



**United States Embassy The Hague**  
ART in Embassies Exhibition

**Couwenberg Puff #3**, 2014

Laser cut buckram, origami, and wood  
9 x 14 x 11 in. (22,9 x 35,6 x 27,9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Baltimore, Maryland

# Art in Embassies



Established in 1963, the U.S. Department of State's office of Art in Embassies (AIE) plays a vital role in our nation's public diplomacy through a culturally expansive mission, creating temporary and permanent exhibitions, artist programming, and publications. The Museum of Modern Art first envisioned this global visual arts program a decade earlier. In the early 1960s, President John F. Kennedy formalized it, naming the program's first director. Now with over 200 venues, AIE curates temporary and permanent exhibitions for the representational spaces of all U.S. chanceries, consulates, and embassy residences worldwide, selecting and commissioning contemporary art from the U.S. and the host countries. These exhibitions provide international audiences with a sense of the quality, scope, and diversity of both countries' art and culture, establishing AIE's presence in more countries than any other U.S. foundation or arts organization.

AIE's exhibitions allow foreign citizens, many of whom might never travel to the United States, to personally experience the depth and breadth of our artistic heritage and values, making what has been called a: "footprint that can be left where people have no opportunity to see American art."

*For fifty years, Art in Embassies has played an active diplomatic role by creating meaningful cultural exchange through the visual arts. The exhibitions, permanent collections and artist exchanges connect people from the farthest corners of an international community. Extending our reach, amplifying our voice, and demonstrating our inclusiveness are strategic imperatives for America. Art in Embassies cultivates relationships that transcend boundaries, building trust, mutual respect and understanding among peoples. It is a fulcrum of America's global leadership as we continue to work for freedom, human rights and peace around the world.*

— John Forbes Kerry  
U.S. Secretary of State



# Introduction

This Residence is an important symbol of America's relationship with the Netherlands. The very first American Embassy, also the residence of our first Ambassador, John Adams, was established in The Hague in 1782. Our two countries have shared diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties for centuries.

To illustrate the strength of our friendship, we have chosen to focus on the cross fertilization between American and Dutch artists in the art exhibition in our Residence.

Twentieth-century American art has many excellent examples that show the impact of Dutch art on American artists, and of Dutch artists who found their home and inspiration in the United States. The exhibition here at the Residence is a selection of contemporary American works of art that highlight this influence. It also includes paintings by William Henry Singer Jr., an American artist who found his style in Europe – in Holland and Norway. This exhibition, moreover, represents the diversity of American society. The works of Pakan Penn are an example of a Cambodian immigrant in the United States who has made a career as a painter.

We are most appreciative of the Art in Embassies program and of the artists, galleries, and in particular the Singer Museum in Laren, who have loaned their works in order to make this exhibition a reality. A special thanks to curator Sarah Tanguy and registrar Jamie Arbolino, for their constant support, encouragement, and knowledge.

We hope that our many friends and visitors will enjoy these works of art as much as we enjoyed putting the exhibition together, and that through this exhibition one will see the deep cultural ties that unite our two countries.

**Ambassador Timothy Broas**

*The Hague  
September 2014*

# Sharon Core 1965

Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, Sharon Core received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Georgia in 1987, and a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Yale University School of Art in 1998, where she was awarded the George Sakier Memorial Prize for Excellence in Photography. Her work has been shown in solo and group shows throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia, and can be found in many public and private collections.

The images in her *Early American* and *1610 – 1907* series extend the tradition of still life painting, or *stilleven* in Dutch. Markers of wealth and status, depictions of fruits and flowers are also considered emblems of mortality and the brevity of life. For *Early American*, Core draws inspiration from the early nineteenth century American still life painter Raphaelle Peale, painstakingly reproducing the light and texture of the originals, down to shadow and brushstrokes on the furniture. Core's work is a triumph of multi-level trompe l'œil – trumping the eye by turning a painting that aspires to lifelikeness into a photograph that aspires to painting by using a technology designed to freeze a moment. Says Core, who lives in the rich countryside of the Hudson Valley in New York, where she grows most of the flowers and fruits found in her still life images: "It is intriguing for me to do this because the genre of flower painting is really dead now."

[www.yanceyrichardson.com](http://www.yanceyrichardson.com)

[www.guggenheim.org](http://www.guggenheim.org)

<http://lightbox.time.com/2013/03/26/painting-with-a-camera-sharon-cores-early-american/#1>



**Core** Early American, Lemons, 2011

Archival pigment print, 14¾ x 18¼ in. (37,5 x 46,4 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Yancey Richardson Gallery, New York, New York



**Core** Early American, Apples in Porcelain Basket, 2007

Archival pigment print, 15 x 18¼ in. (38,1 x 46,4 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Yancey Richardson Gallery, New York, New York



**Core 1886**, 2011

Archival pigment print  
25¼ x 20 in. (64,1 x 50,8 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Yancey Richardson Gallery,  
New York, New York



**Core 1610**, 2011  
Archival pigment print  
19 x 14¾ in. (48,3 x 37,5 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Yancey Richardson Gallery,  
New York, New York



# Annet Couwenberg 1950

“As I would like to make an analogy to architecture, the shelter as much as the body and clothing functions as a place for addressing our understanding of self and culture. Being born and raised in the Netherlands I am very aware that my Dutch heritage is woven into my art. The work is rooted in civic responsibility, in the work ethic tempered by socialism and Calvinism, in austerity, constraint and certain kind of self-denial. My work is based on the concept of clothing as metaphor that examines the precarious balance between the constraints of social norm and our private desires. I use the starched ruffled collar as a symbol of constraint and opulence at the same time. The collar becomes my cultural identity and acts as a receptacle for introspection to distinguishing between what we are and what we have learned to be and desire.”

Annet Couwenberg, an artist and educator born in the Netherlands, received a Master of Fine Arts degree from Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in textile arts from Syracuse University, Syracuse (New York), both in the United States. Couwenberg served as the Fiber Department Chair at the Maryland Institute College of Art (Baltimore) from 1989 until 2008, when she stepped down to spearhead the development of Smart Textiles. As an artist, she has received numerous individual awards from the Maryland State and Ohio State art councils and had the honor, in 2014, to work with a scientist as a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellow. The subject of many articles and a 2003 monograph, she has work in numerous private and public collections, among them the Textile Museum in Tilburg, the Netherlands. She has participated in exhibitions around the world, including at the Gyeonggi MoMa and HOMA in Seoul, Korea; the Museum of Arts & Design, New York City; the Delaware Center for Contemporary Arts, Wilmington; the Contemporary Museum, Baltimore, Maryland; the American Textile History Museum, Lowell, Massachusetts; and the Textile Museum, Tilburg, the Netherlands.

[www.annetcouwenberg.com](http://www.annetcouwenberg.com)



**Couwenberg** **Backstitch**, 2014

Laser cut buckram, origami, wood, and screws, 13 x 19 x 19 in. (33 x 48,3 x 48,3 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Baltimore, Maryland



**Couwenberg Puff #2**, 2014

Laser cut buckram, origami, and wood, 10 x 18 x 15 in. (25,4 x 45,7 x 38,1 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Baltimore, Maryland



**Couwenberg** Puff #3, 2014

Laser cut buckram, origami, and wood, 9 x 14 x 11 in. (22,9 x 35,6 x 27,9 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Baltimore, Maryland

# Willem de Kooning 1904-1997

“Even an abstract form has to have a likeness.”

Born in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, Willem de Kooning began his training as a commercial artist in 1916. At the same time he attended evening courses at the Rotterdam Academie voor Beldende Kunsten en Technische Wetenschappen (Rotterdam Academy) until 1924. Afterwards he studied at the Académie royale des Beaux-Arts in Brussels and the van Schelling School of Design in Antwerp. In 1926 the young artist emigrated to the U.S., where he worked illegally in New York as a commercial artist, window dresser, sign painter, and carpenter. There, de Kooning met other artists, including John Graham, Stuart Davis, and Arshile Gorky, and worked for the Federal Art Project, for which he did murals between 1935 and 1939. By 1935, he was able to devote himself entirely to painting. He shared a studio with Gorky and his early pictures were influenced by Gorky's surrealist style and by Pablo Picasso's painting. The gestural branch of the New York school, known as abstract expressionism, also inspired de Kooning. In 1938 de Kooning met Elaine Marie Fried, later known as Elaine de Kooning, whom he married in 1943. She also became a significant artist.

In 1950 he developed his first “Women” pictures, which are notable for such vehemence of handling that they at first caused a scandal. He retained this type of figuration until the 1990s, while working on abstract landscapes, mainly during the years between 1957 and 1961.

De Kooning taught at Black Mountain College in North Carolina in 1948, and at the Yale School of Art from 1950 to 1951. Naturalized as an American citizen in 1962, he left New York the following year to settle at Springs on Long Island. In 1964 he received one of the greatest distinctions awarded in America, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. By the time de Kooning participated in the 1954 Venice Biennale with one of his most important works, *Excavation*, he was regarded as a leading exponent of abstract expressionism. Other painters in this group included Jackson Pollock, Franz Kline, Arshile Gorky, Mark Rothko, Hans Hofmann, Adolph Gottlieb, Robert Motherwell, Philip Guston, and Clyfford Still. These years of his career were filled with numerous shows of his work and retrospectives. De Kooning's exceptional oeuvre is suffused with the duality of traditional figuration and abstract expressionist painting.

[www.willem-de-kooning.com](http://www.willem-de-kooning.com)



**De Kooning** no title, 1987

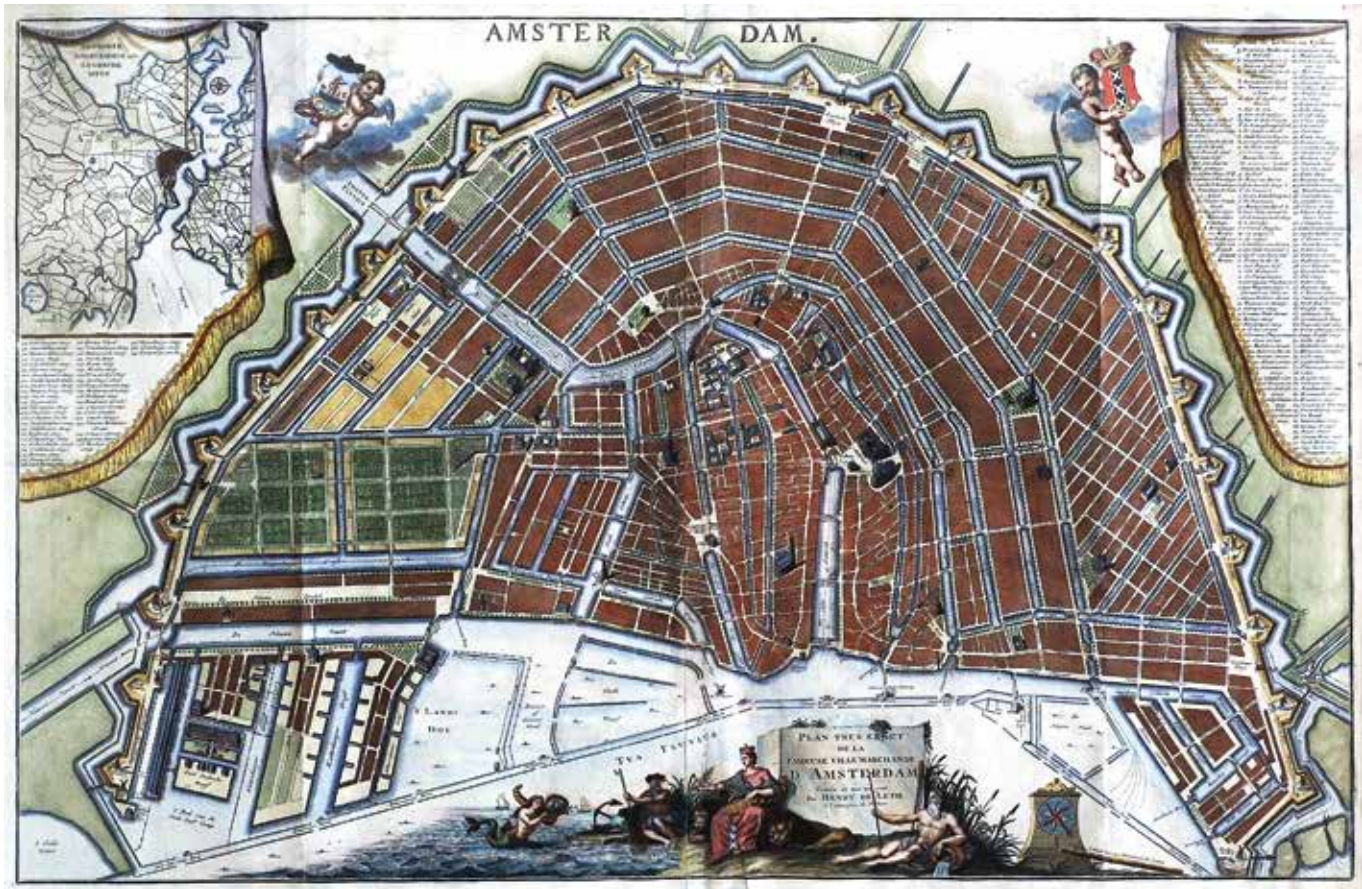
Oil on canvas, 70 x 80 in. (177,8 x 203,2 cm). © 2014 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

# Henry De Leth 1703-1766

Engraver, publisher, and painter, Henry De Leth was active in Amsterdam during the eighteenth century. He was one of the artists who collaborated on Het Zegepralant Kennemerland. He also worked for the Visscher family and eventually took over the business. De Leth is better known as an artist and engraver than as a cartographer although his historical atlas of the Netherlands was a very popular work.

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)





**De Leth** Plan très exact de la fameuse ville marchande d'Amsterdam, ca. 1734  
Hand colored copper engraving, 22% x 34% in. (57,5 x 87,9 cm). Bank of America Collection

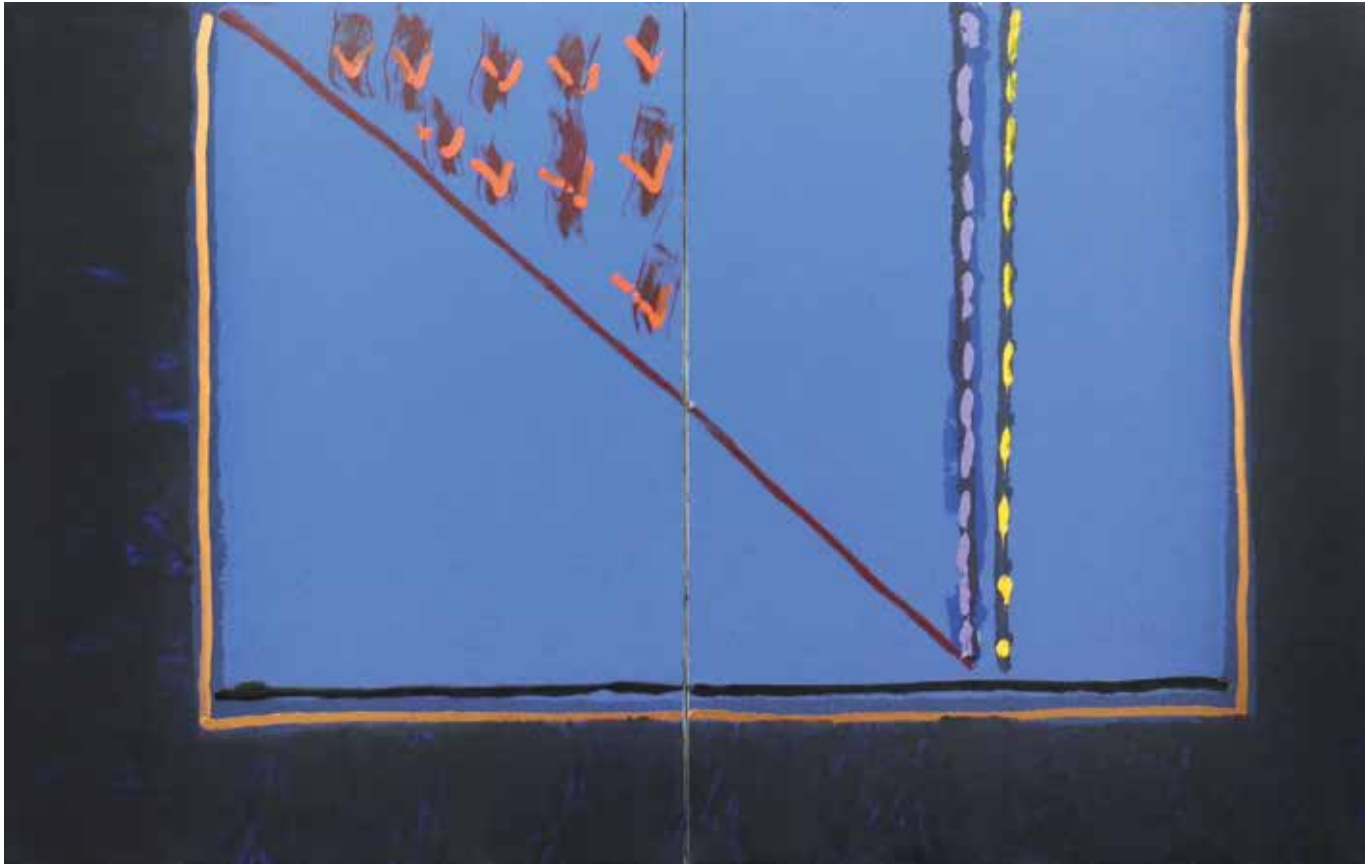
# Willem De Looper 1932-2009

Willem de Looper was born in 1932 in The Hague, the Netherlands. After the end of World War II, de Looper became fascinated by American publications, most notably *The New Yorker* magazine. The articles on art and music, as well as the advertising and depictions of New York found in the pages of *The New Yorker* inspired de Looper to move to the United States in 1950, joining his brother in Washington, D.C. Following his parents' wishes, he enrolled at American University to study economics and business, but soon changed his major to fine arts. De Looper spent the two years following his graduation in the United States Army in Germany. While stationed there, he used his spare time to read art journals and magazines and to visit major museums throughout Europe. He returned to Washington in 1959 and was hired as a guard at The Phillips Collection (then The Phillips Gallery), where he could see works by the artists he admired: Paul Klee, John Marin, and Arthur Dove. He made notebook drawings emulating their work and also pursued his career as an artist. De Looper continued both his painting and his work at The Phillips Collection, moving on to become assistant curator and eventually curator at the museum.

Although de Looper is most often identified as a second-generation Washington color school artist, his oeuvre taken as a whole reflects a distinct and independent style. Using color as his primary form of expression, de Looper created softly nuanced, process-oriented compositions that have a self-contained, reflective quality. His finished works were often painted on stretched, raw canvas, laid on the floor to allow the artist to manipulate it – twisting and turning it to control the flow of paint. De Looper's works from the 1960s consist of fields of color stained into the canvas. In the 1970s he created a series of large-scale paintings characterized by horizontal bands of subtly harmonizing color. In his abstract works of the 1980s and 1990s, de Looper developed a more brilliant palette, more varied compositions, and a marked freedom of brushstroke and gesture.

Starting with his first solo exhibition in 1966 at Jefferson Place Gallery in Washington, de Looper's work has been exhibited and collected by many established museums, such as the National Gallery of Art, The Phillips Collection, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, and the Corcoran Gallery of Art, all in Washington, D.C.

[www.phillipscollection.org](http://www.phillipscollection.org)



**De Looper** Diptych, 1987

Oil on canvas, 31 x 49 in. (78,7 x 124,5 cm). Courtesy of the Estate of the Artist and Hemphill Fine Arts, Washington, D.C.



**De Looper** **Untitled**, 1984

Oil on canvas, 60 x 60 in. (152,4 x 152,4 cm). Courtesy of the Estate of the Artist and Hemphill Fine Arts, Washington, D.C.

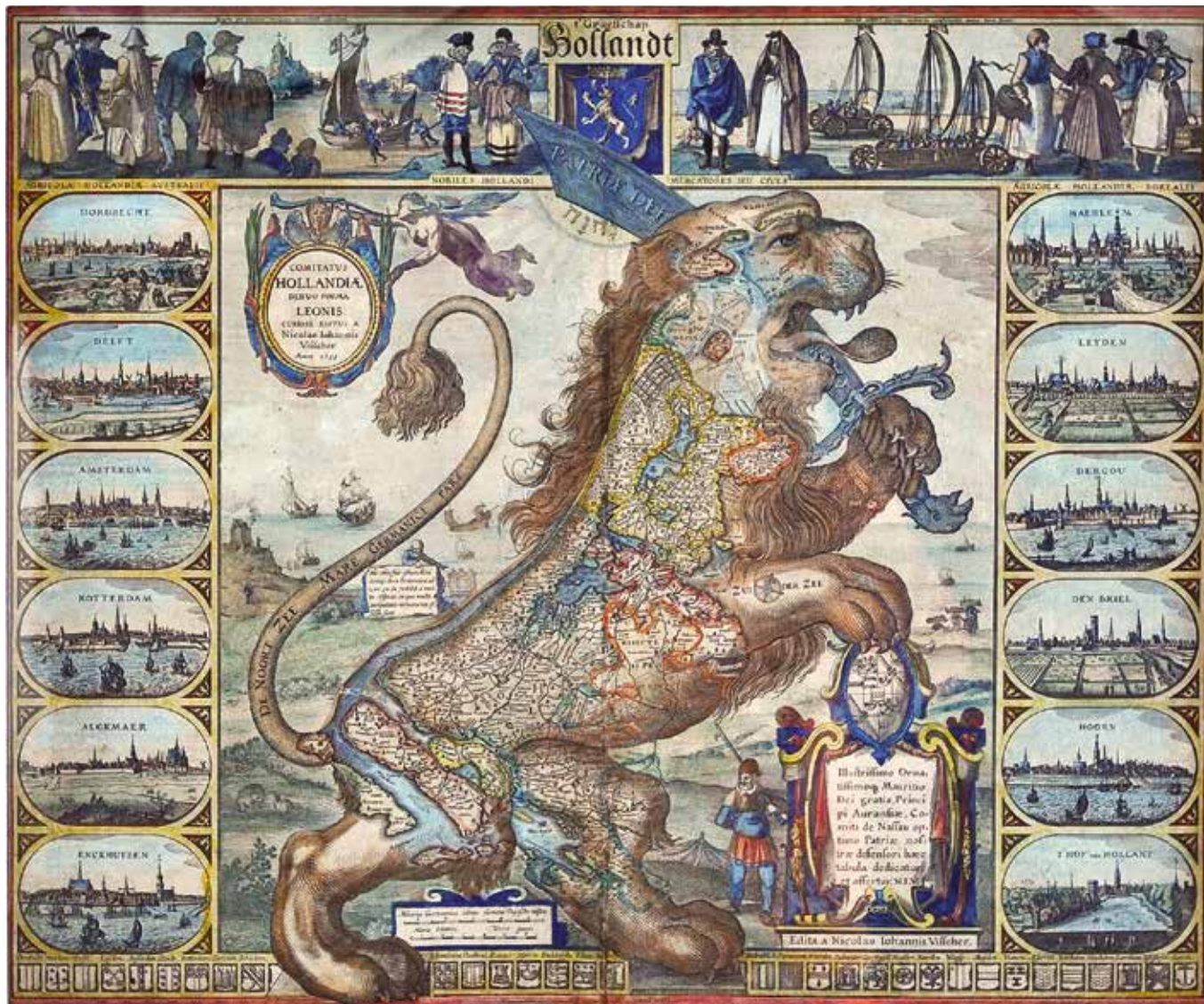


**De Looper** **Chevron No. II**, 1998

Oil on canvas, 48 x 48 in. (121,9 x 121,9 cm). Courtesy of the Estate of the Artist and Hemphill Fine Arts, Washington, D.C.

# **Claes Jansz Visscher** **(Cartographer and Engraver)** **and Nicholas Jansson Visscher** **(Publisher)**

The Visscher family were prominent Dutch map publishers for nearly a century. The Visscher cartographic story begins with Claes Jansz Visscher (1587-1652), who established the firm in Amsterdam, near the offices of Pieter van den Keer and Jodocus Hondius. Many hypothesize that Visscher may have been one of Hondius's pupils and, under examination, this seems logical. The first Visscher maps appear around 1620 and include numerous individual maps, as well as an atlas compiled of maps by various cartographers including Visscher himself. Upon the death of Claes, the firm fell into the hands of his son Nicholas Visscher I, and would, in turn, eventually be passed on to his son, Nicholas Visscher II. Most of the maps bearing the Visscher imprint were produced by these two men. Many Visscher maps also bear the imprint Piscator (a Latinized version of Visscher) and often feature the image of an elderly fisherman. Upon the death of Nicholas Visscher II, the widowed Elizabeth Visscher took over the business until it was eventually sold to Peter Schenk.



**Visscher** Comitatus Hollandiae, 1633. Color engraving, 18¼ x 22½ in. (46,4 x 56,2 cm). Bank of America Collection

# Michael Mapes 1962

“The samples are part of my most recent series of work examining Dutch Master Portraiture. In this work, I deconstruct the original subject, in both a figurative and literal sense by dissecting photos of a painting and considering ways in which the parts might serve to inspire new parts within the reconstruction to suggest unique and complex meanings. I’ve done these works with the use of a visual metaphor suggesting a pseudoscientific method specifically working with materials and processes signifying entomological, biological and forensic science.”

Michael Mapes was born in Fort Knox, Kentucky, and received his Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Illinois in 1992. Technically, Mapes is a portraitist, though he rarely uses paint. Instead, the artist recreates the human face by arranging different tiny materials into highly detailed works of art. Each of his pieces is constructed from what he describes as “biographical DNA,” the little fragments of physical information he mixes to create a finished portrait. Each final piece is made up of thousands of individual specimens consisting of dissected photographs and genetic information about the subject in the form of hair, fingernails, scent, eyelashes, fingerprints, makeup, handwriting, and breath. The representations of his subjects are dissected and then reconstructed through artistic interpretation invoking entomological, forensic, and artistic methods. *Dutch Specimen MT 1639* is based on Rembrandt van Rijn’s 1639 portrait of Maria Trip.

Quotation, [www.thisiscolossal.com](http://www.thisiscolossal.com)  
[www.featherofme.com](http://www.featherofme.com)





**Mapes Dutch Specimen MT 1639, 2013**

Mixed media, 34 x 28 x 3½ in. (86,4 x 71,1 x 8,9 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Croton Falls, New York

# Pakan Penn 1953

Born in Cambodia, Pakan Penn remains one of a select few artists to come forth from the Cambodian Diaspora as a result of the genocide that took the lives of millions of people, including his family. Studying at the Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington, D.C., Penn was unable to return to his homeland during its occupation, and was forced to leave school, choosing to start up his own construction business in Arlington, Virginia. Eventually turning back to his passion of painting, Penn has become a successful artist in the U.S., with his works held in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian Institution and exhibited by the U.S. Department of State, the Embassy of Japan, and The White House, among others.

Penn's work displays the landscapes of his homeland and ethnic origins, drawing from his past, his extensive travels, and from his own viewpoint as an exile of his native country. He creates these scenes in a realistic and impressionistic manner, paying close attention to the play and appearance of natural light and its effects on color. Penn has recently turned to scenes of the Low Country (the Atlantic coast of the southern U.S.) for inspiration, with much of its iconic grassy, watery landscape very similar to that of Cambodia.

[www.pakanpenn.com](http://www.pakanpenn.com)



**Penn** Tropical Jungle, 2013. Oil on canvas, 48 x 48 in. (121,9 x 121,9 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Arlington, Virginia

# William Henry Singer, Jr. 1868-1943

William Henry Singer, Jr., founder of the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts in Hagerstown, Maryland, was born in Allegheny, on the north side of what is now Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His father worked in the steel business of Singer & Nimick in Pittsburgh, founded by the artist's uncle, John Singer in 1854.

Singer had decided early on to pursue a career in art. His mother, Hester Harton Singer, encouraged his artistic pursuits, while his father was a Sunday painter and his grandfather, George Singer, had been a painter and gilder of chairs in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. In 1895 Singer married Hagerstown resident Anna Brugh and in the summer of 1900, they went to Monhegan Island in Maine where Singer began painting full time.

In 1901 the couple crossed the Atlantic and Singer enrolled in the Académie Julian in Paris for several months. His love for the outdoors drove him to leave the Académie to paint directly from nature. They moved to Laren, Holland, not far from Amsterdam, where a regional school of artists flourished. The couple began spending summers on the west coast of Norway and during World War I, settled near the village of Olden on the Nordfjord north of Bergen.

Singer's greatest artistic inspiration came from painting the Norwegian landscape. Although World War I closed the era of painting abroad for most artists, Singer remained, painting in the style of the post-impressionists long after it was fashionable, his work often showing the influence of pointillism with its stippled coloration. By developing a special technique that involved painting directly onto an unprepared canvas, he achieved an almost pastel-like effect that became his trademark. He could work very quickly, and was able to produce a painting in a day or two. Glorifying the natural setting, Singer created beautiful landscapes throughout the 1920s and 1930s until his death in Norway during the Nazi occupation.

[www.askart.com](http://www.askart.com)



**Singer** **The Stir of Spring**, 1916. Oil on canvas, 31 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 33 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (80,5 x 85 cm). Courtesy of Singer Laren, Laren, the Netherlands



**Singer** **A June Morning**, 1924. Oil on canvas, 31<sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub> x 33<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. (80,5 x 85 cm). Courtesy of Singer Laren, Laren, the Netherlands



**Singer** **Early Autumn Day**, undated. Oil on canvas, 31<sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub> x 33<sup>3</sup>/<sub>6</sub> in. (80,5 x 85 cm). Courtesy of Singer Laren, Laren, the Netherlands



**Singer** Salmon River in Winter, Olden, 1918

Oil on canvas, 31<sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub> x 33<sup>7</sup>/<sub>6</sub> in. (80,5 x 85 cm). Courtesy of Singer Laren, Laren, the Netherlands



# **Friedrich Bernhard Werner 1690-1776 and Johann Friedrich Probst 1721-1781**

Friedrich Bernhard Werner was a German printmaker, draftsman, and writer of chronicles. As a young man he lived an itinerant and rather bohemian existence as a writer, translator, and worker in the theater. Eventually he settled in Augsburg, where he drew views for the publishing houses of Martin Engelbrecht (1684-1756), Johann Christian Leopold (1699-1755), and Jeremias Wolff (1663-1724). From 1729, Werner specialized in panoramic views of towns and he traveled around Europe, making nearly 100 views for the Augsburg publishers known as the “Wolff heirs,” which included members of the Probst family and their brother-in-law’s father, Johann Georg Hertel. From the 1740s he settled in Breslau as scenographer to the court of Prussia. In this period of his life Werner also produced a five-part topographical work on the Duchy of Silesia, with some 3,000 pages of manuscript and 1,400 colored ink drawings.

Augsburg was a major European publishing center in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and as proprietors died, their plates frequently were taken over and reprinted by other firms, often relatives with similar names, which has left many of the maps and prints produced there with complicated publication histories. In the case of Werner, his maps were published by a variety of Augsburg firms, including Johann Friedrich Probst and Johann Georg Hertel. Both were mid-eighteenth century Augsburg firms that acquired parts of the business started by Jeremias Wolff (1663-1724). After Wolff’s death his firm was continued as “Wolff’s Heirs” (Haeres Jer. Wolffii) by his son-in-law Johann Balthasar Probst (1689-1750). Following Probst’s death in 1750, his descendants divided the business and published under their own imprints: Johann Friedrich Probst (1721-1781), Georg Balthasar Probst (1732-1801), and Johann Michael Probst. Another part of the Wolff-Probst firm was acquired by the Augsburg publisher Johann Georg Hertel (1700-1775), whose son Georg Leopold Hertel had married a sister of the Probsts.

[www.georgeglazer.com/maps/europe/werner/werner-venetia.html](http://www.georgeglazer.com/maps/europe/werner/werner-venetia.html)



**Werner & Probst** Graven Haag, ca. 1729. Copper engraving, 13 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 39 $\frac{3}{16}$  in. (35 x 99,5 cm). Bank of America Collection



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