

en Land

Jan Toorop
Saying Grace, 1907



Oil on board. Collection Zeeuws Museum, acquired with support of the Rembrandt Association, the Leppink-Postuma Fund, the Mondriaan Fund, the Province of Zeeland and private donors. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

Jan Toorop is a welcome guest at De Brouwerij in Domburg. He paints various members of the Louwse family during his many stays. He draws and paints them in their home or in the orchard or on the land.

Toorop, who has recently converted to Catholicism, is fascinated by the Zeelanders' piety. This is represented in this painting by the warm glow that surrounds the family while saying grace. This painting style is known as Luminism: it is painted with light. In this work, farmer Bram Louwse and his two youngest daughters, Johanna and Adriana Maria, are sunk in prayer.

The Zeeuws Museum purchases the painting in 1981 without any knowledge of this history. When the painting's provenance is made known in 1999, following advice from the Restitutions Committee, the Zeeuws Museum contacts the Flersheims' heirs. The museum re-purchases the painting from the family with support from the Rembrandt Association, the Leppink-Postuma Fund, the Mondriaan Foundation, the Province of Zeeland and individual donors.

Sarcophagus



Lex de Meester. Bathub as cattle trough in the Poel, 1987. Collection ZB / Beeldbank Zeeland.

Farmers are usually practical and use whatever comes to hand. An unwanted bathtub can also serve perfectly as a cattle trough. Before bathtubs were generally available, farmers use other large containers.

Stolen art

Ernst and Gertrud Flersheim probably purchase *Saying Grace* in 1909 in Frankfurt am Main. They are friends of Jan Toorop and own other works by him. As Jews, they flee Nazi Germany in 1937 for Amsterdam. The property they leave behind, including their art collection, is confiscated. The couple are arrested during the occupation and murdered in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1944.

Madder

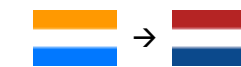
The red pigment alizarin is harvested from the root of the madder plant, *Rubia tinctorum*. It is mainly used for dyeing textiles – wool, silk and cotton – and leather. Madder is grown in Zeeland from the 16th century, with cultivation centred on Schouwen-Duiveland and Tholen. The roots are dried and then ground into a powder. The finest, light-yellow powder is the most expensive; the coarser dark-red powder is the cheapest. Samples are spread out on a black-painted plank in order to judge the colour and quality.

Madder is a true export product. In the 17th century the majority of madder from Zeeland is destined for the British textile industry. The red jackets of the British army are dyed with madder. These are the same 'redcoats' that briefly occupy parts of Zeeland in 1809 in an attempt to take control of Antwerp.



Tunic painted in madder, with reeste lace with buttons by C. Wendels, traditional catholic costume of Zuid-Beveland, 1828-1849 (wool, linen, cotton, silver). Collection Zeeland Society. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

The colours of the original Dutch flag are orange, white and blue. The orange consists of a mix of madder red and a yellow dye derived from the plant known as woold or dyer's rocket (*Reseda luteola*). Because the yellow bleaches in the sunlight, the orange band of the flag has to be regularly re-dyed. One day it is decided to stop topping up the yellow dye and the Dutch flag becomes red, white and blue.



In 1868 a cheap, synthetic alternative to alizarin is discovered. This heralds the end of large-scale madder cultivation. In recent decades there is a renewed demand for the natural pigment and some designers again use madder for dyeing their clothes.

Jan de Prentenknipper



Oudlandische Polder (detail). Cadzand, 1844 (watercolour on paper). Private collection.

Jan Huijszoon (1799-1870), alias Jan de Prentenknipper (Jan the Print Cutter), depicts the world around him in a very personal way. He moves from place to place in search of work, sometimes with his family. To subsidise his meagre income, he sells homemade biblical prints. Every now and then he is offered accommodation with a farmer. In exchange for a place to sleep, he makes a print of the farm and the work on the land. Jan wanders over the islands of Zuid-Beveland and Walcheren, through Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and Tholen.

Cutting is actually not the right word for what he does: Jan the Print Cutter whittles and carves the images from paper. He then sticks them onto a sheet of heavy paper and paints them with watercolours and sometimes adds a handwritten text. His images offer a fascinating perspective on life in Zeeland in the 19th century.

Frank Bruggeman,
Observing A Polder, 2011



Video still. Collection Zeeuws Museum.

The Hertogin Hedwigepolder (Duchess Hedwig Polder) is an area of natural beauty in the extreme eastern corner of Zeeuws-Vlaanderen. The land is reclaimed in 1907 and is part of the Verdrongen Land van Saeftinghe (Drowned Land of Saeftinghe). In an agreement with Belgium, it is decided to re-flood the polder to create more room for the Western Scheldt estuary. But the dismantling of the dykes is met with resistance by the local population and is the subject of an ongoing political battle for several years.

In his work *Observing A Polder*, artist and designer Frank Bruggeman (1966) brings the nature of the threatened area into the museum. Together with filmmaker Roel van Tour he has recorded the area's biodiversity before the Netherlands' most controversial polder disappears under water.

Grijpskerke

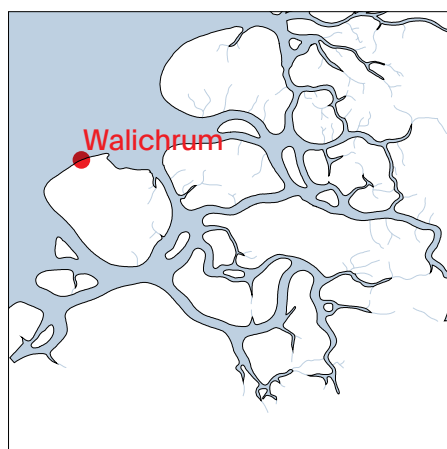
In 2003 a unique discovery is made on the edge of a field in Grijpskerke. During excavations pieces of earthenware from the late Iron Age (200-20 BC) come to the surface. Further digging reveals a pit measuring approximately 6 m³ mainly filled with earthenware pots and shards. It must once have contained between 240 and 340 pots. This is the largest discovery of Iron Age earthenware in the entire coastal region of northwest Europe.



100



Pot from a sacrifice pit in a field in Grijpskerke, c. 185 BC (earthenware). Collection/photo Stichting Cultureel Erfgoed Zeeland.

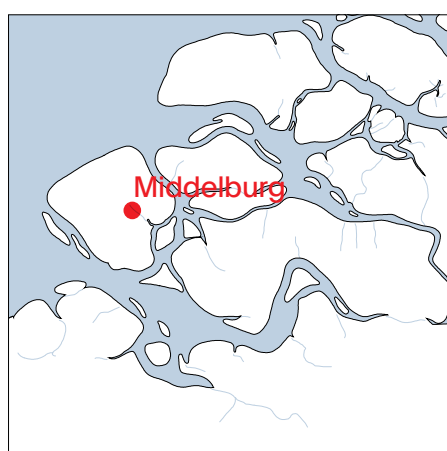


800

The pots vary in form, size and finish. They are decorated in various ways: rubbed smooth, with fingertip indentations, scratches, carvings and combed patterns. Quite special are the spatters of paint on a large number of pots, applied after the firing, which probably have a ritual meaning.



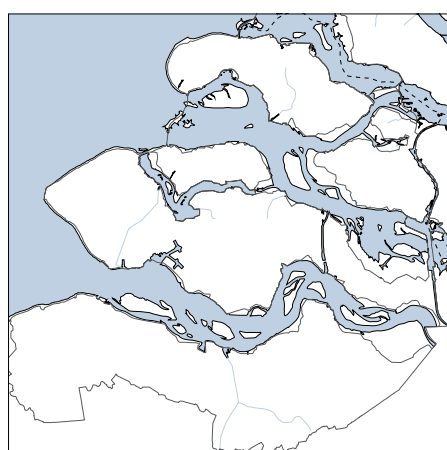
Pot from a sacrifice pit in a field in Grijpskerke, c. 185 BC (earthenware). Collection/photo Stichting Cultureel Erfgoed Zeeland.



1500

There are no villages on Walcheren in the late Iron Age. Families are spread across the countryside in largely self-sufficient farms. As this discovery shows, the families do have contact with each other. The large number of pots and the food remains found, including cow and sheep bones, suggest that they come from around twenty different farms. This may mean that as many as two hundred people are involved in the creation of the pit.

But what is the pit for? Around 185 BC, sometime in the spring, these people carry out a ritual, possibly following a natural disaster such as a flood. To appease the supernatural forces, they organise two ritual communal meals. The earthenware pots can no longer be used in everyday life so they are placed in the pit together with the food remnants after the meals. A man's pelvis and a dead dog complete the sacrifice.



2000

Compilers paleogeographic maps: Peter Vos & Sieb de Vries (Deltareis)

Walichrum

The boundary between land and water changes greatly over the centuries. For example, the row of dunes on the island of Walcheren facing the North Sea has once been much wider. In the early Middle Ages (AD 450-1050) there is a settlement called Walichrum, north of Domburg. It forms the trade link between the hinterland and ports in England, Scandinavia and northern France.

In December 1923 the remains of a skeleton attached to the base plank of a coffin are revealed on the beach at Berkenbosch, between Oostkapelle and Domburg. Little is known about it at the time, except that the man probably has lived in Walichrum.



SCEZ archaeologist Robert van Dierendonck and physical anthropologist Raphael Panhuysen from ANTHRO.NL (to the right) discuss aspects of the lower leg bones of the mediaeval skeleton. Photo Stichting Cultureel Erfgoed Zeeland.

In the meantime, there has been renewed interest in Walichrum and also in this find. Tree ring research conducted on the plank in 2015 shows that it came from an oak tree that stood in the Rhineland in Germany. It is felled between 681 and 703. The plank is first part of a boat, which explains how it arrives in Walichrum. Using the carbon-dating technique, the male skeleton is now dated to the period 666-778.



Base plank of a coffin with remains of a man from a grave-eroded into the sea, near the early medieval settlement Walichrum, close to Domburg, 681-778 (oak, human bones). Collection Stichting Cultureel Erfgoed Zeeland, Zeeland Society. Photo SCEZ.

The Middelburg

In 1961 an archaeological dig takes place in Middelburg Abbey, which is largely destroyed by bombing and fire during the Second World War.

The abbey is located on a natural elevation in the landscape, an attractive site for a settlement in an area surrounded by water. The settlement of Middelburg began at the end of the 9th century with the construction of a circular rampart. It is constructed by a local ruler to guard against threats from hostile groups. In 1123 the first group of monks settles on this site and construction of the abbey begins. It is expanded over the centuries until the Norbertine monks are forced to leave the abbey in 1574.



Shoes, 9th/10th century (leather). Collection Stichting Cultureel Erfgoed Zeeland. Photo Andra van Riel.

These shoes are probably worn by a woman in the 9th or 10th century. They are made from cowhide. Each household has one or more cows in this period. When a cow is slaughtered, practically nothing is thrown away.



Pilgrim's horn found in a cesspit under the princes' accommodation in Middelburg Abbey, 1600-1550 (white-burning clay). Collection Stichting Cultureel Erfgoed Zeeland. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

This pilgrim's horn has been found in a cesspit. It is a souvenir from a pilgrimage, probably in the region of Aachen, where there are several holy sites. This is also one of the areas that is a source of the white-burning clay from which this horn is made.

The sound of the pilgrim's horn refers to the Book of Revelation, which heralds the end of the world. The horns are also believed to have supernatural powers. Upon arriving home, the pilgrim blows the horn to dispel the threat of a thunderstorm or a lunar eclipse. Given that this horn is found in the abbey, it raises the question as to whether it too has been used in such a non-Christian manner.

中间的城堡

There are many objects in museums that we know little or nothing about. Knowledge fades and disappears over the years, creating space for new interpretations. In his sculptural works and performances, Maarten Vanden Eynde (Leuven, 1977) connects pieces of the past from the perspective of a future archaeologist.

IKEA is currently one of the world's largest companies, selling its products internationally on a vast scale. The SKÅCK, SMULA and ÖDMJUK products will therefore make up a substantial part of the geological layer of our time. Vanden Eynde's work refers to the Swedish company's constantly expanding production, the impact it has on the world and what will remain in the future. The work also deals with the problem of restoration when only a very small portion of an object has survived. He uses special restoration cement to turn the shards of an IKEA cup into a vase that calls to mind an amphora of the classical antiquity.



Maarten Vanden Eynde, IKEA Vase, 2010 (earthenware, restoration paste). Collection Zeeuws Museum, acquired with support of the BankGiro Loterij. Photo Jan Torfs.