

WELCOME

CODART Director dies under Avalanche of Books

Gerdien Verschoor

This might have been the headline of a CODART News item, if I hadn't succeeded in preventing one of my bookcases from falling over and burying me under seven shelves of art books. You may well ask, 'What flashes through your mind in such a situation?' Well, I must confess that my philosophical side surrendered to my practical side, and my first thought was to attempt to hold the bookcase with one hand only, so that I could use my other hand to throw some books

on the floor (*throw ... art books*) until the bookcase was light enough for me to prop it up again. My second thought kept resounding in my mind like a slogan: *eBook. eBook. eBook*. But my third and most meaningful thought concerned CODART: several virtual bookcases appeared in my mind's eye, such as the handy [research guide](#) that has been on CODART's website for years, and the new [RKD explore](#). In a flash I also thought about the future of the research guide now being devised by CODART and the RKD: an up-to-date and complete guide to the body of literature important to every museum curator. Should that guide be placed on the website of CODART, the network, or on the website of the RKD, the research institute?

These questions are exercising our minds, and their answers will be found in consultation with both the website committee and the RKD.

In the short term, however, there will be other additions to www.codart.nl. Many of our members have asked us to post their specializations on their personal page. All of our members have recently received an e-mail asking them to inform our webmaster of their fields of expertise. In the future it will be possible, via the search function, to find your colleagues according to their specializations

– and of course you, too, will be more “findable.” You may describe your specialization in terms of specific artists, genres, periods or anything else you think appropriate. The success of this new functionality depends largely on the information you provide. If you have not yet done so, please report your specializations to webmaster@codart.nl.

Regrettably few CODART members will be reporting specializations connected with the eighteenth century. Last year, when we were brainstorming with the eZine's [editorial board](#) about a number of special issues we had in mind, it soon became clear that the “Silver Age” was high on our list of priorities. It is a period of low visibility among our members, which prompted us to ask ourselves some questions. Are there any members of CODART who operate internationally in the field of eighteenth-century Dutch and Flemish art? Which collections can tell us something about the collecting history of this period? Are there other areas within CODART that suffer from neglect? It proved to be quite a challenge to find members beyond the borders of Flanders and the Netherlands who concentrate on the eighteenth century. Even so, we have succeeded in producing a special issue that focuses on this *niche* with articles on eighteenth-century collectors and their holdings, an article on the heyday of the Dutch country house, and an interview with Paul Knolle, curator of the Rijksmuseum Twenthe in Enschede, which pays special attention to the eighteenth century in its exhibition planning and collecting policies.

This all goes to show that curators who might describe their specializations in such terms as ‘Cornelis Troost’, ‘allonge perruque’ and ‘crinoline’ are more than welcome to join our ranks.

Gerdien Verschoor is Director of CODART