

The background of the image is a highly detailed, symmetrical gold filigree pattern. It features intricate scrollwork, floral motifs, and delicate cutouts, creating a lace-like appearance. The gold has a warm, slightly aged tone with some darker spots and highlights that emphasize its texture and depth. The overall design is classic and elegant, typical of antique jewelry or decorative metalwork.

*John Endlich*  
*Antiquairs*

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**Life's important events memorialized in silver and gold**

## Introduction

With great pleasure we present our 2016 Tefaf catalogue. The emphasis on this year's publication is on life's important events memorialized in silver and gold in Holland in the 17th century.

Traditionally, in Europe, the courts, the nobility and the church were the first patrons of the arts. But in the Netherlands the bourgeoisie already possessed silver for common use since the 16th century. Important events in life such as birth, marriage and death gave those people occasion to celebrate with an object in silver or gold.

In our stand we will present numerous important objects that are traditionally given at these events:

A layette basket from Dordrecht with auricular ornaments which is the only example in a private collection.

A superbly engraved medal box from the workshop of Abraham van der Hecken.

Three marriage beakers with fine engravings, one of which is from the well known Stavoren silversmith Jan Saagman.

A beautifully engraved marriage casket from Harlingen.

Several rare birth, marriage and death medals.

We will present more highlights of museum quality. Amongst them is a gold medal from Johannes Lutma the elder commemorating the first stone laying of the town hall of Amsterdam in 1648. This medal is preserved together with the accompanying trowel and apron. One of our latest acquisitions is a tobaccobox with a verre églomisé panel from Jonas Zeuner.

With this catalogue, we hope that you will be seduced to come and visit our new stand (235) at Tefaf Maastricht.

John and Dick Endlich

February 2016

## Life's important events memorialized in silver and gold

Silver objects have many functions. The function of an everyday object such as a candlestick or a bread-basket is obvious. It is also clear what kind of liquor a brandy-bowl was used for. However, the question is, what were the occasions for which these bowls were used? The cycle of life encompasses many moments that may be celebrated with an object in silver. In Holland in the 16th century it became a tradition to offer a silver gift with births, marriages and deaths and this habit slowly spread across the country. In the 17th century this practice was habitual amongst those who could afford it. Although certain objects were confined to particular areas, for example the marriage casket in Frisia, the habit to commemorate events such as births, marriages and deaths with a silver object was widespread. This habit could develop due to the economic welfare of the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands in the late 16th and 17th century. Not just the rich upper classes were privileged enough to own and use silver. Large parts of the population owned a silver spoon. The middle classes often possessed multiple items of silver.

### Birth customs

The first silver object that is used to celebrate one of life's highlights is a silver tazza known as 'Hansje in de Kelder' ('Hansel in the Cellar'). These tazza's were used to announce the birth of a child. Filled with brandy, 'Hansje' pops up, symbolising the unborn child coming from the mother's womb (cellar). In the 17th century, these special tazza's were made in ceramics and glass as well as in silver. It was a common gift for a future mother.

When a baby was expected, the dowry had to be collected and displayed in a nursery. In countries such as France, people did not have nurseries and this probably was a typical Dutch habit. Possibly, the fact that in The Netherlands many women still give birth at home, has its origins in this tradition. The linen for the baby was stored in a layette cupboard, a type of cupboard that was especially made for the nursery and was only made in Holland. The name of this cupboard is derived from the layette basket. Originally layette baskets were made from wicker. These large baskets were already present in the nursery before the birth of the child. The shape resembles that of a wood tray that was used for clean linens. The name not only denotes the layette basket itself, but also the rest of the dowry. The layette basket was bound with traditions. The doctor Johannes Le Francq van Berkhey (Leiden, 1729-1812) who was interested in the traditions surrounding childbirth, states in his *'Natuurlijke Historie van Holland'* ('Natural History of Holland') that *"with the expected first-born child, usually the work of the Husband's mother or upon her death that of the Wife's mother. One should take care that the layette basket and its contents are ready in the seventh month or else not long after"*.



'Hansel in the Cellar', Focko Raerda, 1669 - 1670  
h 22.5 cm × d 14.4 cm  
(Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. BK-NM-13029)



Baby linen cabinet, c. 1655 - c. 1675  
h 177.5 cm, w 119 cm, d 57 cm  
(Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. BK-1985-10)

The rare silver layette baskets were probably used by very wealthy families to store the christening dresses in. These baskets are smaller than the wicker ones. Godparents gave layette baskets as christening presents, but sometimes, like cradles, they gave the baskets as a present for a wedding. A layette basket from 1645, in the collection of The Honourable Society of the Inner Temple in London, exemplifies this.

In 1701 the rich Deventer magistrate Evert ter Welberg listed three silver baskets in his inventory, all of which were given as a christening present to his children. Because of the fact that these baskets were given by the godparents as a christening present, it is almost certain that these were layette baskets, although this is not specifically mentioned in the inventory. In later family papers the baskets are described as fruit baskets, yet it is plausible that they were given this function fairly quickly. Fruit displayed in a silver basket was often present in a nursery, as can be seen on a painting by Gabriel Metsu in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Delft earthenware baskets are always described as fruit baskets, even when a nursery is depicted in the interior.

Silver layette baskets have always been rare. More often, the godparents gave the newborn child beakers, inscribed dishes, medals or spoons. The idea behind the christening presents was that these were sustainable gifts that the child could treasure or could trade for money when necessary. This present that a godfather gave his godchild was called a 'pillegift'. Already in the 16th century it was tradition that the royalty and nobility gave christening gifts to their godchildren. Such a gift used to consist of interest letters or a large sum of money that was stored in a gold or silver box. Silver drinking tazza's or beakers were also presented. In several city's books such gifts are mentioned. However, only the covered beaker by Adam van Vianen in the Hermitage Saint Petersburg that was given as a christening present to Adalbrecht van Duyvenvoorde en Woude is still known today.

In the 17th century affluent citizens imitated this tradition. They often gave a gold or silver rattle on a chain, a medal or a spoon that could be inscribed. Originally, rattles were not toys but a type of amulet. The tinkling sound of the bells was thought to ward off evil spirits. The handle was made of crystal, ivory or coral, materials that should have protective powers. Sometimes old or previously used medals were given as a christening gift. These had an arbitrary image on one side and the child's date of birth inscribed on the other. If a medal was struck for the birth especially, one side usually depicted a coat-of-arms and the reverse was inscribed with the child's name and date of birth. Sometimes a small bell was attached to the medal so it could tinkle like a rattle.

## A gold child's rattle

Amsterdam, 1761, Reynier Graffelman

l 13,7 cm



In the 16th century it was already quite common in England to give children a silver spoon when they were born, hence the saying *'to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth'*. Whether this tradition has spread to The Netherlands is not clear. However, it is remarkable that such spoons were mostly given in the coastal provinces of Frisia and Groningen. Often the spoons are older than the child because parents used to engrave their marriage spoons for the birth of a child. Because silver spoons were common goods in The Netherlands, the English saying is adapted. In Holland, *'one is born with a gold spoon in one's mouth'*.

## Wedding customs

In The Netherlands, the most important silver object that is associated with marriage is the marriage casket, the so-called *'knottekistje'*. From the 16th century onwards it became a Frisian tradition that a man proposed his beloved to marry him by presenting her a coin. When several coins were offered together they were presented in a loosely knotted cloth. If the girl drew the knot tighter, the couple considered themselves to be engaged. The man proclaimed the following verse:

*Wotte? sa wotte  
Sa heste de knotte  
Wost it net dwaen  
Den kinst my de knotte werjaen*

*Do you want to?- if so  
You will have the knotted cloth  
If not  
You should return the cloth to me*

The marriage casket is often trunk-shaped. If it is of a circular shape, so the coins could be stacked on top of each other, the object is called a marriage box, *'knottedoosje'*. The coins and the silver box could be saved for a rainy day. Sometimes, instead of coins, a medal was offered. These medals stem from another tradition in which a medal was struck in honour of the couple.

The engagement period started with the publication of the banns. This happened in the company of the couple's parents who were to give their permission to a groom aged younger than 25 and to a bride aged 20 years old or younger. Hereafter the bride held reception in her parental home visited by relatives and friends who congratulated the couple with their intended marriage. A drink called *'bridal tears'* was served during these receptions. Beer and, in Frisia, brandy with sugar and raisins, were served as well. The brandy was served in a brandy-bowl that was handed over from one guest to another. Guests were also treated to bridal sugars. The silver sweetmeat wedding basket that was used in the 18th century is a remainder of this habit. When the bride failed to offer drinks and treats, she was said to be *'filthy'*.

## Marriage casket

Harlingen, 1682 - 1694, Theodorus Huigen

*h 9,6 cm, w 7,3 cm, d 5,4 cm*



Marriage beakers were also presented as wedding or engagement gifts and could be melted down in difficult times. Whether they were used during the festivities on the wedding day is not known. Traditionally, a chalice that was decorated with palms and flowers was passed along. In Dutch such a beaker was called 'omganger'. Silver drinking bowls embellished with floral ornaments and mounted to the interior with a swan as symbol of purity were also used. 'Drink-uits' were to be finished at once, and were often accompanied by drinking songs causing guests to drink too much for their own good. Usually, household commodities were offered as a present. These were occasionally made of silver, see for example the layette basket. More frequently, spoons that could later be converted into birth spoons were given.

### Marriage medals

To commission a medal in order to commemorate a wedding was regular practice in Holland in the 17th century. Not only the Stadthouder, but also wealthy citizens ordered these medals that were especially designed for the event.

Occasionally, in line with paintings of the time, Biblical stories and symbols were depicted on silver medal. The Wedding in Cana was a popular subject, an image that is also widely used on wedding caskets and was thought to be exemplary.

In Holland the stamps with which medals were struck, remained the property of the silver-smith. Therefore, these same stamps could be re-used for medals commissioned by different couples, using the same symbols that were used before.



### Gold Marriage medal

Amsterdam, 1676, Pieter van Abeele

Ø 6,5 cm, 105 gr

OMNIA AMOR VINCIT

Engraved on the edge:

“d'Olyftack wordt van Godt geplant  
Als in syn Vrees twee Zielen Strengelen,  
Daer zijne trouw vindt Hart en Handt,  
Daer queeckt de liefde lieve Engelen  
1676 – 3 Maert”

Provenance:

J. Schulman, Amsterdam , October 9-10, 1933, lot 705



### Marriage medal

Dutch, 17<sup>th</sup> century  
 Ø 4,7 cm, 35 gr

Obverse: A marriage couple set in a landscape holding hands,  
 Reverse: Marriage at Cana



### Marriage of Princess Mary to William of Orange

1641, J. Blum, Ø 7,2 cm, 95 gr

Standing figures of William and Mary facing each other, their hands clasped; a cherub over each, holding a wreath. Beyond, a distant view of a palace.  
 Pallas receiving an olive branch from Peace.  
 Provenance: Baldwin's, private treaty, 2009



### Gold 50th Anniversary Marriage medal

Dutch, 1701  
 Ø 2,4 cm, 8 gr

Obverse: Family coat of arms connected by a ribbon. 6 Jun 1701. Elisabeth Spiegel \* Wigbolt Slicher.  
 Reverse: Deze Twee Heeft God Gegeven Vyftig Jaer In Echt Te Leven.

Mr. Wigbolt Slicher (Amsterdam 1627-1718) lived "at the Princenhof" and was a counselor at the Court of Holland. Commissioner of Amsterdam in 1653, secretary in 1655 to Amsterdam, Receiver-General of the Admiralty in the period from 1669 to 1713. He married in the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam on June 6, 1651 with Elisabeth Spiegel.  
 He was one of the wealthiest citizens of Amsterdam of his time!



Wigbold Slicher and Elisabeth Spiegel as Paris and Venus, Ferdinand Bol, 1656,  
 oil on canvas, h 118 cm., d 157 cm.  
 (Dordrechts Museum, loan RCE 1953)



## Funeral customs

In the 17th century it was tradition to design a commemorative medal to remember the death of a wealthy, important or well-known person. Numerous examples were struck and distributed amongst the deceased's relatives and close friends. These medals were meant to commemorate the person who had died.

It was a Dutch habit to pay the bearers of the coffin with commemorative medals. Those engaged with the funeral could keep the medals, that were sometimes made of silver. Medals especially made for members of guilds have survived as well. However, the members of the guilds were not allowed to keep their gift. The medals were distributed several days before the funeral and had to be handed in during the ceremony. Thus, the presence of the members could be checked. (See page 32 for funeral customs in the Dutch colonies.)



### Death medal

Amsterdam, 1697, Wouter Muller

*h 6,0 cm, w 5,2 cm, 32 gr*

Obverse: Laureate skull and cross-bones surmounted by winged hour glass; an image of the deceased below within a cartouche and flanked by two putti, one blowing bubbles.

Reverse: Engraved inscription to Iustus de Jonge.



### Death medal

Dutch, 1708

*h 7,1 cm, w 6,1 cm, 45 gr*

Obverse: A tombstone with a text commemorating Joannes Vollenhove (1631 – 1708)

Reverse: A laud to the deceased

*Nu rust Joannes Vollenhove Gequeekt wel eer in Jezus schoot,  
 Zo hoog begaaft met Geest van bove,  
 In zuivre leer en taal zo groot.  
 Vledder moet zulx met Zwol getuigen  
 Ook Leiden, neffens Amsterdam,  
 Schoon die 's mans hart niet konden buigen;  
 t Geen 's Gravenhaag ten voordeel quam:  
 Daar hy ruim veertig jaar in 't zoeken  
 Van Jesus eer zich queet met vlijt;  
 Onsterflijk door zijn naam en boeken,  
 Die d 'ewigheit zijn toegewijt  
 Dit grote licht heeft ons begeben.  
 Hij rustte drie jaar voor zijn doot;  
 En nu na Seventig en zeven,  
 Des Levens zat, in  
 Abrams schoot.'*

Joannes Vollenhove (Vollenhove 1631 - 1708 The Hague) was a well respected preacher who had Stadtholder William III among his listeners.



### Marriage medal box

Amsterdam, 1608 - after 1632, Abraham van der Hecke or workshop

Ø 5,3 cm, 35 gr

A circular medal box, both sides finely engraved with marital representations.

Obverse:

A couple with clasped hands stands before a portico, above the holy ghost. On the right, next to the portico a couple stands at a fountain in a garden.

The representation is bordered with the legend:

*'Die hem Met Godt In trouw verbindt .  
Altijt des Heeren ,  
Seegen vint'*



Reverse:

The wedding at Cana. The wedding guests seated at a table in a lofty hall, Christ and Mary to the right. Next to Christ, a servant fills a pitcher with water which is changed to wine. In the foreground a dog is drinking the wine. On the left a guest looks wonderingly. Above, two persons watch the scene from a gallery. The representation is bordered with the legend:

*'Des Heeren kracht en Goedicheit op  
Dese Feest Is uit Gebreit.'*

Based on stylistic grounds and the faulty Dutch we attribute this box to Abraham van den Hecken. Van den Hecken was probably born in Antwerp, from where he fled on account of religious persecution to Franckenthal and then on to Amsterdam, where he arrived around 1608. He died after 1634. He was influenced by prints of Theodoor de Bry, Michel le Blon and Hans Janssen.

Associated literature:

J.W. Frederiks. *Dutch Silver*, vol. II p. 42.

## Marriage beaker

Bolsward, 1639, Anne Heerkes

*h 10 cm, Ø 7,8 cm, 113 gr*

A small trumpet-shaped beaker, engraved with a strapwork band enclosing sprays of flowers, and with three pendant panels of C-scrolls, a mask, a drapery, two monster's heads, flowers and foliage. The beaker stands on a moulded foot with roped border and foliate band. On the bottom two Frisian coats-of-arms and the initials TB and RR.

Anne Heerkes was born in 1600, became an apprentice in 1617 and master silversmith in 1627. His father Heerke Heerkes was also a silversmith in Bolsward. During his life he was also burgomastor and receiver of the 'floeren' (system whereby tax is levied on land ownership in 'florenes'). Several beakers from his hand are known, as well as one marriage casket. He died in 1680.

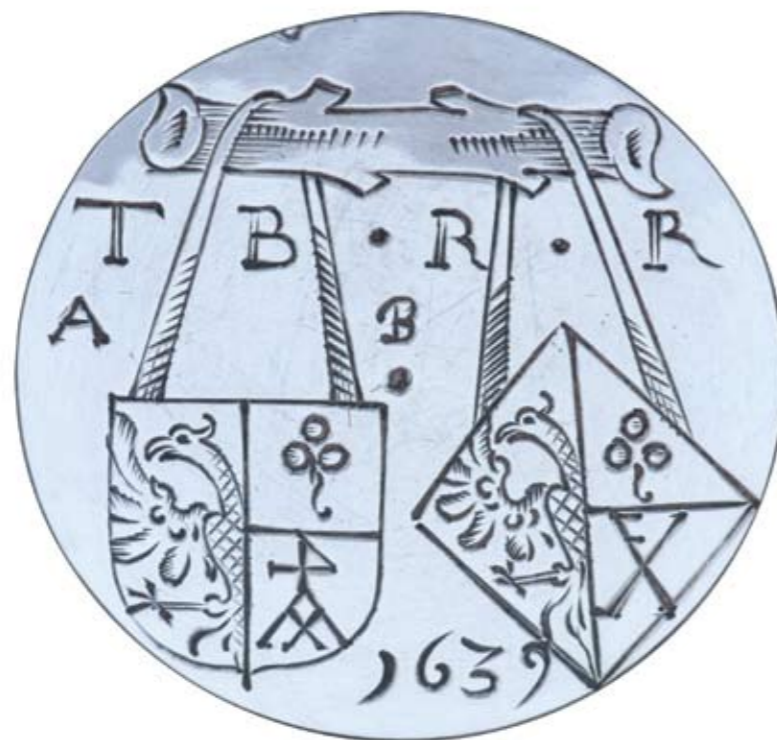
Literature:

Elias Voet, *Merken van Friesche goud- en zilversmeden*, 1932, nr. 314b, p. 239.

J.W. Frederiks, *Dutch silver*, 1960, vol. III, nr. 210, p. 69.

Exhibition:

*Vier eeuwen Nederlands zilver*, Den Haag 1952, nr. 148.



## Marriage beaker

Haarlem, 1652, Jan Akersloot

*h 16,7 cm, Ø 11,5 cm, 308 gr*

A conical tapering chased silver beaker on circular base below horizontal bands. The slightly curved mouth rim of the beaker is engraved with a band of flowers, leafs and foliage. These bands are interrupted three times with opposing accolade-shaped ornaments each containing four leafs.

Below the rim the beaker is decorated with medals engraved with allegories on Hope, Faith and Love, flanked by Venus-type ladies pointing their arrows at a dangling festoon and suspended by pairs of monster's heads. Additionally, above the footrim the beaker has an engraving of three large birds perched on a branch. The base is engraved with the names of the married couple: *'Pittertie Sipkes Tjerne Broers 1652'*.

The engraving is characteristic for the work of silversmiths from the city of Haarlem.



## Marriage Beaker

Stavoren, 1678, Jan Saagman

*h 18,0 cm, Ø 12,7 cm, 306 gr*

A conical tapering chased silver beaker on circular base below horizontal bands. The body is engraved with supple scrollwork enriched with female term and cherub's heads, forming three cartouches placed alternately. On the lower part of the body three ships are finely engraved.

The cast foot is decorated with a band of cast acanthus leaves. The bottom of the beaker engraved with the initials B.R. and R.A. This suggests that the beaker was made in honour of a marriage.



The cartouches are engraved with scenes from the Old Testament.

Jacob receiving his father's blessings (Genesis 27: 1-40)

Isaac called his son Esau and directed him to procure some venison for him, in order to receive Isaac's blessing. While Esau was hunting, Jacob deceived his blind father by misrepresenting himself as Esau and thereby obtained his father's blessing.

Jacob's ladder (Genesis 28:10-22)

On the run from his brother Esau he fell asleep in a field. As he was dreaming, he had a vision of a ladder, or stairway, between heaven and earth. God's angels were on it, ascending and descending.

Moses is found in a wicker basket (Exodus 2: 1-10)

After the Pharaoh had ordered to throw all newborns in the Nile, a Levite woman saves her baby by setting him adrift on the river in a wicker basket. The Pharaoh's daughter finds him, calls him Moses and brings him up as one of her own.

Jan Saagman, a very talented silversmith from Stavoren, who worked in the last quarter of the 17th century, is particularly known for his engraved beakers. His ornamental detail is well designed and superbly engraved. He was born in Leeuwarden in 1648 but moved to Stavoren where he became master silversmith before 1672. In 1682 he married Annatie Hendrickx de Lange. He made his own marriage beaker for that occasion, which is now in the collection of the Frisian Museum in Leeuwarden. Jan Saagman was also mayor of Stavoren.

Literature:

Fries Museum, *De Zilveren Eeuw, Fries pronkzilver in de zeventiende eeuw*, 2000, no. 62.

Associated literature:

J.W. Frederiks, *Dutch Silver*, vol. III, no's 322, 323, 324 and 325.

Exhibition:

Fries Museum, *De Zilveren Eeuw, Fries pronkzilver in de zeventiende eeuw*, 2000, no. 62.



Genesis 27: 1-40



Genesis 28:10-22



Exodus 2: 1-10

## Layette basket

Dordrecht, 1668, unidentified maker's mark

*h 10,2 cm, w 62,5 cm, d 33,8 cm, 1.595 gr*

A parcel-gilt silver layette basket. The sides of the basket openworked with auricular motifs and various naturalistic flowers, the base with a plaque depicting the Adoration of the Magi (symbolising Love/Charity), the handles with auricular medals illustrating Faith and Hope.

This layette basket is a superb example of the floral style, a widely spread European decorative style that was largely developed by Dutch silversmiths in the seventeenth century. Apprentices from abroad travelled to The Hague and Amsterdam to be schooled in this style, and thus the patterns that were developed in The Netherlands can be found on silver objects from all over of the world. There are only seven silver layette baskets known. Two in London Museum collections, one in Boston and three in Dutch collections: The Rijksmuseum, The Hague Municipal Museum and one in the collection of His Majesty the King of the Netherlands. This seventh is the only one known in a private collection.

The current basket distinguishes itself by an innovative approach: a harmonious synthesis of auricular ornaments with various flowers and foliage. Also, it is an extremely rare example of a silver category that has not always been considered to be Dutch. In the inventories of interested collectors and connoisseurs such as Johan van Hellemont (the consignor of the ewer and dish by Johannes Lutma) objects in silver, gilt and parcel-gilt are three distinct categories. This basket's gilding is original, which, at the same time, is the reason of the exceptional level of conservation of its detailed decoration.

Equally remarkable is its visual imagery, which is directly related to the basket's function. The three reliefs show the three main Christian virtues, however, due to contrast in dimensions, Love is of greater importance than Faith and Hope, which is in line with I Corinthians 14: *'What remains is faith, hope and charity, these three, yet the greatest is charity'*, a text that is still read during christenings and weddings. Furthermore, the main scene directly points to the function of the object. Celebrating a birth by bringing gifts befits a layette basket (an object that was used in seventeenth century nurseries to display the dowry of a new-born child).

The acts of representation and reception that are explicitly connected with this object were not played at the same level throughout Dutch society. The coats-of-arms and monograms on the surviving baskets suggest that these were mainly courtly habits. We know from the archives that this custom was adopted by various important families either from or with strong connections in Dordrecht, such as the families De Witt, Pompe van Meerdervoort, Repelaer and De Beveren. As Dordrecht silversmiths in the 1660s worked predominantly for their hometown's elite, we may therefore conclude that the current basket was consigned by one of these families.

In the seventeenth century, baskets could be used in various ways, for example as a layette basket, a silver masterpiece in which the dowry of the new-born child could be displayed during the christening dinner. Amongst the silver that, according to the Dordrecht lady Christina Repelaer maiden name De Beveren (1653-1728), wife of Johan Reepmaker, was needed for the new-born child, a large silver basket was on top of the wishlist.



As can be concluded from the notes from her dowry drawn up in 1679: 'many textiles, also some silver: a large silver basket, a large silver spice box, a porringer with cover and spoon, a second bowl with cover and spoon'.

Around 1645 the use of silver baskets for this purpose gained popularity at court, but examples from important patrician families are documented as well. A relatively large amount of references are connected with the family De Witt. For example, the christening in 1660 of Maria, the youngest daughter of Johan de Witt and Wendela Bicker, was celebrated with a rectangular basket worth 134 guilders in silver, and an aunt of Johan de Witt, Maria van den Corput (Dordrecht 1603-1671), presented a 'silvere doorkluchtige benne' ('a silver openworked basket') on the occasion of the christening of Amsterdam-born Isaack Loten (Amsterdam 1650-Groningen 1713), that had cost at least 225 guilders. Directly connected with Dordrecht are Diederick Pietersz van Leyden van Leeuwen (1628-1682) and his wife Alida Paets (1625-1673). At birth, some of their daughters received silver baskets of which the bases were chased with children.

Assuming that the Dordrecht basket was intended as a christening gift as well, the year 1668 offers several possibilities: one is the son of Cornelis Pompe and Anna de Beveren, Michiel, a full cousin of the couple Repelaer-de Beveren. Michiel was christened on 22 October 1668 in Dordrecht.

We are greatfull to drs. Dirk Jan Biemont for his attribution to this text.

Provenance:

Muncaster Castle Collection, before 1917.  
Phyllida Pennington and Patrick Thomas Gordon-Duff, 1955.  
Sotheby's London, 9 november 1995, p. 121.  
John Endlich Antiquairs, 1996.  
Private collection, 1996-2015.

Literature:

Jet Pijzel-Dommisse, *Haags goud en zilver*, Zwolle, 2005, p. 131.  
Jan Rudolph de Lorm, *Amsterdams goud en zilver*, Zwolle 1999, p.65.

Associated literature:

Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'Enkele oude Nederlandse kraamgebruiken' in *Antiek*, 1971/2, pp. 297-332.  
J.R. Ter Molen, 'Een zilveren luiermand in de Wallace Collection' in *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, 1980, pp. 204-214.





## A birth medal

Amsterdam, circa 1680, Reynier Arondeaux

Ø 8,3 cm, 74 gr

A circular embossed 'plaquettepenning' depicting the Adoration of the Magi and the Adoration of the Sheperds.

Obverse: Adoration of the Magi. Melchior, Balthasar and Caspar visit the newborn, bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Reverse: Adoration of the Sheperds. After an angel appears to a group of sheperds, they hurry to Bethlehem to visit Jesus and make widely known what they had been told.

Both scenes are very commonly combined due to the balanced composition it creates. It is most likely that this beautiful executed medal was commissioned for a birth. Reynier Arondeaux was a well known medallist. It is also known that he assembled plaquettes from other well known artists such as Johannes Lutma the younger and Pieter van Abeelen into 'plaquettepenningen'.



## A commemorative salver (schenkpiring)

Batavia, 1729, Jan van Cloon

Ø 34,5 cm, 654 gr

An eight-lobed silver chased salver, bordered with acanthus and a gadroon rim. A flower between each lobe. The centre engraved with an inscription:

*'Ter Gedachtenisse Van den Wel Edelen Gestrengen Heer Anthonij Huijsman Eerste Raad en directeur Generaal van Nederl's India. Gebooren tot Jaffenapatnam den 9'december 1668 En Overleden tot Batavia den 19'september 1729 Oud 60 Jaren 9 Mn En 10 dagen.'*

In Batavia, where there were no stamp-cutters, a different custom developed. Existing silver objects were engraved with an inscription stating the deceased's name, marital status, occupations and dates of birth and death. The most prominent amongst such objects are the commemorative salvers that are known as 'schenkpirings' ('piring' is the Malay word for salver). These salvers were presented to relatives and friends of the deceased as well as to the bearers of the coffin- a costly habit since large funeral processions with as many bearers, relatives and friends as possible were the custom. Later in the 18th century this practice was regulated and bearers had to be recruited from the garrison. They were paid with cash and now only the pallbearers, the family members that held the cloth covering the coffin, were given a commemorative salver.

This piring was made to commemorate Anthony Huijsman, a member of the Council of the Indies and Director-General of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in Batavia. An identical piring, manufactured for the same occasion is in the collection of the Rijksmuseum (inv. no. BK-1994-79).

### Literature:

W.G.F.C. Rissink, 'Anthonij Huijsman, een belangrijk dienaar van de compagnie', in: *Verslagen en aanwinsten 1970-1971, Stichting cultuurgeschiedenis van de Nederlanders overzee*, 1972, pp. 53-55.

### Associated literature:

*Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 43, 1995, p. 356.



## Gold Medal

Commemorating the laying of the first stone of the Town Hall of Amsterdam  
Amsterdam, 1729, attributed to Johannes Lutma the elder.

Ø 5,4 cm, 64 gr

A gold engraved medal with on the obverse a pair of lions rampant flanking the coat-of-arms of the city of Amsterdam, above, in a lobed cartouche, the year 1648. The reverse is inscribed: *'Ter gedachtenis dat ondert gesach der Heeren Burgemeesteren den eersten steen vant Amsterdams Stadhuis is geleght door Gerbrand Pancras, Jacob de Graeff, Sijbrand Valckenier, Pieter Schaep, der heeren Burgemeesteren soonen en neeven, is dees penning doen maken den XXVIIIden Octobris Anno MDCXLVIII.'* ('To commemorate that under the supervision of the Mayor the first stone of the Amsterdam Town Hall is laid by Gerbrand Pancras, Jacob de Graeff, Sijbrand Valckenier, Pieter Schaep, the Mayor's sons and nephews, this medal has been made on the 28th of October in the year 1648'.)

To commemorate the laying of the first stone of the Town Hall on 28 October 1648, the four children that participated in the ceremony were each given a valuable engraved gold medal. The present example was meant for Sijbrand, the son of mayor Wouter Valckenier. The iron trowel with ebony handle has a silver ring that is inscribed with the name 'Sijbrand Valckenier'. The chamois-leather apron that, just as the trowel, was used during the ceremony, belongs with it.



*The Town Hall on Dam Square, Amsterdam, Gerrit Adriaensz. Berckheyde, 1672  
oil on canvas, h 33.5cm × w 41.5cm  
(Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. SK-A-34)*

The laying of the first stone of such an important building for one of the most powerful cities



in the world was an event that came with extensive ceremony. However, the architect of this 'Eighth World Wonder', Jacob van Campen, was not present at the celebrations. Instead, the four sons and nephews of the reigning mayors of the city, Jacob de Graeff, Gerbrand Pancras, Pieter Schaep and Sybrant Valckenier participated in the ceremony.

The famous Dutch poet Joost van den Vondel wrote:

*Zo leit die Jeught des eersten Steen  
Van 't Raethuis, dat met raet en daet  
Versterkt een zenuw van den Staet.*

*And so youth lays the first Stone  
Of the Town Hall, that with advice and deeds  
Reinforces the Nation's nerves.*

There are two other trowels in silver that suggest to have been used with the laying of the first stone, although these were probably commemorative objects to remember this prestigious project by. The Amsterdam Museum keeps a trowel that is inscribed with the names 'Jacob de Graeff' and 'Philips de Vos'. The latter was the city's master-stonemason who supervised the laying of the first stone and further construction work.

The very fine example in the collection of the Rijksmuseum not only shows exuberant decoration in the auricular style, but also the scene of the four boys who, dressed in aprons, are busy with trowels, stones and mortar.



Detail of a trowel, Attributed to Johannes Lutma the Elder, 1648  
h 3,5 x l 27,8 cm (Rijksmuseum  
Amsterdam, inv. no. BK-KOG-1494)



## Model of a Frog

South German, dated 1572, Monogrammist PM

18,3 cm

This pearwood model of a frog is signed and dated with the monogram PM 1572. Possibly these are the initials of a sculptor named Paulus Mair II (Augsburg c. 1540-1615/19). He was a member of a family of sculptors and became a master in 1564. Little is known about his career until 1570-71 when he carved the monumental Mary or High altar for the St Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg. Since very few works of his are known, principally big altarpieces, it is difficult to give certainty to this attribution.

The sixteenth century was marked by a scientific interest in natural phenomena. New worlds had been discovered, occupied by animals and human beings never before seen in Europe. Museums of curiosities abounded. Artists copied nature in all their strange phenomena. The tradition to make small animals in wood or bronze comes from 14th century Italy where sculptors made casts of real animals, shells and plants. They saw themselves as creators of Gods creation in another material.



Past cataloguers felt this frog was a goldsmith's model used as a workshop example for future potential projects. This thought is not surprisingly since many, diverse examples of little boxwood models are known. The Amerbach Cabinet in Basel has several 16th century examples. It is known that the great goldsmith Wenzel Jamnitzer (Vienna 1507/1508-1585 Nuremberg) contracted an unknown local sculptor to cut a boxwood casting model when he was completing his first masterpiece: the Mother Earth Table decoration for the Nuremberg city council. The large basin is richly covered with foliage, hanging putti scrolls and strapwork. Miniature creatures including lobsters snakes and frogs adorn the inside of the basin.

The silver gilded mounting of the rhinoceros cup by Nicolaus Pfaff (Nuremberg 1556?-1612 Prague) in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna is also decorated with small animals including a frog. In the same period Bernard Palissy (France 1510-1590) created his famous ceramics. He began practicing his trade, using a white clay body with delicately nuanced colored glazes.

An enthusiastic natural scientist, Palissy used local fish, plants, and reptiles, making casts of actual specimens for use in his modeling, to develop what he called "rustic pottery." He produced his rustic ware in abundance and made a grotto (now destroyed) in the garden of the Tuileries palace in Paris for queen Catherine de Médici. This oval dish, in the manner of Palissy, is in the shape of a pond surrounded by plant life. Perched on the plate are fish, frogs, a twisting snake, a lizard, a water beetle, crayfish, and a variety of shellfish.

The initials and number in pen LP 3976 are probably an inventory number from a large collection. Possibly LP stands for Lanna Prag, the famous collector Adalbert Ritter von Lanna whose collection was sold in Berlin in four separate auctions between 1909 and 1911.

Literature:

Blumka Julius Bohler, *Collecting Treasures of the past V*, New York 2006, no. 50.

Provenance:

Collection Peter Wilson (ex Chairman of Sotheby's), his sale  
Sotheby London, 4 July 1991, lot. 249 illustrated in color on the cover of the catalogue  
Blumka New York, circa 2006.

Table ornament, Wenzel Jamnitzer, 1549  
h 99,8 cm, d 46 cm  
(Rijksmuseum Amsterdam inv. no. BK-17040-A)



## Tobacco box with verre églomisé panel

Silver, mother of pearl, Dutch, circa 1780, Jonas Zeuner

*h 4,3 cm, b 6,3, d 12,6 cm, 245 gr*

A rectangular silver tobacco box and cover with canted corners. The sides and cover are mounted with mother-of-pearl plaques that are engraved on the front and back side and cover with flowers, foliage and leaves. The corners are filled-in with a cell-pattern containing leaf-shaped crosses. The interior of the cover is mounted with a reverse-glass painting, a so-called verre églomisé.

The scene depicts a hunter with his female company in a luxurious garden with water bordered by high hedges. On the right there is a garden pavilion with doors opening to reveal a snoozing cat, on the left a garden statue raised on a socle with a pair of doves below, while a church surrounded by trees is in the background.

It is inscribed with the ambiguous text: *'Kind Lass doch die Enten ruhn; Siehe wie die Däubgen thun.'* ('Child, let the ducks rest; can't you see what the doves are doing')

The lower part of the pavilion bears the signature: *'Zeuner fec.'*

Jonas Zeuner was born in Kassel (Hessen) in 1727 and moved to Amsterdam around 1750 where he died in 1814 after a long and fruitful artistic career. However, his career had not always been successful. His first occupation was in the army where he was a cannoneer. In 1750 he married Margaretha Sippel. Over the years he acquainted himself with various disciplines connected with the art of painting and with related professions such as goldsmithing, engraving, drawing and reverse-glass painting.

Only in 1770 his very specialised work started to appear on the market. These were refined 'paintings' in the verre églomisé technique that mostly depicted topographical scenes. He also painted a small number of the Republic's cities, first and foremost Amsterdam, then Utrecht, Haarlem and Groningen. A number of harbour views and landscapes are known to be of his hand, as well as some renderings of characteristic country estates and pastoral scenes that were probably made in commission.



The fact that he also depicted historical events in which cannoneers were present, shows that he never forgot his old profession. He also had an eye for mythological scenes as is shown in the allegories he made for places such as Felix Meritis in Amsterdam. His Lutheran faith as well as his political colour is expressed by portraits of the preacher Alberti, depictions of the house of a Patriot foreman and the rendering of the entering of the French troops in 1795.

His work was mostly made for the decoration of walls. The plaques that were meant to be mounted on a snuff- or tobacco-box are very rare and enabled the proud owner to carry a piece of Zeuner's work with him at all times. His work has a unique place amongst the oeuvres of the Dutch artists of the second half of the 18th century.

It is certain that Zeuner often worked after existing prints, see for example drawings by P.A. Baudouin, Jan de Beijer, Hermanus Schouten, Jean J. le Veau and Jacobus Houbraken.

Associated literature:

J. Sprenkels-ten Horn and A. Sprenkels, *Jonas Zeuner 1727-1814, Zijn wereld weerspiegeld in zilver en goud*, 1994.





## A pair of Louis XVI coasters

Rotterdam, 1783, Johannes Jansen

*h 6,5 cm, Ø 12,9 cm, 436 gr*

A pair of circular wine coasters with wood bases. The sides openworked with garlands and three columns. The columns are topped with vase ornaments. The rims are bordered with beaded rims.

These finely executed coasters stand out because of their architectural form. Johannes Jansen became master of the silversmith's guild in 1773. Most of his work was made for domestic use but he also received commissions for religious purposes, city councils and for guilds.



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Text : John Endlich, Marius van Dam, Dick Endlich  
Photos : Dick Endlich  
Print : Printgarden - Alphen a/d Rijn  
Translation : Marleen Rengers  
Design : New Fountain - Haarlem  
Date : Haarlem, February 2016

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