹⁸ Westen underscores the paradoxical societal expectations towards women in art. She explains due to new ideals of civilization by the bourgeoisie, art played a more prominent role in society, allowing

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p.61.

¹¹⁶ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.70-71, 78-81.

¹¹⁷ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.221-222.

¹¹⁸ Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan*, p.8.

more exhibition and training opportunities for artists. At the same time, she mentions that within this bourgeoisie, the position of women as homemakers grew, with the notion that women should display their natural sense of beauty in the private sphere as wives and mothers. Despite advancements in women's rights, the professional practice of artistry by women, and thus earning income, remained taboo well into the twentieth century.¹¹⁹ Klarenbeek adds that the work of women was often confined to family circles and rarely displayed in public markets, leading many to forgo signing their work when produced at home or in male-dominated studios.¹²⁰

Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof observe a shift in the art scene during the *De Vrouw 1813-1913* exhibition, marked by increased interest in women artists and the emergence of new modern art movements like Luminism. They cite Jacoba van Heemskerck as one of the few women who, in her view, embraced this new modern art.¹²¹ However, Klarenbeek suggests that academies favored dilettantes instead of professional artists like Van Heemskerck.¹²² Hermes adds that Van Heemskerck faced resistance from male colleagues in Dutch art movements like Luminism, prompting her to explore German Expressionism for a while. After mentioning the negative criticisms Van Heemskerck received from male colleagues, Hermes quoted Charley Toorop, who wrote about Van Heemskerck's career: 'a struggle between being a woman and a creative being.'¹²³ Even after the initial wave of feminism, the art world had to continue to emancipate, and changes in art education for women persisted. Van Osselen, for instance, mentioned that in 1926 the Institute for Applied Arts Education offered extensive possibilities for women. She concluded that many women found professional success in the crafts, with their work receiving significant appreciation. As a highlight, she noted the substantial contribution of Dutch women in areas such as silversmithing, ceramics, furniture, graphic work, sculpture, and stained glass at the 1937 *World Exhibition* in Paris.¹²⁴

Propagating change and intersections with the feminist movement

Historian Anna Tjiselning argues that Perk was ahead of her time with her 'gigantic feminist strides,' not only founding the first women's association, women's magazine, and women's exhibition but

¹¹⁹ Westen, "Heilig En Ongeduld. Nederlandse Kunstenaressen in de Negentiende, En in Het Begin van de Twintigste Eeuw," p.90-91.

¹²⁰ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.22-23.

¹²¹ Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan*, p.8-9.

¹²² Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.64-65.

¹²³ Hermes, *Met Verve*, p.15, 43-45.

¹²⁴ Osselen, "De vrouw in de kunstnijverheid," p.148.

also embarking on the first tour with writer Mina Kruseman (1839-1922) starting from 1873 to propagate feminist ideology. In doing so, Perk delved into history, particularly art history. Journalist Maarten Slagboom mentions Perk's references to the literary works of poets and glass engravers Maria Tesselschade (1594-1649) and Anna (1583-1651) Roemers Visschers. These sisters were literate in Dutch, French, Italian, and Latin, and they recited their poems to Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft, Joost van den Vondel, Constantijn Huygens, and French Queen Maria de Medici. Slagboom explains that while Kruseman was applauded for her appearance, which he considered somewhat 'vulgar,' Perk received criticism for her lectures containing 'unwomanly' thoughts. According to him, religious women had issues with feminist ideology opposing the ban on work after marriage; they saw charity as a solution and protested feminists.¹²⁵

Art historian Lisette Almering-Strik explains that both the women's movement and the labor movement held different views on this matter and began producing lithographic prints for the widespread dissemination of their political messages. She cites examples, including the posters of the life insurance company *Amsterdamsch Levensverzekering Genootschap* with the text 'The support of widows and orphans' from 1899, and that of the VvVK with the text 'Let me in- I bring new light' from 1918 made by Theo Molkenboer (1871-1920).¹²⁶ In addition to Almering-Strik's insights, Stam sheds light on the earlier involvement of feminists in pamphleteering, citing instances such as Kee Groot's (1868-1934) symbolic bicycle ride to celebrate 'Women's Suffrage Day' on June 15, 1910. She also points out the proactive role played by the VvVK department in Enkhuizen, which produced an array of visual materials to serve as potent propaganda tools.¹²⁷ Artists were also involved in creating visual material for feminist associations, such as designer, painter, and illustrator Dinah Kohnstamm (1869-1942), who created the drawing for the cover of the program for the Women's Suffrage Congress in 1908.¹²⁸ Kohnstamm's involvement extended beyond her artistic endeavors; her nephews documented her impactful contributions to feminist activism in a comprehensive bibliographical work, drawing on letters from their grandfather Philip Kohnstamm. These letters shed light on Dinah's unwavering commitment to social causes and her active participation in various association boards, where she advocated women's independence.¹²⁹ Similarly, Wilhelmina Drupsteen, designed four *tableaux vivants* for the 'National Congress of the

¹²⁵ Slagboom Maarten, "Betsy Perk, Oerfeminist Met Een Abonnement Op Miskening – Schiff," accessed April 18, 2024, <http://www.schift.nl/betsy-perk-oerfeminist-met-een-abonnement-op-miskening/>.

¹²⁶ Almering-Strik, *Vrouwen in zicht: op weg naar gelijke rechten!*, p.19, 32.

¹²⁷ Stam, "2. Staatsburgeressen voor vrouwenbelangen, 1920-1945," p.55. Visual materials included flags, pencils, thimbles, brooches, plaques, ribbons, and sashes with 'women's suffrage' on them.

¹²⁸ Aletta Jacobs, "WELKOMSWOORD TOT DE LEDEN VAN DEN WERELDBOND VOOR VROUWENKIESRECHT," *Feestnummer: Maandblad van de Vereeniging Voor Vrouwenkiesrecht*, June 15, 1908, p.5., <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMALET01:000329029:00001>.

¹²⁹ Geldolph A. Kohnstamm, ed., *Het Leven van Dinah Kohnstamm, 1869-1942: Een Amsterdamse Kunstenaar* (Amsterdam: Joods Historisch Museum, 2009), p.7-9, 33.

Dutch Committee of Women for Sustainable Peace' on April 28 and 29, 1917, symbolically depicting the role of women in war and peace according to the *Vrouwenkiesrecht Maandblad* (Women's Suffrage Monthly).¹³⁰ Drupsteen also made fashion drawings for the *Maandblad der Vereeniging voor Verbetering van Vrouwenkleeding* (Monthly Magazine of the Association for the Improvement of Women's Clothing) as early as 1903.¹³¹

However, not all women artists in this period were necessarily 'feminists.' Vermeulen and Pelkmans argue that landscape painter Marie Bilders-van Bosse 'was not a great advocate of the women's movement.'¹³² Nevertheless, Bilders-van Bosse was a co-organizer of the art section at the women's exhibition in 1898 and an early student at the Amsterdam Academy in 1874 and 1875. Vermeulen and Pelkmans cite quotes from Bilders-van Bosse in which she explains that being a woman was not an obstacle for her, but time was, as she wished she had more time to create art. At the same time, Vermeulen and Pelkmans also mention that Bilders-van Bosse distanced herself from motherhood, viewing it as a potential hindrance to artistic pursuit. Furthermore, they mention a quote in which the landscape painter says that her women's exhibition, like the novel *Hilda van Suylenburg*, did not have a positive influence on her sister-in-law Jeanne and speaks positively about feminist critic Henri Smissaert.¹³³ Smissaert (1866-1934), director of life insurance companies and founder and editor of various magazines, expresses his negative views about the women's movement and its writers like Anna Polak (1874-1943) and De Jong van Beek en Donk.¹³⁴ The latter wrote *Hilda van Suylenburg* (1897), a novel about an orphan who rebels against the aristocratic environment of her aunt and after meeting two from the women's movement begins to advocate for women's rights.¹³⁵ Smissaert wrote an open letter to De Jong van Beek en Donk in the *Amsterdamsche Courant* in response to the novel, urging women: 'Be holy (...) for you are the carrier,

¹³⁰ Clara Mulder van de Graaf-de Bruin, "Verslag over Het Nationaal Congres Gehouden Te Den Haag, Door Het Nederl. Comité van Vrouwen Voor Duurzamen Vrede, Op 28 En 29 April 1917," *Maandblad van de Vereeniging Voor Vrouwenkiesrecht*, May 15, 1917, p.11; Het Dagelijksch Bestuur van het Ned. Comité van Vrouwen voor Duurzamen Vrede, "ORGANISATIE," *Maandblad van de Vereeniging Voor Vrouwenkiesrecht*, May 15, 1917, p.11. The tableaux vivants were executed by textile artist Eugenie Carolina Wall Perné- van Vooren.

¹³¹ Anita de Groot and Marloes Huiskamp, "Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon van Nederland," ING Project (Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, March 25, 2024), <https://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/vrouwenlexicon/lemmata/data/Drupsteen>.

¹³² Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.95. 'al mijn verloren jaren en uren! Ik had zooveel meer en beter kunnen doen, en nu mij de oogen opengaan, ben ik lam en pijnlijk en op. En nu zit Gusta, welk gezeur van broeder en zus, haar goddelijk talent te vermorsen- en die tijd die nooit terug komt!!'

¹³³ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.94-95. 'Enfin-ik ben ouder en de jeugd moet maar zelf zien hoe ze het redt. 't Kan mij niet schelen, ik heb goddank! Geen menschenkind op mijn geweten (ik bedoel er in geschopt).' 'Op Jeanne mijn schoonzuster heeft die mij niet zoo sympathieke vrouwentoonstelling, even als Hilda Suylenburg, ook al zo'n slechte invloed.' Jeanne de Roo (1861-1914) was married to Marie's second brother Pieter Philip.

¹³⁴ Henri Smissaert, "Feministische pleidooien Door Jhr. Mr. H. Smissaert., Onze Eeuw. Jaargang 2," *Onze Eeuw* Jaargang 2 (1902): 837-861.

¹³⁵ C. Goekoop de Jong van Beek en Donk, *Hilda van Suylenburg* (Scheltema & Holkema, 1897). The activists Hilda met were the American Gladys and doctor Corona.

the nurturer of what tomorrow the people will be.’ He concludes that De Jong van Beek en Donk wrote the novel without using her mind.¹³⁶ Historian Fleur Speet suggests that De Jong van Beek en Donk deliberately avoided the word ‘feminist’ in her novel, as it already carried a stigma at the time.¹³⁷ The women’s exhibitions were also not positively received by all women artists. The next chapter will explore these perspectives and critiques surrounding women’s exhibitions, shedding light on how the unfolding events of these six exhibitions (1871-1913) contributed to the outcomes of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands.

¹³⁶ Henri Smissaert, “Hilda van Suylenburg: Open Brief Aan Mevrouw Goekoop-de Jong van Beek En Donk,” *De Amsterdamsche Courant*, 1898, derde edition.

¹³⁷ Fleur Speet, “Hilda van Suylenburg | Literatuurgeschiedenis,” accessed April 18, 2024, <https://www.literatuurgeschiedenis.org/teksten/hilda-van-suylenburg>.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the socio-historical context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, identifying the position of women's artistry in the Netherlands during that time. Women's artistic endeavors faced significant resistance, underscored by prevailing gender biases and societal constraints. Despite one in four amateur artists being women, their participation in public exhibitions was limited, often confined to domestic display. Private art education, accessible to affluent women was viewed as a leisure activity rather than a professional pathway. Exclusion from traditional art academies persisted until the latter half of the nineteenth century, and private tutoring or familial instruction rarely sufficed for independent careers.

This first feminist wave in the Netherlands (1870-1920) marked significant societal shifts, advocating for women's education, employment, and rights. This movement, with pioneers like Storm-Van der Chijs, Perk, and Van Calcar, challenged norms confining women to domestic roles and led to the establishment of women's associations promoting labor rights, educational opportunities, and suffrage, starting with the promotion of women's art and crafts through organizing similar sales exhibitions, prizes, and premiums by *Arbeid Adelt* in 1871. Notable achievements include the admission of women to secondary and higher education and the eventual granting of women's suffrage in 1919.

Feminists integrated arts further into feminist ideology, advocating for establishing drawing schools for girls and the admission of women into art academies. Despite restrictions and societal barriers, women persisted, gaining the right to work after nude models by 1895. However, women's professional practice of artistry, and thus earning income and exploring all art genres, remained taboo well into the twentieth century. This chapter sets the stage for further exploration of women artists' evolving roles in the arts and the first feminist movement, specifically in the six inaugural women's art exhibitions.

Chapter 2. How did the unfolding events of these six exhibitions (1871-1913) contribute to the outcomes of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands?

The journey of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was marked by significant socio-political shifts and the emergence of new forms of women's activism. Against this backdrop, the six inaugural women's exhibitions held between 1871 and 1913 emerged as feminist platforms. To assess the extent to which these exhibitions contributed to this feminist wave and embodied the evolving ideology, a comprehensive comparison of all six exhibitions is necessary. Unfortunately, primary material availability varies among the exhibitions, with not all exhibition committees producing publications. Consequently, not every exhibition will receive equal attention across all comparison criteria. Nevertheless, I discuss all exhibitions during the comparison, as this offers fresh insights into the evolution of women's exhibitions amidst the changes within the first feminist wave.

2.1. Organizational dynamics

The organization

The inaugural regional 'women's bazaar,' the *Tentoonstellings-bazaar van Vrouwelijke Nijverheid en Kunst*, was orchestrated in December 1871 by feminist Betsy Perk under the auspices of the first women's movement *Arbeid Adelt*. Klarenbeek elucidates that Perk secured three halls in the Town Hall from the Delft city council to fill them with twenty-two thousand objects, of which twelve thousand were available for purchase. She further notes that Perk encouraged women to submit their work through newspaper announcements.¹³⁸ Perk did not produce a catalog or any other publications regarding the bazaar. The *Huldeblijck* reveals that post-1871, the association's members continued to host annual sales bazaars.¹³⁹ One of the board members was Anna de Jong van Beek en Donk-Nahuijs, mother of the Cécile Goedkoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk.¹⁴⁰ This was followed in 1878 by the inaugural 'women's exhibition,' the *Tentoonstelling van Voorwerpen van Nijverheid en Kunst uitsluitend door Vrouwen vervaardigd* in Leeuwarden. The introduction of the exhibition catalog reveals that the concept was conceived by gallery owner and photographer Gerharda Matthijssen in the

¹³⁸ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.116-117.

¹³⁹ Jiskoot-Pierson, "ALG. NED. VROUWENVER. 'ARBEID ADEL'T,'" p.264.

¹⁴⁰ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.25.

winter of 1877, aiming to present ‘the very first exhibition featuring only items made by women.’¹⁴¹ In contrast to Perk, Matthijssen sought a committee and informed a group of ‘ladies’ of her plans. The catalog mentions that during the initial meeting, it was disclosed that a former Minister of War donated a riding hall at Arendstuin for the exhibition of three thousand items. The Leeuwarden City Council granted permission for the exhibition and provided a meeting room in the town hall for the committee’s meetings. The committee raised seven thousand guilders for the furnishings of the building with a security fund. Advertisements, this time through women’s movement magazines like *Ons Streven*, were employed to ensure submissions.¹⁴² Klarenbeek mentions that Matthijssen involved Tesselschade in the organization through such advertisements.¹⁴³ The introduction highlights that Matthijssen deferred her appointment and invited Baroness Welderen Rengers-Looxma to preside over the committee.¹⁴⁴ She is acknowledged in the catalog for her cooperation, as ‘undoubtedly her influence greatly ensured the success of the project.’¹⁴⁵ It is noteworthy that Van Welderen Rengers-Looxma’s husband was the head of the Leeuwarden municipality, which probably promoted good cooperation with the municipality. Karstkarel mentions another male figure involved in this ‘entirely women-managed exhibition.’ He explains that Willem Molkenboer, father of Theo Molkenboer, who later designed the poster for the VvVK, oversaw the arrangement of the mange, including an unknown bust of Queen Sophie (1816-1877).¹⁴⁶

Following the two industry-focused two art exhibitions ensued. The subsequent one, the *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd*, took place in the art hall of the Panorama building in Amsterdam in 1882, featuring the works of seventy women artists.¹⁴⁷ Unlike its predecessors, this exhibition was overseen by men, namely Gerardus Frederik Westerman (1807-1890), director of Artis and co-founder of *Arti et Amicitiae*, August Allebé (1838-1927), and Barend Wijnveld (1820-1902), directors and professors at the *Rijksacademie*. Additionally, several women from Amsterdam’s elite were part of the committee. Remarkably, women artists were not represented on the committee, but male artists such as Christiaan Lodewijk van Kesteren (1832-

¹⁴¹ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878* (Leeuwarden: J.R. Miedema, 1878).

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.117-118.

¹⁴⁴ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878*.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ Karstkarel, “Gerharda Henriëtte Matthijssen En de Eerste Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen,” p.89.

¹⁴⁷ “In de Kunstzaal van Het Panorama, Plantage Tegenover Artis: Tentoonstelling van Kunstwerken, Uitsluitend Door Vrouwen Vervaardigd,” *Het Nieuws van Den Dag: Kleine Courant*, April 17, 1882, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010064071:mpeg21:a0189>.

1897) were.¹⁴⁸ Nearly a decade later, in 1891, an exhibition with the same title followed, organized jointly by feminists and women artists. Klarenbeek mentions that the women's art association of Amsterdam asked artists Margot Knipscheer (1865-1951), Mina van der Pek (1867-1926), and Charlotte Bouten to curate the exhibition, showcasing approximately a hundred works in the building of the *Maatschappij ter Bevordering der Bouwkunst* in the Marnixstraat 402 in Amsterdam. Like the 1871 bazaar, this exhibition did not have a catalog.¹⁴⁹

The final two women's exhibitions during the first feminist wave were large-scale in organization, involving multiple sub-committees and publications to support the exhibitions. In 1898, the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* took place in The Hague, organized by the *Vereeniging Nationale Tentoonstelling Vrouwenarbeid* (1896), and held in a specially constructed building on Scheveningseweg to celebrate in the inauguration of Queen Wilhelmina. This venue was provided by Adriaan Goedkoop, notably the husband of the committee's chairwoman, Cécile Goedkoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk.¹⁵⁰ Grever and Waaldijk explain that feminist writer Marie Jungius (1864-1908) divided the organization into 'Regulation,' 'Financial,' and 'General' Congress Committees,' with the organization comprising over five hundred staff members.¹⁵¹ Goedkoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk enlisted women artists Marie Bilders-van Bosse, Sientje Mesdag-van Houten, and Barbara van Houten to establish the fine arts department. There were thirty departments in total, including 'fine arts,' 'photography,' 'textile art,' and 'decorative art.' Photographer Charlotte Polkijn solely chaired the photography committee, while Elisabeth Reekers-Barge presided over textile art, with Johanna Naber serving as secretary, also presiding over the decorative arts department.¹⁵²

On the initiative of feminists Rosa Manus and Mia Boissevain (1878-1959), the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913* was organized in 1913 at Meerhuizen estate on the Amsteldijk, along with its expanded pavilion. Despite the exhibition having twenty-four subcommittees, only a separate catalog was produced for the fine arts section to stimulate art sales, even though the contribution of artists was notable in every department. Nelly Bodenheim's (1874-1951) design won the competition for the title page (fig.2).¹⁵³ The committee was chaired by Thérèse Schwartz, with sculptor Johanna Adriana IJzerman (1867-1933) serving as vice president, Agnieta Gijswijt (1873-1962) as treasurer, and members including Hendrika Wilhelmina Jacoba Schaap van der Pek (1867-

¹⁴⁸ *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd in de kunstzaal van het Panorama-gebouw, Plantage tegenover Artis* (Amsterdam: Roeloffzen & Hübner, 1882).

¹⁴⁹ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.120.

¹⁵⁰ Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.90.

¹⁵¹ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.61.

¹⁵² *Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (The Hague: Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid, 1898).

¹⁵³ Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913"*.

1926), Geesje Mesdag- van Calcar (1850-1936), Georgine Schwartz (1854-1935), Marie Wandscheer (1856-1936), Lizzy Ansingh, Suze Robertson, Nelly Bodenheim, and Jacoba van Heemskerck. The jury for the other artistic competition, the lithography competition, won by Wilhelmina Drupsteen, included not only Schwartz and Bodenheim but also Margaretha Verwey (1867-1947), Françoise Baanders-Fockema (1879-1950), Mia Boissevain, and director of the *Quellinusschool* Christiaan Wilhelm Nijhoff (1861-1916), and artist Rik Roland Holst (1868-1938).¹⁵⁴ Naber concludes that by around 1913, the collaboration between men and women was realized, with a man on every departmental committee.¹⁵⁵



Figure 2. Nelly Bodenheim, *Annoncekaart van de tentoonstelling "De Vrouw, 1813-1913"*, in or before 1913, paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

Professionals or dilettantes?

When examining the organizers of the exhibitions, it becomes apparent that they all hail from affluent backgrounds. Despite the exhibitions of 1871, 1878, and 1898 focusing on labor, none of the committees included any workers.¹⁵⁶ A similar observation can be made when comparing the participating artists. However, distinctions arise between the exhibition in terms of dilettantes and professionals. As discussed in the previous chapter, women did not have access to all academies during the 1871 exhibition. The exhibition occurred at the beginning of the feminist movement and the professionalization of women's artistry. Yet, in a retrospective exhibition of Schwartz in

¹⁵⁴ Marjan Groot, *Vrouwen in de vormgeving in Nederland*, p.120.

¹⁵⁵ Naber, *Na XXV Jaren, 1898-1923: het feminisme in zijnen bloei en in zijne voleinding*, p.112.

¹⁵⁶ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878; Catalogus van de tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd in de kunstzaal van het Panorama-gebouw, Plantage tegenover Artis; Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid; Boissevain, Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913", "Meerbuizen"-Amstedijk.*

2021 in Delft, it was noted that she made her exhibition debut at the age of twenty at the *Tentoonstellings-bazar van Vrouwelijke Nijverheid en Kunst*.¹⁵⁷ The Rijksmuseum Amsterdam notes that Schwartzze, through her ‘artistic talent coupled with her astute business acumen,’ became the most successful Dutch woman artist of the nineteenth century.¹⁵⁸ Perk accepted Schwartzze’s work, even though she was not admitted to the *Rijksacademie* until two years later. Similarly, the *Tentoonstelling van Voorwerpen van Nijverheid en Kunst uitsluitend door Vrouwen vervaardigd* (1878), accepted work from young women artists alongside industrial objects, such as clothing, braiding, and lacework, from women associated with organizations like Tesselschade, Arbeid Adelt, and the *Industrieschool voor Vrouwelijke Jeugd* in Amsterdam. Not only Schwartzze submitted works for this, but also her younger sister Georgine and artists like Marie van Ravenswaaij (1860-1930), Charlotte van der Kellen (1857-1942), Jacoba Antonia de Graaff (1857-1940), and Ida van Lokhorst (1854-1881). Men also submitted works depicting historical women, including collector Assuerus Quaestius, who submitted a bust and drawing of Anna Maria van Schurman.¹⁵⁹ According to Karstkarel, Van Schurman’s work garnered much attention.¹⁶⁰

The *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd* in 1882 showcased a similar inclusive approach by exhibiting artworks from established professional artists such as Schwartzze, Henriëtte Ronner-Knip (1821-1909), and Mesdag-van Houten, as well as pieces from dilettantes, students of the *Rijksacademie* and The Hague Academy, and four students from the *Industrieschool voor Meisjes* in Amsterdam.¹⁶¹ In contrast, the 1891 exhibition was exclusively reserved for women artists who had not previously been featured in public exhibitions and were either former or current students at academies in the Netherlands.¹⁶² Conversely, the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (1898) adopted a more restrictive stance towards dilettantes, despite Grever and Waaldijk’s assertion that its initial goal was to represent solely middle-class women.¹⁶³ Klarenbeek notes an advertisement by Bilders-van Bosse, Mesdag-van Houten, and Van-Houten, expressing their intent to select only the finest works from renowned artists, inevitably disappointing aspiring

¹⁵⁷ Frans Rijnsouw, van, “Na 150 jaar Thérèse Schwartzze terug in Delft,” November 7, 2021, <https://www.omroepdelft.nl/omroepdelft/nieuws/na-150-jaar-therese-schwartzze-terug-in-delft>.

¹⁵⁸ “Thérèse Schwartzze,” Rijksmuseum, accessed May 8, 2024, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/stories/dutch-masters/story/therese-schwartzze-10>.

¹⁵⁹ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878*.

¹⁶⁰ Karstkarel, “Gerharda Henriëtte Matthijssen En de Eerste Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen,” p.89.

¹⁶¹ *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd in de kunstzaal van het Panorama-gebouw, Plantage tegenover Artis*.

¹⁶² Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.120.

¹⁶³ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.35.

young artists.¹⁶⁴ However, the photography department maintained a more inclusive approach, displaying works by women amateurs.¹⁶⁵

At the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913* (1913), all women could submit their work for consideration in the photography and applied arts sections. In the fine arts section, women could submit up to four works, which had to be shipped and framed free of charge, with the return costs borne by the artists themselves, in the amount of three guilders if selected, and they had to cede 15 percent of the selling price. Klarenbeek remarks that sculptor Jo Scheve-IJzerman (1867-1933) found the jury lenient, resulting in the acceptance of 667 submissions.¹⁶⁶ The applied arts department encompassed categories such as needlework, lacework, batikwork, weaving, braiding, binding, and lithography.¹⁶⁷ A new element of this exhibition was the inclusion of women from previous centuries to illustrate the history and significance of working women. The Rijksmuseum's Print Room contributed numerous works for this purpose, including this print showing the history of working women (fig.3). In ten of the sixteen representations, women's labors are highlighted. Additionally, portraits of significant historical women, such as writer Anna Barbara van Meerten-Schilperoort (1778-1853), and actress Anna Maria Snoek (1779-1849), were featured to underscore women's diverse societal roles. Objects referring to important women from history were displayed in the 'Historical Department,' with members Naber and Drucker. In a somewhat candid tone, the department acknowledged in the catalog that amateurism had resulted in mediocre work in the fine arts.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.123-124.

¹⁶⁵ *Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (Den Haag, 1898), p.406. Including photographs by Mrs. D.W.D. André, E.H. Garms, L.W. van Rossum, en Van Andringa de Kempnaer.

¹⁶⁶ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.127.

¹⁶⁷ Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913"*, "Meerhuizen"-Amsteldijk, 381-88.

¹⁶⁸ J. C. Overvoorde-Gordon, *De Historische Commissie van de Tentoonstelling De Vrouw 1813-1913 [...]* (Historische Commissie van de Tentoonstelling De Vrouw 1813-1913, 1913), <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMA:TR03:028255000:00001>.



Figure 3. Hendrik or Hermanus Numan, *Zo mans- als vrouwen-werk, van kunstenaars, ambachtsliën, / En winkeliers, kunt gy, ó kinderen! hier zien*, 1794, etching on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum Amsterdam).

2.2. Changing feminist approach

Entanglement with women's associations

The relationship between the emergence of women's exhibitions and women's associations is not straightforward. While the arts and crafts exhibitions of 1871 and 1878 were co-organized by the earliest associations *Arbeid Adelt* and *Tesselschade*, the art exhibitions of 1882 and 1891 were organized without direct involvement from women's associations.¹⁶⁹ In contrast, the latter two exhibitions were organized with extensive participation from women's associations. Naber mentions in her retrospective of the 1898 exhibition that the National Women's Council was involved in the organization. Additionally, she explains that lesser-known women's associations were also involved in the exhibitions, not affiliated with the National Women's Council, including *Vereeniging Thutgar*, which led the 'Education Department,' along with the *Vereeniging van Onderwijzeressen* (the Association of Female Teachers) and the *Vereeniging tot Verbetering van Vrouwenkleding* (the Association for the Improvement of Women's Clothing). She adds that the *Vereeniging ter Behartiging der Belangen van Jonge Meisjes* (the Association for the Promotion of the Interests of Young Girls) submitted works in collaboration with the *Roomsch-Katholieke Vereeniging ter Bescherming van Jonge Meisjes* (the Roman Catholic Association for the Protection of Young Girls).

170

Naber concludes that the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* served as a catalyst for the gatherings of associations into the VvVK and the International Congress, as she believes there was little enthusiasm from the suffrage association before the exhibition.¹⁷¹ During the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913* (1913), this association was considered the most significant, with the organizers Manus and Boissevain founding the Propaganda Committee of the VvVK.¹⁷² However, the lack of involvement from women's associations does not imply the absence of emancipatory messages within all six women's exhibitions.

¹⁶⁹ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878*; *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd in de kunstzaal van het Panorama-gebouw, Plantage tegenover Artis*; *Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid*; Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913", "Meerhuizen"-Amstedijk*.

¹⁷⁰ Naber, *Na tien jaren, 1898-1908*, p.101-104.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijster, 1894-1919," p.59-60.

Women's labor

None of the six inaugural women's exhibitions featured a specific section dedicated to the feminist movement. However, the goals of the movement are reflected in the exhibitions. The movement's earliest goal was women's labor, embodied in 'Labor Adorns.' Perk, the initiator of *Arbeid Adelt*, not only adopted the idea of selling handicrafts and applied arts to provide women with independent income from Storm-Van der Chijs but also drew from her experience of observing sales exhibitions in Chicago in the 1860s, incorporating it into *Arbeid Adelt* a decade later.¹⁷³ This is evident in Perk's *Tentoonstellings-bazaar van Vrouwelijke Nijverheid en Kunst* (1871). According to Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof, the bazaar was innovative because objects were not anonymously displayed, aiming to break anonymity for professionalism and income, which was unusual at the time.¹⁷⁴ Klarenbeek elaborates that women artists who exhibited at art exhibitions such as *Levende Meesters* were accustomed to this, unlike women from affluent backgrounds in need who made handicrafts for sale purposes and exhibited anonymously due to fear of negative reactions.¹⁷⁵ Geerts highlights that the primary goal of the arts and crafts exhibitions of 1871 and 1878 was to sell work to encourage women to provide for their income, suggesting that criticism of the anonymity of the participants stemmed from the stigma that women working would be humiliating in the nineteenth century.¹⁷⁶ Similarly Matthijssen mentions facing criticism during the organization of the 1878 exhibition.¹⁷⁷ Geerts argues that Matthijssen's exhibition explicitly aimed to counter this, including the display of Jacobs' medical diploma surrounded by handicrafts, jewelry, carpets, and paintings by, among others, Bilders-van Bosse and Van Houten.¹⁷⁸ (fig.4). In contrast, Meijers suggests that the 1871 bazaar mainly featured objects deemed suitable for women of affluent backgrounds, such as needlework, sculpting, and painting. She argues that even in the 1878 exhibition, the organizers hesitated to use the term 'women labor' and barely represented factory work and home industry.¹⁷⁹ Contrarily, Klarenbeek argues that these two exhibitions demonstrated that every woman, including affluent women in financially unfavorable positions, could provide for their families through respectable labor, including arts and crafts and other art forms.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷³ Geerts, "Even liefelijke als doeltreffende propaganda," p.12.

¹⁷⁴ Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan*, p.11.

¹⁷⁵ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.117.

¹⁷⁶ Geerts, "Even liefelijke als doeltreffende propaganda," p.12.

¹⁷⁷ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878*.

¹⁷⁸ Geerts, "Even liefelijke als doeltreffende propaganda," p.12.

¹⁷⁹ Clara M. Meijers, "Deel II. Intree in de Maatschappij," in *Van Moeder op Dochter: De maatschappelijke positie van de vrouw in Nederland vanaf de franse tijd*, ed. Willemijn Hendrika Posthumus van der Groot and Anna Waal, de, Volume 25 van SUN reprint (SUN, 1977), p.109, <https://collectie.atria.nl/bibliotheek/item/135952-van-moeder-op-dochter?offset=9>.

¹⁸⁰ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.117-119.



Figure 4. Gerarda Matthijssen, *Interior of the Manege in Leeuwarden 1878 during the Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen*, 1878, photograph. Collection of Gemeentearchief Leeuwarden. (Photo: Gemeentearchief Leeuwarden).

Despite the primary focus on art, the exhibitions of 1882 and 1891 still align with the feminist goal of promoting labor for women. In the *Algemeen Dagblad*, J.G. asserts regarding the 1882 exhibition, ‘the descendants of Rachel Ruysch cannot emancipate themselves better.’ However, J.G. does not hope for exhibitions solely for men consequently but sees the women’s exhibitions as the beginning of more mixed exhibitions because they ‘teach appreciation for emancipation in the right direction.’¹⁸¹ In contrast, Vermeulen and Pelkmans mention that the chairperson of the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (1898), Goekoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk, argued that there was no women’s issue at the artistic level.¹⁸² Lakmaker explains that all forms of labor were exhibited, including art, to expand and promote women’s work spheres.¹⁸³ Grever and Waaldijk similarly explain that art was added to the exhibition with the motive that women artists adhere to the principles of humanity and justice, as they work in the service of beauty and the board wanted to make the lives of other women more beautiful.¹⁸⁴ Gerritsen-Kloppenburger, Coppes, and Oosterhof argue that a revolutionary element was present at this exhibition, where, for the first time, an overview of women’s labor to advocate for improvements and criticize class

¹⁸¹ J.G., “Tentoonstelling van Kunstwerken Door Vrouwen Vervaardigd in de Kunstzaal van Het Panorama-Gebouw.,” *Algemeen Handelsblad*, April 21, 1882, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010141693:mpeg21:a0004>.

¹⁸² Vermeulen and Pelkmans, *Marie Bilders-van Bosse 1837-1900. Een leven voor kunst en vriendschap*, p.25.

¹⁸³ Lakmaker, “1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919,” p.45.38.

¹⁸⁴ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.220.

distinctions.¹⁸⁵ However, Lakmaker notes that only affluent young women seized the opportunity to work at this exhibition. She adds that after criticism from socialists, including Henriëtte Roland Holst, the organizers decided to draw attention to abuses in factories, thus the situation of women working out of necessity and not for self-improvement. According to Lakmaker, a second objective was added to this criticism: promoting contact between various women's organizations. She explains that various forms of labor were exhibited, discussed, and practiced at the exhibition, congresses, lectures, including, and singing, dancing, and theatrical performances. The lectures ranged from dentistry and photography to horticulture.¹⁸⁶ Lakmaker and Grever both conclude that Goedkoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk listened to Holst, with the centerpiece of the exhibition being the 'Industry Hall,' filled with machines, noise, and sixty workers to demonstrate the area in which 20 percent of working women were employed. Central to this was Minca Bosch Reitz's sculpture of a woman behind a wheelbarrow.¹⁸⁷ (fig.5,6). The departments such as 'Industry,' 'Trade,' 'Book Trade Exhibition,' 'Dairy Processing,' 'Agriculture and Livestock Farming,' 'Pharmacy,' 'Hospital and District Nursing,' 'Literature and Science,' 'Social Work,' 'Fine Arts,' 'Floristry,' 'Confection,' 'Home Labor,' 'Textile Art,' 'Decorative Art,' 'Gymnastics and Sport,' and 'Photography, highlighted the diversity of women's labor.¹⁸⁸



Figure 5. Minca Bosch Reitz, *Stenenkruierende vrouw*, 1898, photograph. Collection of Atria. Whereabouts unknown. (Photo: Atria).

¹⁸⁵ Gerritsen-Kloppenborg, Coppes, and Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan*, p.11-12.

¹⁸⁶ Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.25, 38-40.

¹⁸⁷ Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.40; Grever, "Vorstin Voor Heel Het Vaderland?," p.85. The publications wrongly attribute it to Georgine Schwartz.

¹⁸⁸ *Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid*.



Figure 6. Unknown photographer, *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid*, 1898, sepia photograph. Collection of Atria. (Photo: Atria).

Manus mentions that in the final exhibition of 1913, women's labor was utilized for a different purpose: to provide an overview 'of the development and progress of women's position in this period, by presenting the results of women's work in various fields.' According to her, the 'Historical Department' emphasized the gains made. She concludes that the 1913 exhibition provided a historical overview for a political aim, namely suffrage.¹⁸⁹ Naber adds that unlike the 1898 exhibition, in 1913, women no longer had to fight for their place in education and employment.¹⁹⁰ Interestingly, industry was not a separate department at the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913*. Among the twenty-four departments were 'Social Work,' 'Cooperative Kitchen,' 'Home Industry,' 'Banking and Office Work,' 'Women in the Laboratory,' 'Theater and Literature,' 'Photography,' 'Horticulture,' 'Fine Arts,' 'Applied Arts,' 'Nursing,' 'Music,' and 'Gymnastics.' The 'Cinema' department featured images of working women for illustration, and the 'Historical Department' included reflections on the progress of working women between 1813 and 1913.¹⁹¹ The catalog explains that the definitions of home industry vary, but it mainly refers to individuals working outside factories and workshops. This includes workers operating their own business or a business within their home, workshop workers working at their own risk by selling products to traders, and family members assisting in labor. Additionally, the catalog highlights that the 'Clothing' chose not to represent stores as a kind of showcase but focused on what was missing for women in clothing and 'the sad truth that many women would rather suffer and endure than

¹⁸⁹ Manus, "De Vrouwenbeweging 1908-1918," in *Huldeblijk aan H. M. de Koningin van de Amsterdamsche Vrouwen: 6 September 1898-1938*, ed. Huldigungs Comité van Amsterdamsche Vrouwen (Amsterdam: Het Comité, 1938), p.344.

¹⁹⁰ Naber, *Na XXV Jaren, 1898-1923: het feminisme in zijnen bloei en in zijne voleinding*, p.111.

¹⁹¹ Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913"*, "Meerhuizen"-Amstedijk, 430-31, 23-124.

revolt against accepted customs and habits,' referring to the uncomfortable clothing regulations for women that hinder their ability to walk and sit.¹⁹²

Education equality

The second part of the feminist motto 'Labor, labor education, education for women,' as mentioned by Werker-Beaujon in the encyclopedia, is education.¹⁹³ In the art exhibitions of 1882 and 1891, there were no education departments. Although the first two women's exhibitions focused on industry and selling objects, Klarenbeek suggests, after analyzing reviews, that the exhibitions of 1871 and 1878 paved the way for more professional opportunities.¹⁹⁴ In contrast, the exhibitions of 1898 and 1913 had separate education departments. Meijers notes that the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (1898) held congresses between July and September, where various topics seen in the departments were discussed. The first congress focused on vocational training for women (July 11-14), and the sixth congress was the 'Education Congress' (August 10-13), of which the admission fee was between 2 and 2,50 guilders. Meijers adds that the four-day education congress discussed the poor condition of nursery schools and advocated for compulsory education, which was achieved two years after the exhibition. Additionally, she explains that the 'Education Congress' advocated for co-education because girls were still not admitted to many vocational schools, and female teachers were only allowed to teach in lower classes.¹⁹⁵ As previously mentioned, Lakmaker remarks that initially, only affluent young women seized the opportunity to work at the exhibition. She explains that after criticism from Holst, the organizers decided to draw attention to abuses in factories, vocational training, poor relief, and the servant problem.¹⁹⁶ Goekoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk argues that 'teaching through observation' was the first goal of the exhibition and the second goal was 'to stimulate interest.' She elaborates that the working woman was lonely with the new ideology and was limited by prejudice. The prejudices were that a working woman would be a competitor for the hardworking man, it goes against religion, and that a financially independent woman would be a 'nuisance.' Goekoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk

¹⁹² Ibid, 244-247, 389-391.

¹⁹³ Werker-Beaujon, "Hoofdstuk II. Het Hedendaagsche Vrouwenvraagstuk," p.42-53; Werker-Beaujon, "Hoofdstuk I. Vrouwenbeweging en Maatschappij," p.132.

¹⁹⁴ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.119.

¹⁹⁵ Meijers, "Deel II. Intree in de Maatschappij," p.117-119.

¹⁹⁶ Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.25, 38-39.

concludes that the exhibition of 1898 educated the public that women ‘need housing, food, and clothing just as much as men to live.’¹⁹⁷

Naber confirms that the ‘Congress Hall’ served as the centerpiece of the 1898 exhibition. She argues that the focal point of the 1913 exhibition was the ‘Education Department,’ located in the dome hall.¹⁹⁸ The department was divided into nine sections: preparatory education, primary education, secondary education, higher education per faculty, household education, industrial education, arts and crafts education, and special education. Each section had its subcommittee and displayed statistics, such as the number of female teachers per type of education, female students, and female candidates for examinations.¹⁹⁹ Naber concludes that between 1898 and 1913, vocational education for girls had expanded and the subsidy for domestic and industrial schools had increased eightfold. However, according to her, an education hall was still necessary because outdated views persisted in society, and primary and secondary education for women was superficial, focusing on cooking, household management, needlework, nutrition, and health, advocating for co-education and mixed vocational training.²⁰⁰

Women’s suffrage

As discussed in the preceding chapter, women’s suffrage was the primary goal of the women’s movement between 1894 and 1919. Therefore, the first four women’s exhibitions lacked a department or lecture dedicated to the suffrage issue. Remarkably, this was also the case for the 1898 exhibition. Geerts highlights that the idea of women’s suffrage only received marginal attention. She mentions that a plaque and painting from the VvVK were displayed but concludes that these did not effectively convey a clear propaganda message for women’s suffrage to the public.²⁰¹ Meijers argues that the 1898 exhibition marked the conclusion of the first period of the feminist movement. She adds that *De Vrouw 1813-1913*, organized out of the interest of feminists during this second period, focused on the struggle for women’s suffrage.²⁰² One of the organizers, Manus, emphasizes the significant impact of the exhibition, arguing that it ‘exerted great propagandistic power for the political aspirations of women,’ despite being just one of the twenty-

¹⁹⁷ Cécile Goedkoop-De Jong van Beek en Donk, “Hoofdstuk VI. Vrouwenwerk in Beeld: De Tentoonstelling van Vrouwen-Arbeid 1898,” in *De vrouw, de vrouwenbeweging en het vrouwenvraagstuk: encyclopedisch handboek*, ed. C.M. (Cornelia Mathilde). Werker-Beaujon, Clara (Clara Gertrud). Meijer-Wichmann, and W.H.M. (Willem Hendrik Martinus). Werker (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1914), p.310-313.

¹⁹⁸ Naber, *Na XXV Jaren, 1898-1923: het feminisme in zijnen bloei en in zijne voleinding*, p.114-119.

¹⁹⁹ Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling “De vrouw 1813-1913”, “Meerhuizen”-Amstedijk*, p.306-313.

²⁰⁰ Naber, *Na XXV Jaren, 1898-1923: het feminisme in zijnen bloei en in zijne voleinding*, p.114-119.

²⁰¹ Geerts, “Even liefelijke als doeltreffende propaganda,” p.14.

²⁰² Meijers, “Deel II. Intree in de Maatschappij,” p.146-147.

four committees. She explains that by showcasing all women's achievements over the past hundred years within other departments, opponents of women's suffrage were refuted. Manus further suggests that thanks to the exhibition, the People's Petition for the introduction of constitutional equality between men and women, initiated by the VvVK in early 1914, received support from all sides.²⁰³

Lakmaker explains that the VvVK, in collaboration with the *Bond voor Vrouwenkiesrecht* (League for Women's Suffrage) and the *Mannenbond voor Vrouwenkiesrecht* (Men's League for Women's Suffrage) not only curated the 'Suffrage Room' but also established a Suffrage Committee to organize the space (fig.7). She adds that the room included, among other exhibits, a world map indicating countries where women's suffrage was ensured.²⁰⁴ The exhibition's catalog provides a



Figure 7. Unknown photographer, *Hall of Women's Suffrage*, 1913, photograph. Collection of Atria. (Photo: Atria).

comprehensive overview in its four hundred pages. In the preface, Boissevain recounts the exhibition's origin, stemming from a meeting of sixty women at the American Hotel in Amsterdam on May 12, 1912, where the desire for an exhibition was expressed. The floor plan reveals that the exhibition commenced with the 'Pavilion of Statistics,' part of the 'Historical Section,' showcasing graphical representations of women's status, followed by the sections 'Social Work' and 'Suffrage' (fig.8).²⁰⁵ Thus, statistical data served as an introduction to the suffrage propaganda section. Remarkably, only artists were involved in this sub-department. The commemorative book of the exhibition features this photograph of the women responsible for compiling the statistics: textile artist Dina Del Court, illustrator Willemina Polenaar, sculptor Annie Tollenaar, and graphic designers Wilhelmina Drupsteen, Tine Baanders, and Cato Berlage.²⁰⁶ Drupsteen, as a committee member, designed visualizations, including depicting the wage gap between men and women (fig.9).

²⁰³ Manus, "De Vrouwenbeweging 1908-1918," p.344.

²⁰⁴ Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.58-60.

²⁰⁵ Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913"*, "Meerhuizen"-Amsteldijk.

²⁰⁶ J. Overvoorde-Gordon, *Gedenkeboek van de tentoonstelling De Vrouw, 1813-1913, Meerhuizen, Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Vereeniging tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913," 1913), p.24., <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB24:079380000:00001>.

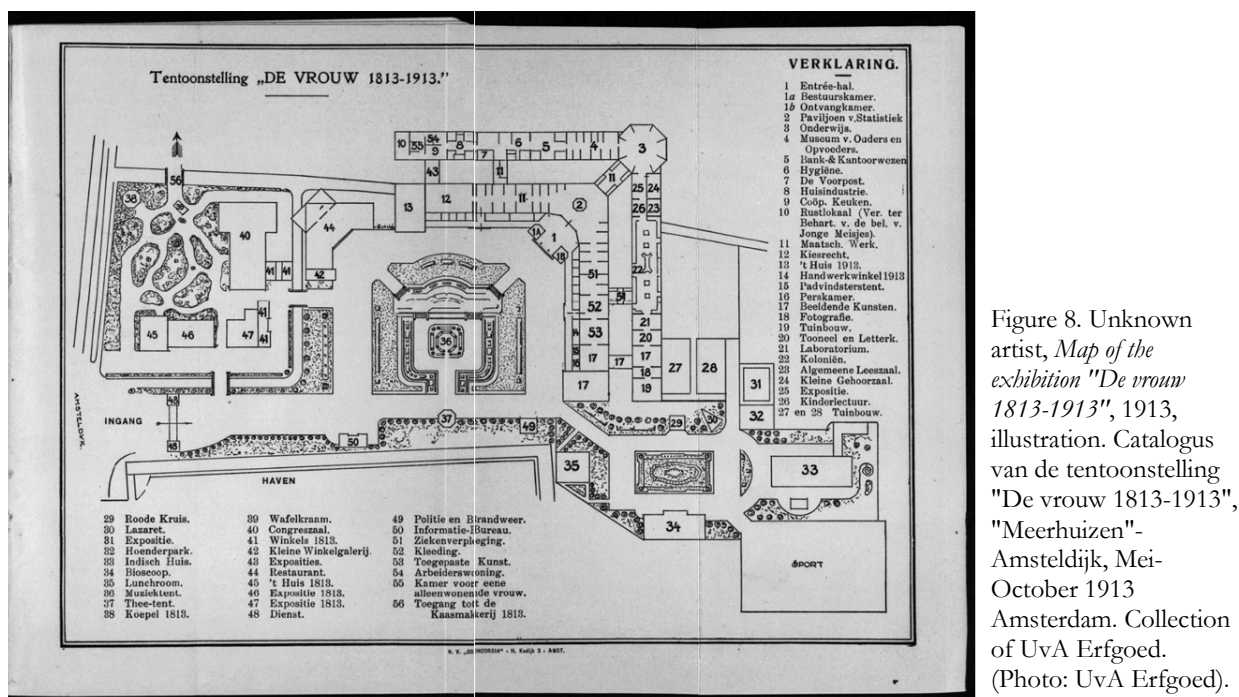


Figure 8. Unknown artist, *Map of the exhibition "De vrouw 1813-1913"*, 1913, illustration. Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913", "Meerhuizen"-Amstedijk, Mei-October 1913 Amsterdam. Collection of UvA Erfgoed. (Photo: UvA Erfgoed).

The committee members also compiled all statistics in the book *Algemeene statistiek van de vrouw in Nederland*. The book confirms the previously mentioned surplus of women and the increasing number of unmarried women. In the entrance hall, the occupational statistics of women between eighteen and sixty-five years old were displayed. Most women worked in agriculture. As of January 1st, 1900, 17 percent of all employed women between eighteen and sixty-five worked in agriculture. The clothing industry ranked second, with 13 percent of all employed women between eighteen and sixty-five working in this sector. A total of 341,615 women were employed. Other statistics included 9.8 percent working in trade, 2.3 percent in education, and 3.2 percent in arts and crafts, to name a few figures.²⁰⁷ Van Boissevain reflects in the encyclopedia on the statistics section, recounting a visitor's question about what they prove. She explains that by gathering knowledge about women's situation, women could better shape their own conditions.²⁰⁸



Figure 9. Unknown photographer, *The Ladies from left to right, D. Del Court, W. Polenaar, W. C. Drupsteen, A. Tollenaar, T. Baanders, C. Berlage, who performed the statistics, 1913*, photograph. Gedenkboek van de tentoonstelling De Vrouw, 1813-1913, Meerhuizen, Amsterdam, p.24. (Photo: Delpher).

²⁰⁷ Dina Del Court et al., *Algemeene statistiek van de vrouw in Nederland* (Zaltbommel: H.J. van de Garde & Co., 1913), <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB31:033373000:00005>.

²⁰⁸ Mia Boissevain, "Hoofdstuk V. De Tentoonstelling 'De Vrouw 1813-1913,'" in *De vrouw, de vrouwenbeweging en het vrouwenvraagstuk: encyclopedisch handboek*, ed. C.M. (Cornelia Mathilde). Werker-Beaujon, Clara (Clara Gertrud). Meijer-Wichmann, and W.H.M. (Willem Hendrik Martinus). Werker (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1914), p.326.

2.3. Intersectional or international approaches: Diversity and global perspectives

Royal cooperation

Grever argues that nineteenth-century feminists sought historical foundations for national changes to improve the situation of women. This is also evident when analyzing the exhibitions. Grever explains that early feminists viewed Queen Sophie, the wife of King Willem III (1817-1890), as an ally. She adds that Perk succeeded in interesting her in the 1871 exhibition and in becoming the patroness of *Arbeid Adelt* until she died in 1877. She sees her life-size bust at the 1878 exhibition as evidence of the relationship between the women's movement and the Queen. According to her, the situation changed after King Willem III's death in 1890 with the involvement of other political groups and criticism of female succession to the throne. Perk responded by proposing the establishment of a *Paleis of Wereldmuseum voor van Vrouwelijke Kunst en Kunstnijverheid* (Palace of World Museum for Female Arts and Crafts) as a national gift for Queen Wilhelmina's accession to the throne.²⁰⁹ This, according to Waaldijk, led to the decision to dedicate the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (1898) to Queen Wilhelmina, despite the reluctance of Queen Regent Emma (1858-1934), the second wife of King Willem III, who declined to become the patroness.²¹⁰ Grever finds Emma's stance understandable from the perspective of impartiality.²¹¹ Waaldijk clarifies that the organizers did not overly adore the royal family, and the board adopted a neutral stance toward the monarchy as much as possible. The royal family sent their chamberlain to the opening in June and unexpectedly visited the exhibition in August, according to Waaldijk, after the Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar, Carl Alexander, had visited the exhibition. She not only considers the visit coincidental but also notes that Versluys-Poelman of the VvVK gave her lecture on women's suffrage on that same day, which was announced beforehand in the program book. Waaldijk concludes that Emma dared to be associated with women's suffrage.²¹² This was not the case for the older Queen Wilhelmina, who visited the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913* under Manus' guidance. Meijers explains that the Queen had to be carefully maneuvered around the suffrage hall as women's suffrage was deemed unconstitutional and had to remain out of her sight.²¹³

²⁰⁹ Grever, "Vorstin Voor Heel Het Vaderland?," p.76-80.

²¹⁰ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.154.

²¹¹ Grever, "Vorstin Voor Heel Het Vaderland?," p.76-80.

²¹² Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.153-156.

²¹³ Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.60-61.

Composition of audiences and exhibiting artists

The VvVK primarily targeted visitors outside the royal family. Lakmaker mentions that in its monthly magazine, the VvVK asked its readers to visit the 1898 exhibitions to understand the meaning of solidarity and to show unity. She argues that with ninety thousand visitors, the exhibition was a success.²¹⁴ Visitor numbers for the first three exhibitions are unfortunately not known. Klarenbeek mentions that the art exhibition of 1891 was not intended for the public but could be visited by invitation, with the idea that it served as a lesson for young artists.²¹⁵ Lakmaker elaborates that the 1913 exhibition attracted three hundred thousand visitors and attributes this number to the simultaneous parliamentary elections, which sparked more political interest, including in women's suffrage.²¹⁶ Meijers elaborates that this specific aspect of the exhibition also attracted international visitors. She mentions that for the American Carry Chapman Catt, a champion of women's suffrage, the 'Suffrage Hall' was temporarily relocated to the 'Congress Hall' to accommodate more people. According to her, Austrian activist Bertha von Suttner, the first woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 1905, also visited the exhibition. Additionally, the five-year meeting of the International Council of Women held in The Hague that year attracted international visitors to the exhibition. Meijers elaborates that the exhibition was visited by over two hundred delegates from almost thirty countries, led by President Lady Aberdeen, the Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temari.²¹⁷

The participants in the 1891 art exhibition were also international. The catalog of the art exhibition mentions six international artists, including the English Alma Tadema-Epps and Ellen Hill, the Brussels-based Alice and Emma Ronner, daughters of Henriette Ronner-Knip, and the Germans Anna Peters and Bertha Froriep.²¹⁸ In the catalog of the 1878 exhibition, there are no objects produced outside the Netherlands.²¹⁹ The same applies to the art objects exhibited at the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (1898) and *De Vrouw 1813-1913*. In the departments of fine arts, photography, textile art, and decorative arts, there were no objects exhibited that were made outside the Netherlands by non-Dutch artists.²²⁰ One might conclude that the initiative to organize the first industrial exhibitions to promote women's independent income and the national

²¹⁴ Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.40.

²¹⁵ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.120.

²¹⁶ Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.61.

²¹⁷ Meijers, "Deel II. Intree in de Maatschappij," p.151-152.

²¹⁸ *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd in de kunstzaal van het Panorama-gebouw, Plantage tegenover Artis*.

²¹⁹ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878*.

²²⁰ *Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid*; Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913", "Meerhuizen"-Amstedijk*.

character of the later exhibitions precluded the presentation of objects or stories from outside the Netherlands. However, this was not the case.

Colonial perspectives

As the coronation of Queen Wilhelmina served as the occasion for the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* in The Hague in 1898, artists wrote about the Queen's visit. One of the exhibited artists, Cornelia van der Hart, who created this emblem for the committee of the 'East Indies' department, shared with artist Philip Zilcken her expectation that the Queen would be primarily interested in 'the artworks of our colonies' amidst 'a mixture of exhibitions and celebrations.'²²¹. Van der Hart was correct; Geert notes that the colonial section, mainly showcasing demonstrations of professions, attracted the most attention.²²² In the same vein, Grever and Waaldijk recount that male artists who visited the exhibition expressed their appreciation for this section in letters. They mention that Jan Toorop (1858-1928) and Isaac Israëls (1865-1934) were captivated by the Javanese wedding in the imitation *kampong* named 'Insulinde,' and Joseph Mendes da Costa (1863-1939)



Figure 10. Unknown photographer, *Nationale tentoonstelling van vrouwenarbeid, 'Insulinde'*, 1898, photograph. Collection of Atria. (Photo: Atria).

made studies of the approximately forty Javanese people who had to live in the 'Indonesian House' next to the exhibition grounds to dance, work, and make music during the exhibition (fig.10). Grever and Waaldijk conclude that the artworks created by these men after the exhibition are not significant visual remnants of the exhibition but do illustrate the colonial dimension of Dutch art. They describe the treatment of women in this section as 'fairground-like' and note the fascination of the visitors.²²³

Grever explains that the organizers, the 'cultured women,' saw themselves as moral guides in the Dutch colonial empire, forming an important exhibition theme.²²⁴

²²¹ Cornelia van der Hart, "Brief aan Philip Zilcken," 1897, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten>.

²²² Geerts, "Even liefelijke als doeltreffende propaganda," p.13.

²²³ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.223, 242, 171-181.

²²⁴ Grever, "Vorstin Voor Heel Het Vaderland?," p.83-84.

At the 1898 exhibition, the colonial section was divided into ‘West’ and ‘East Indies.’ The ‘West Indies’ section was further subdivided into the sub-sections ‘Suriname,’ ‘Curaçao,’ and ‘Leeward and Windward Islands,’ including Saba, Aruba, Bonaire, and Saint Martin. In the latter sections, a few items, mainly handicrafts, from the islands were displayed, with some items available for purchase. The same applied to the ‘Curaçao’ section, where besides handicrafts, biscuits, and pastries were available for tasting. Suriname had the largest sections, with seven specific themes within the section: ‘Domestic and Social Life,’ ‘Field Labor,’ ‘Trade and Industry,’ ‘Arts and Sciences,’ ‘Surinamese Food and Beverages,’ and ‘Educational Institutions.’ Most themes were illustrated through products, including coffee, medicines, tools, clothing, jewelry, spinning



Figure 11. Unknown photographer, *Nationale Tentoonstelling Vrouwenarbeid 1898*, 's Gravenhage. In the photo: Sassa, Mulatto woman, 1898, cyanotype. Collection of Atria. (Photo: Atria).

machines, miniatures, dolls, and crafts, as well as photographs. Sassa, a Mulatto woman was also present at the exhibition (fig.11). Notably, the art section only contained handicrafts by ‘Roman Catholic Sisters’ and a book of songs and *Anasi* stories described using derogatory racial terms in the catalog. Furthermore, there were loans from Mrs. Douair Baroness Van Heerdt tot Eversbergen, who had produced paintings and drawings on the theme of the islands. The ‘East Indies’ section not only displayed objects, furniture, and crafts from the former Dutch Indies but also items looted in Lombok during the war. Moreover, this section featured the ‘Insulinde,’ including multiple dwellings from various regions such as *Gamelan*, *Bandjarmasin*, *Japara* houses, and a tomb with symbols from Borneo, as well as facilities such as a tea house and restaurant.²²⁵ This aligns with the ‘fairground-like’ treatment described by Grever and Waaldijk and also reveals the colonialist ideology underlying the organization, with not only the display of stolen objects during a war, a tomb, and discriminatory language, despite the exhibition’s intended focus on women’s labor.

Unfortunately, the same concept can be found in the catalog of the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913*. In the ‘Colonies’ section, compiled by committees from the Netherlands, the Indian Archipelago, Suriname, and Curaçao, the focus was on demonstrating women’s work in the colonies. The catalog mentions that in ‘tropical regions,’ as in Europe, women have an important role to play not only in the ‘household’ but also in schools, industry, and nursing. Remarkably, science, arts, and services within this section are not linked to women. This exhibition also had a ‘fairground-like’ approach, with the first section being ‘The Indian House,’ a recreated house from

²²⁵ *Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (Den Haag, 1898), p.59-64, 338-366.

Java where ‘the average Dutch woman’ and her family lived in Java (fig.12). Thus, the focus was not on the Javanese and their authentic culture and customs indoors. The catalog mentions that initially, the committee wanted the house to be inhabited by Javanese, as was the case in 1898, but it was too difficult to arrange. Around the house, visitors could observe Javanese female laborers. Reflecting the prevailing colonial mindset at the time, objects from Suriname, the Indian Archipelago, and Curaçao were categorized in the main hall by ‘race and class,’ unlike the objects in all the other twenty-three sections. This was an old concept, as Matthijssen emphasized in her catalog of 1878 that she had wanted to categorize it ethnographically but had not been able to do so due to lack of time.²²⁶



Figure 12. Unknown photographer, *The Indian House. The Servants' Room*, 1913, photograph. Collection of Atria. (Photo: Atria).

²²⁶ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878*, p.ix-x.

2.4. Results for the first feminist movement: Impact and legacy

Practical outcomes for the first feminist movement

Groot concludes that the two smaller exhibitions of 1871 and 1878, which focused on labor, cannot be compared to the attention received by the 1898 exhibition. However, she argues that Matthijssen's exhibition in 1878 is an important indication of 'the already pursued emancipation of women.'²²⁷ These exhibitions should be seen as the beginning of a tradition of women's exhibitions for women's emancipation. Only the last two exhibitions had clear consequences for the women's movement. To draw attention to the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (1898), a competition was held for a poster design. Suze Fokker won with her design of a beehive surrounded by flowers and bees. The poster symbolizes the new busy bees: women involved in industry and labor (fig.13).



Figure 13. Suze Fokker, *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid 's-Gravenhage. 1898 Juli-September, 1898*, poster. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

With ninety thousand visitors and the gathering of diverse women workers, the exhibition was a success according to Naber.²²⁸ At the exhibition, there was a

lottery for which Jan Toorop made this poster to promote ticket sales. The monumental woman strikes a hammer on an anvil bearing the words 'Labor for women.' Possibly, she crushes societal opposition to working women in all classes (fig.14). With the lottery, art sales, and donations, the exhibition raised twenty-two thousand guilders. This money was invested in the establishment of the 'Bureau voor Vrouwenarbeid' (Bureau of Women's Labor). Lakmaker notes that Marie Jungius, the first president of the bureau, considered the founding of the bureau as 'permanently establishing' a documentation system of women's labor. Anna Polak succeeded her from 1908 to 1937. She adds that thanks to the establishment, the *Vrouwenboekje voor Nederland* and the *Leidraad voor Nederlandsche meisjes bij de keuze van een Beroep* were published. Furthermore, she mentions that the 'Industry Hall' was a catalyst for the establishment of women's unions.²²⁹ Naber adds that the

²²⁷ Marjan Groot, *Vrouwen in de vormgeving in Nederland*, p.50.

²²⁸ Naber, *Na tien jaren, 1898-1908*, p.21-56.

²²⁹ Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.38-40.

exhibition also served as a catalyst for the merging of associations into the VvVK and the International Congress.²³⁰

The exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913* had more indirect consequences for the women's movement. The exhibition was intended to celebrate the Dutch women's movement, and Annie Ermeling created this festive advertisement for the program of the celebration committee (fig.15). The main consequence was a growing interest in women's suffrage. In 1908, the membership of the VvVK was 7,500. By 1913, after the exhibition, the membership had risen to 16,450, leading to passive suffrage in 1917, followed by active suffrage in 1919.



Figure 14. Jan Toorop, *Labor for Women*. Tickets for the Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid available for 50 cents on the premises and in the depots. First prize: a jeweled ornament worth f.1000,-, 1898, lithograph. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).



Figure 15. Annie Ermeling, *Design for an advertisement for the celebration program of the exhibition 'De Vrouw 1813-1913' in Amsterdam*, 1913, lithograph. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

²³⁰ Naber, *Na tien jaren, 1898-1908*, p.101-104.

Critics

The early exhibitions received little publicity, possibly due to their small scale and regional nature. From the 1882 exhibition onwards, reviews began to appear in several Dutch newspapers. At the *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd* sixty-eight women exhibited thirty-nine artworks. International publicity followed, but critics in the *Nederlandsche Spectator* deemed the exhibition unnecessary, claiming that women already had access everywhere. The magazine advised that the exhibition should focus only on ‘ladies,’ not on ‘a female painter from the lower middle class.’²³¹ Johan Michaël Schmidt Crans (1830-1907) mocked the innovation of female creators in the same magazine with a caricature in which male spectators waited bored on benches until women finished looking attentively at the still lifes (fig.16). In the *Algemeen Dagblad*, these still lifes were seen as both a strength and a weakness, with Ronner-Knip cited as an example of the diversity within this theme.²³² In *Het nieuws van den dag: kleine courant*, the author discusses a visit with a ‘woman-hater.’ The woman-hater is disappointed by the lack of variety in the 139 artworks, none of which are history paintings. The author discusses the harsh reality behind this lack of diversity and explains that a woman aspiring to artistry must develop within the domestic sphere. The author suggests that the hater would change his mind if he were to meet one of these artists on their life journey. Appreciation is expressed for these artists, including Gerardina Jacoba van de Sande Bakhuijzen (1826-1895), Van Houten, Hubrecht, and Mesdag-van Houten, and it is noted that works by Sara Stracké-Bilders (1837-1922), Cornelia van der Hart (1851-1940), Cornelia Schouten (1849-1929), Hermina van der Haas (1843-1921), Cato van Hoorn (1851-1939), Sophie Taurel-Hamburger (unknown), and Bertha Valkenburg (1862-1929) were sold.²³³

In contrast, the reviews of the 1898 exhibition barely highlighted art; the focus was mainly on the visit of male artists, such as Toorop and Israëls. Waaldijk and Grever rightly conclude that only two women, Wilhelmine Kiehl (1862-1922), and Charlotte Bouten, were discussed. Bouten’s street, landscapes, and farm scenes broke the stereotype that women only painted still lifes. The work of the young artist, who had died three years before the exhibition at the age of twenty-four, while painting, was praised for its ‘masculine qualities.’²³⁴ The critique echoes Klarenbeek’s criticism that the exhibition did not support young emerging artists.²³⁵ Male critics of the 1913 exhibition were also wary of women’s skills. In the catalog, the organizers mention that male lithographers

²³¹ "Tentoonstelling van Vrouwelijke Kunstwerken te Amsterdam," *Nederlandsche Spectator*, Jaargang 1882, no. 16.

²³² J.G., "Tentoonstelling van Kunstwerken Door Vrouwen Vervaardigd in de Kunstzaal van Het Panorama-Gebouw."

²³³ "Kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd II," *Het Nieuws van den Dag: Kleine Courant*. April 22, 1882, <https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&identificer=ddd:010064077:mpeg21:a0008>.

²³⁴ Grever and Waaldijk, *Feministische openbaarheid*, p.222-223.

²³⁵ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.124.

reacted by claiming women could not work on stone.²³⁶ Wilhelmina Drupsteen proved them wrong with her winning design. In the encyclopedia, Boissevain mentions that similar criticism was voiced by men regarding women undertaking statistical work. She argues that men expressed doubts, saying that ladies would turn it into embroidery patterns, but women proved them wrong once again.²³⁷



Figure 16. Johan Michaël Schmidt Crans, *Caricature of an Exhibition of Female Artworks in Amsterdam*, 1882, lithograph. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

Reviews of feminists

Boissevain mentions that despite the 1898 and 1913 exhibitions being regarded as milestones for the women's movement, the first milestone, 1898, is considered a more significant event.²³⁸ The same encyclopedia includes a quote from Catharina Agatha Worp-Roland Holst (1827-1892), in which she recounts sleepless nights and sickness from anxiety over the fact that women were going to break with opposition by appearing everywhere in different municipalities, including at the 1898 exhibition, of which she was one of the initiators.²³⁹ Meijers adds that during the two-year

²³⁶ Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913", "Meerhuizen"-Amsteldijk*.

²³⁷ Boissevain, "Hoofdstuk V. De Tentoonstelling 'De Vrouw 1813-1913'," p.327.

²³⁸ Ibid, 325.

²³⁹ Goedkoop-De Jong van Beek en Donk, "Hoofdstuk VI. Vrouwenwerk in Beeld: De Tentoonstelling van Vrouwen-Arbeid 1898," p.310.

preparations, the organizers received insulting notes, and influential women from the women's movement openly emerged as opponents of the plans. She mentions that Jeltje Bosch Kemper (1836-1916) believed there was no distinction between women's and men's work and that the issue of low women's wages could not be resolved through exhibitions but through a survey.²⁴⁰ Waaldijk and Grever also mention criticism from the women painter P. Tilanus, who, in the magazine *Belang en Recht*, compares the exhibition of 1898 to a 'storehouse for all kinds of handicrafts,' and therefore sees no point in submitting valuable work.²⁴¹

Despite the success of the 1898 exhibition, feminists also withdrew from the 1913 exhibition. Lakmaker notes, among other things, that Polak withdrew with her National Bureau because she believed that less than a year was too short for adequate preparation. As a result, the aim for more paid work and better working conditions disappeared from the exhibition as a theme. According to her, socialist women withdrew due to the 'Catholic character' of the exhibition, and Catholics found the setup with suffrage too radical. Lakmaker concludes that despite differences, it proved possible to achieve something great in a short time, and the success of the exhibition was a stimulus for further cooperation, also politically.²⁴²

Author Charlotte Hendrika Amalia Schlimmer-Arntzenius also critiqued the exhibition after her visit for being 'too commercial and political like men,' talking about their ways of propending women's suffrage.²⁴³ Feminists received similar criticism. For example, in *De Gids*, R.P.J. Tutein Nolthenius warns Naber, 'Truly, Miss Naber, if you are not careful, you will start writing as tediously as... a man!'²⁴⁴ This is one of the reasons, according to literary historian Erica van Boven, why women authors between 1850 to 1900 used male pseudonyms.²⁴⁵ This was also taken into account during the 1898 exhibition with the publication *Catalogus van boeken door Nederlandsche vrouwen geschreven en sedert 1850 uitgegeven met verklarende lijst van pseudoniemen*, which consisted an explanatory list of pseudonyms used by women.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁰ Meijers, "Deel II. Intree in de Maatschappij," p.111.

²⁴¹ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.42, 223.

²⁴² Lakmaker, "1. Van de uiterste suffragette tot de kalmste stijdster, 1894-1919," p.59-61.

²⁴³ Schlimmer-Arntzenius, "De Tentoonstelling 'De Vrouw' 1813-1913 I," p.30.

²⁴⁴ J. Tutein Nolthenius, "Vrouwenideaal," *De Gids* 1, no. 28 (1918): p.154-161.

²⁴⁵ Erica van Boven, "Het pseudoniem als strategie Pseudoniemen van vrouwelijke auteurs 1850-1900," *Nederlandse Letterkunde* 1, no. 3 (n.d.): 309-326.

²⁴⁶ Afdeling Boekhandel: Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid 1898, *Catalogus van Boeken Door Nederlandsche Vrouwen Geschreven En Sedert 1850 Uitgegeven Met Verklarende Lijst van Pseudoniemen* (The Hague: Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid, 1898), <https://hdl.handle.net/11653/book26204?index=2>.

Conclusion

This chapter investigated how the six women's exhibitions held between 1871 and 1913 contributed to the outcomes of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands. These exhibitions provided platforms for showcasing not only arts and crafts but also the evolving roles of women in society. Organizational dynamics mirrored societal shifts, transitioning from amateur endeavors to more professional and socially engaged initiatives. Initially focused on selling women's crafts and economic independence, the exhibitions evolved to spotlight a broader range of women's contributions, including professional arts, education, labor, and social work.

The early exhibitions of 1871 and 1878, emphasized the economic potential and quality of women's work, organized by women's associations. Shifts occurred in the 1882 and 1891 exhibitions, which began promoting the professional careers of women artists. As the first feminist movement gained momentum, later exhibitions in 1898 and 1913 expanded their scope discussing more social and political issues, influenced by advice from feminists, and incorporating educational congresses and demonstrations to further feminist objectives. Despite variations in focus and inclusivity, these exhibitions collectively challenged societal prejudices, raised funds for women's associations, and advocated for women's labor, education, and rights.

Thus, these exhibitions played a role in legitimizing women's work and advancing gender equality, despite facing societal barriers and criticism. By claiming public space and recognition, these exhibitions contributed to the feminist discourse in the Netherlands, laying the groundwork for future advancements. This chapter sets the stage to examine the extent to which the exhibited artworks played a role in visualizing and representing the objectives of the first feminist wave, and if so, in what disciplines and themes?

Chapter 3. What artists and artworks were featured in these six exhibitions (1871-1913), and to what degree did the artworks embody the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands?”

Determining the exact number of women who exhibited artworks in these six inaugural women’s exhibitions is challenging, as not all exhibitions had catalogs. Based on the available catalogs, newspaper articles, and other publications related to the exhibitions, I estimate that around 423 artists exhibited works at these six exhibitions. Including works from different sections and literary contributors, the number rises to approximately 450 to 500 women makers. Among the youngest exhibitors was painter and draughtswoman Marie Ravenwaaij (1860-1930), who was eighteen years old when she exhibited at the *Tentoonstelling van Voorwerpen van Nijverheid en Kunst uitsluitend door Vrouwen vervaardigd* in 1878, while the oldest was the painter Johanna Wilhelmina von Stein Callenfels (1831-1916), who was eighty-two when she exhibited at *De Vrouw 1813-1913* in 1913.²⁴⁷

Painting and drawing were well-represented in the exhibitions, followed by printmaking. Sculpture and photography were less prevalent with only eleven objects exhibited in each category. Portrait painter Thérèse Schwartz and painter and draughtswoman Clémence Pruijs van der Hoeven (1839-1921) were the only two artists who participated in five of the six exhibitions. They did not exhibit in the 1891 exhibition, as it was intended for young artists who had not previously exhibited their artworks. Painter Hendrika Landré-van der Kellen (1846-1903), painter Sara Dekker-Sartorius (1836-1913), draughtswoman and printmaker Jacoba de Graaff, and sculptor Georgine Schwartz exhibited their works in four of the six exhibitions, also excluding the 1891 exhibition. Approximately forty-three women exhibited in three exhibitions, and sixty-three exhibited in two. Over 280 women participated in a women’s exhibition only once.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁷ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878; Catalogus van de tentoonstelling “De vrouw 1813-1913”, “Meerbuizen”-Amstedijk.*

²⁴⁸ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878; Catalogus van de tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd in de kunstzaal van het Panorama-gebouw, Plantage tegenover Artis; Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid; Boissevain, Catalogus van de tentoonstelling “De vrouw 1813-1913”, “Meerbuizen”-Amstedijk.*

3.1. The *Tentoonstellings-bazar van Vrouwelijke Nijverheid en Kunst* (1871)

Despite the absence of a catalog for the *Tentoonstellings-bazar van Vrouwelijke Nijverheid en Kunst* in 1871, it is known that nineteen women artists exhibited their work, as evidenced by a letter from feminist Minette Storm-van der Chijs, which is also referenced by Klarenbeek. Klarenbeek suggests that the actual number of artists is fewer because Sara Dekker-Sartorius exhibited not only under her name but also as ‘Miss Letiz.’ The identities of the remaining three monogamists ‘freule S.,’ ‘Miss. v.B.,’ and ‘Miss. S.,’ are unknown. The known exhibiting women include organizer feminist Perk, Dekker-Sartorius, Thérèse Schwartz, Pruijs van der Hoeven, Van Sandick, Teunsijna Johanna Albertina Kranenburg, Hermina van der Haas (1843-1921), Hendrika Landré-van der Kellen (1846-1903), Catharina Kiers (1839-1930), Francina Louise Martin-Schot (1816-1894), Marie Molijn (1837-1932), Ida Molijn (1849-1939), Elisabeth Verwoert (1836-1905), Maria Vos (1824-1906), and Swanida Wilderik (1807-1883).²⁴⁹ Unfortunately, which women represented arts and crafts on behalf of *Arbeid Adelt* at the exhibition is unknown. However, several analyses can be made from this known selection of women artists.

First, the average age of the women artists at the time of the exhibition was thirty-seven years. Wilderik, Van Sandick, and Martin-Schot stand out with ages of sixty-four, fifty-three, and fifty-five, respectively. Ida Molijn and Schwartz were the youngest at twenty-two and twenty years old. As mentioned in the introduction, Kranenburg is listed as an ‘amateur painter’ by the RKD, while the other exhibited women are primarily known as painters and draughtswomen.²⁵⁰ However, Kranenburg cannot be categorized as a dilettante who strictly painted still lifes. Around 1850, she painted this group portrait of herself with her sisters Jantina Hendrica and Wemelina Anna (fig.17). The owner, The Centraal Museum, notes that S.F. Fekkes, the donor of



Figure 17. Teunsijna Johanna Albertine Kranenburg, *Portrait of Teunsijna Johanna Albertine* (1827-1878), *Jantina Hendrica* (1821-?) and *Wemelina Anna* (1824-?) *Kranenburg*, ca. 1850, oil on canvas. Centraal Museum, Utrecht. (Photo: Centraal Museum/Ernst Moritz).

²⁴⁹ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.209.

²⁵⁰ RKD Research, “Teunsijna Johanna Albertine Kranenburg.”

the painting, identified the standing woman as Kranenburg, who after her marriage to physician Josef Alexander Fles in 1853, had her own studio on the Domplein in Utrecht.²⁵¹ Today, her work sells for thousands of pounds at Christie's, indicating she was more than an amateur.²⁵²

Only Perk diverged with her career as a feminist activist, author, and sculptor. No two-dimensional works of hers are known, so it seems likely that she exhibited one of her sculptures or modeling works. Given that these women were not yet admitted to all academies in the Netherlands at the time of the exhibition, it is not surprising that Van der Haas, Landré-van der Kellen, Kiers, Martin-Schot, Marie and Ida Molijs, Vos, and Wildrik are only known for their still lifes, primarily floral still lifes. This, however, does not speak to the quality of their work. For example, Vos's *Stilleven met vruchten en dood gevogelte* (1873) is in the collection of the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen (fig.18). In a letter from Kiers to the committee of the exhibition of *Living Masters*, it is also noted that she participated in the Utrecht exhibition with her floral still lifes.²⁵³



Figure 18. Maria Vos, *Still Life with Fruit and Dead Poultry*, 1873, oil on canvas. Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam. (Photo: Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum).

Works by Dekker-Sartorius, Verwoert, Sandick, and Pruijs-van der Hoeven also include landscapes combined with genre scenes. These works reflect the situation of women's artistry in the late nineteenth century. This signed drawing by Pruijs-van der Hoeven, titled 'Venice,' depicts a woman looking out a window in Venice (fig.19). According to art dealer Simonis & Buunk, this drawing comes from the estate of the later Queen Juliana (1909-2004), suggesting that the drawing was owned by her mother, Queen Wilhelmina.²⁵⁴ Pruijs-van der Hoeven was one of the women

²⁵¹ Centraal Museum Utrecht, "Portret van Teunsijna Johanna Albertine (1827-1878), Jantina Hendrica (1821-?) en Wemelina Anna (1824-?) Kranenburg."

²⁵² Christie's, "Teunsijna Johanna Albertine Kranenburg (1827-1878), Lady in the Window."

²⁵³ Catharina Kiers, "Brief aan de commissie van de Tentoonstelling van Levende Meesters in Utrecht," Rijksmuseum, accessed May 23, 2024,

<https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/search/objects?q=catharina+kiers&f=1&p=1&ps=12&principalMaker=Catharina+Kiers&st=Objects&ii=0#/RP-D-2017-641,0>.

²⁵⁴ "Clémence Pruijs van der Hoeven | Aquarellen v.h. te Koop | In Venetië," Simonis & Buunk, accessed May 23, 2024, <https://www.simonis-buunk.nl/kunstwerk/clemence-pruijs-van-der-hoeven-schilderij-in-venetie/16749/>.



Figure 19. Clémence Pruijs van der Hoeven, *In Venice*, pencil and watercolor on paper. © Simonis & Buunk. (Photo: Simonis & Buunk).

taught by Allebé.²⁵⁵ Another pupil was Verwoert, whose watercolors often featured boats. Living in Amsterdam, Verwoert painted and drew landscapes, rivers, and beach scenes, including in *Katwijk aan Zee*.²⁵⁶ This shows that despite societal expectations that women should not venture into the streets and nature alone due to the chaperone system, which lasted until the early twentieth century in the Netherlands, women did create landscapes. Additionally, women traveled abroad. Former curator and head of the Rijksmuseum's 'Women of the Rijksmuseum' research project, Jenny Reynaerts, mentions a forest scene of Van Sandick from 1853. She explains that Van Sandick left for Cleves with her mother and sister as chaperones at the age of thirty to unsuccessfully pursue lessons at the academy of Barend Cornelis Koekkoek, where women were not admitted. Reynaerts concludes that Van Sandick received private lessons from him and developed professionally through her travels in Central Europe to paint landscapes in the mid-nineteenth century.²⁵⁷

Another theme these women artists were already proficient in was portraiture, despite not being allowed to take drawing and painting lessons after nude models until 1895. Schwartze, who became the portraitist of the elite, has well-known portraits in the collections of major museums, including the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. Pruijs-van der Hoeven painted a portrait van Oncko Quirijn Jacob Johan van Swinderen (1812-1870), a Member of the Council, Provincial States, and the Senate. Thus, women did not only paint portraits within their households. As previously mentioned, the discussed feminists as well as the artists came from affluent backgrounds. Nonetheless, their works also show interests beyond their social circles, such as Dekker-Sartorius's *Bäuerin in der Stube, ein Buch lesend*, which, as the title suggests, depicts a reading peasant woman. She also painted a portrait of a shoemaker, indicating an interest in crafts and workers' lives.

²⁵⁵ "RKD Research | Clémence Pruijs van Der Hoeven," RKD Research, accessed May 23, 2024, <https://research.rkd.nl/nl/detail/https%3A%2F%2Fdata.rkd.nl%2Fartists%2F279943>.

²⁵⁶ "RKD Research | Elisabeth Verwoert," RKD Research, accessed May 23, 2024, <https://research.rkd.nl/nl/detail/https%3A%2F%2Fdata.rkd.nl%2Fartists%2F91621>.

²⁵⁷ *WANDERLUST | Vrouwelijke Kunstenaars Op Reis | Anna van Sandick*, 2022, <https://vimeo.com/728125626>.

3.2. The *Tentoonstelling van Voorwerpen van Nijverheid en Kunst uitsluitend door Vrouwen vervaardigd* (1878)

For the *Tentoonstelling van Voorwerpen van Nijverheid en Kunst uitsluitend door Vrouwen vervaardigd* in 1878, it is not always clear which artworks and objects were exhibited due to descriptions in the catalog such as ‘drawing’ and ‘painting,’ without indicating a theme nor title. However, it is known that seventy-eight women exhibited artworks at the exhibition.²⁵⁸ The age categories of the exhibitors were evenly distributed, ranging from eighteen to sixty-nine years old. The background and type of woman can be inferred from this portrait of one of the exhibiting artists, Wilhelmina Ludovica Philippo Jonxis-Laurillard Fallot, from 1870, eight years before the exhibition (fig.20). Jonxis-Laurillard Fallot is depicted sitting, wearing a bonnet with ribbons and a buttoned dress with puffed sleeves.

Like the exhibition of 1871, the exhibited artists were primarily draughtswomen and painters. Karstkarel

argues that Thérèse Schwartz achieved significant success at the 1878 exhibition with her works ‘*A Farmer from Ober Baijern*, a *Meditation* and *Little Red Riding Hood*.’²⁵⁹ The twenty-seven-year-old Schwartz, coming from an artist family of affluent background, again shows an interest in peasant life. *Little Red Riding Hood* possibly refers to this portrait of a girl with a red headdress (fig.21). Besides Schwartz, he mentions that the Molijn sisters, Charlotte van der Kellen, Louise Jansen (1835-1912), Ida van Lokhorst, Louise van Beek (1829-1904), and ‘Mrs. Bisschop - which could refer to either Kate Swift or Suze Robertson - were also highly regarded.²⁶⁰ Both the Molijn sisters and Van der Kellen had already exhibited still lifes of flowers and fruits at the exhibitions of *Living Masters* in 1875, 1877, and 1888.²⁶¹ This was also the primary genre seen at the the *Tentoonstelling*



Figure 20. Jan Bos Wz., after Antonie Johannes Groeneveldt, *Portrait of Mrs. Wilhelmina Ludovica Philippo Jonxis-Laurillard Fallot*, 1870, tone lithograph in black with tone block in beige. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

²⁵⁸ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878.*

²⁵⁹ Karstkarel, “Gerharda Henriëtte Matthijssen En de Eerste Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen,” p.90.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ *Tentoonstelling van Schilder- En Andere Werken van Levende Meesters Te Amsterdam, in Den Jare 1877* (Amsterdam: Stads-drukkerij, 1877), <https://research.rkd.nl/nl/detail/https%3A%2F%2Fdata.rkd.nl%2Flibrary%2F106814>; *Tentoonstelling van Kunstwerken van Levende Meesters*, 1888th ed. (Amsterdam: Maatschappij Arti et Amicitiae), accessed May 23, 2024, <https://research.rkd.nl/nl/detail/https%3A%2F%2Fdata.rkd.nl%2Flibrary%2F51920>; *Tentoonstelling*

van *Voorwerpen van Nijverheid en Kunst uitsluitend door Vrouwen vervaardigd* (1878).²⁶² Jansen, on the other hand, exhibited paintings of castles at the exhibition of *Living Masters*, including *Ruins of Stableck at Bacharach*, *The Castle Schwalbach at Boppard at the Rhine*, and *The Castle Rheinstein at Bingen*. Her works of castles are currently being sold at German auction houses.²⁶³

Furthermore, artworks by deceased women artists were also exhibited at the 1878 exhibition, including three drawings by artists Henriëtte Geertruida Knip (1783-1842), similar to those in the Rijksmuseum's collection (fig.22). This first woman to exhibit at the exhibition of *Living Masters* won a prize in 1819 for her floral watercolors.²⁶⁴ Karstkarel mentions that objects by the seventeenth-century 'femme savante' Anna Maria van Schurman likely inspired Matthijssen to organize a



Figure 21. Thérèse Schwartz, *Portrait of a Young Woman with a Red Headscarf*, 1861-1918, brush, chalk, and watercolor on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

women's exhibition in 1878. He adds that Van Schurman's objects drew the most attention in the exhibition.²⁶⁵ Art collector Mr. Assuerus Quaestius from the Schatzenburg estate in Dronrijp sent in four works by Van Schurman: 'a sculpted bust of a spiritual sister, a drawing on velvet, a watercolor, and a self-portrait on parchment.' Additionally, 'a fine embroidery in gold and silver thread' by Van Schurman was later added to the exhibition.²⁶⁶ There is only one known (self-)portrait of her on parchment, given the fragility of the material (fig.23).

The exhibition offered some versatility, particularly through the 'exquisite photographs by Miss Matthijssen,' highlighted by Karstkarel for their 'size and careful processing.'²⁶⁷ Identifying the creators of tapestry, crochet, knitting, embroidery, paper cutting, hand, mosaic, and hair work

van *Kunstwerken van Levende Meesters, in de Kunstzalen Der Maatschappij Arti et Amicitiae* (Amsterdam: Maatschappij Arti et Amicitiae, 1875), <https://research.rkd.nl/nl/detail/https%3A%2F%2Fdata.rkd.nl%2Flibrary%2F51923>.

²⁶² *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878*.

²⁶³ *Tentoonstelling van Kunstwerken van Levende Meesters* (The Hague: Van Weerden, 1863), <https://research.rkd.nl/nl/detail/https%3A%2F%2Fdata.rkd.nl%2Flibrary%2F106788>.

²⁶⁴ "A Bouquet, Henriëtte Geertruida Knip, c. 1820," Rijksmuseum, accessed May 23, 2024, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-T-FM-73>.

²⁶⁵ Karstkarel, "Gerharda Henriëtte Matthijssen En de Eerste Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen," p.87-89.

²⁶⁶ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878*.

²⁶⁷ 'keurige photographiën van mejuffrouw Matthijssen die vooral door grootte en zorgvuldige bewerking de aandacht ver- dienen.' Karstkarel, "Gerharda Henriëtte Matthijssen En de Eerste Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen," p.90.

proved challenging due to the use of only initials and surnames, complicated further by the inclusion of children, such as ‘H. Wielsma,’ an eleven-year-old.²⁶⁸ Nevertheless, Karstkarel observes that critics regarded the exhibition highly successful, affirming that ‘to see with one’s own eyes that we have not said too much when we claim that this first exhibition on such a large scale has been completely successful.’²⁶⁹ The emphasis on still lifes alongside photography and arts and crafts was not viewed negatively. Karstkarel attributes this success to Matthijssen’s quarter-century expansion of such exhibitions, later referring to them as ‘Fine Art Gallery’ and subsequently as a ‘Salon for Modern Art.’²⁷⁰



Figure 22. Henriëtte Geertruida Knip, *A Bouquet*, ca. 1820, watercolor on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).



Figure 23. Unknown artist, *Portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman*, born in Cologne on November 5, 1607, writer and poet in Utrecht, died in Wierd on May 5, 1678. Bust from the front, between January 1, 1630 and December 31, 1650, pencil drawing on parchment. Collection of Prentenkabinet van de Rijksuniversiteit Leiden (inv.nr. 902). (Photo: Het Utrechts Archief).

²⁶⁸ *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van voorwerpen van nijverheid en kunst, uitsluitend door vrouwen vervaardigd, te houden te Leeuwarden in 1878*, 3.

²⁶⁹ om zich met eigen oogen te overtuigen, dat wij niet te veel hebben gezegd, als we beweren, dat deze eerste tentoonstelling op zulk een groote schaal volkomen is geslaagd.’ Karstkarel, “Gerharda Henriëtte Matthijssen En de Eerste Tentoonstelling van Kunst En Nijverheid Door Vrouwen,” p.90.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

3.3. The *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd* (1882)

Thanks to the comprehensive catalog of the *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd* in 1882, it is evident what types of works the sixty-eight women exhibited at this women's art exhibition. The average age of the exhibited women was thirty-seven years, with the youngest artist being twenty-year-old Barbara Elisabeth van Houten and the oldest artists being sixty-eight-year-olds Adriana Haanen (1814-1895) and Sara Teixeira de Mattos (1814-1893). As previously indicated in critiques, the exhibition predominantly featured still lifes with a limited number of landscapes. In the aforementioned critique in *Het nieuws van den dag: kleine courant*, the author recounts a visit with a 'woman-hater,' elucidating the 'harsh reality' behind this lack of diversity, asserting that women aspiring to artistry must develop within the domestic sphere. Recognition is extended to several artists, including Van Houten, Mesdag-van Houten, Van de Sande Bakhuijzen, and Bramine Hubrecht (1855-1913). The critique also notes that the exhibited works by Stracké-Bilders, Van der Hart, Schouten, Van der Haas, Van Hoorn, Taurel-Hamburger, and Valkenburg were sold.²⁷¹

Barbara Elisabeth van Houten showcased several still lifes, achieving a level of skill akin to her aunt and uncle, Sientje Mesdag-van Houten and Hendrik Willem Mesdag.²⁷² At a young age, she and Schwartze were the only female members of the *Nederlandsche Etsclub* (1886-1895) in 1886.²⁷³ She made her debut with a print of petunias, a recurring theme within her oeuvre (fig.24). She also exhibited etchings of flowers in the 1882 exhibition.²⁷⁴ The acclaim of her graphic work led to a retrospective in The Hague in 1907. As reported in the *Algemeen Dagblad*, these still lifes were viewed as both a strength and a weakness, with Henriëtte Ronner-Knip cited as an example of the diversity within this theme.²⁷⁵ Ronner-Knip exhibited paintings such as



Figure 24. Barbara Elisabeth van Houten, *Petunias in a Glass Vase*, 1877-1950, etching. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

Hunting in the Forest, *Playing Kittens*, *The Right Time*, and *Two Dogs Fighting Over a Bone*. These works,

²⁷¹ "Kunstwerken Door Vrouwen Vervaardigd."

²⁷² *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd in de kunstzaal van het Panorama-gebouw, Plantage tegenover Artis.*

²⁷³ *Portefeuille Der Nederlandsche Etsclub*, Jaargang 1 (The Hague: Mouton & Co, 1886).

²⁷⁴ "Kunstwerken Door Vrouwen Vervaardigd."

²⁷⁵ J.G., "Tentoonstelling van Kunstwerken Door Vrouwen Vervaardigd in de Kunstzaal van Het Panorama-Gebouw."



Figure 25. Henriette Ronner-Knip, *A Cat at Play*, 1875, oil on canvas. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

uncertain which specific painting was exhibited in 1882 (fig.25). *The Right Time*, also a scene of cats, has two versions. Unfortunately, both are housed in private collections. The painting *Two Dogs Fighting Over a Bone* was auctioned at Sotheby's Amsterdam in 1997. An almost identical watercolor is still available for sale (fig.26). Meanwhile, in the same critique, the still lifes of Van de Sande Bakhuijzen, Alida Haanen (1814-1895), and Margaretha Roosenboom (1843-1896) were seen as 'both weak and strong' because they strongly depicted flowers and fruits, but led to a perception of repetitiveness.²⁷⁸ It is worth noting that Haanen did not exhibit a fruit still life but *A man with quinces*.²⁷⁹ This possibly comparable, or exhibited *Pionies* by Roosenboom is more traditional in theme (fig.27), and can now be found in collections of the Boijmans van Beuningen Museum, the Rijksmuseum, and the Mesdag Collectie.²⁸⁰ J.G. expressed

of this mother of six, are housed in major museum collections and are currently part of the exhibition *Art for a Living: On the artist as entrepreneur in the 19th century* at the Dordrecht Museum alongside modern artists Piet Mondriaan and Pyke Koch.²⁷⁶ Since 1836, Ronner-Knip succeeded with her submissions and later in her lifetime had solo exhibitions worldwide in America, Europe, and Australia.²⁷⁷ *Playing Kittens* is a frequently depicted theme in her oeuvre, hence it is

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Figure 26. Henriette Ronner-Knip, *When Two Dogs Fight Over a Bone*, watercolor on paper. © Simonis & Buunk. (Photo: Simonis & Buunk).

²⁷⁶ "Kunst voor de Kost," accessed May 23, 2024, <https://www.dordrechtmuseum.nl/nu-te-zien-en-te-doen/kunst-voor-de-kost/>.

²⁷⁷ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.112, 158-159.

²⁷⁸ J.G., "Tentoonstelling van Kunstwerken Door Vrouwen Vervaardigd in de Kunstzaal van Het Panorama-Gebouw."

²⁷⁹ *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd in de kunstzaal van het Panorama-gebouw, Plantage tegenover Artis.*

²⁸⁰ "Zilveren Vaas met Bloemen," accessed May 23, 2024, <https://www.boijmans.nl/collectie/kunstwerken/2713/zilveren-vaas-met-bloemen>.

disappointment that women were ‘free,’ yet still created still lifes, without considering that full-fledged artists like Roosenboom chose this theme throughout their careers.²⁸¹



Figure 27. Margaretha Roosenboom, *A Vase with Roses*, 1853-1896, brush on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).



Figure 28. Marie Bilders-van Bosse, *Pond in the Forest*, ca. 1860-1899, chalk on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

As illustrated Johan Michaël Schmidt Crans ridiculed the innovation of female creators in the same magazine with a caricature in which male spectators waited bored on benches until women finished attentively examining the still lifes. Meanwhile, J.G. mentions Thérèse Schwartz, Marie Bilders-van Bosse, and Wally Moes (1856-1918) as artists capable of convincing one of the exhibition’s qualities.²⁸² Bilders-van Bosse’s landscapes garnered attention at the 1882 exhibition and were included in the lottery, presumably also *Pond in the Forest* (fig.28). Vermeulen and Pelkmans mention that she ventured into nature alone to create sketches, an activity then deemed inappropriate for women at that time. In her later years, Bilders-van Bosse identified ‘time’ as a significant obstacle for women artists - a precious commodity she wished she had more of to pursue art further. Queen Emma admired her work and purchased one of her landscapes in 1897.²⁸³

While the catalog lacked history pieces or photographs in the catalog, it did feature genre pieces that reflected the *zeitgeist* of these women. Thérèse Schwartz made another appearance, this time with a portrait of *Two orphan girls*, a theme she also exhibited at the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van*

²⁸¹ J.G., “Tentoonstelling van Kunstwerken Door Vrouwen Vervaardigd in de Kunstzaal van Het Panorama-Gebouw.”

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.152.

Vrouwenarbeid in 1898. The plight of growing orphan girls during this period was difficult; they received minimal vocational training and were relegated to domestic work. The annual budget of four hundred guilders for an orphan girl was also partly allocated to orphan boys. This disparity prompted a public protest in Amsterdam in 1902, led by feminist Wilhelmina Drucker, resulting in equalization in 1912.²⁸⁴ Two years after the exhibition of 1882, Schwartz submitted a first request to the Civil Orphanage of Amsterdam to paint a portrait of one of the girls. Despite the request being denied, she was permitted to borrow a uniform. It remains unclear why Schwartz, known for high society portraits, took an interest in these girls (fig.29). Nevertheless, this interest persisted throughout her career, and her sister Georgine became a regent at the Lutheran Orphanage from 1917 to 1931.²⁸⁵



Figure 29. Thérèse Schwartz, *Three Girls from the Amsterdam Orphanage*, 1885, oil on canvas. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

Schwartz also presented a portrait of Professor Harting at the exhibition.²⁸⁶ Other male figures were portrayed by women, such as sculptor Louise Grube, who exhibited busts of Constantijn Huygens, and Johan de Witt.²⁸⁷ The rationale behind displaying male figures at an all-women exhibition is unclear; it could have been an attempt to assert a presence in the art world by

²⁸⁴ Wilhelmina Drucker and Marianne Braun, "Marianne Braun Wilhelmina Drucker, feminist en multatuliaan," *Over Multatuli* Delen 62-63, no. Jaargang 31, accessed May 23, 2024, https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_ove006200901_01/_ove006200901_01_0011.php.

²⁸⁵ R. Meischke, *Amsterdam Burgerweeshuis*, in *De Nederlandse monumenten van geschiedenis en kunst. De provincie Noordholland. De gemeente Amsterdam*, vol. 3 of *Nederlandse monumenten van geschiedenis en kunst*, ed. R. Meischke (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1975), 261; Marloes Huiskamp, "Schwartz, Georgine Elizabeth," in *Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon van Nederland*, accessed May 23, 2024, <https://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/vrouwenlexicon/lemmata/data/SchwartzGeorgine>.

²⁸⁶ *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd in de kunstzaal van het Panorama-gebouw, Plantage tegenover Artis*.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

demonstrating skill in sculpting historical men, a conventional theme in art history. One historical woman was also honored at the exhibition. Aerts explains that Stracké-van Bosse crafted a ‘highly artistic bust’ of eighteenth-century writer Betje Wolff specifically for this event. The sculptor dated the piece 1882 on the base and submitted it, along with other works to the women’s exhibition. Overall, critics praised her work, and Aerts mentions, for example, that Alberdingk Thijm considered it ‘striking.’²⁸⁸ Concurrently, from 1882 to 1884, the Elisabeth Wolff School, a school for girls, was established, with Stracké-van Bosse’s work as a centerpiece during the opening.²⁸⁹

In addition to Schwartz, Moes, Betsy Repelius (1848-1921), and Cina van Es (1849-1891) also expressed interest in portraying social themes in their artwork. Repelius showcased the paintings *The Cheerful Workman* and *Home Care*, while Van Es presented *The Rooster Plucker* and Moes displayed *The Scheveningsche Fishwoman* and *At the Spinning Wheel*.²⁹⁰ Historian Marina Marijnen contends that Moes was preoccupied with the plight of workers, particularly working children who were obliged to contribute to their families.²⁹¹ For instance, she depicted children who had to toil after school (fig.30). Concurrently, Marijnen characterizes these romanticized depictions of the harsh rural existence.²⁹² This is consistent with the perspective of the Historical Circle Laren, which recounts Moes’s narrative about ‘Mie,’ who spun in a cubicle separated from the barn: she liked it here. The hours were never too long.’ However, the Historical Circle Laren clarifies that the reality was one of forced labor due to extreme poverty; ‘Mie’ spent the entire day in the dusty spinning room, whether she desired to or not. This labor was both unhealthy and poorly compensated.²⁹³ This voyeuristic approach towards the life of the impoverished worker resonates with the efforts of feminists from privileged backgrounds who later endeavored to represent workers and the former Dutch colonies at the exhibitions of 1898 and 1913. Additionally, it illustrates that there was more to observe than the largely criticized floral still lifes.

²⁸⁸ Mieke Aerts, “Een rondedans om het gedenkstuk’ Wolff en Deken als nationaal monument,” *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman*, Onbreekbaar 1, Jaargang 27 (2004): p.15-18, https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_med009200401_01/_med009200401_01_0024.php.

²⁸⁹ “GEMEENTERAAD,” *De Tijd: Godsdiensig-Statkundig Dagblad*, January 24, 1884, Dag edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010266279:mpeg21:a0015>.

²⁹⁰ *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd in de kunstzaal van het Panorama-gebouw, Plantage tegenover Artis*.

²⁹¹ Marina Marijnen, “Kinderen van de Haagse School. Spelen of hard werken,” *Historiek*, February 19, 2024, <https://historiek.net/kinderen-van-de-haagse-school-spielen-of-hard-werken/161855/>.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Moes schreef ‘over ‘Mie’ die in een, van de deel gescheiden hok spon: “ze was er graag. De uren waren nooit té lang.’ “Historische Kring LarenLaren door bittere armoe naar de weefgetouwen,” *Historische Kring Laren* (blog), December 1, 2008, <https://historischekringlaren.nl/laren-door-bittere-armoe-naar-de-weefgetouwen/>.



Figure 30. Wally Moes, *Meal Hour*, 1885, oil on canvas. Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam. (Photo: Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum).

3.4. The *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd* (1891)

The *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd* (1891) was organized on behalf of the women's art association 'Amsterdam' by Margot Knipscheer, Mina van der Pek, and Charlotte Bouten. These organizers, all in their twenties, were painters, draughtswomen, and printmakers. According to Klarenbeek an anonymous critic in the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* mentions that Jo Koster (1868-1944), Wilhelmina Maria Terpstra-Reerink (1863-1929), and Jo Gram (1865-1930) also exhibited works.²⁹⁴ These artists were also in their twenties. Unfortunately, due to a lack of a catalog, it remains unclear which other women exhibited their works. However, Klarenbeek suggests that about forty women artists were involved, who had not previously exhibited publicly and produced paintings, drawings, etchings, and watercolor studies. She adds that Knipscheer, Van der Pek, and Bouten wrote to Queen Emma for support to encourage the exhibitors to earn the title of 'artist,' explaining the young age of the involved artists and organizers.²⁹⁵

Knipscheer, twenty-six years old at the time of the exhibition, is described in *De Valk Lexicon* of artists from Laren-Blaricum as 'one of the ladies who fought against the established idea that only men could pursue a career as an artist.'²⁹⁶ This aligns with the letter she sent to Queen Emma. Until 1891, Knipscheer was also a student at the *Rijksacademie*. She primarily made drawings and, after her marriage to painter P.F. Maarseveen a year later,



Figure 31. Hendrika Wilhelmina Jacoba van der Pek, *Stilleven (Still Life)*, oil on canvas. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Stedelijk Museum).

opened a commercial studio where she not only sold her works but also made copies of modern and old renowned artists. The lexicon mentions that her letterhead lists clients from Paris, London, Philadelphia, and Dresden, highlighting her international success.²⁹⁷ Despite this success and auctions of her work at Christie's, her work is not found in major Dutch museums. Furthermore,

²⁹⁴ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.120.

²⁹⁵ Ibid, p.120.

²⁹⁶ "De Valk Lexicon Kunstenaars Laren-Blaricum," accessed May 23, 2024, <https://devalk.com/kunstenaars/knipscheer/knipscheer.html>.

²⁹⁷ Ibid; "RKD Research | Margot Knipscheer," RKD Research, accessed May 23, 2024, <https://research.rkd.nl/nl/detail/https%3A%2F%2Fdata.rkd.nl%2Fartists%2F88636?c=q%3Dmargot%2520knipscheer%26filters%25B0%25D%25Bfield%25D%3Ddb%26filters%25B0%25D%25Bvalues%25D%25B0%25D%3Drkdartists%26filters%25B0%25D%25Btype%25D%3Dall&n=i%3D0%26p%3D1%26rpp%3D2%26tp%3D1>.

her work does not appear in the exhibition catalogs of the other women's exhibitions.²⁹⁸ Her twenty-four-year-old co-organizer, Van der Pek, is represented in the collection of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam with a modern still life (fig.31). Van der Pek had graduated from the *Rijksacademie* a year before the 1891 exhibition. Unlike the earlier flower still lifes, she showed a loose impressionistic touch in her landscapes and still lifes. Van der Pek also served on the jury and board for the 1913 exhibition.²⁹⁹ The final organizer, Charlotte Bouten, at twenty-one, was the youngest of the organizers.

The 1891 exhibition was the first group exhibition for the young Koster, who had only learned her skills in drawing schools.³⁰⁰ Her well-known work, which is also in the collection of museums such as Boijmans van Beuningen, emerged in the twentieth century during the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913*. Works like *Maria* (portrait of an old woman) showcase her skill in modern art movements such as impressionism and pointillism (fig.32). Her work also depicts women's labor, such as *Woman at a spinning wheel*.³⁰¹ Drawings by Gram are found in private collections, including *Military with Trumpet* and *Woman with Feather Hat*.³⁰² There are no works by the other exhibiting woman artist, Van Terpstra-Reerink, in the collections of larger Dutch museums. However, she was a feminist activist and became a board member of the *Algemeene Nederlandsche Vrouwen-Organisatie* (ANVO) in 1922. It was the first Dutch women's party to field candidates in elections for the House of Representatives. Initially, the ANVO focused on a short urgency program, emphasizing issues such as legal equality for men and women and maternal care.³⁰³ Thus, in line with the organizers of the exhibition, some of the exhibited women also had feminist interests in emancipation.

Klarenbeek also explains that a review in *De Portefeuille* described the exhibition as a study for women artists to make an entry into the art world. She adds that *De Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* criticized the initiative condescendingly, referring to it as an exhibition where 'budding painters with pounding hearts were busy'.³⁰⁴ Nevertheless, Koster, Terpstra-Reerink, Van der Pek, and

²⁹⁸ "Margot Knipscheer (1865-1951) | Christie's," accessed May 23, 2024, <https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-485541>.

²⁹⁹ Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913", "Meerhuizen"-Amstedijk*.

³⁰⁰ Klaas Roodenburg et al., *Jo Koster, 1868-1944: Een Zwerfend Bestaan* (Zwolle: Amersfoort: Waanders; Museum Flehite, 2002), p.1-20.

³⁰¹ "Jo Koster, Woman at a Spinning Wheel," Galerie Lindeman, accessed June 3, 2024, <https://galerielindeman.nl/product/onbekend-8/>.

³⁰² "Jo Gram," RKD Research, accessed June 3, 2024,

<https://research.rkd.nl/nl/detail/https%3A%2F%2Fdata.rkd.nl%2Fimages%2F192451?c=q%3Djo%2520gram%26filters%25B0%25D%25Bfield%25D%3Ddb%26filters%25B0%25D%25Bvalues%25D%25B0%25D%3Drkdimages%26filters%25B0%25D%25Btype%25D%3Dall&n=i%3D1%26p%3D1%26rpp%3D3%26tp%3D1>.

³⁰³ "Repertorium Kleine Politieke Partijen 1918-1967," ING Project, August 21, 2021, <https://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/repertoriumkleinopolitiekepartijen/PartijDetail?Id=14>.

³⁰⁴ Klarenbeek, *Penseelprinsessen & broodschilderessen*, p.209.

Gram also exhibited works at the later 1913 women's exhibition. The first two, along with Bouten, were also exhibited at the 1898 exhibition. The 1891 exhibition can thus be seen as an emancipatory initiative where young women painters and draughtswomen could showcase their skills in studies.



Figure 32. Jo Koster, *Maria (Portrait of an Old Woman)*, 1927, oil on canvas. Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam. (Photo: Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum).

3.5. The *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (1898)

At the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* in 1898, around fifty women exhibited fifty-three paintings, seventeen drawings, thirteen etchings, and three sculptures in the 'Fine Arts' department, under the leadership of Mesdag-van Houten, Bilders-van Bosse, and Van Houten. The average age of the artists was older than in the previous exhibitions, at forty-two years.



The youngest was twenty-four-year-old draughtswoman Wilhelmina Haakma van Royen (1874-1964) followed by

Figure 33. Barbara Elisabeth van Houten, *Evening from the series Six Etchings by Mlle B.E. van Houten (Six eaux-fortes par Mlle B.E. van Houten)*, 1886, etching on paper. The Mesdag Collection, The Hague. (Photo: The Mesdag Collection).

twenty-seven-year-olds Lucie van Dam van Isselt (1871-1949), and Sophie Hirschmann (1871-1937). The oldest was Sandick, at eighty years old. The department mainly featured two-dimensional visual arts. Photography had its own department, with twelve women photographers exhibiting under the leadership of Polkijn.³⁰⁵ The age difference from the previous exhibition and the focus on fine arts was due to the committee's preference for established artists, not students. As evident from previous chapters, education and the overall emancipation of women in two-dimensional arts were also the most progressive.

The overall connection with the organizers is also evident in the catalog and the fact that several objects are now part of the Mesdag Collectie, including *Evening* by Van Houten after Jules Dupré (fig.33).³⁰⁶ Furthermore, *Sheepfold* by Mesdag-van Houten has been part of the collection for two years (fig.34). Notably, Hendrik Willem Mesdag also owned works by women artists submitted for the exhibition, including *White Roses* by Van de Sande Bakhuijzen (fig.35). There were also several works inspired by his own, such as *Etchings after Seas by H. W. Mesdag* by Johanna Behrend-Croiset van der Kop (1861-1943), who also submitted *Corner in the House of Mr. H. W. Mesdag*.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁵ *Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid*.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*



Figure 34. Sientje Mesdag-van Houten, *Schaapskooi bij ondergaande zon*, ca. 1880, oil on canvas. Museum Panorama Mesdag, The Hague. On loan from the Mesdag-van Houten Foundation; private donation. (Photo: Museum Panorama Mesdag).



Figure 35. Gerardina Jacoba van de Sande Bakhuyzen, *White Roses*, ca. 1842-1895, watercolor and pencil on paper. The Mesdag Collection, The Hague. (Photo: The Mesdag Collection).

However, these artworks were not highlighted by critics. Feminists like Betsy Perk primarily saw the coronation of Queen Wilhelmina as a unique opportunity to draw attention to women's



Figure 36. Thérèse Schwartz, *Portrait of Wilhelmina of the Netherlands*, 1898, oil on canvas. Koninklijke Verzamelingen, The Hague. (Photo: Koninklijke Verzamelingen).

labor with the *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid*. According to Waaldijk and Grever, the artworks dedicated to Queen Wilhelmina were the highlights of the 'Fine Arts' department. They specifically mention this inaugural portrait of the Queen, commissioned by the court and painted by Thérèse Schwartz, as the 'centerpiece.' (fig.36). They add that critics of *Eigen Haard* did not consider it her best work but acknowledged that it attracted attention. They suggest that the placement in this department was favorable for the commercial society artists and for anti-monarchist visitors, who could be persuaded that the painting was there to honor Schwartz.³⁰⁸

Schwartz was not the only one; Eugenie Vlierboom honored the Queen with a 'miniature portrait of H.M. the Queen, watercolor on ivory.'³⁰⁹

Male figures were also a theme in the artworks, such as Danish critic and scholar Georg Brandes in a portrait by Hubrecht.³¹⁰ More artworks were inspired by 'great men,' including an etching by Gesina Dake (1864-1911) after Frans Hals. These works did not stand out to critics. Grever and Waaldijk note that, at the same time, only Bouten's *Calfs Head* and *Stable* were appreciated in reviews alongside Schwartz's portrait. Bouten's street, country, and farm scenes broke the stereotype that women only painted floral still lifes in the nineteenth century. The work of the young artist, who had died three years before the exhibition at the age of twenty-four while painting the Old Church of Amsterdam, was praised for 'its masculine qualities.'³¹¹ *Misery* is another example of the melancholic power of Bouten's work (fig.37). Grever and Waaldijk mention that

³⁰⁸ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.221-222.

³⁰⁹ *Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid*.

³¹⁰ *Ibid*.

³¹¹ *Vrouwenarbeid; Orgaan van de Vereeniging Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid-Uitgave Der Afdeling "Letteren En Wetenschap,"* No.13 (Amsterdam: H.J. Poutsma, 1898), p.115, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMATR01:001834013:00007>.

Kiehl's painting *Begonias* was compared by critics to Bouten's work, with the idea that it would receive criticism from 'professionals.'³¹²



Figure 37. Charlotte Bouten, *A Flower Still Life*, 1887, oil on canvas. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

Hubrecht also created works related to emerging conditions in factories during the exhibition. This work (fig.38), for example, was not exhibited at the 1898 exhibition but aligned better with the exhibition's goals. As previously mentioned, at the exhibition, bourgeois women advocated for more work and development opportunities, and the harsh conditions of working women in factories were discussed. Sophie Jacoba Wilhelmina Grothe (1852-1926) and Suze Robertson showcased more societal-themed works. Grothe presented the drawing *Sewing Machine*, and Robertson the painting *Neighborhood* and the painting *Antique Stall* (fig.39).³¹³ H. de Boer dedicated an article in *Elseviers Geïllustreerd Maandschrift* to Robertson, placing her among prominent names and art movements. In the article, De Boer connects her work, such as *The Spintster*, to seventeenth-century traditions and impressionism, describing a 'kind of intellectual-artistic erudition, appreciating the beautiful, charming folk art that adorned studios with a fantastical array of artistic trinkets (...), and all that a keen nose could find in the venerable bric-a-brac of an old castle or peasant homes.'³¹⁴ The folk and peasant life, and associated objects, were seen purely as an interesting theme for a good painting. De Boer argues that the 'reason lies in the era when

³¹² Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.223.

³¹³ *Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid*. The work is wrongly dated in the museum's collection.

³¹⁴ 'een soort intellectueel-schilderkundige érudits vormende, die oogen hadden voor het mooie, behagelijke der oude uit het volksleven opgebloeide sierkunsten, vond men er behagen in zijn atelier te tooien met een fantastisch allegaartje van artistieke prullen, bibelots, kandelabers, pauweveeren, judaspenningen, perzische sjaals en tapijten, oud tin en koper en al wat een fijne neus uit de eerbiedwaardige rommelzoo van een oud kasteel of uit boerenwoningen wist op te speuren.' H. de Boer, "Suze Bisschop-Robertson," *Elseviers Geïllustreerd Maandschrift*, no. Jaargang 16 (1906): 354–367, https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_els001190601_01/_els001190601_01_0099.php.

humanity was preparing to investigate and inhabit new intellectual realms amid confusion and darkness.³¹⁵

Additionally, *Study in the Workhouse* by eighteenth-century painter, lithographer, and art collector Margaretha Cornelia Boelaard (1795-1872) was exhibited, honoring earlier women artists.³¹⁶ Although these women displayed feminist themes, such as historical women and women workers, it appears that it was primarily a popular theme within these women's exhibitions. Waaldijk and Grever add that women like Schwartze were not afraid to be associated with the feminist movement.³¹⁷ However, most of the women in the art section were not affiliated with feminist associations or unions, whereas the inverse was true.

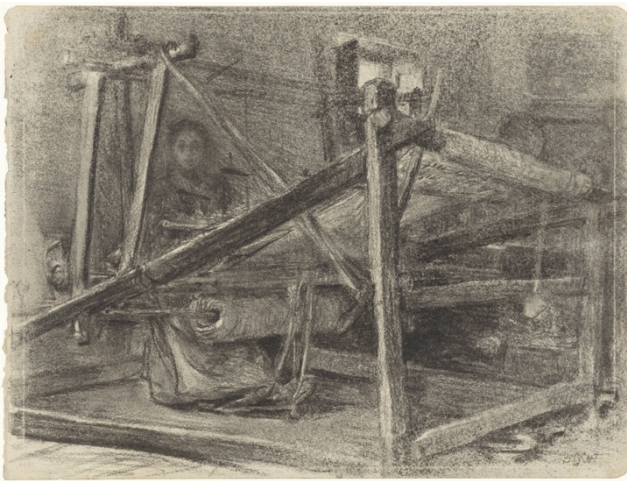


Figure 38. Bramine Hubrecht, *Weaving Loom and a Woman in the Background*, ca. 1880-1900, pencil on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).



Figure 39. Suze Robertson, *Antique Stall*, ca. 1900-1901, oil on canvas. Centraal Museum, Utrecht. (Photo: Centraal Museum).

³¹⁵ Ibid. 'oorzaak vindt zijn verklaring in den tijd waarin de menschheid uit onklarheid, duisternis en verwarring zich opmaakt tot het onderzoek en met den geest bewonen van nieuwe ideëele sferen.'

³¹⁶ *Catalogus van de Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid*.

³¹⁷ Grever, and Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid*, p.221.

3.6. *De Vrouw 1813-1913* (1913)

As previously mentioned, art objects were represented in almost all twenty-four sub-committees at the 1913 exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913*. Henriëtte de Vries (1867-1942) depicted the exhibition estate Meerhuizen on Amsteldijk in this etching (fig.40). Most sub-committees lack catalogs listing the objects, making it impossible to identify all the artworks and associated artists. The total number of women artists likely ranged from 120 to 150. I identified the objects exhibited in the ‘Fine Arts,’ ‘Applied Arts,’ ‘Historical,’ and ‘Statistics’ sections. In the ‘Historical Department,’ primarily in the ‘Women in Art, Science, Play, and Sports’ section, the history of women was highlighted with objects linked to important historical women. In addition to historical objects on women’s labor from the Rijksmuseum’s Print Room, works by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century artists Boellaard, Christina Chalon (1748-1808), Maria Geertruida Goeje-Barbiers (1801-1849), Wilhelmina Geertruida van Idsinga (1788-1819), Maria Margaretha van Os (1779-1862), Henriette Susanna Angélique Repelaer van Driel (1807-1838), Cornelia Scheffer-Lamme (1769-1839), Cornelia Maria Warnsinck-Haakman (1787-1834), and Agatha Wichers (1840-1872) were displayed. These included drawings, etchings, and ivory plaques. Honoring these women demonstrated the importance and skill of working women. However, they sometimes chose to demonstrate this through comparisons with renowned male artists. For example, Henriette Susanna Angélique Repelaer van Driel submitted a copy after a steel engraving from Rembrandt van Rijn.



Figure 40. Henriette de Vries, *Meerhuizen on the Amsteldijk*, where the exhibition ‘*De Vrouw 1813-1913*’ was held, 1913, pencil on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

Wilhelmina Geertruida van Idsinga’s *Biblical Scene* was owned by the Old City Orphanage.³¹⁸ Schwartze once again chose to exhibit a portrait of two orphan girls and this pastel of Queen Wilhelmina.³¹⁹ The orphanage was a popular theme again, with De Vries exhibiting *The Bread Cutter of the Orphanage* and sculptor Jo Schreve-IJzerman displaying the sculpture *Amsterdam Orphan Girl*.³²⁰ In total, nine sculptors exhibited works, often with contemporary social themes, such as Rachel van Dantzig (1878-1949) with *Tackling Boy*, and Saar de Swart (1861-1951) with *Workman*, and

³¹⁸ Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling “De vrouw 1813-1913”, “Meerhuizen”-Amsteldijk*.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ Ibid.

Javanese Dancer.³²¹ The ‘Colonies’ department also displayed objects by Dutch artists, including a print by Jo Vermijne (1886-1966) of a *wayang* puppet, a Javanese epic shadow play character (fig.41). This once again demonstrated the Dutch interest in objects and culture from the colonies, intending to show that women work worldwide.³²²

Moreover, the exhibition *De Vrouw 1813-1913* stands out as the only exhibition where artists and the feminist movement directly intersected, specifically in the ‘Statistics’ sub-section. As previously discussed, as a member of the ‘Historical Department’ and the ‘Statistics’ section, Wilhelmina Drupsteen visualized the wage gap between men and women. She also designed the poster and several murals for the exhibitions.³²³ Her work, including three portraits, two calendars, and illustrated books of *Cinderella* and *Snow White*, were also exhibited. In her rendition of *Cinderella*, she infused this children’s fairy tale with a contemporary character using her signature Art Nouveau style. The exhibition poster is

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Figure 41. Jo Vermijne, *Stilleven met Wayangpop, kris en Budaibeeld*, 1896-1937, etching on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

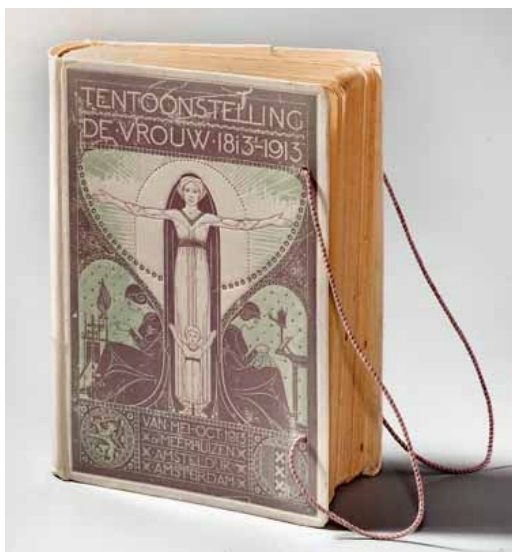


Figure 42. Wilhelmina Drupsteen, *Cover for the program booklet of the exhibition 'De Vrouw 1813-1913'*, 1913, photograph. Archief (verzameling) Internationaal Archief voor de Vrouwenbeweging. (Photo: RKD).

now housed in several museum collections, including the Rijksmuseum, and Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Drupsteen used the design of the poster for the catalog cover and program booklet (fig.42). I suggest that the poster depicts a woman with a child, accompanied by another woman behind a mechanical spinning wheel and a woman embroidering. Geerts described it as ‘a woman doing domestic work and one doing scientific work.’³²⁴ The mechanical spinning wheel not only relates to the role of women in the industry, as shown in the exhibitions but also to Drupsteen’s earlier depiction of a mechanical spinning wheel.³²⁵ The city

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Ibid.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Geerts, “Even liefelijke als doeltreffende propaganda,” p.30.

³²⁵ “Wilhelmina Drupsteen (1880-1966), Dame aan Spinnewiel,” Invaluable, accessed June 3, 2024, <https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/wilhelmina-drupsteen-1880-1966-dame-aan-spinnewie-1484-c-999463eb90>.

sunrise in the background symbolizes the emerging emancipation of women in various fields of work.

In contrast to Drupsteen's feminist work, most of the artworks at the exhibition comprised still lifes and landscapes. For instance, Gerarda Wilhelmina ten Hoet (1857-1939) exhibited an etching of dunes near Hilversum, as shown in this piece (fig.43). Following her move to Hilversum in 1903, she drew inspiration from nature.³²⁶ Her artwork not only demonstrates her skill but reflects her connection to the natural beauty of Hilversum. Furthermore, Roline Maria Wichers Wierdsma (1891-1970) contributed an ink drawing of a *Withered Sunflower* (fig.44). This motif frequently appeared in her work, as evidenced by this print. Wichers Wierdsma's stylized depiction of the withered sunflower, characterized by sharp lines and angular leaves, resonates with the modern aesthetics of the early twentieth century.³²⁷ Therefore, Gerritsen-Kloppenburg, Coppes, and



Figure 43. Gerarda Wilhelmina ten Hoet, *Heather Field with Birches and Pines, Sand Hills near Hilversum*, 1867-1939, etching on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: Rijksmuseum).

Oosterhof's assertion that the work of the artists at the exhibition 'shows that the creators, with the notable exception of Jacoba van Heemskerck (1876-1923), adhered to a nineteenth-century painting tradition the style of which dominated Dutch academies and found a rich breeding ground among female students,' can be nuanced. They further suggests: 'If innovative work is used as a criterion for judging art, it can be said that few women painters of importance emerged at the exhibition.'³²⁸ Moreover, Gerritsen-Kloppenburg, Coppes, and Oosterhof question whether their art should be evaluated solely through this lens, considering the influence of being a woman on their work, career opportunities, and expected genres and stereotypes that affected both the work and the artist. Van Heemskerck exhibited five works, including the abstract *Composition*, to which Gerritsen-

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Figure 44. Roline Maria Wichers Wierdsma, *Still Life with Flowers*, 1921, lithograph on paper. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. (Photo: © Heirs of Roline Maria Wichers Wierdsma).

³²⁶ "Gerarda Wilhelmina ten Hoet," RKD Research, accessed May 23, 2024, <https://rkd.nl/artists/38842>.

³²⁷ Boissevain, *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling "De vrouw 1813-1913", "Meerhuizen"-Amsteldijk*.

³²⁸ Gerritsen-Kloppenburg, Coppes, and Oosterhof, *De kunst van het beschutte bestaan*, p.8.

Kloppenburg, Coppes, and Oosterhof refer.³²⁹ Additionally, alongside Van Heemskerck, and Wichers Wierdsma, Jo Koster also worked in modern art movements like Pointillism during the exhibition. Notably, many of these ‘few painters of importance’ are now prominently represented in museum collections today.

³²⁹ Ibid.

Conclusion

This final chapter explored the contributions of women artists in the six inaugural women's exhibitions in the Netherlands from 1871 to 1913. These exhibitions showcased the works of approximately 450 to 500 diverse women artists, offering a nuanced understanding of women's evolving roles in art and society. The exhibited artworks varied widely in the medium and subject matter. Paintings, drawings, and arts and crafts were the most predominant, reflecting the traditional training women received. However, the inclusion of sculptures and photographs, though less common, signaled the expanding horizons of women's artistic endeavors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Traditional genres such as still lifes and portraiture were skillfully rendered by many women artists, but there were also portrayals of historical women, workers, and orphans, embodying feminist objectives. While most of these women were not affiliated with feminist associations and organizations, their works reflected an engagement with social issues, showing both collective awareness and voyeuristic explorations. The artworks at these exhibitions demonstrated that women, despite the chaperone system, ventured outdoors to create their pieces. Additionally, some women artists maintained their focus on pre-feminist genres throughout their careers, finding success in the art market and contemporary museums.

These exhibitions can be viewed as responses to a male-dominated art world. By featuring the works of earlier women artists, they honored their legacy and inspired contemporary participants like Matthijssen, establishing a sense of continuity while affirming women's contributions to art. Many women sought recognition by creating works that depicted well-known men or were inspired by male artists. However, the diversity of the exhibited works demonstrated women's capacity to address significant (social) themes. By offering a platform for women to display their work and explore various subjects, these exhibitions challenged traditional gender norms in the art world and supported the discussion of various social issues in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to explore the relationship between the emergence of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands and the role of women artists and their artworks in the six inaugural all-women exhibitions between 1871 and 1913. The central research question aimed to uncover how the participation and representation of women artists in these exhibitions embodied the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands. In this conclusion, I will synthesize my findings, reflect on their significance for art historical and feminist research, acknowledge the limitations, suggest directions for future research, and share my final thoughts.

My research question was: “How did the participation and representation of women artists and their artworks within the six inaugural all-women exhibitions between 1871 and 1913 embody the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands?” Through this question, I investigated the history and evolution of the first feminist wave in the Netherlands and contextualized it within women’s artistry. The primary aim of this research was to investigate how women artists, specifically through their participation in women’s exhibitions, contributed to and reflected the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands. This involved a detailed analysis of the socio-historical context of the first feminist wave and women’s artistry, the organization and impact of the six exhibitions, and the role of the featured artists and artworks.

Historical context and women’s artistry

In the first chapter, I aimed to answer the question: “How did the socio-historical context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shape women’s artistry in the Netherlands, particularly within the framework of the first feminist movement?” The socio-historical context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was crucial in shaping contemporary women’s artistry in the Netherlands. During this period, the first feminist movement emerged, focusing on securing women’s admission to all forms of education, suffrage, improvement of labor conditions and rights, right to guardianship and administration, and control of shared assets. This movement coincided with the demographic phenomenon known as the ‘surplus of women,’ prompting many women from prosperous backgrounds to seek entry into the workforce despite societal prohibitions. Educational reforms due to the feminist movement were pivotal in shaping and improving women’s artistry. Women began to gain access to art education in the 1860s, with the opening of drawing schools for girls, followed by the admission of women into separate art programs at traditional art academies in Rotterdam, The Hague, and Amsterdam. This was a significant shift,

as women were largely excluded from formal art training, with only private and familial tutoring in sculpting, drawing, and painting providing some avenues for artistic education, which were often insufficient for fostering independent careers. Access to art education for women marked critical steps toward professionalizing women's artistry. The first feminist movement promoted the economic independence of women through their engagement in various forms of labor, including arts and crafts. The formation of women's associations like *Arbeid Adelt* and *Tesselschade* provided platforms for women to exhibit and sell their work, challenging the prevailing norms that confined women to domestic roles and restricted their economic independence. These associations were instrumental in organizing the early women's exhibitions, highlighting the intersection of feminist activism and artistic practice.

The six inaugural women's exhibitions (1871-1913) and the first feminist movement in the Netherlands

In the second chapter I focused on answering the follow-up question: "How did the unfolding events of these six exhibitions (1871-1913) contribute to the outcomes of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands?" The six inaugural women's exhibitions were instrumental in advancing the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands. The *Tentoonstellingsbazaar van Vrouwelijke Nijverheid en Kunst* (1871) organized by feminist Perk and *Arbeid Adelt*, aimed to showcase women's handicrafts and fine arts, promoting the idea of economic independence through artistic labor. The exhibition challenged the notion of women's work being confined to the private sphere. It also provided a platform for emerging women artists, like Schwartz to gain visibility and recognition for their work. The bazaar set the stage for subsequent events as Matthijssen expanded the scope in the *Tentoonstelling van Voorwerpen van Nijverheid en Kunst door Vrouwen vervaardigd* (1878) by including a broader range of women's labor and artistry, including her own photographs. Once again, the exhibition highlighted the economic potential of women's work and emphasized the importance of women's (historical) contributions to society. The larger organization of this event demonstrated the growing organizational capabilities and influence of women during the first feminist movement. Notable artists presented their landscapes and still lifes, showing the growing professionalization of women in the arts and their increasing recognition in the public sphere.

As a result, the *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door Vrouwen vervaardigd* (1882), organized by prominent male figures in the art world, featured work by seventy women artists, both professional and dilettante. It underscored the artistic talents of women, their ability to produce quality art within

the subject boundaries society had offered them, and the support and recognition of male artists. The *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door Vrouwen vervaardigd* (1891), was more emancipatory while being more exclusive, by only showcasing the works of women who had not previously exhibited their works publicly and being organized by a women's association and the three young women artists Knipscheer, Bouten, and Van der Pek. The exhibition provided a platform for new and emerging artists, advocating the growing confidence and visibility of women artists.

The *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid* (1898) featured an extensive array of works across thirty departments, including fine arts, photography, textile art, and decorative arts. The arts were a small part of the total representation of women's labor, with the 'Industry Hall,' as the central point and the representation of the former colonies gaining the most attention of visitors, including artists. The exhibition advocated for better labor rights and vocational training for women. The involvement of prominent feminists like Goedkoop-de Jong van Beek en Donk in its organization and renowned women artists Bilders-van Bosse, Mesdag-van Houten, and Van Houten leading the fine arts department, underscored the ties between the art of exhibiting and the feminist movement. *De Vrouw 1813-1913* (1913) was also organized by feminists, namely Boissevain and Manus, celebrating women's achievements and included historical and contemporary perspectives on women's contributions to society to advocate for women's suffrage. The exhibition represented a wide range of artistic and historical representations of women artists throughout the twenty-four departments. The exhibition included historical portraits and objects, emphasizing the long history of women's contributions to society. This comprehensive nature of the exhibitions, including both historical and contemporary perspectives, provided a holistic view of women's achievements and challenges. In the end, all six exhibitions provided platforms to challenge these societal norms, gain visibility, and advocate for their rights. They also fostered a sense of solidarity and collective action among women.

Artists and artworks: reflecting feminist objectives

The final chapter aimed to answer the question: "What artists and artworks were featured in these six exhibitions (1871-1913), and to what degree did the artworks embody the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands?" The six exhibitions featured a diverse array of artists and artworks while reflecting the socio-historical position of women's artistry during the time. Paintings, drawings, and arts and crafts were the most prevalent, reflecting the traditional training and limited education women received. However, the presence of sculptures and photographs,

though less common, indicated the expanding boundaries of women's artistic endeavors. Women artists excelled in still lifes and portraiture, but some also portrayed historical women, orphans, farmers, and other workers, embodying feminist objectives. Although most of these women were not members of feminist associations and organizations, their artworks, for example, the exhibited works of Bouten, Moes, and Robertson showcased an engagement with social issues, reflecting both collective consciousness and voyeuristic explorations. Art was exhibited to showcase disciplines in which women successfully worked and visualized their artistic qualities and engagement with society. The final exhibition went further by explicitly connecting the feminist movement with artistic expressions, as seen in Drupsteen's work. Furthermore, the artworks at these exhibitions demonstrated that women like Sandick, Bilders-van Bosse, and Ten Hoet, even within the confines of the chaperone system, ventured outdoors to capture landscapes and life. Moreover, some women artists such as Roosenboom, Ronner-Knip, and Van de Sande Bakhuijzen remained devoted to pre-feminist genres, like still lifes, throughout their careers, achieving success in the contemporary art market and museums. The participation of women artists, like Schwartz and Pruijs van der Hoeven in several exhibitions, showcases consistent professional engagement in all-women's exhibitions. The inclusion of work by earlier women artists honored their legacy and inspired contemporary participants, creating a sense of continuity while validating women's artistic contributions. By providing a platform for women to exhibit their work and explore subjects, these exhibitions challenged traditional gender norms in the art world and contributed to the broader struggle for gender equality in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Discussion

The findings suggest that the exhibitions were more than mere showcases of women's art; they were platforms for advocating women's rights and emancipation. The 1871 and 1878 exhibitions highlighted the economic potential of women's handicrafts and arts, aligning with the feminist goal of economic independence. The 1882 and 1891 art exhibitions offered platforms to women artists, recognizing their artistic qualities and advocating their titles as 'artists.' The 1898 and 1913 exhibitions, further expanded the scope by including diverse forms of labor, art, and social issues, thereby broadening feminist discourse within these exhibitions to encompass all aspects of women's contributions to society.

The participation of feminist figures in the organization since the first women's exhibition underscores the connection between art and the first feminist movement. The inclusion of a wide

range of artworks - from textiles, sculptures, and photography to paintings and historical prints - illustrates the comprehensive approach of feminists within the exhibitions in advocating for women's rights across different sectors. These exhibitions provided platforms for women and motivated them to exhibit and make work throughout various disciplines, aligning with the feminist objective to encourage working women. Moreover, these exhibitions served as educational tools, both for the participating artists and for the audience. They broke down stereotypes about women's capabilities within art and highlighted their talent and skills. This educational aspect remains important, as the contribution and situation of women in the art world of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are still relatively unknown. Therefore, these exhibitions also provided a counter-narrative to the dominant male-centric view of art, even though they met many critics. By creating spaces exclusively for women and women artists, these exhibitions challenged the exclusionary practice of art institutions and showed the contributions and skills of women. Despite most of these women artists not being aligned with women's associations, their participation represented the contribution and capability of women working in the arts, visualized feminist and social issues, and gave them visibility and sometimes recognition. Thus, these exhibitions not only represented the professionalization of women in the arts during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries but also served as critical sites for emancipation, showing a nuanced understanding of the intersection between art and feminism.

Contribution to art historical and feminist research

This research makes contributions to the field of art history and feminist history by shedding light on the often-overlooked role of all-women exhibitions in the first feminist movement. It challenges the traditional art historical narrative that has predominantly focused on male artists and their contributions. By analyzing the histories, dynamics, and events of these exhibitions, this research gives insights into the evolution and professionalization of women's art during this period, reflected in the exhibitions. It also breaks down common misconceptions of women's art and their limitations during this time by showing and listing the artworks these women made and their eagerness to exhibit and create independent careers. Furthermore, it highlights the contributions of lesser-known, and unknown women makers who participated in these exhibitions. By bringing their work to the forefront, this study contributes to the ongoing efforts to reevaluate and appreciate the contributions of women artists in art history. In addition, it also sheds light on early

curatorial practices, by showing how these women organized and categorized these exhibitions and the accompanying artworks.

Furthermore, by documenting and analyzing these six exhibitions, this study provides an overview of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands while showing their usage of exhibitions to advocate their objectives. It reveals the strategies employed by feminists and women artists to navigate and challenge the constraints imposed by society. In line with this, it underscores the importance of exhibitions as sites for activism, where they can be used not only for aesthetic purposes and art appreciation but also as tools for social and political change. Examining the relationship between women's artistry and feminism, this study shows the significance of the broader socio-political context in shaping women's artistic practices in the Netherlands. It highlights how emancipatory changes in education, labor opportunities, and social norms impacted the developments within women's artistry and their public participation. This holistic approach reflects the complex interplay between art, gender, and society. At the same time, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the intersection between art and feminism, showing that not all exhibited women artists during the first feminist movement should necessarily be labeled as 'feminists' or even 'socially involved.'

Limitations and suggestions

Despite my comprehensive analysis of these exhibitions, there are limitations to consider. The availability of primary sources varied significantly among the exhibitions, with some lacking detailed archival material, such as catalogs. This limited the depth of the analyses of the 1871 and 1891 exhibitions. Moreover, most of the primary sources of the exhibitions were written by the organizers in nineteenth-century Dutch, which may present a one-sided view of the events and challenge the interpretation of historical documents that also reflect the social and cultural attitudes of their time. The retrospectives written by later feminists may also not fully capture the experiences and contributions of all women involved. Unfortunately, it is impossible to grasp everyone's experience due to unknown women, probably dilettantes and amateurs, and the lack of catalogs and/or full descriptions. In line with this, there are uncertainties when it comes to some of the exhibited artworks, due to the lack of material on some of the exhibitions.

Moreover, the study primarily focuses on the exhibitions held in the Netherlands, without extensive comparison to similar movements in other countries. Even though I investigated the history of these kinds of exhibitions worldwide and researched the international scope of

exhibitions in the Netherlands, looking at broader transnational influences and connections could provide a more in-depth understanding of the first feminist movement worldwide. This would also add to research into the intersectionality of the first feminist movement, keeping the colonialist ideology that underpinned the organization of the exhibitions of 1898 and 1913 in mind.

Future research could also build on my study by exploring the later women's exhibitions and their roles within the second and third feminist waves. A potential area of research could be the examination of how strategies and themes of the women's exhibitions during the first feminist movement were adopted and adapted in subsequent exhibitions during the later feminist movements. This could also involve an analysis of women's exhibitions in different countries and feminist movements, to identify common patterns and unique developments. It would be valuable to explore to what extent these early exhibitions paved the way for future generations of women makers and if their ways are embedded in contemporary exhibitions.

Furthermore, this research could also be flipped around, looking at the contributions of these exhibitions within the careers of the exhibited artists. This considers the roles of these exhibitions in the artists' careers, lives, subsequent work, and their place in art history. Part of this research will examine if participation in these exhibitions offered the artists opportunities and recognition. However, it would be a limited study, since not all exhibited artists are known, and not all artists left considerable primary sources to investigate.

Final thoughts

In conclusion, this thesis has demonstrated that the six inaugural all-women exhibitions between 1871 and 1913 were instrumental in presenting and advancing the objectives of the first feminist movement in the Netherlands. These exhibitions not only provided a platform for women to showcase and sell their work but also played a role in challenging social norms and advocating for women's rights. My findings underscore the importance of recognizing and appreciating the contributions of women makers in the context of art and feminist history. These exhibitions represent a significant chapter in the history of art and feminist activism in the Netherlands.

The exhibitions were significant in their ability to bring together many women from various backgrounds, creating a sense of solidarity and collective action. They provided a space where women could celebrate and improve their achievements, share their experiences, and support each other in artistic and feminist endeavors. This collective approach reflects the resilience of the first feminist movement, even though not all exhibited women were active supporters. Their exhibited

works and attendance show their interest in social issues and not being afraid to be associated with the feminist movement. Moreover, the exhibitions highlighted the diversity of women's artistic expressions. They showcased various art forms, from traditional to modern fine arts, photography, sculptures, and applied arts, reflecting the multifaceted nature of women makers. This diversity enriched the cultural landscape of these exhibitions and challenged the narrow definitions of art that marginalized women's contributions and our understanding of it today.

The legacy of these exhibitions extends beyond the specific events and artworks they showcased. They represent a broader movement towards the recognition of women's rights in all areas of life. Today, the number of all-women exhibitions and growing debates surrounding their necessity, potential stereotyping, and the agency of women artists within these group exhibitions are increasing. The women's exhibitions between 1871 and 1913 remind future generations of the importance of creating spaces for women creators to be celebrated and motivated. By looking at these exhibitions in that way, the legacy of those who came before is honored and the path of generations of women artists is paved. Therefore, the exhibited artists should be celebrated for their participation in these exhibitions.

The six inaugural all-women exhibitions in the Netherlands are (unfortunately) not just events of the past; they are part of an ongoing story of women's struggle, resilience, and triumph. These exhibitions are reminders of the political power of art, as the work of gender equality is not finished and meets new struggles every year. Continuing to honor and build upon the legacy of pioneering women artists and feminists is vital in striving for a more just and equitable future for all women and creative makers.

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Appendix 1. Exhibited women artists

I used RKD Research to add the women artists' birth and death dates and occupations.³³⁰

The Tentoonstellingsbazar van Vrouwelijke Nijverheid en Kunst 1871

Artist	Age	Data	Role exhibition	Occupation (art)
Anna van Sandick	53	1818-1904	Exhibited	painter
Betsy Perk	38	1833-1906	Organizer	painter, sculptor, author
Catharina Kiers	32	1839-1930	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman
Clémence Pruijs van der Hoeven	32	1839-1921	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, pastelist
Elisabeth Verwoert	35	1836-1905	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Francina Louise Martin-Schot	55	1816-1894	Exhibited	painter
Hendrika Landré-van der Kellen	25	1846-1903	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist
Hermina van der Haas	28	1843-1921	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman
Ida Molijn	22	1849-1939	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, copyist,
Maria Vos	47	1824-1906	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, etcher
Marie Molijn	34	1837-1932	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Sara Dekker-Sartorius	35	1836-1913	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist
Swanida Wildrik	64	1807-1883	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Teunsijna Johanna Albertina Fles-Kranenburg	44	1827-1878	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Thérèse Schwartz	20	1851-1918	Exhibited	painter, pastelist, etcher, lithographer

³³⁰ "RKD Artists," RKD Research, accessed June 3, 2024, https://research.rkd.nl/nl/zoeken?size=n_20_n&filters%5B0%5D%5Bfield%5D=db&filters%5B0%5D%5Bvalues%5D%5B0%5D=rkdartists&filters%5B0%5D%5Btype%5D=all.

The Tentoonstelling van Voorwerpen van Nijverheid en Kunst door Vrouwen Vervaardigd 1878

Artist	Age	Data	Role exhibition	Occupation (art)
A.G. Keijzer	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
H. Hanlo	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
H.A. Zöhr	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
J. Chalon	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Unknown
Johanna Wilhelmina von Stein Callenfels	47	1831-1916	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Louise Jansen	43	1835-1912	Exhibited	painter
M. de Court	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Unknown
M.C. Donker	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Mevr. A. Harmens-Ledeboer	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
N. Hoogewerf	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
S. de Koning	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Unknown
Sara Hendriks	32	1846-1925	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Anna Burger	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Anna Maria Immerzeel	61	1817-1883	Exhibited	painter
Anna Maria van Schurman	Deceased	1607-1678	Exhibited	glass engraver, engraver, calligrapher, papercut artist, etcher, painter, draftsperson, embroiderer
Anna Peters or Ida Peters	Unknown	1843-1926 and 1846-1923	Exhibited	painter
Anna Sandick	60	1818-1904	Exhibited	painter
Boll	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
C.J. de Beaufort-Steengracht	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Unknown

Catherina Geetruida Doijer	20	1858-1913	Organisational role	Unknown
Charlotte van der Kellen	21	1857-1942	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist
Clémence Pruijs van der Hoeven	39	1839-1922	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, pastelist
Cornelia Boeke	39	1839-1896	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist
D. Zeper	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
De Witte	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
E. H. Beukse	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Eleonora Elisabeth Hamburger-Fairbairn	69	1809-1858	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, copyist
Eline Robin	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	schilder
Elisabeth Alida Haanen	69	1809-1845	Exhibited	paper artist, graphic artist, papercut artist, etcher, painter, draftsperson
Elisabeth Maria Petronella Repelius	38	1840-1920	Unknown	Collector
Elisabeth Verwoert	42	1836-1905	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman,
F.S.C. Speelman	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	aristocrat, watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
G. A. L. van Dijk	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Geetruida Catherina Gorter-ten Cate	50	1828-1907	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Hoedemaker Georgine Schwartze	24	1854-1935	Exhibited	sculptor, draughtswoman
Gerarda Henriëtte Matthijssen	48	1830-1907	Organizer and treasurer	teacher, photographer, gallery owner, art dealer, painter, illustrator, court supplier, art collector
Gerardina Jacoba van de Sande Bakhuijzen	52	1826-1895	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Gesine Vester	21	1857-1939	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Gevaerts-van Haren	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Gijsberta Catharina Moens-ter Kuile	28	1850-1924	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman

H. Uitterdijk-Rethel	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
H.Z. Reijnders-Swanenburg	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Hendrica de Graaf	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Hendrika Floris	43	1835-1901	Exhibited	painter
Hendrika Landré-van der Kellen	32	1846-1903	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist
Henriëtte Geertruid Knip	Deceased	1783-1842	Exhibited	draughtswoman, painter, watercolorist, gouaches, teacher
Ida Molijn	29	1849-1940	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, copyist
Ida van Lokhorst	24	1854-1881	Exhibited	painter
J. de Haan	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
J. Reijnders, Arnhem	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
J. W. Engelman	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Jacoba Antonia de Graaff	21	1857-1940	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Jacqueline Francina Nicola	29	1849-1917	Exhibited	painter
Jeanette Françoise Struben	23	1853-1882	Exhibited	artist
Lena Margaretha van Tienen	24	1854-1924	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Louise Françoise van der Beek	49	1829-1904	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, lithographer
Louise Lintz	40	1838-1911	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, pastelist
M. Visscher	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
M.H. van der Kooi	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Marie Molijn	41	1837-1933	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Marie van Ravenswaaij	18	1860-1930	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Mevr. Boonen	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Unknown

Mevr. IJ. Post	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	painter
Petronella Wilhelmina van Wesel	29	1849-1930	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Pietronella Peters	30	1848-1924	Exhibited	painter
Sara Dekker-Sartorius	42	1836-1914	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist
Schilthuis	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Sientje Mesdag-van Houten	44	1834-1909	Exhibited	watercolorist, etcher, art collector, panorama painter, painter, draughtswoman
Teunsijna Johanna Albertina Fles-Kranenburg	51	1827-1879	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Thérèse Schwartz	25	1851-1918	Exhibited	painter, pastelist, etcher, lithographer
V. Tellegen	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
W. Amons	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Wilhelmina Ludovica Filippo Jonxis-Laurillard Fallot	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman

The *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd 1882*

Artist	Age	Data	Role exhibition	Occupation (art)
Johanna Wilhelmina von Stein Callenfels	51	1831-1916	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
A. Boseker	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Student at Industrial School for Girls Amsterdam
Adolphiena Dirks-Giesse	26	1856-1981	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, amateur, copyist
Adriana Haanen	68	1814-1895	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Alice Emma Henriette Ronner	25	1857-1957	Exhibited	painter
Alida Lagerweij	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Anna Abrahams	33	1849-1930	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter
Anna Johanna Hoogewerff-van Stolk	29	1853-1938	Exhibited	painter, illustrator
Anna Pel	21	1861-1920	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Anna Peters	39	1843-1926	Exhibited	painter
Anna Wolterbeek	48	1834-1905	Exhibited	painter
Anne Veegens	32	1850-1942	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draftsman
Barbara Elisabeth van Houten	20	1862-1950	Exhibited	painter, draftsman, watercolorist, etcher, woodcuts, collector
Barones Adrienne Hoogendorp- 's Jacob	25	1857-1920	Exhibited	watercolorist, copyist (art), painter, aristocrat, draftsman
Bertha Froriep	49	1833-?	Exhibited	painter
Bertha Valkenburg	20	1862-1929	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Betsy Repelius	34	1848-1921	Exhibited	Watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Bramine Hubrecht	27	1855-1913	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, etcher, illustrator
Cato van Hoorn	31	1851-1939	Exhibited	painter
Cina van Es	33	1849-1891	Exhibited	painter

Clémence Pruijs van der Hoeven	43	1839-1922	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, pastelist
Cornelia Schouten	33	1849-1929	Exhibited	painter
Cornelia van der Hart	31	1851-1940	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, pen artist, etcher, illustrator, designer, lithographer, woodcuts, craftsman, art teacher
E. Kaiser	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter
Elisabeth Verwoert	46	1836-1905	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Ellen Hill	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Emma Fraissinet	39	1843-1912	Exhibited	painter
Emma Ronner	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter
Etha Fles	25	1857-1948	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Geetruida Catherina Gorterten Cate Hoedemaker	55	1828-1907	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Georgine Schwartze	28	1854-1935	Exhibited	sculptor, draughtswoman
Gerardina Jacoba van de Sande Bakhuijzen	56	1826-1895	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Gesine Vester	25	1857-1939	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
H. Stroh	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Student at Industrial School for Girls Amsterdam
Hélène Hamburger	46	1836-1919	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Hendrika Landré-van der Kellen	36	1846-1905	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist
Henrietta Schakel-van Hove, Voorthuijzen- van Hove	21	1861-1918	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Henriëtte Ronner-Knip	61	1821-1909	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Hermina van der Haas	39	1843-1921	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Hillegonda Femina Aleida Loder	32	1851-1897	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Ida Molijn	34	1849-1940	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, copyist

Jacoba Antonia de Graaff	38	1857-1940	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Johanne Marie Hovy	45	1837-1920	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Johanne Marie Julie Prölss	32	1851-1941	Exhibited	painter
Laura Theresa Alma Tadema (Lady)	30	1852-1909	Exhibited	pastelist, illustrator, painter
Louise Françoise van der Beek	53	1829-1904	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, lithographer
Louise Grübe	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	sculptor
M. Salm	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Student at Industrial School for Girls Amsterdam
M. von Reeken	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter
Margaretha Roosenboom	39	1843-1896	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Maria Vos	58	1824-1906	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist, etcher
Marie Bilders-van Bosse	45	1837-1900	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Marie Heineken	38	1844-1930	Exhibited	painter, pastelist, watercolorist
Marie Molijn	45	1837-1933	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Marie Wandscheer	26	1856-1936	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, pastelist, etcher
mevr. Van Willes	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter
Mina Günther	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, copyist
Petronella Gijsberta Leonarda van Oostveen	42	1839-1918	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Sara Dekker-Sartorius	46	1836-1914	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist
Sara Stracké-van Bosse	45	1837-1922	Exhibited	sculptor, painter, draughtswoman
Sara Teixeira de Mattos	68	1814-1893	Exhibited	painter
Sientje Mesdag-van Houten	48	1834-1909	Exhibited	watercolorist, etcher, art collector, panorama painter, painter, draughtswoman
Sophie Taurel	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Student at Industrial School for Girls Amsterdam

Swanida Wildrik	75	1807- 1883	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Thérèse Schwartze	31	1851- 1918	Exhibited	painter, pastelist, etcher, lithographer
Wally Moes	26	1856- 1918	Exhibited	author, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Wilh. (Cornelia) van Salk	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Wilhelmine Christine Gerardine Booms	26	1856- 1943	Exhibited	painter

The *Tentoonstelling van kunstwerken door vrouwen vervaardigd 1891*

Artist	Age	Data	Role exhibition	Occupation (art)
Charlotte Bouten	21	1870-1895	Organizer	painter, draughtswoman, etcher
Hendrika Wilhelmina Jacoba van der Pek	24	1867-1926	Organizer	painter, draughtswoman, teacher, lithographer, art critic
Jo Gram	26	1865-1930	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist, pastelist
Jo Koster	23	1868-1944	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, graphic artist, etcher, lithographer, decorative artist, woodcuts, textile artist, illustrator, teacher
Margot Knipscheer	26	1865-1951	Organizer	painter, draughtswoman
Wilhelmina Maria Terpstra-Reerink	28	1863-1929	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher

The *Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid 1898*

Artist	Age	Data	Role exhibition	Occupation (art)
A. Chits	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	photographer
A.J. Magielse	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	photographer
Adrienne van Hogendorp-s' Jacob	41	1857-1920	Exhibited	watercolorist, copyist (art), painter, aristocrat, draughtswoman
Aletta Ruijsch	38	1860-1930	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, teacher
Anna Abrahams	49	1849-1930	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter
Anna Clasina Leijer	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	photographer
Anna Elisabeth Batelt	29	1869-Unknown	Exhibited	etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Anna Kerling	36	1862-1955	Exhibited	collector, watercolorist, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Anna Sandick	80	1818-1904	Exhibited	painter
Anna Veegens	48	1850-1942	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Barbara Elisabeth van Houten	36	1862-1950	Exhibited, board member Fine Arts	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist, etcher, woodcuts, collector
Betsy Repelius	50	1848-1921	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Betzy Rezora Berg	48	1850-1922	Exhibited	painter
Bramine Hubrecht	43	1855-1913	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, etcher, illustrator
Cato Kool	38	1860-1933	Exhibited	watercolorist, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Charlotte Bouten	28	1870-1895	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher
Charlotte Polkijn	46	1852-1931	Exhibited, president photography	photographer
Christina Abigaël van der Willigen	38	1850-1931	Exhibited	Watercolorist, etcher, graphic artist, painter, draughtswoman
Clara Donkersloot	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	photographer
Clémence Pruijs van der Hoeven	59	1839-1922	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, pastelist

Corine Ingelse	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	photographer
Cornelia van der Hart	47	1851-1940	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, pen artist, etcher, illustrator, designer, lithographer, woodcuts, craftsman, art teacher
Eugenie Vlierboom	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman, miniaturist
G.M.T. Mulder	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	photographer
Geesje Mesdag- van Calcar	48	1850-1936	Exhibited	watercolorist, etcher, graphic artist, painter, draughtswoman, art collector
Georgine Schwartz	44	1854-1935	Exhibited	sculptor, draughtswoman
Gerardina Jacoba van de Sande Bakhuijzen	72	1826-1895	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Gesina Dake	34	1864-1911	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher
Grada Hermina Marius	44	1854-1919	Exhibited	art critic, biographer, watercolorist, publicist, art teacher, painter, draughtswoman
Henriëtte Ronner-Knip	77	1821-1909	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Hermina van der Haas	55	1843-1921	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Jacoba Antonia de Graaff	41	1857-1940	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Jeanne Hoyack	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	sculptor
Jo Koster	30	1868-1944	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, graphic artist, etcher, lithographer, craftsman, woodcuts, textile artist, illustrator, teacher
Johanna Behrend-Croiset van der Kop	37	1861-1943	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist, etcher, art critic
Lucie van Dam van Isselt (Ekker)	27	1871-1949	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist, lithographer, etcher
M. Termaat, munchen	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	photographer
Margaretha Cornelia Boellaard	Deceased	1795-1872	Exhibited	painter, lithographer, aristocrat, art collector
Margaretha Roosenboom	55	1843-1896	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Maria Johanna Baukema-Philipse	35	1863-1952	Exhibited	watercolorist, etcher, painter, draughtswoman, pen artist, pastelist, designer
Maria Vos	74	1824-1906	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, etcher

Marie Bilders-van Bosse	61	1837-1900	Exhibited, board member Fine Arts	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Marie Heijermans	39	1859-1937	Exhibited	author, lithographer, art critic, painter, draughtswoman
Marie Wandscheer	42	1856-1936	Exhibited	pastelist, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
R. Slaterus, eigen zaak leeuwarden	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	photographer
S. v.d. Weg	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	photographer
Sara Dekker-Sartorius	62	1836-1914	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist
Sara Ledebøer	31	1867-1952	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Sientje Mesdag-van Houten	64	1834-1909	Exhibited, board member Fine Arts	watercolorist, etcher, art collector, panorama painter, painter, draughtswoman
Sophie Hirschmann	27	1871-1937	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Sophie Jacoba Wilhelmina Grothe	46	1852-1926	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter
Stoof, employee Utrecht	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	photographer
Suze Bisschop-Robertson	43	1855-1922	Exhibited, committee Fine Arts	watercolorist, pastelist, painter, draughtswoman, teacher
Thérèse Schwartze	47	1851-1918	Exhibited	painter, pastelist, etcher, lithographer
Tine Mesdag	39	1859-1936	Exhibited	painter
Wilhelmina Haakma van Royen	24	1874-1964	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Wilhelmina Johanna Anderson Miltner	31	1867-1946	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher
Wilhelmina Maria Terpstra-Reerink	35	1863-1929	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher
Wilhelmine Kiehl	36	1862-1922	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist

De Vrouw 1813-1913

Artist	Age	Data	Role exhibition	Occupation (art)
Johanna Wilhelmina von Stein Callenfels	82	1831-1916	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Lina Gratama	40	1873-1946	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Marie de Jonge	41	1872-1951	Exhibited	art teacher, painter, aristocrat, draughtswoman
Adeline Maud van Schaik-Russell	37	1876-1965	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Adri Bleuland van Oordt	51	1862-1944	Exhibited	watercolorist, pastelist, painter, draughtswoman
Adrienne van Hogendorp-s' Jacob	56	1857-1920	Exhibited	watercolorist, copyist (art), painter, aristocrat, draughtswoman
Afina Goudschaal	36	1877-1956	Exhibited	painter, miniaturist
Agatha Wichers	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	watercolorist, draughtswoman
Agathe Zethraeus	41	1872-1966	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Agnieta Gijswijt	40	1873-1926	Exhibited, treasurer, committee Historical Department: The Woman in Art, Science and Sports, committee Fine Art	painter, etcher, watercolorist, draughtswoman, teacher
Aletta Ruijsch	53	1860-1930	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, teacher
Alice Emma Henriette Ronner	56	1857-1957	Exhibited	painter
Alice Plato	24	1889- Unknown	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Anna Catharina Brouwer	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman, etcher, engraver, illustrator, painter
Anna Kerling	51	1862-1955	Exhibited	collector, watercolorist, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Anna Lehmann	37	1876-1956	Exhibited	etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Anna Maria Kruijff	43	1870-1946	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher, sculptor, illustrator
Anna Maria Wegman	45	1868-1945	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher

Anna Wijthoff	50	1863-1944	Exhibited	lithographer, watercolorist, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Anna Wijtman	56	1857-1941	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Anna Wolterbeek	79	1834-1905	Exhibited	painter
Annie Abresch	33	1880-1926	Exhibited	bookbinder, designer
Annie Tollenaar/Ermeling	48	1865-1932	Exhibited, graphic operations statistics	sculptor, lithographer, draughtswoman
Anny Raeskin-Nanning	23	1890/1891-1915	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Ans van den Berg	40	1873-1942	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, pastelist
Antje Egter van Wissekerke	41	1872-1969	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, lithographer
Bernardina Midderigh-Bokhorst	18	1895-1972	Exhibited	watercolorist, sculptor, etcher, graphic artist, designer, illustrator, decorative artist, lithographer, miniaturist, fashion draughtswoman, pastelist, political draughtswoman, draughtswoman, art teacher, textile artist, muralist
Bertha van Hasselt	35	1878-1932	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, lithographer, art teacher
Besty Westendorp-Osieck	33	1880-1968	Exhibited	watercolorist, etcher, painter, pastelist, draughtswoman, pen artist, collector, ethnographic collector
Betsy Repelius	65	1848-1921	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Betsy Stam	39	1874-onbekend	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Betsy van Manen	42	1873-1915	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher, lithographer, illustrator
Betzy Rezora Berg	63	1850-1922	Exhibited	painter
Bramine Hubrecht	58	1855-1913	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, etcher, illustrator
C. Blawé	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-

Carola Herrmann	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter
Catharina Elisabeth Mirandolle	43	1870-1951	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher, lithographer
Catherine Lumine Elise van Ermel Scherer	33	1880-1971	Exhibited	painter
Cato Berlage	24	1889-1976	Exhibited, graphic operations statistics	graphic designer, illustrator, textile artist
Cato Elise Cosman	39	1873-1934	Exhibited	painter
Cato Repelaer van Driel	33	1880-1962	Exhibited	etcher, painter, aristocrat, draughtswoman
Cécile Gertrude van den Berch van Heemstede	28	1885-1932	Exhibited	sculptor, painter, draughtswoman
Charlotte Boom-Pothuis	46	1867-1945	Exhibited	lithographer, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Christina Abigaël van der Willigen	63	1850-1931	Exhibited	watercolorist, etcher, graphic artist, painter, draughtswoman
Christina Chalon	Deceased	1749-1808	Exhibited	printmaker, etcher, painter, draughtswoman, pen artist
Christina Rudolfine van Pesch	40	1873-1947	Exhibited	painter
Christine Moret	43	1870-1952	Exhibited	painter
Clémence Pruijs van der Hoeven	74	1839-1922	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, pastelist
Coba Surie	34	1879-1970	Exhibited	watercolorist, graphic artist, painter, draughtswoman, lithographer
Constance van de Vijssel	31	1882-1977	Exhibited	painter, etcher
Cor de Gavere	36	1877-1955	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Cornelia Maria Warnsinck-Haakman	Deceased	1787-1834	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Cornelia Scheffer-Lamme	Deceased	1769-1839	Exhibited	miniaturist, draughtswoman, painter, etcher, copyist
Corrie Pabst	48	1865-1943	Exhibited	watercolorist, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Corry Gallas	28	1885-1967	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Corry van Dam-Slager	44	1883-1927	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist

Dea Meeter	28	1885-1935	Exhibited	sculptor, draughtswoman
Dinah Kohnstamm	44	1869-1942	Exhibited, committee Historical Department: The Woman in Art, Science and Sports, committee Fine Arts	painter, watercolorist, graphic artist, linocut artist, etcher, lithographer, draughtswoman, decorative artist
Dre. Gravin P. van Heerdt-Quarles	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
E. Hardenberg Schlette	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
E.A. van der Veer	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
E.C. van Manen	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
Edmée Broers	37	1876-1955	Exhibited	painter
Egberdina Hester Jaarsma	34	1879-1975	Exhibited	painter
Elisabeth Adriani-Hovy	40	1873-1957	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, etcher, lithographer
Elisabeth Brandt	54	1853-1907	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, graphic designer
Elisabeth Coster	34	1879-1955	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher
Elisabeth Francisca Nieuwenhuis	31	1882-1971	Exhibited	wood engraver, craftsman, illustrator, watercolorist, woodcutter (printmaker), etcher, painter, draughtswoman, teacher
Elisabeth Mathilda Keer	42	1871-Unknown	Exhibited	etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Elize Hardenberg	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
Else Kalshoven Biermans	35	1878-1927	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Emilie van Kerckhoff	46	1867-1960	Exhibited	watercolorist, draughtswoman
Engelina Helena Schlette	38	1875-1954	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, lithographer
Etta Tramburg	33	1880-1961	Exhibited	painter
Fransje Carbasius	28	1885-1984	Exhibited	sculptor

Frederika Henriëtte Broeksmit	38	1875-1945	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher, lithographer
Froukje Wartena	58	1855-1933	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher
G. te Winkel	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Geesje Mesdag- van Calcar	63	1850-1936	Exhibited	Aquarellist, etser, graficus, schilder, tekenaar, kunstverzamelaar, kunstenaarsechtgenote
Georgine Schwartz	81	1854-1935	Exhibited	sculptor, draughtswoman
Gerarda Wilhelmina ten Hoet	56	1857-1939	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher
Gijsberta Catharina Moens-ter Kuile	63	1850-1924	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Gorinne Smit	33	1883-1956	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, etcher, engraver (printmaker), lithographer, pastelist
H.C.L. Fritz	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter
H.G. Dingemans-Numans	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
Hedwig Kleintjes- van Osselen	42	1871-1936	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Helena Christina van de Pavord Smits	46	1867-1941	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Hendrika van Gelder	43	1870-1943	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Hendrika Wilhelmina Jacoba van der Pek	46	1867-1926	Organizer	painter, draughtswoman, etcher, lithographer, art critic
Henriëtte Adriana Anette van der Goes	32	1881-1972	Exhibited	aristocrat, watercolorist, draughtswoman
Henriëtte Asscher	55	1858-1933	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Henriëtte Breedveld	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Kunstenaar
Henriëtte de Vries	46	1867-1942	Exhibited	watercolorist, graphic artist, painter, draughtswoman, designer, lithographer, art teacher, illustrator, secondary art teacher
Henriette Dicks	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-

Henriëtte Johanna Reuchlin-Lucardie	36	1877-1970	Exhibited	lithographer, watercolorist, engraver (printmaker), etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Henriette Susanna Angélique Repelaer van Driel	Deceased	1807-1883	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, aristocrat, copyist
Henriette van Hove van Voorthuizen	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
Henriëtte Willebeek le Mair	24	1889-1966	Exhibited	watercolorist, etcher, glass painter, illustrator, ceramic designer, plate maker, painter, draughtswoman, muralist
Hetty Broedelet	36	1877-1966	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Hilda de Sturler de Frienisberg	44	1872-1916	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Hinke Gorter	27	1886-1956	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Hortense Kempe	27	1886-1974	Exhibited	pastelist, painter, draughtswoman
Ima van Eysinga	32	1881-1958	Exhibited	aristocrat, watercolorist, illustrator, lithographer, textile artist, painter, draughtswoman
Jacoba Antonia de Graaff	56	1857-1940	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Jacoba Bosscha	66	1858-1924	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, illustrator, designer
Jacoba de Poll	41	1872-1966	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, pastelist, draughtswoman, aristocrat
Jacoba van Heemskerck van Beest	37	1876-1923	Exhibited, committee Fine Arts	painter, draughtswoman, graphic artist, etcher, lithographer, woodcutter, glass painter, monumental artist, mosaicist, aristocrat
Jeanne Henny-Saueressig	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Jeanne Wasch	29	1884-1979	Exhibited	pastelist, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Jenny van Wijk	34	1879-1938	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Jo Gram	48	1865-1930	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist, pastelis
Jo Koster	45	1868-1944	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, graphic artist, etcher, lithographer, craftsman, woodcutter,

				textile artist, illustrator, teacher
Jo Metelerkamp	37	1875-1954	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Jo Schreve-Ijzerman	46	1867-1933	Exhibited	sculptor
Jo Vermijne	27	1886-1966	Exhibited	graphic artist, painter, draughtswoman
Johanna Alida Heynis	45	1868-1931	Exhibited	painter
Johanna Bleuland van Oordt	48	1865-1948	Exhibited	sculptor, modeler, painter, draughtswoman
Johanna Elisabeth Judith Rutgers	62	1851-1919	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Johanna Gijselman	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter, miniaturist
Johanna van Buuren Martens	32	1881-1959	Exhibited	painter
Johanna van Deventer	44	1869-1959	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Leonora Johanna van Bijsterveld	25	1888-1955	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Lize Rose	38	1875-1944	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Lizzy Ansingh	38	1875-1959	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist, graphic artist, illustrator, designer, art collector, author
Lizzy Schouten	26	1887-1967	Exhibited	graphic artist, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Lolkje Anema	42	1871-1953	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Lotte Uyldert- Mayer	37	1876-1960	Exhibited	painter, pastelist, draughtswoman
Louise Alice Andrine van Blommestein	31	1882-1965	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, illustrator
Louise E. Beijerman	30	1883-1970	Exhibited	sculptor, designer, art historian, teacher
Louise Jacoba van Essen	43	1870-1936	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Louise Stam	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman, miniaturist
Lucie van Dam van Isselt (Ekker)	42	1871-1949	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist, lithographer, etcher

M. Schotel	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
M.A. Mees	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
Margaretha Cornelia Boellaard	Deceased	1795-1872	Exhibited	painter, lithographer, aristocrat, art collector
Margaretha van Wisselingh	58	1855-1926	Exhibited	painter, pastelist, draughtswoman
Margo de Boer	42	1871-1956	Exhibited	painter
Maria Adeline Alice Schweistal	49	1864-1950	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, etcher, modeler
Maria Anna Bleeker	33	1885-1918	Exhibited	etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Maria Francisca Hubertina Janssen	35	1878- 1925/1945	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Maria Geertruida Goeje-Barbiers	Deceased	1801-1808	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist, lithographer
Maria Margaretha van Os	Deceased	1779-1862	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Marianne Hartong	34	1879-1974	Exhibited	watercolorist, tapestry artist, painter, draughtswoman
Marie Heineken	69	1844-1930	Exhibited	painter, pastelist, watercolorist
Marie Jorissen-Cox	41	1872-1965	Exhibited	painter draughtswoman
Marie Kelting	27	1886-1969	Exhibited	graphic artist, painter, watercolorist, draughtswoman, pen artist, pastelist, lithographer
Marie van Regteren Altena	45	1868-1958	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Marie van Waning- Stevens	39	1874-1943	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Marie Vlieland Hein	42	1871-1955	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist
Marie Wandscheer	57	1856-1936	Exhibited	pastellist, etscher, schilder, tekenaar
Mary Valkema- Herrmann	33	1880-1952	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman
Mej. C. Plaat	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	draughtswoman
Mej. de Beer	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	Tekenaar

Mieke Blauuw	31	1882-1953	Exhibited	sculptor, draughtswoman
Mien Marchant	47	1866-1952	Exhibited	pastelist, painter
Mies Drabbe	38	1875-1956	Exhibited	engraver (printmaker), etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Mina Günther	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter, copyist, draughtswoman
N. van Brakel- Cremer	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	sculptor, painter
Nellie Honig	34	1879-1945	Exhibited	lithographer, painter, draughtswoman
Nelly Bodenheim	39	1874-1951	Exhibited, committee Historical Department: The Woman in Art, Science and Sports, winner poster competition, designed the catalog for Fine Art	watercolorist, embroiderer, illustrator, paper cut artist, lithographer, designer, draughtswoman, textile artist
Nelly Goedewaagen	33	1880-1953	Exhibited	lithographer, watercolorist, etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Nettie Rapp	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	painter
Netty Lensvelt	31	1882-1976	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman, teacher
Nicoletta Brand	30	1883-1971	Exhibited	painter
Rachel van Dantzig	34	1878-1949	Exhibited	sculptor, etcher, draughtswoman
Roline Maria Wichers Wierdsma	22	1891-1970	Exhibited	graphic artist, graphic draughtswoman, medalist, draughtswoman, woodcutter
Rosa Spanjaard	47	1866-1937	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman
Saar de Swart	52	1861-1951	Exhibited	sculptor, art collector, collector, patron, muse (person)
Sara Hense	56	1857-1936	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter
Sara van Heukelom	28	1885-1963	Exhibited	draughtswoman, painter, etcher
Sophie Christina van den Wall Bake	47	1866-1915	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, watercolorist, lithographer

Sophie Jacoba Wilhelmina Grothe	61	1852-1926	Exhibited	painter, watercolorist
Suze Bisschop- Robertson	58	1855-1922	Exhibited, committee Fine Arts	watercolorist, pastelist, painter, draughtswoman, teacher
Suze de Lint	35	1878-1953	Exhibited	etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Thamine Tadama- Groeneveld	42	1871-1938	Exhibited	painter
Theodora Elisabeth Wolterbeek Muller	37	1876-1945	Exhibited	etcher, painter, draughtswoman
Thérèse Schwartz	62	1851-1918	Exhibited, president Fine Arts	painter, pastelist, etcher, lithographer
Thérèse van Berckel	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
Tilly van Beyma	35	1878-1955	Exhibited	painter, aristocrat, draughtswoman
Tine Baanders	23	1890-1971	Exhibited, graphic operations statistics	graphic designer, illustrator, designer, stamp engraver, typographer, lithographer, draughtswoman, decorative artist, bookbinder, academy teacher, textile artist painter
Tine Mesdag	54	1859-1936	Exhibited	painter
Wed. Dr. J. Langelaan	Unknown	Unknown	Exhibited	-
Wilhelmina Böhl	36	1877-1934	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher
Wilhelmina Drupsteen	33	1880-1966	Exhibited, committee Historical Department: The Woman in Art, Science and Sports	etcher, graphic designer, illustrator, lithographer, fashion draughtswoman, painter, draughtswoman, art teacher, typographer, muralist
Wilhelmina Geertruida van Idsinga	Deceased	1788-1819	Exhibited	Schilder, tekenaar, pastellist, kopiist, aristocraat
Wilhelmina Johanna Anderson Miltner	46	1867-1946	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, pastelist, copyist, aristocrat
Wilhelmina Mari	38	1875-1942	Exhibited	Decorative artist, painter
Wilhelmina Maria Terpstra-Reerink	50	1863-1929	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, etcher
Wilhelmina Suy	52	1861- onbekend	Exhibited	watercolorist, painter, draughtswoman

Willemien Testas	37	1876-1931	Exhibited	painter, draughtswoman, textile artist
Willemina Polenaar	29	1884- 1985/1996	Exhibited, graphic operations statistics	draughtswoman, lithographer, decorative artist, textile artist, textile designer