

De Andere Helft. Expertmeeting #3: Collectors and Mediators

November 19th, 2021 – 10:00-12:30

The other half. Women's participation in the Dutch art world 1780-1980

Minutes taken by Mariëlle Ekkelenkamp, research assistant RKD

Programme

- 10.00 Introduction and welcome by Mayken Jonkman
- 10.10 Keynote by Frances Fowle, 'The Gendering of Collecting: Women as Tastemakers and Philanthropists 1780-1980' (introduction by Beatrice von Bormann)
- 10.40 Questions moderated by Jenny Reynaerts
- 10.50 Martine Bontjes on Betsy Westendorp (introductions by Beatrice von Bormann)
- 11.05 Julia van Leeuwen on Anna Hogguer-Ebeling
- 11.20 Fleur Roos Rosa de Carvalho on female mediators of Odilon Redon
- 11.35 Questions via the chat moderated by Mariëlle Ekkelenkamp
- 11.50 Break
- 12.00 Discussion on how to proceed with this project led by Rachel Esner
- 12.30 End

Introduction and welcome by Mayken Jonkman

Last spring, simultaneous initiatives on the subject of women mediators in the Dutch art world were starting off. We think that collaborative action will be beneficial for this research. We want to create a more lasting awareness of the role of women in the art world at large and in the formation of Dutch museum collections specifically. To realize this, we are making an inventory of women who, amongst other things, donated their collections and those of their husbands to museums. Secondly, we will study women who were active in those museums, such as curators, secretaries and volunteers. Lastly, we also include women who were responsible for shaping the taste of an era: art critics.

So far, we have entered 150 new names into the [RKD-database](#). Additional research is done on individual women: MA-students have written papers, such as Martine Bontjes on Betsy Westendorp-Osieck, and Julia van Leeuwen on Anna Maria Ebeling. Moreover, Rachel Esner is teaching a BA-seminar on women collectors in the Netherlands c. 1900, the results of which will be incorporated into the project.

During our last meeting in June, we discussed the different possibilities of publishing our findings. In the second part of this expert meeting, we will discuss the development and details of the project.

Keynote by Frances Fowle, 'The Gendering of Collecting: Women as Tastemakers and Philanthropists 1780-1980' (introduction by Beatrice von Bormann)

Relevant questions:

- Why were there so few great women collectors?
 - In what ways are women stereotyped as collectors?
 - How philanthropic were they and what motivated them to donate to museums; or to create their own museums?
 - How did they differ from male collectors?
- **Why were there so few great women collectors?**

There is more written about UK and US than on European collectors, for instance on the pioneers in collecting Impressionism.

There are two principal reasons for the lack of attention to women collectors:

1. The works they acquired weren't deemed important, but decorative.
2. They didn't set out to form 'serious' collections of art but assembled objects for their homes.

- **In what ways are women stereotyped as collectors?**

See the above. And another stereotype is that there is a masculine strain in women who collected and that patterns of collecting by women differ from men. In *Enchanted Lives, Enchanted Objects*:

American Women Collectors and the Making of Culture, 1800-1940 (2008), Dianne Sachko Macleod argues that women saw their collections as an extension of themselves and mostly decorated their homes with their collections rather than made a public statement. Because of this they were not regarded as serious collectors.

There were exceptions to this generalization: for example, Isabella Stewart Gardner. She collected thousands of objects and founded a museum in Boston.

Fowle points out that in fact, many men collected in similar ways to women. For example, Sir William Burrell had an eclectic collection of 9.000 objects, including Gothic art, Asian art, carpets etc. Like Stewart Gardner, he was involved in the transformation of his mansion, Hutton Castle, to display his collection. He left it to the city of Glasgow. The involvement of his wife Constance is never acknowledged and needs to be looked into.

The market of decorative arts is important for women collectors. It developed from 1880 onwards. Fortunes were paid for decorative arts and distinct collections were built. Individual objects often went for excessive prices, often much higher than contemporary painting. For example Henry Clay Frick paid 282.000 US dollars for a secretaire that belonged to Marie-Antoinette. This is a huge amount compared to Impressionist painting, which fetched in the single thousands at the time.

Art history tends to forget the role of Frick's daughter, Helen Clay Frick, in the establishment of The Frick Museum. She catalogued the collection and was a trustee involved in a number of early acquisitions. She is one of the interesting invisible female agents. Many women collectors didn't have independent wealth and their activities were often overshadowed by their husbands.

In Charlotte Vignon's *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts, 1880-1940* (2019) only three women collectors are named: Eleanor Elkins Widener Rice, Anna Thomson Dodge and Eva Cromwell. They had inherited huge fortunes from their husbands' work in industry, a common story in the late 19th century. Widener's son and husband had died in the sinking of the Titanic. But she continued to build their collection of 18th-century French furniture in her own house. If he hadn't died, would her role as taste maker have been recognized?

Dodge amassed an important collection of French furniture and Chinese porcelain in her Louis XVI-house outside Detroit. Her music room held one of the most extensive decorative arts collections in the whole of the US (now in the Detroit Institute of Arts). That her husband's business was the source of her wealth is often emphasized in favour of her collecting efforts.

It is also often stated that women collected in a haphazard way rather than logically. Cartesian qualities are attributed to men collectors, such as William Henry Vanderbilt, and determine the dominant definition of a collector and a collection. By contrast, women were considered to collect more miscellaneous objects from a more intuitive perspective.

Phoebe Apperson Hearst, the wife of Vanderbilt, also collected. They had a gallery separate of the house, showing 88 paintings and 40 works on paper. The pictures were hung in a symmetrical, salon-like style. A photograph of Apperson Hearst's own rooms shows a more aesthetically oriented

presentation of her collection. The contrast between the modes of display is less obvious though in their home in New Hampshire.

Macleod presents a polarized, stereotypical view of men and women collecting. Fowle's findings are that women who could afford it engaged in similar practices as men. For example, Bertha Honore Palmer, who owned a picture gallery in her home in Chicago, organized it in a salon-like way.

Another part of collecting practice that was considered male is cataloguing the collection. There are cases of women doing the same, such as Margaret Cavendish Bentinck, who had an intellectual interest in her collection, appointed a curator and sought advice. She owned major art objects, such as the Portland vase. She also wanted to acquire and catalogue every living species, acquired through Cook's voyages. They are now in The Portland Museum. Many famous visitors came to see her collection. Her method of display was criticized despite the intelligent rationale behind the collection. It was described as disorderly and chaotic. It was unorthodox to oppose different kinds of objects in this way. Now this seems fairly orthodox.

Ergo: stereotypes are in need of revision.

- **How are these women erased from history?**

Partly due to their legal status, women were often bypassed in favor of their husbands. An example is Clémence d'Ennery, founder of Musée d'Ennery in Paris. She was praised by contemporaries for her pioneering work in collecting Asian arts. Yet scholars still present the collection as the work of her husband or a joint venture. She was erased from cultural memory.

There is also a desire of women themselves for anonymity. Lousine Osborne Havemeyer, for instance, bequeathed her collection but not under own but her husband's name, as he was head of the household, even though she made the purchases.

Mary Fairchild made donations to museums, of works by Degas, Monet, Pissarro and Renoir from her collection. She bought many works independently, without her husband's participation. She even speculated on some works, buying and quickly reselling them to make profit. This speculation activity is now often attributed to her husband, and her means to collect, his fortune, is emphasized. It is assumed that they collected together, rather than that she collected independently.

The problem of collections being disassembled and dispersed due to financial difficulties often occurs. Elisabeth Workman owned one of the most important collections of Impressionist painting (Degas, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Matisse etc.). She acquired her collection through her husband's income. She was forced to sell the collection in 1929 because of misfortune in her husband's business. Luckily, Helene Kröller-Müller had the foresight to put her collection in a foundation before her husband's business started to collapse.

Museums deaccessioned works, for instance in the case of Lillie Plummer Bliss, who bequeathed her collection to the MoMA. She allowed her donations to be sold during economic downtime for the

museum, in order to finance other purchases. Her collection is now dispersed because of that, and her role underplayed in favor of her advisor, the artist Arthur Davies, who influenced her collecting.

Elizabeth Courtauld, rather than her husband Samuel Courtauld, was the first to purchase modern French art for their collection, such as works by Renoir. She also introduced her husband to Percy Moore Turner, an art dealer and their main advisor.

- **Women agents, influencers and philanthropists**

Women were often invisible supporters and influencers. But their role is underplayed due to the supposed influence on them by men. Gertrude Stein encouraged the Cone sisters Etha and Claribel to buy works by Matisse. Rosalind Birnie Philip, heir to Whistler's estate, gifted and bequeathed his art collection and his personal collections of decorative art and memorabilia to the University of Glasgow in 1935 and 1958 respectively.

Gwendoline and Margaret Davies inherited money from their father, who had made a fortune from the coal industry. They remained unmarried and independent. Yet it is continually emphasized by art historians that Hugh Blaker was an influencer on their taste. They donated to the National Museum of Wales because they had a strong sense of duty towards their country and wanted to save their collection for the nation. These are motives of philanthropy.

Gabrielle Keiller had a collection of Surrealist works, hundreds of which she left to the National Galleries of Scotland. Her name is not known outside of Scotland.

Peggy Guggenheim is known outside the US, partly because she founded a museum bearing her own name, a 'male' practice. She promoted contemporary artists, another motive for philanthropy, and housed her collection in a Venetian palazzo, which was her home and a museum until 1951. She was both collector and curator in last thirty years of her life.

Gertrude Vanderbilt-Whitney founded Whitney Studio in Manhattan in which she showcased overlooked artists. She offered her collection of 500 pieces to the Metropolitan Museum, but this was declined. So she established the Whitney Museum in 1931.

Guggenheim and Whitney were true philanthropists. Their self-memorialization stands apart from men. Collecting and philanthropy at this level were possible through substantive wealth, the income of estates or expansive industrial business. Guggenheim and Whitney inherited or married into money, or a combination of both.

Only towards the middle of the century do women with different backgrounds enter the picture, such as Helena Rubenstein, a businesswoman from humble origins who owned a cosmetics company. She collected African art, French painting, furniture and sculpture. She was sneered at by critics and the quality of her collection was questioned.

Coco Chanel is another example of a new player who was from a modest upbringing. She had an eccentric collection and was less of a collector than a curator of her life. The collection could be seen as a backdrop to her wardrobe and an extension of herself. This was a less philanthropic and more 'selfish' attitude towards collecting.

Women who remained unmarried and/or had no children left their collection to posterity with a strong wish to benefit the public.

We don't know exactly how many women collectors there have been. Gertrud Osthaus is now being researched. Henny Hansen of the Odrupgaard collection supported and was an advisor to her husband. A plaque was made in which a portrait en profile of Constance Burrell foregrounds the portrait of her husband.

Hopefully their due place will be given in history.

Themes:

- *Reassess/revise stereotypes of patterns of collecting by women (object choice, display etc.)*
- *Contextualize findings on women collectors with their male counterparts*
- *Take source of wealth into account – follow the money*
- *Reveal division of labour within collector's couples, invisible influence*
- *Study independent action and philanthropic motives of women*

Questions moderated by Jenny Reynaerts

This was an astonishing row of famous collections which made the invisibility of female collectors clear. Should we not also look at the social capital involved in collecting, besides the economic capital?

In the late 19th century social changes were taking place. Marriages were often arranged and the aristocracy was marrying into new money. A shift was taking place in the UK: a new type of collecting emerged in the middle of the 19th century by new money, in which more women were involved. The women discussed were themselves from socially elevated positions. This was only to a certain extent the same as in the US. Before, people tended to collect decorative arts and old masters. This new group was a bit more adventurous in their purchases. They began to buy contemporary art. This was not entirely determined by economics. The decorative arts market flourished at end of 19th century. The paintings market was more accessible, less expensive. Less wealthy collectors could make more canny purchases there.

We also have to look into education. The Davies sisters had a good cultural education, like many upper-class women, receiving female input by their governess. Women could bring knowledge about art into the market.

Women often received a more thorough cultural education than men. Brothers were educated differently from their sisters, for instances in the languages. Women learned 'soft' subjects, such as music and drawing.

How do we overcome stereotypes? It could be a helpful way to think of these women collectors as having a kind of curatorial practice. We could think of them in terms of being curators.

Women were mostly in control of household activities and the decoration of the interior, i.e. they made the decisions around the house. Also, women were considered to approach their collection more aesthetically, collected more eclectically and displayed it accordingly. There should be room for different types of collecting.

There are not many examples of works by women artists in the collections discussed. This seems to give the impression that women did not favor works by women. Can this be concluded?

Palmer and Havemeyer collected works by Mary Cassatt. She herself was the agent influencing them. Women certainly did not avoid women artists but it was simply the case that their work was less available on the art market at the time. Now there are far more opportunities to support women artists.

Two Dutch examples of women collecting works by women are Sientje Mesdag-van Houten and Josephina van Baaren.

Related to the idea of collectors as curators and from the print making perspective, the Sagot Gallery in Paris is interesting. The books kept there show that many female collectors from the US bought fashionable posters by Cheret to display in their house, while men put these posters in portfolios. Thus, there is a distinction between collections for personal use and a decorative collection, and the many things in between.

Women were considered not 'rational' enough to collect seriously. Making a public statement seems to be an important condition for being recognized as a collector. Collections become visible if they are donated to a museum but many were kept inside the house and later dispersed through auctions. In these cases, there is no public statement. A couple of women donated their collections to several museums, not making a real statement about themselves as collectors. Is this specific to women? There are many men with private collections that followed a similar path. We still know collectors who have memorialized themselves through founding a museum or bequeathing their collections to existing museums. But women often outlived their husbands and bequeathed the collection in their name, of which we often don't have further knowledge on their precise role.

Themes:

- *Social and cultural capital, marriage and education*
- *New money – new collecting*
- *Women as curators of their collections*
- *Different kinds of collections, different purposes (personal, decorative etc.)*
- *The conditions of being a collector; a public statement necessary?*

Martine Bontjes on Betsy Westendorp-Osieck: artist, art collector and legacy builder

Westendorp-Osieck's husband made many donations to the Rijksmuseum and the Stedelijk Museum. Westendorp-Osieck was an artist herself and played a role in the collecting activities of her husband. She was much more active than presumed.

Sources used for this research: diaries, agendas, travel diaries, photo albums and interviews with descendants. This was the first time someone interviewed family members about Westendorp-Osieck's collecting activities.

Westendorp-Osieck was a successful artist in the beginning of the 20th century and actively involved in the Dutch artworld of her time. She was a member of different artists' associations, such as St. Lucas and Arti et Amicitiae (a jury member of the St. Lucas award and a member of the purchase committee of Arti). She was engaged in a large network of other Dutch artists, for example the Amsterdamse Joffers. This group of all women artists reviewed and discussed each other's work and organized exhibitions together. This resulted in Westendorp-Osieck developing a connoisseurship in modern and contemporary Dutch art.

She married Herman Karel Westendorp, a collector of Asian art, amongst other things, and chairman of the Association of Friends of Asian Art (*Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst*). Together they made many international travels to buy art, both for the association and for their own collection.

50% of all modern art purchases in the collection bought at Van Wisselingh & Co was acquired during their marriage. 75% of all Asian art objects was acquired during their marriage, even though Herman Karel Westendorp had started collecting before their marriage.

The diaries show that Herman Karel Westendorp relied on the quality judgment of his wife.

Variety of roles in/as:

- **Negotiation process**

Westendorp-Osieck donated her own artworks to art dealers and would get objects for their collection in return, for example a sake bottle.

- **Partners in crime**

As chairman of the Asian arts association, Westendorp was seen as a connoisseur. Prices would be higher for him because of this. The tacit assumption that Westendorp-Osieck herself wasn't a connoisseur resulted in lower prices being offered to her. She made use of her secondary position as a female art collector to gain influence in the negotiation process to benefit their collecting practice.

- **The influencer**

She was an influencer on her husband. During a trip to Tokyo he liked an object but didn't want to decide without her say. He wrote in his diary: 'I wonder if Betsy will like it.' She thought the price too high, so they paid a lower price and later donated it to the Rijksmuseum.

- **The user**

Her collection was an inspiration for her own work. In her paintings you can see objects from their Asian arts collection. The life of artists and collectors is very connected, and not in a separate sphere. Collections were important for artists.

Maybe more roles can be added still.

Westendorp-Osieck is a 'quiet connoisseur'. This describes the hidden roles women played in collecting practices.

- **Donor**

She permanently donated eight artworks already loaned to the Stedelijk Museum. Two executors and the foundation for cultural decisions ensured that parts of the Asian collection stayed together and should remain publicly accessible in the Rijksmuseum. She wrote this in her diary in 1968.

- **Financial contributions**

She founded the *Herman Karel Westendorp Fund*, through donations of her own artworks.

Further research into the Persian art collection is needed, for instance a loan to the Singer Laren of 21 objects. This is the only collection that she had bought by herself. And her activities as a design collector could be further explored, her tailormade coats and hats, are donated to the former costume museum in The Hague.

Another research area is the collection practices of artists during WWII and artist-collector couples, such as Marius Bauer and Jo Bauer-Stumpff.

Q: In her testament Westendorp-Osieck calls the Asian collection 'as collected by her husband'. Is that a deliberate downplay of her role?

- It was important for her to credit her husband when donating to museums. He devoted his whole life to collecting Asian arts. On the other hand, she does state that she wants both their names mentioned.

Q: The Amsterdam Joffers possessed a lot of social and partly economic capital, could they all be described as influencers within the art world of their time, besides being artists?

- For the purpose of this thesis, the individual Joffers were not studied.

Themes:

- *Different roles of women collectors: negotiator, partner in crime, influencer, user, donor*
- *Artist-collectors; the role of their own collections for artists*
- *The quiet connoisseur*
- *Collecting during WWII*
- *Artist-collector couples*

Julia van Leeuwen on Anna Maria Hogguer-Ebeling

In 1971 Nochlin asked: why have there been no great women artists? The same question can be asked about women collectors.

Ebeling's collection was auctioned in 1817 and sparked the interest of collectors and connoisseurs. Literature on her is scarce but there is an extensive auction catalogue of 200 pages, which shows she was an avid collector, not surpassed in size.

What was her impact on the Amsterdam art market at end of the 18th century? How did she manifest herself as a collector? Her network, her involvement in many auctions between 1800-1812 and the auction of her own collection will be discussed.

Her father was a lawyer and sugar refinery owner. Ebeling married merchant and banker Hogguer and lived at the Herengracht in Amsterdam. He founded his own trading and banking house, became the first director of the Dutch national bank and mayor of Amsterdam. Their financial situation was very fortunate, they owned several houses and had enough money to build an art collection.

Ebeling was the first woman to receive honorary membership of the Amsterdam drawing academy (*Stadtekenacademie*), a prestigious institute. Women were not allowed as regular members, to take drawing lessons, contribute or donate artworks. Ebeling thus turned to her own collection.

In the auction catalogue of 1817, the size and quality of her collection stands out: 250 sculptures, a coin collection, 50 books with prints, 155 paintings, mostly landscapes and portraits of renowned Dutch artists, such as Pieter de Hooch and Jan Steen.

To what extent did she collect independently? The catalogue suggests that her husband enabled her to collect. But the archives suggest otherwise: her grandfather died in 1775, leaving her 200.000 guilders, and she herself left 40.000 guilders to a friend in her will. So, she had her own money. In how far was her husband involved? Nowhere is it said who acquired what for the collection.

In her will it is stated that she brought a large collection of objects into the marriage. So it seems she collected before her marriage. The auction catalogue clearly states: 'alles bijeen verzameld door vrouwe Anna Maria Ebeling'.

Network

Her father was also a collector, with an extensive library and scientific instruments. It is likely that he stimulated her to collect. Many objects came through her network of influential families, such as prominent bankers and diplomats. She had her own cultural network of artists, merchants etc. These contacts were crucial to build the collection.

She was a pupil of Izaak Schmidt, who acted as her agent at many auctions in 1800-1812. She bought and sold paintings at many auctions during her life. She also independently submitted paintings for public sale, for instance in the Trippenhuys in 1810.

She died in 1812 and her husband inherited her collection. On his death bed in 1816 he wished to sell his wife's collection publicly. It was necessary for three auctioneers to collaborate considering the size of the collection. Various sorts of collections were sold over four days.

The auctions were advertised a month in advance for those interested to prepare for travel to Amsterdam. The auctions attracted interest of many foreign collectors. There was competition between dealers, resulting in high prices. 11 paintings were sold for more than 1.000 guilders, 48.000 guilders in total. The average price per lot was 310 guilders, much higher than auctions of the collections of her male contemporaries. This is proof that her collection was very valuable.

Many of her paintings are now in important collections, such as that of the National Gallery in London and the Rijksmuseum.

In the 18th century her collection was renowned, and it was praised years after the auctions took place, by Jeronimo de Vries for instance.

Important sources are: wills, auction catalogues, letters.

Ebeling came from an influential family but also created her own network of artists, dealers etc. who enabled her to create her collection.

Q: It is interesting that Anna Maria Ebeling's husband considered it an honour to sell her collection publicly rather than to keep the collection together and donate it to one museum. Why did he consider this an honour?

- Unfortunately, little is known about personal motivations because there are no ego documents. But the status of auctions in collecting practices at the time could play a role in this.

Q: Is there any evidence that Anna Maria Ebeling speculated on the art market or did she just sell works to refresh the collections?

- She probably sold works to refresh collections. The prices of the works she sold were relatively low.

Suggestion: Are you familiar with Izaak Schmidt's unpublished manuscript about contemporary Dutch art of 1811, kept in the archives of Teylers? He mainly describes Dutch artists, but also the collectors who own their work. It would be interesting to know what Schmidt says about Ebeling here and if he recognizes her as a collector.

Themes:

- *Membership of societies and associations*
- *Source of wealth*
- *The role of auctions and auction houses in acquisition and de-acquisition by women collectors (buying & (re)selling)*
- *Network and contacts important to build a collection, surrounded by advisors*

Fleur Roos Rosa de Carvalho on the female mediators of Odilon Redon

So many female mediators popped up in research on Redon. This is a first exploration in which the net is cast very wide, to draw in all women who surrounded Redon.

Redon's wife: Camille Falte

Redon is often described as a seeking and lonely artist, but in 1880 he marries Camille Falte. She gives him stability, success and happiness. Redon credits his wife for this. She took care of their relations, invited people to their house, did the administration, and build a solid relationship with J.H. de Bois, an art dealer based in Amsterdam. She made Redon successful in the US and kept his legacy alive after his death. In a photograph we can see that she picked and arranged flowers Redon used for his still lifes, which suggests she took on a more creative role. She composed his paintings in a way.

Salons

Berthe de Rayssac. She was the widow of a poet. In her salon she wanted to evoke an antirealistic aesthetic, in poetry, literature, music, and printmaking. Redon met Fantin-Latour there. Her salon was a meeting place, for instance for artists and collectors.

Madame Georges Charpentier. This is the name used in the title of a painting of her. Her own name: Marguerite Louise Lemonier. Many of impressionists came to her salon.

Collectors

It is striking how many female collectors Redon had. If you focus on one artist you can find a lot of female collectors just by searching account books and correspondence. This is another way to bring them to light.

Saar de Swart was a famous collector of Redon in the Netherlands. She collected his work very early on. In 1888 she organised an exhibition of his work in the *Nederlandsche Etsclub* and in 1894 one of the biggest Redon exhibitions during his life in the *Haagsche Kunstkring* with Andries Bongers. De Swart and Bongers visited each other regularly and became friends. His respect for her is evident from his letters, in which he mentions her a lot.

Emilie van Kerckhoff, partner of De Swart, is mentioned by Redon in his letters because she had written to him that she liked his works.

Madame Dorothea Dina Estelle Calisch owned an album of lithographs of Redon and enjoyed it.

Netta Peacock was found through an account book. She was an English socialite, with a Dutch parent. Redon made her portrait in sanguine, which is now in the Kunstmuseum.

Dans le reve, an album by Redon, was printed in a limited edition of 25 in 1879. This very dark material was hard to stomach for many. But out of the 25 owners, 4 were women. They were also interested in these darker, less decorative works.

Commissions

Later in his life, Redon was commissioned by several women for decorative works. For example by Jeanne Lerolle, sister of the musician Henry Lerolle and widow of Ernest Chausson. She and her sisters were all musically gifted. Redon decorated her entire music room. Debussy and other famous fin de siècle protagonists came here.

Princesse de Faucigny Cystria, in Paris, commissioned Redon for decorative works. Many aristocrats did this. They hosted many receptions, particularly for the musical world.

Artistic correspondences

Maria Botkina was a Russian artist that designed a few of the vases Redon used in his still lifes. This is a form of collaboration between artists.

Critics

The Dutch critic Grada Marius wrote very early on substantial critiques on Redon. She approached critiques as pieces of art. And her compatriot Maria Viola also wrote interesting things on Redon. She was the first one to publish his autobiographical notes.

Jeanne Doin, also an important mediator, wrote a psychoanalytical reflection on Redon's work, which shocked him.

Posthumous mediators

Barones Françoise van der Borch van Verwolde, the widow of Andries Bonger, inherited his collection with many works by Redon.

Rosaline Bacou was one of the most important Redon specialists.

It seems that Redon was very open to women. A lot of research is still to be done.

Themes:

- *Wife of the artist*
- *The salon as a meeting place and hostess as a mediator*
- *Account books and the oeuvre of one artist as ways to find new women collectors*
- *Commissions by women*
- *Artistic collaborations between men and women*
- *Posthumous mediators*

Discussion on how to proceed with this project led by Rachel Esner

The goals formulated by the initiators of the project are:

- Collecting the collectors
- A presentation of abt. 750 mediators in the databases of the RKD
- Publishing a number of biographies of iconic mediators on the platform
- Collaboration with universities, the UvA (now) and UU (later)
- Organizing conferences and symposia
- Journal issues, such as *Oud Holland* and the *Rijksmuseum Bulletin*

We would like to discuss:

1. Ideas and activities the core group have initiated
2. New ideas and possible output

1. Ideas and activities the core group have initiated

- **Linked open data**

Where and how to collect joint information on women mediators?

At the expert meeting in June we discussed the possibility of entering the information found in museums and elsewhere in the RKD-databases, integrating the results. This would be a form of linked open data. We would like to embed the findings in a sustainable way, as a permanent part of art historical research, so women don't disappear again in the future.

Is everyone comfortable with sharing information as linked open data?

- **Online platform**

The presentations today showed that we are dealing with similar methodological problems and this is an ongoing conversation. We would like to find ways to continue to communicate with each other. The RKD can provide the platform for that. Perhaps we can establish an online community, where we can share and read each other's research and ask questions. On a separate website we could collect and add findings in the form of blogs for instance. This would require funding and work. The International Art Market Association could possibly promote a platform like this.

- **Exhibitions**

We should also think about exhibitions as a form of output.

The RKD suggests a threefold plan of action:

1. The RKD can coordinate and manage the project. It will look for funding, such as from the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds and the Mondriaanfonds, and study its own archives.
2. Research starts into the collections and archives of museums and other cultural institutions. Museums can decide to organize this themselves, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen is doing this now (so far around twenty women collectors of 19th-century paintings have been found). Or the RKD can conduct the research for them.
3. Apply for larger research grants, such as at the NWO, and fund (PhD-)research.

2. New ideas and possible output by participants

- Define a list of fundamental research questions: who, what, when and where?
- Create a Wiki. This is open and public.

- **Linked open data**

Share primary sources via Teams as a form of open data, so research does not overlap and we can complement each other.

To link the data between museums and the RKD-databases takes time and money. Dropbox is not a viable or long-term solution. It depends on how many sources are found and how much funding is available.

What would we use linked open data for? Is this for sources, lists of collectors or research output? There are different kinds of linked data. We could also link existing websites to each other and connect different collections in this way. The technical part would cost a lot of energy.

Presenting both the sources and the research results would be ideal. Making an inventory in a central database is essential in order to find common denominators between women and answer meta questions in the future. Right now, we don't know yet how many women we are talking about. The

press documentation and auction catalogues at the RKD are being studied and we suspect that there is considerable overlap with what will be found in the museum archives. The RKD is also the most natural place to combine found information because the context of collectors in general, including men, can be made here.

Is there a hierarchy in who to include in the database and who to study first? Now the net is cast as wide as possible. Another point is that this project as a whole creates a separate sphere for studying women.

This is an old problem. At this stage we have to make these women and their labor visible and acknowledge what they did. The final goal would be that women are integrated in art history. But before their contributions are known and the gender balance is restored, integration is not possible.

Could museums not send information from Adlib to the RKD?

The problem with this is that women are not tagged consistently in Adlib in many museums, such as the Rijksmuseum. We have to start an inventory in the museums themselves first and then this could be shared with the RKD. Updating and cleaning up Adlib in the museums is the first step now, to include gender in all groups, such as collectors and patrons.

Also, the different databases do not use the same structure. Data cannot simply be imported automatically; it has to be converted to fit the database in question.

The Drents Museum would be willing to participate in the project and open their archives.

The early modern women bibliography could be an inspiration for this project. A bibliography is being compiled by the RKD. This could be shared with those interested.

Suggestions for the next expert meeting

What is a collection and what is a collector? We have to take men into account as well, to note differences and similarities. Collecting information for the database and theoretical reflections on who and what is a collector go hand-in-hand. We have to discuss how to address women as collectors without stigmatizing them as *women* collectors.

Focus on the other mediators we are interested in: critics and curators.

Conclusion/summary

During this second expert meeting for the project *The other half. Women's participation in the Dutch art world 1780-1980* we further explored the roles that women played in the art world through several presentations and continued the conversation on how to collaborate in the future, share information and produce research outputs.

In her keynote lecture 'The Gendering of Collecting: Women as Tastemakers and Philanthropists 1780-1980', Frances Fowle discussed many women collectors and their collections in the US and UK. She argued that we need to reassess and revise stereotypes of women collecting and study their patterns of collecting anew. Object choice and modes of display do not always answer to a clear-cut gender binary. Men also amassed impressive decorative arts collections and there are several women who catalogued and showed their collections in a salon-like manner rather than in an 'feminine' integrated, decorative ensemble. It is imperative to contextualize findings on women collectors with their male counterparts. Sources of wealth are another area in which women's dependence on the fortune of their (deceased) husbands is often emphasized. Being overshadowed by their husbands seems to be one of the most common factors in the memory of these women. The division of labour within a collector's couple also reveals that women often exercised a more invisible influence on their joint collecting activities. Lastly, the study of independent action of women collectors reveals strong philanthropic motives in donating their collections to museums.

Martine Bontjes presented her research on Betsy Westendorp-Osieck, a Dutch artist embedded in the art world of her time and collector of modern art, Asian art objects and fashion. She married Herman Karel Westendorp, chairman of the Asian Arts Association in the Netherlands, and together they acted as 'partners in crime' to secure great purchases for their collection, more than 50% of which was bought during their marriage. Based on diaries, letters and interviews with family members, Martine distilled several roles that Westendorp-Osieck played in their collecting practice: 1. As a participant in the negotiation process, for instance in donating her own works to dealer in order to receive a collectible object in return. 2. As a partner in crime with her husband, using her 'secondary' position to pay lower prices. 3. As an influencer on her husband, who relied on her judgment regarding the quality of objects. 4. As a user of her collection as inspiration for her own paintings 5. As a donor of her collection to different museums. In conclusion, Westendorp-Osieck could be described as a 'quiet connoisseur', a useful term in discussing the contributions of women in collecting history.

Anna Maria Ebeling was a collector famed in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Julia van Leeuwen researches her impact on the Amsterdam art market at end of the 18th century and the ways in which she manifested herself as a collector. Her network, her involvement in many auctions between 1800-1812 and the auction of her own collection was discussed. Ebeling was the first woman to receive an honorary membership of the Dutch drawing academy and created a significant network of influential families, merchants, dealers and artists around herself that would prove invaluable contacts for her collecting activities. She had her own fortune through inheritance and acted very independently, buying and selling works to refresh her collection. The 1817 auction catalogue of her collection shows a vast array of different objects that fetched higher prices than the sales by many of her male contemporaries. People travelled far and wide to compete for a purchase. The size and quality of her collection was unsurpassed and renowned art critics wrote approvingly of her as a collector. Ebeling's case shows the importance of auctions in her collecting practice and in the recognition she gained after her death in 1812.

A first exploration of the women surrounding the artist Odilon Redon was presented by Fleur Roos Rosa de Carvahlo. Redon is known to have voiced his appreciation for women in his life, such as his

wife Camille Falte, who not only maintained their social contacts and did his administration but also arranged the flowers used in his still lifes. Account books provide a rich source to find more female collectors, which in the case of the Redon were many. Women also often provided artists like Redon and potential buyers of their work with a meeting place: their salon. Hostesses were mediators par excellence, and many of them, like Madame Georges Charpentier (Marguerite Louise Lemonier), still need to be studied more in-depth. Commissions are another avenue through which women could assert themselves in the art world. Artistic collaborations took place between men and women and women were involved in the early promotion of Redon through art critiques. Fleur's talk showed how focusing on the life and oeuvre of one single artist can shed light on and connect many new women mediators to the avant-garde art world of their time.

During the discussion, other aspects came to light, such as the importance of social and cultural capital in obtaining a place in the art world. From the late 19th century onwards, 'new money' entered the stage, which ran parallel to the emergence of a new type of collecting. This new group was more adventurous in their purchases and bought contemporary art more readily. Was there more room for women here and if so, how and why?

A perspective change also seemed to be significant in studying women collecting. Rather than approaching them as collectors per se it might be helpful to see them as curators of their collections. In collecting for their homes and creating integrated displays, this seems a useful tool to understand their collecting practices better. In line with this, it is important to conceptualize different kinds of collections and different kinds of collecting purposes, such as personal, decorative or public, or a combination of these. Lastly, the conditions of what constitutes a collector and a collection need to be assessed. Is a public statement necessary? Where do we draw the line between household items and collectibles? In how far can female influencers be seen as collectors themselves?

It is our aim to set up a sustainable platform to share sources, information and research results on women mediators, which would also function as an online community. Making an inventory in a central database – such as that of the RKD – is essential in understanding women's participation in the art world as it makes their involvement visible. Open linked data is a preferable option to accomplish this but first Adlib in individual museums needs to be researched and organized in such a way as to reveal women's activities more structurally. Then, this information can be combined publicly in the RKD-database.