

The Hague School in The Burrell Collection



Anton Mauve - Carting Sand



Jacob Hendricus Maris - Amsterdam



Matthis Maris - The Sisters

The collection of 87 Hague School works gathered by Sir William Burrell is of national importance.

Within Great Britain the quality and quantity of the collection can rival with those of The National Gallery in London, The National Gallery in Edinburgh and the Aberdeen Art Gallery.

As a collector of The Hague School Sir William Burrell can be compared to The Hague School painter Hendrik Willem Mesdag, who, just like Burrell, simultaneously invested in Hague School art and the French Barbizon artists and the Dutch-English collectors couple Mr. and Mrs. Drucker-Fraser.

Sir William Burrell was one of the earliest collectors of Hague School art in Scotland and he collected Hague School works throughout his life. His collection now holds 88 works, half of which by one single artist: Matthijs Maris. He acquired works from art dealers in London and Glasgow. Although Burrell made several trips to The Netherlands, it is unknown if he purchased any Hague School works during these stays.

The greatest strength of The Burrell's nineteenth century Dutch collection is the group of over 40 works by Matthijs Maris. This is probably the largest outside The Netherlands, and includes masterpieces such as 'The Butterflies' and 'The Sisters'. A special place is occupied by a large number of his late works in which vaguely seen female figures seem to fade away in their surroundings.

The other half of Sir William Burrell's Hague School collection consists of 11 oil paintings and 33 watercolours by important artists such as Johannes Bosboom, Anton Mauve and Jacob Maris .

The large group of 19 watercolours by Johannes Bosboom range from very early, detailed work to late church interiors executed in a loose style. Anton Mauve is represented with a number of vibrant watercolours, in which the artist captures the atmosphere of Dutch landscape in wintertime. Examples of Jacob Maris' art vary from impressive city views on Amsterdam and Dordrecht to early, pure landscapes and charming portraits of his children.



Anton Mauve - Scheveningen

Sir William Burrell had a strong preference for land- and seascapes to interiors and scenes of fishermen's life, which were too sentimental for his liking. Therefore works by David A.C. Artz and Albert Neuhuys are lacking. In the case of Jozef Israels, whose works were very popular and certainly available to Sir William Burrell, the sky-high prices paid for his works must have been another reason not to invest in them.

The investments Sir William Burrell did make show a keen eye for Hague School works of high quality.

Suzanne Veldink 10/07/2006