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THE PANPOËTICON BATAVÛM

LIEKE VAN DEINSEN

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JAN DE HOND

THE
PANPOËTICON
BATAVÛM

THE PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR AS A CELEBRITY

FOREWORD

The Rijksmuseum has been a repository for art and history since the very beginning. Paintings and historical artefacts were on display when the institution first opened its doors in 1800 as the 'Nationale Kunstgalerij' located in Huis ten Bosch in The Hague, and later when the national museum moved to the Royal Palace on Dam Square in Amsterdam in 1808. The approach did not change until the accession of King William I in 1815, following which the paintings, drawings and prints were installed in the Trippenhuis building in the centre of Amsterdam. The historical objects were returned to The Hague, where they were placed in the newly founded Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden (Royal Cabinet of Curiosities). This separation was reversed when the Rijksmuseum opened in 1885. A substantial part of the collection of the Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden – subsequently incorporated in the Nederlandsch Museum voor Kunst en Geschiedenis – returned to the new museum building in Amsterdam, designed by Pierre Cuypers. The Nederlandsch Museum was divided in 1927 into Dutch History and Sculpture & Applied Arts departments. The two departments were reunited, however, following the most recent, large-scale renovation of the building, which was completed in 2013. Today, paintings, applied arts and history are no longer shown in separate sections, but have been integrated in a single chronological circuit telling the story of Dutch art and history.

The collection of the history department runs to around 50,000 items and is highly varied in character. It includes paintings, prints and photographs, but also coins, costumes, model ships, weapons and even a complete aircraft. There are celebrated national relics , such as Oldenbarnevelt's walking stick and Hugo Grotius's bookcase, but also many less well-known objects, such as seventeenth-century propaganda prints and twentieth-century photo albums. The museum's task is to preserve and display these objects, but also to study them. The Rijksmuseum is an institution that carries out its own research, while simultaneously making its collection accessible to other scholars. The contents of the museum are, after all, only relevant if they are continually reinterpreted. A collection that is no longer studied is a dead collection, which will eventually lose its meaning for the present.

This is why we have created the *Rijksmuseum Studies in History* series. Historians are accustomed to working mostly with written sources, and so we want to challenge them to use material and visual sources as well. The scholarly studies published in the series will draw on objects in the Rijksmuseum as a source for historical research. Each new volume will show just how surprising and fruitful research of this kind can be.

This first publication in the new series focuses on the Panpoëticon Batavûm – a collection of authors' portraits, which Lieke van Deinsen has used as the focus (starting point) for her study of literary canon formation in the eighteenth century.

We are extremely grateful to the Johan Huizinga Fund/Rijksmuseum Fund for making the *Rijksmuseum Studies in History* possible.

MARTINE GOSSELINK
HEAD OF THE RIJKSMUSEUM HISTORY DEPARTMENT

THE PANPOËTICON BATAVÛM

The canon of what are perceived to be the most important and influential authors and literary works is a perennial subject of debate within Dutch literature, as it is elsewhere. The urge to draw up lists and devise canons is found in every era. In the case of Dutch cultural history, however, the most noteworthy canon-forming initiative might well have been the Panpoëticon Batavûm in the eighteenth century – a wooden cabinet containing small portraits of over 300 Dutch poets, both male and female. Eighty-two of these portraits currently belong to the collection of the Rijksmuseum.

The Panpoëticon offered tangible proof of the power of Dutch literature in a period that has tended to be described in terms of the Republic's decline, Frenchification and loss of cultural identity. The history of this remarkable collection offers a unique insight into eighteenth-century engagement with the literary past, the growing fascination for the author behind the literary work and the emancipation of women writers in the world of letters.

LIEKE VAN DEINSEN (1987, Netherlands) studied Dutch Language and Culture (BA) and Literature and Literary studies (RMA) at Radboud University in Nijmegen. Having completed (*cum laude*) her master's thesis on the function of emotion and memory in early-modern theatre, she participated as a doctoral student in the research project *Proud to be Dutch*. Within this programme, she wrote her PhD thesis on mechanisms of canon formation in the early eighteenth-century Dutch Republic. Lieke van Deinsen's research is situated at the interface between literature, art and cultural history and digital humanities. She was attached to the Rijksmuseum in 2015/16 as a Johan Huizinga Fellow, in which capacity she completed her study of the Panpoëticon Batavûm. In 2016, she was granted an Elsevier Fellowship at the Scaliger Instituut of the University of Leiden. She sits on the committee of the Dutch-Belgian Society for Eighteenth Century Studies and serves as guest editor of the journal *De Achttiende Eeuw* and treasurer of the Stichting Vrouwengeschiedenis van de Vroegmoderne Tijd (SVVT). Articles by Lieke van Deinsen have appeared in a variety of Dutch and international journals and collections.

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The author is grateful to Eveline Sint Nicolaas, Paul van Duin, Robert-Jan te Rijdt, Ton van Strien and Timothy De Paepe for their expertise and advice at various stages of this research.

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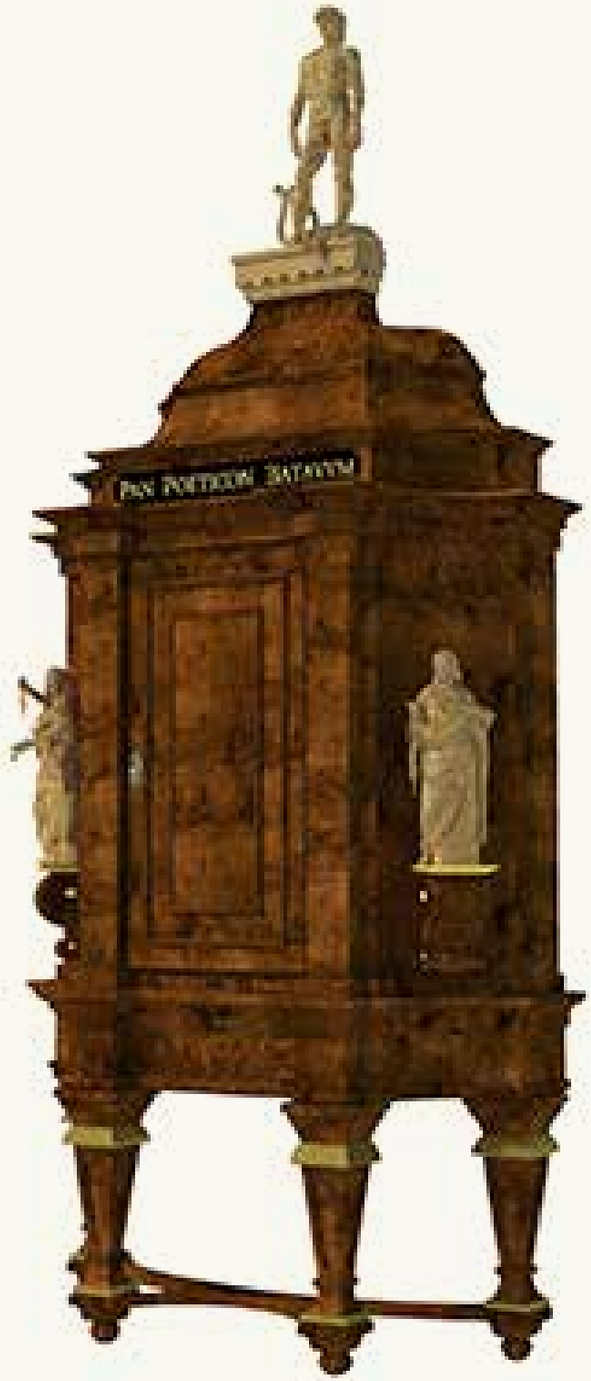
2 Jacob de Gheyn II, *Portrait of Hugo Grotius at the Age of Fifteen*, 1599. Engraving, 10.6 x 7.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1898-A-20586. D. Franken Bequest, Le Vésinet.



3 Lieke van Deinsen and Timothy De Paepe, *Reconstruction of the Panpoëticon Batavûm, c. 1735*, 2016. Computer visualisation.

THE 'TREASURE CHEST' OF DUTCH POETS

In the summer of 2012, the Rijksmuseum acquired an early eighteenth-century oval portrait measuring 11 by 9.5 centimetres and painted on a cheap metal support (Fig. 1). It shows a young man, hand on hip, gazing out confidently at the world. The stately atmosphere of the likeness is echoed in its setting; the little portrait is mounted in a wooden frame decorated with a laurel wreath – the classical symbol of poetic tribute –in gilded metal. A small strip of paper on the back suggests that this is a miniature in oils of the popular French King Henri IV. In reality, the young man is the fifteen-year-old *wunderkind* Hugo Grotius (1583–1645).[1] With visible pleasure, Grotius shows the viewer the medallion he received during an audience with the French king. That the monarch took that opportunity to declare his protégé 'le miracle de la Hollande' will no doubt have contributed to the proud twinkle in the young scholar's eyes.[2]

Contrary to what both the size and the quality of the painting suggest, it forms part of one of the most evocative collections of authors' portraits in the history of Dutch culture. Within the context of this collection, there will have been little doubt as to the sitter's identity. The painting of the young Hugo Grotius is one of at least 350 authors' portraits that formed part during the eighteenth century of a collection better known as the 'Panpoëticon Batavûm', roughly 'All Dutch Poets'.[3] It was founded around 1700 by the wealthy Amsterdam amateur painter and poet Arnoud van Halen (1673–1732).[4] Drawing on existing likenesses, he painted the portraits of Dutch poets (Fig. 2), which he placed in a specially commissioned cabinet, described by contemporaries as the 'treasure chest' of the Dutch literary canon.[5] With its distinctive top, niches, pilasters and, above all, carved figures, the burl wood collector's cabinet had the appearance of a temple Dutch poetry (Figs. 3 and 4). The Panpoëticon contained dozens of shallow drawers, similar to those of popular coin and medal cabinets, which could be lifted out for viewing.[6] Each one contained eleven portraits, mostly arranged chronologically.[7] The portraits all had a gilt frame in the shape of a laurel wreath. A rectangular cartouche at the bottom allowed space for a

1 Duncan et al. 2013, 304–305.
2 Ridderikhoff 1996, 23.
3 The last auction catalogue to mention the Panpoëticon Batavûm refers to 'a collection of Dutch poets and poetesses, depicted in over 350 small oval painted portraits' ('eene verzameling van Nederlandsche Dichters en Dichteressen, afgebeeld in ruim 350 kleine ovale geschilderde portretten'). *Cat.* Amsterdam 1849, 43.
4 *Arnoud van Halen's Pan poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt* 1773, vi.
5 Bidloo 1720, [*3v]; 14; 79.
6 Backer 1789, 263–64. Each of the wooden drawers was roughly 45 cm wide, 40 cm deep and 1 cm high. The Rijksmuseum has six of the original drawers. Contemporary sources contradict one another regarding the number of panels that were eventually placed in the cabinet. Three nineteenth-century sources state the number of drawers, but none of them make clear whether they are referring purely to the panels in which the portraits were mounted or to all the drawers present in the cabinet. An advertisement in the *Algemeen Handelsblad* newspaper on 17 September 1849 announcing the auction of the cabinet speaks of 'over 80 drawers' ('ruim 80 laden'). The auction catalogue, meanwhile, specifies 82 'drawers, both large and smaller' ('zoo groote als kleinere laden'). *Cat.* Amsterdam 1849, 43. In 1853, the journal *De Navorscher* quoted an earlier description of the collection, probably dating from the early nineteenth century, which mentions 'over 300 small portraits in oils, oval-shaped …, lying in 29 drawers' ('ruim 300 stuks pourtraitjes in olieverw, in langwerp ovaal …, liggende in 29 laden'). L.J. 1853, 187.
7 *Arnoud van Halen's Pan Poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt*, ix.

strip of parchment with the name of the depicted poet. A large drawer at the bottom of the cabinet housed the various manuscripts and printed texts written and published over time about the collection.[8] The Panpoëticon combined several characteristically eighteenth-century enthusiasms, including a passion for history, collection mania, encylopedism and a growing fascination for the author behind the literary work.

Van Halen's initiative struck a chord. Following its creator's death, the cabinet passed through the hands of successive art-lovers, each of whom restored or replaced damaged or dated portraits, while adding new authors – mostly contemporaries. In this way, the collection that Van Halen had begun in his Amsterdam townhouse grew to embrace more than 350 writers. The Panpoëticon reached its zenith at the end of the century in the meeting room of the Leiden art society *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* (Art Is Attained through Labour). This success was due in part to the accessibility of the collection, which had a semi-public character from the outset, even though the eighteenth-century Dutch Republic did not yet have any public museums as such. Hundreds of literature-lovers would visit the Panpoëticon in the course of the century, experiencing the Dutch literary past through direct physical interaction with the collection. The eighteenth-century public did not have to view the Panpoëticon in person, however, in order to acquaint themselves with it: awareness of the cabinet and the portraits also grew thanks to the lively reception of the collection. Dozens of odes were composed in its honour in the eighteenth century. Lambert Bidloo's almost 300-page *Panpoëticon Batavûm* (1720) is a particularly important source of knowledge about the collection, as is the commemorative anthology, *Arnoud van Halen's Pan Poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt* ('Arnoud van Halen's Pan Poëticon Glorified'), which *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* published in 1773.

Having represented the pride of the Dutch literary world for almost a century and a half, the collection came into the hands in 1849 of an art dealer out to maximise his profit, at which point it was broken up and scattered across Europe. There is no further trace of the wooden cabinet from that year onwards. The dispersal of the collection and the dynamic way in which it came about makes it hard to determine how many portraits the Panpoëticon Batavûm contained in total. At its highpoint, it featured at least 336 authors. Some of them, however – including leading literary figures like Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679), Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687) and Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678) – were placed in the Panpoëticon twice, which means that the precise number of portraits in the collection remains unclear.[9] For the most part, these authors were depicted at different stages of their lives, as was the case with Hugo Grotius, of whom there were also two portraits. What's more, portraits were replaced in the course of the eighteenth century or, due mostly to their poor quality, removed from the cabinet entirely. A total of at least 350 portraits are known to have been made for the Panpoëticon. A list of the authors depicted in the collection is included in the appendix to this study. Portraits thought to have been lost continue to turn up fairly regularly, including the one showing the young Hugo Grotius. The Rijksmuseum currently holds eighty-one of the original authors' portraits, twenty-two of which have been on display in the eighteenth-century section since the museum reopened in 2013. The museum also has a portrait of Arnoud van Halen, which likewise formed part of the collection, even though its dimensions (14.5 x 12.5 cm) differ from the standard (Fig. 5).

THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Despite the unique character of the Panpoëticon Batavûm, the collection has so far received surprisingly limited attention. The near-magical attraction that the Panpoëticon exerted on contemporaries seems to have disappeared along with the wooden cabinet and the dispersal of the collection. Art historians have tended to focus on the inferior aesthetic value of the various individual portraits.[10] What's more, the writer's portrait as a genre has had to contend with a stubborn image problem. Virtually nothing has been written to date concerning the significance and function of the author's portrait in the more general sense.[11] Literary historians, meanwhile, have struggled first and foremost with the complete illegibility of Bidloo's *Panpoëticon Batavûm* (Fig. 6).[12] The perceived lack of aesthetic and literary quality has long overshadowed the cultural-historical importance of the collection. The latter has recently received some more positive attention.[13] The ongoing character of the collection means that the Panpoëticon Batavûm offers a unique point of access for study of eighteenth-century reception of the literary past. More specifically, it offers an insight into the function of and fascination for the author's portrait in the eighteenth century.

Although authors' portraits had been in circulation since classical antiquity, it was only in the eighteenth century that the genre became genuinely popular.

8 *Cat.* 1849, 48.

9 In addition to Vondel, Huygens, Van Schurman and Grotius, Reyer Anslo, Johannes van Braam, Lambert Bidloo, Casper and Johannes Brandt, Hermanus van der Burg, Frans Greenwood, Jan de Marre and Arnout van Overbeke were included in the collection twice.

10 Van Thiel 1978, 24.

11 One noteworthy exception is provided by the recent explorations undertaken by the book historian Lisa Kuitert of the outlines of Dutch authors' likenesses. Her focus is, however, consistently on the nineteenth century and, more specifically, on the invention of photography. Kuitert 2007a; 2007b, 2011.

12 While the importance of Bidloo's *Panpoëticon Batavûm* to knowledge of the eighteenth-century reception of the literary past has been alluded to frequently, the treatment of his panegyric was far from positive or thorough for some considerable time. Bidloo was dismissed, for instance, as an 'untalented minor poet' ('onbegaafde dichterling'), whose attempt to stage a 'group portrait of our poets' ('een groepsbeeld van onze dichters te vormen') seems chiefly to have dug a 'family crypt in tedious doggerel' ('familiegraf van een doodvervelende rijmelarij'). Brom 1944, 9. The poem thus had to wait almost three centuries to be discussed *in extenso*. Van Strien 2014.

13 See, for example: Van Thiel 1976, 723–25; Baarssen, Te Rijdt & Scholten 2006, 88–90; Van Stipriaan 2001, 263–67; De Vries 2001, 36; Leemans & Johannes 2013, 111–12; Van Deinsen 2016.

Both the author's biographical details and his or her physical features became increasingly important as the idea gained ground that poetic inspiration was not drawn from some external source but from the writer's own inner, evocative powers.[14] Building on the sparse body of seventeenth-century writers' biographies, the popular eighteenth-century encyclopedias included detailed accounts of authors' lives,[15] sketches that were not infrequently accompanied by a portrait of the author in question. A noteworthy example in which Dutch poets were placed on a pedestal both textual and visual – and one that almost certainly functioned as a direct inspiration for Van Halen – was the *Index Batavicus of Naemrol van de Batavise en Hollandse Schryvers van Julius Caesar af, tot dese tijden toe* ('Index Batavicus or Roll of Batavian and Dutch Writers from Julius Caesar's Time to Our Own', 1701) by the Protestant minister Adriaan Pars (1641–1719 (Fig. 7). The word 'author' was not only applied in the early modern period to literary writers, incidentally, but also – as we find in Pars's *Index* – to historians, philosophers and politicians.

The growing number of writers' portraits circulating in early-modern print culture further promoted the individualisation and personalisation of authorship. It is no coincidence, therefore, that literary historians have tended increasingly in recent years to place the 'birth' of the 'modern' writer around 1700. Observations of this kind have so far relied chiefly on textual sources.[16] Growing public awareness of the physical appearance of the author is an important indication in itself, however, of the transition that authorship went through in the eighteenth century. The large-scale presence of writers' portraits meant that contemporary readers were increasingly familiar with the faces of admired literary figures. The growing presence of portraits in editions and collected works meant, moreover, that every reader immediately became a collector of authors' portraits. Some literary fans even made a point of actively seeking them out. By the end of the century, these ostensibly trivial depictions of authors were being avidly collected by the Dutch reading public.[17]

This study offers a chronological and thematic description of the history of the Panpoëticon Batavûm in direct relationship with the course of development undergone by the author's portrait in the eighteenth century. It focuses successively on the collection of authors' portraits, the physical experience of the literary past, growing demand for portraits of contemporary authors, the visualisation and formation of the woman writer and, lastly, the rise of a true celebrity culture in the final quarter of the century.

ARNOUD VAN HALEN: A COLLECTED LITERARY PAST

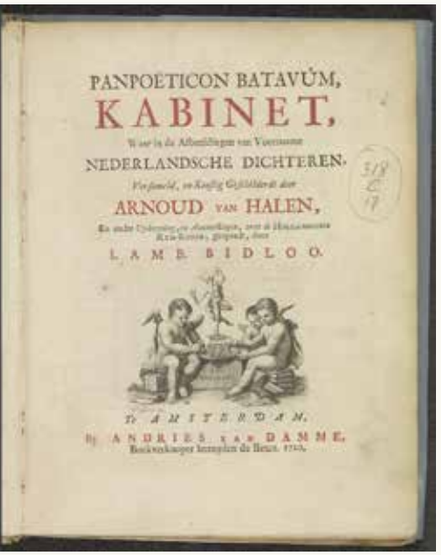
14 Kuitert 2007b, 356.

15 For more elaborate accounts of biographical practices in the early modern Dutch Republic, see: Harmsen 1998, 217–41; Duits 1991, 121–50; Duits 1992, 91-120; Rutten 2005, 145–76.

16 The foundations of this thesis were laid by the literary historian Alain Viala who, building on the 'field theory' of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, placed the formation of the autonomous literary market in the final quarter of the seventeenth century. Viala 1985. See also Turnovsky 2010.

17 Leemans & Johannes 2013, 135–36.

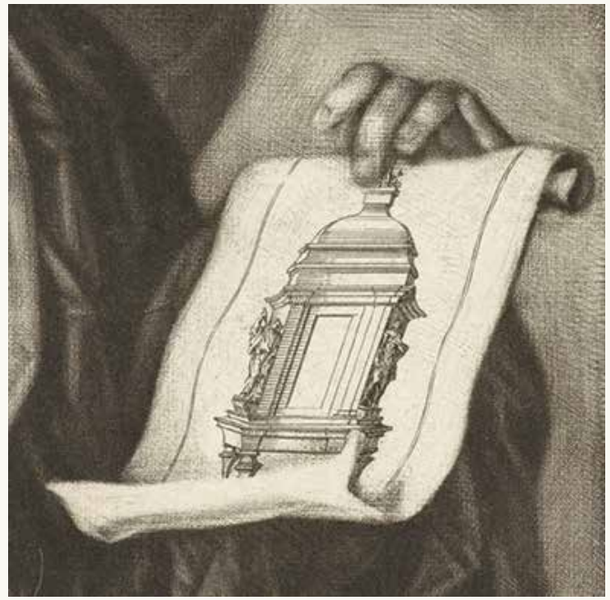
4 *Photograph of shelf in current layout; the portraits are not placed in the original, chronological order.*



5 *Title page of Lambert Bidloo's*, Panpoëticon Batavûm, 1720. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Research Library, 318 C 17.

6 Arnoud van Halen (after portrait by Christoffel Lubienietski), *Portrait of Arnoud van Halen*, 1725–32. Oil on copper, 14.5 x 12.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-38. D. Franken Bequest, Le Vésinet.

7 Hillebrand van der Aa (after drawing by Willem van Mieris), *Title page of* Index Batavicus, of, Naamrol van de Batavise en Hollandse schrijvers, 1701. Engraving and etching, 19.3 x 15.7 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1878-A-457.
[caption: *Title engraving of Adriaan Pars's* Index Batavicus, of, Naamrol van de Batvise en Hollandse schrijvers, 1701.



NIEUWE BIJSCHRIFTEN GRAAG
VOOR 2 BOVENSTE FOTOS

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OUD
Arnoud van Halen (naar prent van Karel Dujardin), *Portret van Jan Vos (ca. 1620-1667)*, 1700–1720, Voor- en achterzijde. Olieverf op blik, grisaille, 11 cm x 9,5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-4592.

10 Arnoud van Halen, design drawing for the Panpoëticon Batavûm (detail of) *Portrait of Lambert Bidloo*, 1720–32. Mezzotint and engraving, 16.5 x 14.2 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1906–3332.

In one of the first responses to the Panpoëticon Batavûm, the popular Haarlem playwright Pieter Langendijk (1683–1756) situated the project in a direct line with the mania for collection that prevailed in the Dutch Republic in the first quarter of the eighteenth century:

> A discerning mind devoted to numismatics,
> Seeks the nature of princes in their deeds;
> Another attends diligently to whether the Amboinese horn
> Is flattened, twisted, curved, round or squashed;
>
> A third shows his cabinet of animals or butterflies.
> This one is charmed by minerals, that by the bird's nest,
> Or presents us with the finest of the art of painting,
> As does Mr Van Halen, who shines a light on her.[18]

Arnoud van Halen compiled a collection, the like of which had never been seen.[19] Where many of his contemporaries collected medals of rulers, exotic animal species or rare stones, the Amsterdam painter and poet chose to assemble the portraits of key Dutch literary figures. He painted their portraits on small, oval supports made of metal and of uniform size (Fig. 8). In each case, he stated the name of the depicted author on the back, along with his or her year of birth and death, if known (Fig. 8 reverse). To house his rapidly growing collection of authors' portraits, Van Halen had a cabinet designed (Fig. 9) by his good friend and fellow collector Simon Schijnvoet (1652–1727).[20] He adorned the cabinet, which was completed no later than 1719, with three figures that he made himself. Apollo, god of poetry, stands atop the dome, while the muses of tragedy and comedy, Melpomene and Thalia appear in niches on either side.[21]
Van Halen's initiative arose at a delicate moment in Dutch literary history. The Dutch Republic in the early eighteenth century tended to be described by contemporaries and later historians alike in terms of decline, Frenchification and loss of cultural identity.[22] To many of the country's inhabitants, the new century marked the definitive end of the glorious 'Golden Age'. Economic stag-

18 'Een schrand're Geest, die op de Penningwysheid let,/ Zoekt Vorsten weezens op hunn' daaden nâ te spooren;/ Een ander let met vlyt of de Amboineesche hooren/ Gevlakt is, of gedraaijd, gebogen, rond, geplet;/ Een derde toont zyn Dier- of Vlinderkabinet./ Dees' kan het Mineraal, dien 't Vogelnest bekooren,/ Of stelt ons 't heerlykst van de Schilderkonst te vooren,/ Als Heer van Halen, die haar in het daglicht zet.' Langendijk 1720, [*4v].

19 Van Halen is frequently confused in biographical surveys with his father, Arnoldus van Halen. This confusion reflects not only the similarity of their names, but also the fact that in 1699 Arnoud married Margareta Rooleeuw (c. 1673–1710), the younger sister of his father's second wife. See Wijnman 1926, 96–97 for the correct view.

20 *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt* 1773, vi.

21 Houbraken 1718–21, vol. 2, 262.

22 For a good introduction to the unease felt in the eighteenth century, see: Mijnhardt 1996. A great deal of attention has been paid to the eighteenth-century Dutch Republic in recent historical surveys. Jonathan Israel, for instance, has labelled the period 1702–1806 as 'The Age of Decline', while J.L. Price describes the state of Dutch culture at the beginning of the eighteenth century as 'The Waning of the Golden Age'. Israel 1998, 957–1130; Price 2011, 244–61. The stubborn image problem suffered by eighteenth-century Dutch culture is largely attributable to nineteenth-century historians. According to their markedly ideological account of Dutch history, shaped by the cyclical rise, flourishing and decline of nations, an eighteenth century of decline was a prerequisite if the Netherlands was to flourish once more in *their* century. Much has been done recently to unpick the rigid, nineteenth-century formation of the reputation of eighteenth-century literature in particular. The current state of affairs is set out in Leemans & Johannes 2013, 35–51. A good introduction to Dutch cultural history in the eighteenth century can be found in Kloek & Mijnhardt 2004.

nation, constant war and persistent political unrest generated a growing sense of unease. The Dutch watched sadly as the Republic relinquished its pioneering role to the neighbouring great powers. At the very moment Dutch culture was supposed to be withering in the shadow of the previous century, Van Halen decided to erect a monument to it, so that it would once more be able to glitter in the full light of day. The elaboration of his idea was perfectly in keeping with the spirit of his time.

With the distinctive design of the cabinet and the collection it contained, Van Halen created a unique monument to the Dutch literary tradition. The final two stanzas of Langendijk's ode focus on Van Halen's contribution to Dutch poetry:

> Artfully he paints the Netherlands' sturdy poets.
> Learned Bidloo thanks and lauds the founder's diligence,
> Who has built a gainful monument rather than a mausoleum.
>
> What prize, what laurels shall the nation offer
> A painter and poet who, from a banished ghost,
> Causes two hundred phoenixes to rise from their ashes![23]

Langendijk's poem marks the beginning of the reception culture that would surround the collection throughout the eighteenth century.[24] Countless contemporaries sang the cabinet's praises. The official starting shot was fired by the Amsterdam pharmacist Lambert Bidloo (1638–1724), probably on the initiative of Van Halen himself. In his hefty panegyric *Panpoëticon Batavum* (1720), Bidloo firmly established the name of the collection, as depicted by Van Halen in the mezzotint he made of the poet (Fig. 11).[25] Van Halen captures the elderly Bidloo in the act of writing, just as he is putting the finishing touches to the title page of his poem. In his left hand he shows the viewer the design of the cabinet. The Panpoëticon Batavûm was to emulate the Roman Pantheon, the temple to the classical gods, by immortalising 'the finest poets, born on *Batavian* soil'.[26] Bidloo – who, like many of his contemporaries, was very much classically formed – did not only allude to the Pantheon because of its sacred character: the monumental building had also proved its ability to withstand the ravages of time. From the very beginning, therefore, the Panpoëticon was explicitly conceived as a steadfast sanctuary for Dutch literature.

The association with the Pantheon also creates the sacred atmosphere evoked by the portrait of Van Halen, which the Polish-born painter Christoffel Lubieniecki (1675–1728) made in 1725 (Fig. 12). Van Halen is shown at a large

23 'Hij maalt vol Konst en Rei van Neêrlands wakk're Dichters,/ Geleerde Bidloo dankt en roemt de vlyt des stichters,/ Die nutter Pronkgraf bouwt dan 't Mauzoleum was./ Wat prys, wat Lauw'ren staat het Vaderland te geeven/ Aan schilder, en Poeët, die van een' Geest gedreven,/ Twee honderd Fenixen doen ryzen uyt hunn' asch!'

24 For a list and detailed description of these images, see: Van Thiel 1978.

25 The full title is: *Panpoëticon Batavûm, kabinet, waar in de afbeeldingen van voornaame Nederlandsche dichteren, verzameld, en konstig geschilderdt door Arnoud van Halen, en onder uytbreyding, en aanmerkingen, over de Hollandsche Rymkunst* ('Panpoëticon Batavûm, cabinet, containing the likenesses of eminent Dutch poets, collected and artfully painted by Arnoud van Halen, with notes on the art of Dutch rhyme').

26 'braafste *Digsters*, op *Bataafsche* grond gebooren'. Bidloo 1720, 3.

window, leaning casually on his right arm so that the viewer can see past him into the background. The Panpoëticon stands at the centre of a pantheon-like space. Van Halen holds up his collection's masterpiece: the portrait of the prince of Dutch poets, Joost van den Vondel.[27] He points with his left hand to Bidloo's portrait, which hangs over the edge. The bas relief at the bottom form a kind of rebus,[28] summing up in classical imagery the struggle to canonise literature. Those like Van Halen who were committed to raising a monument to authors in one of the least auspicious periods in Dutch cultural history would naturally have to face down their carping critics. It is no coincidence, therefore, that Van Halen should have chosen this same painting as the model for the self-portrait that he eventually included in the collection (see Fig. 5). He used a similar composition, incidentally, for a self-portrait drawing he made, probably around the same time (Fig. 13). Once again, the faint outlines of the cabinet can be made out in the background.

CONSTRUCTING A DUTCH LITERARY CANON

Although Lubieniecki portrayed the founder of the Panpoëticon brandishing the portrait of Vondel, the undisputed master of Dutch literature, Van Halen also made great efforts to include the less celebrated branches of the Netherlands' literary family tree in his cabinet. In this way, the Panpoëticon Batavûm grew into a project that consistently transcended municipal and provincial boundaries. The result was an emphatically complete overview of Dutch writers, which also allowed space for women authors. With unprecedented zeal, Van Halen visited every corner of the nation in search of portraits.[29] In the foreword to his *Panpoëticon Batavûm*, Bidloo focuses at some length on the geographical diversity of the authors he encountered in the cabinet. He wrote that it essentially offered a home to the 'most eminent ' *Hollanderen*, who, with one or two exceptions, devoted themselves to literature in Dutch.[30] 'Hollander' is used here to refer much more widely than simply the provinces of North and South Holland; it embraces, Bidloo continued, 'not only those from the Seven United Provinces', but also those from the 'Ten other Netherlands', by which he meant the Southern Netherlands – roughly modern-day Belgium, which had remained under Spanish and, from 1715 onwards, Austrian rule.[31] In a few exceptional cases, the authors portrayed by Van Halen even came from outside the Netherlands. For the most part, these were authors who, 'by virtue of their scholarship and learning and excellent poetry became professors and holders of other offices

27 Craft-Giepmans 2012, 64.

28 Van Thiel 1978, 19–20.

29 Bidloo 1720, 279.

30 Ibid., 12.

31 *'niet alleenlyk die uyt de Seven-Vereenigde*', but also authors from '*de* Tien *andere* Nederlanden'. In this way, Van Halen included portraits of eight figures from Antwerp and five from Brussels: (Antwerp) Theodoor Rodenburg (1578–1644), Caspar Barleus (1584–1648), Janus Gruterus (1560–1627), Peter Heyns (1537–1598), Zacharias Heyns (c. 1566–1638), Willem van Nieulandt (1584–1635), Willem Ogier (1618–1689) and Bonaventura Peeters (1614–1652); (Brussels) Claude de Grieck (1625–c. 1670), Jan Baptista Houwaert (1533–1599), Philips Marnix van Sint Aldegonde (1540–1598), Aubertus Miraeus (1573–1640) and Margaret of Austria (1480–1530).

here, Dutchified and, as they say, naturalised, from whatever land they hail'.[32] This allowed eminent scholars such as Scaliger (1540–1609), Gronovius (1611-1671) and Salmasius (1588–1653), who lived and worked in the Republic, to be incorporated in the Dutch literary pantheon.

The 199 portraits that Van Halen would ultimately make for the Panpoëticon depicted authors from over five centuries of Dutch history: from the thirteenth-century historian Melis Stoke (c. 1235–c. 1305) to the promising young author Lucas Schermer (1688–1711), who had died recently. When it came to selecting his authors, Van Halen did not restrict himself to literature in the narrow sense that is customary today; instead he assembled the portraits of male and female authors whom he considered valuable to Dutch culture in the broad sense. The majority of the portrayed authors belonged to the seventeenth century – the Golden Age of Dutch letters. This focus reflected the cherished desire to capture the era of Dutch literary glory in a subsequent period of supposed decline.

Van Halen's physical ode to Dutch poetry was not an isolated phenomenon: similar efforts were made in neighbouring counties in the same period to commemorate their literary heroes in visual form. In France, for instance, the 'premier maître d'hôtel du Roi', Evrard Titon du Tillet (1677–1762), came up with the idea of a monumental and publicly accessible sculpture of *le Parnasse François*, which would be raised 'A la gloire de la France et de Louis le Grand, et à la mémoire immortelle des illustres poètes et musiciens François' (Fig. 15). This French Parnassus would not be ruled by Apollo, god of poetry, but by Louis XIV, who enjoyed a reputation as an important patron and stimulator of art and culture in France. The nine muses who traditionally accompanied Apollo were replaced in this design by eminent contemporary French poets and musicians: Corneille, Racine, Molière, La Fontaine, Boileau, Chapelle, Segrais, Racan and Lully, holding a portrait of Quinault.[33] In London, the south transept of Westminster Abbey, where literary giants like Chaucer, Spencer and Dryden were buried, received widespread recognition in the first decades of the eighteenth century as a national literary pantheon (Fig. 14).[34] Literature lovers visited the church

32 *'om hunne wetenschap in geleerdheyd, en voornamentlyk poesy alhier tot* Hoog-Leeraars, *en andere Ampten gevorderd*, Verhollanderd, *en, zoo men zegt, genatuuralizeerd zyn; van welk een Landaart*'. Bidloo 1720, [*3r]. Although Van Halen based himself purely on existing model portraits, his collection is a source of rare likenesses, thanks to the immense devotion with which it was assembled. Arnold Houbraken apologises in the second volume of his monumental artists' biography for the lack of a portrait of Christoffel Pierson (1631–1714). Fortunately, he could refer his readers to 'the art-loving Arnoud van Halen', who had included him in his cabinet 'among the likenesses of the finest Dutch poets' ('de konstlievende Arn. Van Halen heeft zig van de zelve bedient, en ze in zyn kabinet onder de beeltenissen der Nederlandse puikdichtersen geplaatst'). Houbraken 1718–21, vol. 2, 262. As a close acquaintance of Van Halen, Houbraken was also able to cite a potential second source of inspiration: Van Halen owned three manuscripts from the estate of the Amsterdam painter Willem Schellinks (1627–1678), containing 'accounts of the best authors' ('met aanmerkingen van de Beste Schryvers'). 264.

33 The French Parnassus, due to have measured over eighteen metres in height, was never actually constructed either in central Paris or in Versailles. Detailed plans have nevertheless survived on paper. Titon du Tillet reports at length on his plans in the *Description du Parnasse François* (1727). Colton 1979, 4–25.

34 Piper 1982, 78–82; Connoll 2005, 559; Prendergast 2015, 73–104. For a list of the authors added to Poets' Corner see Prendergast 2015, 159–87.

11 Jan Goeree, *Title page of* D'Amboinsche rariteitenkamer, 1705. Nijmegen, University Library, inv. no. OD 135 a 8.

12 Arnoud van Halen, *Portrait of Lambert Bidloo*, 1720–32. Mezzotint and engraving, 16.5 x 14.2 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1906–3332.

13 Christoffel Lubienietski, *Portrait of Arnoud van Halen*, 1725. Oil on panel, 56 x 43 cm. Moscow, Pushkin Museum, inv. no. 3076.

14 Arnoud van Halen, *Self-portrait*, Halen c. 1725. Black chalk, pen and brown ink, brush and brown ink on paper,19.5 x 14.5 cm. Paris, Fondation Custodia, Lugt Collection.

15 Arnoud van Halen (after print by Gaspar Bouttats), *Portrait of Willem Ogier (1618–1689)*, 1700–32. Oil on tin, grisaille, 11 x 9.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-4588.

from far and wide to come into direct contact with the literary heroes of the past. 'Poets' Corner' reached its absolute zenith in 1740, when Shakespeare's absence was made good by a monumental statue.

Veneration of the cultural past of the Dutch Republic, which lacked an overarching authority and the guiding hand of a monarch, relied heavily on private initiatives. It is evident from the praise Bidloo bestows in his panegyric to Van Halen that people were well aware of the absence of a smoothly functioning system of patronage. Bidloo lauds Van Halen, who 'As the first and only one' had initiated a project 'Which no prince ever founded for *Poets*'.[35] In so doing, the author stressed the public importance of the collection, while also highlighting the painfully limited possibilities at the time for the wholesale conservation of the Republic's literary 'heritage'. All the same, the Panpoëticon firmly transcended the private in terms of its prestige. If only the art-loving burgomaster Jan Six (1618–1700) had still been alive, the poet lamented, the cabinet could surely have relied on the patronage of the city of Amsterdam and would have flourished under its administration. In Bidloo's view, the Panpoëticon played such a unique role in embodying Dutch cultural tradition that the monument deserved a public holiday in its honour. An appropriate date, he felt, would be 7 March – the day on which his friend, the collector Ludolf Smids (1649–1720), had died: 'For it now extends the fame of the dead from the dark tomb,/ And evokes immortal honour for the living'.[36]

The Panpoëticon was located in the secure, domestic surroundings of Arnoud van Halen's pied à terre on Utrechtsestraat, near the Keizersgracht, and never ultimately became part of an official public space. Nevertheless, the physical viewing of the cabinet and its collection of portraits was an essential element of the power that the ensemble exerted. In the speech he gave on New Year's Day 1722 to the Haarlem chamber of rhetoric, *De Pellicaen of Trou moet blycken* ('The Pelican Or Loyalty Must Be Shown'), Langendijk (Fig. 17) referred explicitly to both the monumental function the cabinet performed for Dutch poetry and to its accessibility to the public. The limited scope of his address, 'Lof der dichtkunst' ('In praise of poetry'), prevented its author from reciting an exhaustive list of the leading figures of Dutch literature. Not to worry, though, anyone seeking an overview of the development of Dutch letters merely had to consult Van Halen's cabinet: 'Those who demand more, may view the Panpoëticon,/ At Mr Van Halen's'.[37] Bidloo likewise noted the approachability of the cabinet: 'Neighbours and speakers of our tongue' were warmly welcome to come and view the cabinet. After all, the elderly poet continued, 'the PANPOËTICON was opened for you too'.[38]

35 'Als de eerste, en eenigste' … 'Wel nimmer eenig Prins gestigt heeft voor *Poëten*'. Bidloo 1720, 269.

36 'Daar 't nu der dooden Roem ten duyst'ren graf uitstrekt,/ En voor den levenden onsterf'lyke eere wekt'. Bidloo 1720, 283.

37 'Die meerder eischt zie 't Panpoëticon,/ By heer *van Halen*'. Langendijk 1751, 6–7.

38 'Buur-en-Taal-genooten' … 'het PANPOËTICON werd ook voor u ontslooten'. Bidloo 1720, 3.

A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE MONUMENT

From the outset, the Panpoëticon Batavûm was more than a static monumentalisation of Dutch literature: it was a dynamic monument, with which the viewer interacted directly. The wooden cabinet functioned as an open, active and tangible memory of the literary past, in which sense it may be viewed as a traditional *lieu de mémoire* – 'the ultimate embodiment of a memorial consciousness'.[39] The literary past was given a programmatic role in a new context and within the framework of a new discourse, and was pressed into the service of perpetuating a Dutch literary tradition in a period in which its status and future were far from certain.[40] In the early eighteenth century, precisely when the Dutch Republic's cultural establishment was dominated by a supposed mania for French culture, the Panpoëticon offered urgent and physical proof of the riches of Dutch literature.

The fact that the actual physical viewing of the Panpoëticon was an essential part of experiencing the collection from the outset is apparent from the caption that the poet and engraver Jan Goeree gave his title-print for Bidloo's *Panpoëticon Batavûm* (Fig. 18):

> Come in viewer, you are most welcome.
> Thank only Mr Arnoud's zeal,
> And the diligent writer's labour.
> Be sure to view all this work before you
> Step outside, where there is so much less.[41]

The title-print not only thematises the process of contemplation, but also visualises the interaction the cabinet could bring about between the viewer and the literary past. The pantheon-like space in which the Panpoëticon was displayed was characterised not by serenity but by activity. Goeree presented the collection as a canon in the making. A nude figure sits on the floor in front of the cabinet holding a portrait that has yet to be added to the collection. A second portrait rests against the pillar. Two people, dressed in classical robes, can be seen in the background, in the temple ambulatory. They converse animatedly about a portrait held by the figure on the left. The cherub in the foreground offers the curious viewer a glimpse inside the cabinet. The open door reveals the many drawers in which the portraits were placed. He holds his palette and paintbrushes at the ready, so that he can start work immediately on a new portrait for the collection should the opportunity present itself. The Panpoëticon Batavûm is not, therefore, a mausoleum or sealed tomb in which the literary heroes of the past have been laid to rest, but a dynamic collection that is open to new additions and interaction.

Goeree succinctly captures here in visual form what awaits the reader in Bidloo's hefty panegyric. Bidloo takes the reader on a tour of the cabinet lasting almost 300 pages. He picks out each portrait one by one and gives his thoughts free rein: 'Look at the treasure chest! for your likeness and your name,/ Batavian poets, preserved for fame/ To shield your praise in poetry from decline.'[42] The fact that the collection was still growing presented the poet with a challenge. He was confronted 'daily', he wrote, with new faces added to Van Halen's 'treasure chest'.[43] Bidloo was therefore obliged to deviate regularly from the chronological order in which the portraits were arranged in the cabinet. The project was still very much a work in progress, and so the panegyric did not turn out to be an orderly discussion of the history of Dutch literature, but a labyrinthine account that constantly skips back and forth between the literary past and present. The result is a literary maze, which Bidloo himself compares to a typical early-modern Amsterdam house, to which new rooms were constantly being added inside and out. He sought in this way to accommodate all poets in his poem.

DIALOGUE WITH THE PAST

The cabinet was lauded from the beginning as an important monument to Dutch literature, which drew its power from direct viewing. The Panpoëticon was a 'diverse rarity', which 'well deserved to be seen', the Zeeland historian Pieter de la Ruë (1695–1770) wrote several years later.[44] It drew dozens of visitors, including the prominent Amsterdam regent and theatre director Baltazar Huydecoper (1695–1778), who described his experiences in the lengthy ode *Panpoëticon Batavûm. Kabinet van meest alle de Nederlandsche Dichteren, konstig geschilder door den Heer Arnoud van Halen* ('Panpoëticon Batavûm: Cabinet of Most Every Dutch Poet, Artfully Painted by Mr Arnoud van Halen'), which rolled off the press in 1723 (Fig. 19). Like many of his contemporaries, Huydecoper reflected on the physical character of the collection. He could not believe his eyes when he stood before the cabinet in person:

> My soul, enraptured and elated,
> Can barely believe its own eyes:
> And gazing around, fears,

39 Nora 1989, 12.

40 For the Panpoëticon's function as a monument for Dutch literary culture, see Van Deinsen 2016, esp. 254–64.

41 'Tree in Beschouwer, het staat vry,/ Dank, dank alleen Heer Arnouds yver,/ En de arbeydt van den noesten Schryver,/ Doch niet, voor gy het werk door ziet;/ Sta buyten die noch minder biedt'. Goeree in Bidloo 1720, [*1v].

42 'Zie daar den *Schatkist* ! voor uw *beeldenis*, en naam,/ *Bataafsche Digteren*, bewaard, om aan de Faam/ Uw lof in *Poësy* voor de ondergang te hoeden'. Bidloo 1720, 11.

43 Ibid., 1720, [*3v], 14, 79.

44 'keurlijke rariteit' … 'wel verdiende gezien te worden'. De la Ruë, 3, 11, 8–9

That it is not awake but dreaming.
If I am attentive and may trust
That which I have come to behold[45]

Thanks to this 'Temple of Memory', he found himself in immediate proximity to the lauded literary giants who were immortalised there, 'never to die'.[46] They lived on after their death in the sacred setting of the ornamental wooden cabinet, affording Huydecoper the opportunity to greet them with respect. The poet did not know where to look:

The eye, eager to learn, flew hither and thither,
Now upwards, then down again
Now here, now there, until, in the distance,
It made out its own compatriots.[47]

'[G]azing upon/ This chest, which contains so many treasures' plainly touched him to the depths of his poetic soul.[48] In this way, Huydecoper, like Bidloo, takes the reader on a textual tour through the Panpoëticon, so that those who did not visit in person could also discover the power of the collection.

The emphasis Huydecoper placed on viewing the Panpoëticon reflects prevailing ideas at the time of the suggestive power of portraits. The biography of Constantijn Huygens, for instance, describes the impact that portrait painters – who were, ironically, widely looked down upon – could achieve with their work: 'Yet they perform a noble task, that is more vital than anything else to our human needs, as through their efforts, in a certain sense we do not die, and can still, as descendants, speak intimately with our most distant forefathers.'[49] What Huygens could not have predicted when he wrote these words is that, decades after his death, he himself would ultimately be able to 'converse' with eighteenth-century visitors through the Panpoëticon (Fig. 20). According to contemporaries, it was precisely through this interaction with leading figures from the literary past that the power of the Panpoëticon lay. This physical contact with the past allowed the collection to spark a dialogue for contemporary visitors between the illustrious literary past and their own time. Space was created for an emotional tête-à-tête between the 'absent' author and the 'present' viewer. Visiting the Panpoëticon was explicitly described therefore not as an aesthetic sensation but as an affective experience.

45 'Myn' ziel, verrukt en opgetoogen,/ Gelooft hare eigene oogen/ Ter naauwernood: en rondom ziende, schroomt,/ Dat zy niet waakt, maar droomt./ Indien ik waake, en moog' vertrouwen/ Het gene ik kom te aanschouwen'. Huydecoper 1723, 1.

46 'Tempel der Geheugenisse' … 'vereeuwigd worden, nimmer sterven' Ibid., 2–5.

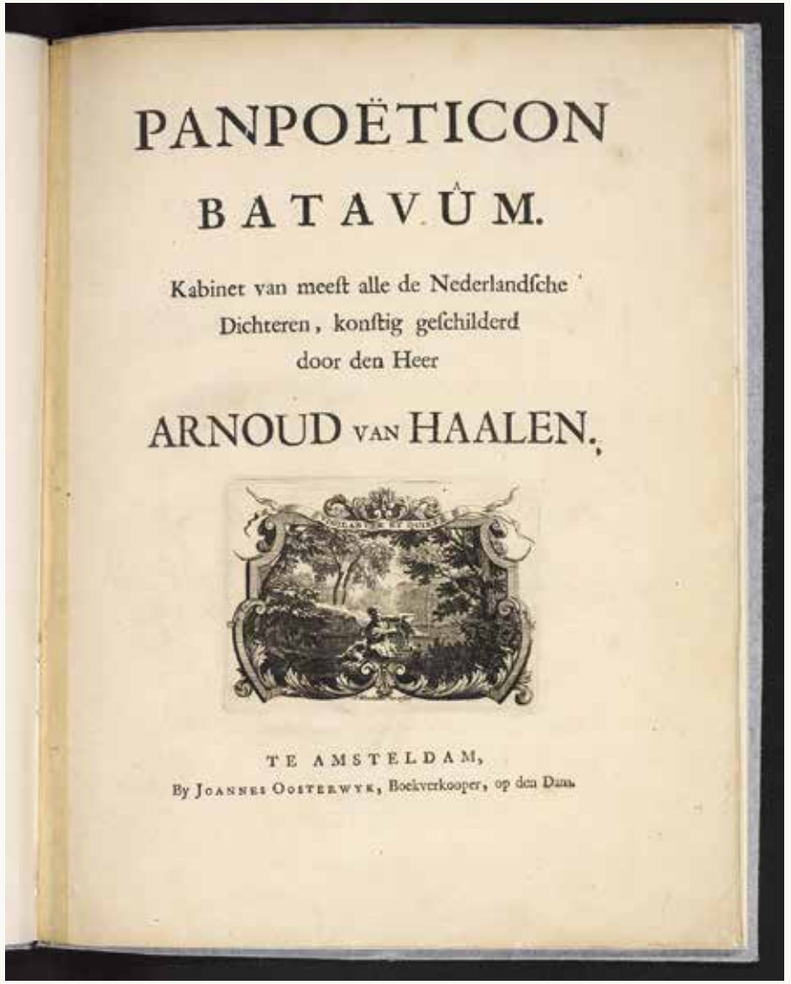
47 ''t Weetgierig oog vloog heene en weder,/ Nu opwaarts, dan weêr neder/ Nu hier, dan daar, tot dat het in 't verschiet,/ Zyne eigen' landsliên ziet'. Ibid., 6.

48 ''t aanschouwen/ Van deezen schat, die zo veel schatten sluit', Ibid., 6.

49 'Toch verrichten zij een nobel werk dat meer dan iets anders voor onze menschelijke behoeften allernoodzakelijkste is, omdat wij door hun toedoen in zekere zin niet sterven en nog als nakomelingen met onze verste voorvaderen vertrouwelijk kunnen spreken'. Huygens 1946, 75.

16 Nicolas de Poilly, le Jeune, *Le Parnasse français*, 1723. Oil on canvas, 150 x 114 cm. Versailles, Château de Versailles et de Trianon, inv. no. MV6042. Photo: © RMN-Grand Palais (Château de Versailles)/Hervé Lewandowski.

17 Stereoscopic Co., *Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey, London*, c. 1875–1900. Albumen print, paper/cardboard, 13.3 x 21.2 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-F-00-6316. Gift of W. Diepraam, Amsterdam.



PANPOËTICON

BATAVÛM.

Kabinet van meeſt alle de Nederlandſche
Dichteren, konſtig geſchilderd
door den Heer

ARNOUD VAN HAALEN.

TE AMSTELDAM,
By JOANNES OOSTERWYK, Boekverkooper, op den Dam.

18 Jacobus Houbraken, *Portrait of Pieter Langendijk (1683–1756)*, 1708–80. Engraving, 17.1 x 14.2 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-48.513.

19 Jan Goeree, *Engraved title page of Lambert. Bidloo,* Panpoëticon Batavûm, 1720. Engraving. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Research Library, 318 C 17.

20 *Title page of Huydecoper's* Panpoëticon Batavûm, 1723. Amsterdam, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam, OTM: OG 06 466.

21 Jan Maurits Quinkhard (after print by Paulus Pontius), *Portrait of Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687)*, 1732–71. Oil on copper, 11 x 9.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-4570.

22 Jan Maurits Quinkhard, *Double portrait of Michiel de Roode (1685–1771) and Jan Punt (1711–79) sitting in front of the cabinet with a miniature portrait of Joost van den Vondel*, 1738. Oil on canvas, 69.7 x 59.6 cm. Private collection. Photo: RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History, image no. 0000279722.

One of Huygens's interlocutors was the author of the ode *Kunstkroon voor den heere Arnoud van Halen* ('Artistic Crown for Mr Arnoud van Halen'). It was this anonymous poet's 'privilege', as he put it, to 'Enter the chamber of art' and 'To feast the eye on so much excellence'.[50] The tours penned by Bidloo and Huydecoper had stoked his curiosity about the Panpoëticon. Now he had the opportunity to view the cabinet in person, the appearance of the collection surpassed his wildest dreams. The anonymous poet was awed most of all by his highly cordial encounter with the literary heroes of the past.

> There I greet with respect the distinguished poets,
> Those scions of heaven, possessed of Phoebus' spirit,
> Whose golden lyre, artfully rendered and printed,
> Has so often amazed and delighted my soul.
> There might I behold their praiseworthy countenance after their death.
> There might I converse with Hooft and Vondel.
> There might I see the smiling soul of great Konstantijn [Huygens].
> There, in sparks of joyful light, shines Antonides,
> Among those phoenixes of former and latter years.[51]

Bidloo too emphasised how intimate the encounter could be with one's literary forefathers, as described by this anonymous author, when he noted how in the spirit of the poet Reyer Anslo (1626–1669) he found 'a pleasant guest/ At noon and evening meal'.[52] Another contemporary, wandering as he put it among 'all those heroes of letters', even stated that the portrayed authors had transcended the boundaries of death:

> Yet here might the eye delight
> In true images, paintings
> sketched from life, as their mouths
> Even in death, would seem to speak
> And their bodies break free from their tombs
> As if they stood before us in the flesh.[53]

50 'Kunstzaale in te treeden' … 'Te weiden met het oog in al de uitmuntendheden'. *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt* 1773, 21.

51 'Daar groet ik met ontzach de deftige Poëeten,/ Die Hemeltelgen, van God Febus geest bezeten,/ Wier gouden lier, met kunst behandeld en gedrukt,/ Mijn ziel zoo meenigmaal verwondert en verrukt./ Daar mag ik, na hun doot, hun loflijk beeld aanschouwen,/ Daar mag ik mij met HOOFT en VONDEL onderhouwen,/ Daar lacht mij 't wezen toe van den grooten KONSTANTIJN,/ Daar blinkt ANTONIDES in Heuchelijken schijn,/ Met andre Fenixen, van vroege en laater jaaren'. *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt* 1773, 23. These lines place certain question marks against the reliability of the lists that were subsequently drawn up by *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* of the authors portrayed in the Panpoëticon. According to this overview, both Constantijn Huygens and Antonides van der Goes were only added to the collection under its second owner.

52 'een aangename gast/ Ter Noen-en Avond-maal'. Bidloo 1720, 128

53 'al die Letterhelden' … 'Maar hier mag zig het oog vermeijen/ In waare beelden, Schilderijen/ Geschetst naar 't leeven, daar hun mond/ Zelfs, na hun dood, nog schijnt te spreeken/ En 't ter grafzerk uit komt breeken,/ Als het leevend voor ons stond'. *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt* 1773, 30.

Contemporary authors were satisfied in the first instance with an intensive conversation with the literary minds they admired. It was not long, however, before they too began to join the portrait collection. It was chiefly under the Panpoëticon's second owner, Michiel de Roode, that the inclusion of contemporary authors became an explicit focus.

MICHIEL DE ROODE: A NEW HIGH POINT

Following Arnoud van Halen's death on 15 June 1732, the Panpoëticon was placed on the market. The cabinet went under the hammer on an autumnal morning in October. The announcement of the sale in the previous day's edition of the newspaper *Oprechte Haerlemsche Courant*, makes it plain that the intention was to sell the exceptional collection 'certainly as a whole and in a single purchase all together'.[54] The cabinet passed into the art-loving hands of the wealthy Amsterdam broker Michiel de Roode (1685–1771) for the not inconsiderable sum of one hundred ducats.[55] This 'never sufficiently praised Maecenas of the arts' had previously used his fortune to establish a substantial collection of paintings, books and other art treasures.[56] That De Roode was a confirmed art-lover is not only apparent from his purchase of the cabinet: he was also a good friend of the actor and engraver Jan Punt, and was a welcome guest at the Amsterdam city theatre, where he was one of the few businessmen to take a private box.[57]

He had his affinity with the Panpoëticon recorded in a portrait that Jan Maurits Quinkhard (1688–1772) made of him a few years after the purchase (Fig. 21).[58] The double portrait shows De Roode leaning on a table, one fist planted resolutely in his side. His left hand rests gently on a book. He is shown in the good company of his friend Punt, who in turn proudly displays the portrait of Vondel. Various contemporaries sang the praises of this work, despite the apparently unfinished state in which the painting remains to this day. On 25 September 1734, Jan de Marre (1696–1763) captured his admiration of the piece in the following verses:

> Behold three wonders sketched by art's brush,
> The Dutch Apollo, driven by sacred fire;
> De Roode, the Maecenas who restores the poets to life;
> And Punt, the glory and soul of the theatre:
> Could you, O Quinkhard! Paint each's merits in his likeness,
> What treasures would such a painting bestow?[59]

54 'sekerlijck in het geheel en in één koop by malkander', *Oprechte Haerlemsche courant*, 14 October 1732.

55 Little is known about Michiel de Roode's life. He was born in Amsterdam to the broker Michiel de Roode, Jansz. and his wife Anna Somma, and was baptised in the city's Lutheran church. The addition of his name to the register of Amsterdam brokers on 17 May 1714 indicates that De Roode followed his father's profession. According to De la Ruë, De Roode was chiefly engaged in the trade in dyestuffs. De la Ruë (3, 11, 8–9).

56 'nooit genoeg gepreezen Kunstmeçeen'. De la Ruë (3, 11, 8–9).

57 Corver 1786, 40.

58 Although the painting is inscribed with the words 'Quikhard fecit 1738', the first brushstrokes were probably laid down earlier than that. Judging from a number of odes, a variety of contemporaries had already seen the painting in 1733 and 1734. Several of these references to the painting are included in the anthology *Arnoud van Halen's Pan poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt*. See, for instance, 38, 39, 55, 58, 61.

The illustrious trio of De Roode, Punt and Vondel found themselves placed before the sketchy contours of the Panpoëticon. Quinkhard's work echoes the earlier composition of Lubieniecki's portrait of Van Halen. By playing with uniformity in this way, Quinkhard visually expresses the firm intention of his patron, De Roode, to continue the Panpoëticon Batavûm in the spirit of his predecessor.

The Panpoëticon Batavûm flourished once more in De Roode's hands. The wealthy businessman spared no expense or effort in embellishing the cabinet. He had a number of less accomplished portraits replaced and added over a hundred new authors to the collection. New drawers were installed in the cabinet to create space for the expanding collection (Fig. 22).[60] As part of his effort to raise the prestige of the ensemble, De Roode had the portraits done henceforth on copper. He also commissioned the artist Jacob de Wit (1695–1754) to replace Van Halen's paintings on the inside of the door.[61] De Wit depicted the union of poetry and painting in accordance with Horace's ideal 'ut pictura poesis' (Fig. 23).[62]

EMBODYING CONTEMPORARY AUTHORSHIP

Where Van Halen had chiefly focused on portraits of literary greats from the earlier Golden Age of Dutch literature, De Roode shifted the emphasis to contemporary poets. Although he added past authors who had been omitted, his preference was for the poetry writers of his own time. It was their honour to continue the literary tradition captured in the Panpoëticon Batavûm. The criteria for selection were also tightened considerably under Michiel de Roode's stewardship. Where Van Halen had included linguists, philosophers and historians in the collection, space was only granted under the new owner to poets whose work, in his opinion, had made a substantial contribution to Dutch poetry. The new, more stringent approach did not go unnoticed by De Roode's contemporaries. Several decades later, for instance, the secretary of *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* wrote that De Roode grants 'space to no likenesses but those of such poets whom he, having judged their works, considers worthy of this honour; he does not choose, as the first proprietor did, to include portraits of men who had done little in the way of poetry'.[63]

The majority of the portraits commissioned by De Roode, unlike those made when Van Halen was owner, were not based on existing portraits, prints or drawings. Instead he asked leading portrait artists from various cities in the Republic to capture contemporary poets in paint. In addition to Quinkhard

59 'Zie hier drie wonderen geschetst door 't kunstpenceel,/ d' Apol van Nederland, door heilig vuur gedreeven;/ Meçeen de ROODE die de Dichters doet herleven;/ En *Punt*, den luister en de ziel van 't Schouwtooneel;/ Kost gy ô *Quinkhard*! by elks Beeld hun gaven malen,/ Wat schatten zouden zulk een Schildery betaalen?'. *Arnoud van Halen's Pan poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt* 1773, 58.

60 De la Ruë (3, 11, 8–9).

61 What little is known about the original decoration has been gleaned from a few cryptic verses that Bidloo devoted to the painting. Bidloo 1720, 6. See also: Van Thiel 1978, 22.

62 Not much is known about De Wit's painting either. Lunsingh Scheurleer believed that what is probably De Wit's preparatory study is now in the Teylers Museum collection (inv. no. T 043). Lunsingh Scheurleer 1973, 227; Lunsingh Scheurleer 1954, 20.

63 'aen gene Afbeeldsels plaets [geeft], dan alleen van zulke Dichteren, wien hij, na het beöordeelen hunner werken, die eer waerdig achtte, niet verkiezende, gelijk de eerste Bezitter, daerbij te voegen Beeldtenissen van Mannen, wleke slechts weinig in de Dichtkunst hadden uitgevoerd'. *Arnoud van Halen's Pan poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt* 1773, vii.

(twenty-one replacements and ninety-two new portraits), Nicolaas Verkolje (1673–1746) (four portraits), Hieronymus van der Mij (1678–1761) (one portrait), Dionijs van Nymegen (1705–1795) (replaced one portrait and painted seven new ones), Cornelis Greenwood (1708–1736) (one portrait), Aart Schouman (1710–1792) (seven portraits) and Hendrik Pothoven (1725–1807) (one portrait) all definitely contributed to the Panpoëticon.[64] The portraits De Roode added to the Panpoëticon express a growing demand for accurate likenesses of authors. The fact that he had Van Halen's less successful portraits replaced with 'more faithful' ones also highlights the importance placed on the most realistic possible representation of the author.[65]

The determination with which De Roode sought to pin down the leading literary figures of his time for a portrait is apparent from his correspondence with the aforementioned Huydecoper (Fig. 25). The new owner was far from satisfied with the portrait of the theatre director that Van Halen had previously placed in the cabinet. Although various portraits of the popular Huydecoper were in circulation, including a mezzotint by Van Halen (Fig. 26), De Roode preferred to commission a new one. He invited Huydecoper to sit for a portrait at Quinkhard's studio in 1734. The impresario was a busy man, who was occupied at the time on the island of Texel in preparing an edition of P.C. Hooft's letters, and so it took some time before he had the opportunity to pose. De Roode was eventually able in 1736 to inform the writer with great pleasure that his new portrait had been added to the Panpoëticon. The inclusion of the portrait in the cabinet did not end the owner's contact with the poet. De Roode kept the depicted authors up to date with developments regarding the Panpoëticon and informed them whenever he received an ode to their portraits.

De Roode's active policy significantly increased contemporaries' engagement with the Panpoëticon and the collection took on almost a cult status. De Roode's focus on adding contemporary poets to the collection of literary greats elicited a stream of positive reactions. He collected an anthology of odes to the collection in a handwritten album, to which every visitor to the cabinet or current poet whose portrait was added to the collection was systematically invited to contribute.[66] The portraits of contemporary poets in particular elicited a large number of responses from visitors. In this way, the album encouraged a mutual admiration contest. The portraits of women writers in particular were singled out for flattering comments by contemporaries. Part of the album, which was probably lost, later formed the basis for the publication of the commemorative anthology *Arnoud van Halen's Pan Poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt* ('Arnoud van Halen's Pan Poëticon Glorified', 1773).

64 Van Thiel 1976, 723–24. Van Thiel based his overview on the lists that the poetry society *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* published in its commemorative anthology.

65 'beter gelijkende'. *Arnoud van Halen's Pan poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt* 1773, vi.

66 Many of these poems were not limited to Michiel de Roode's album, but also appeared in the poets' own publications.

23 Lieke van Deinsen and Timothy De Paepe, *Reconstruction of the open cabinet door in 1738 with, on the inside, the preliminary study for the allegorical grisaille painting by Jacob de Wit*, 2016. Computer visualisation.

Woonagtig op de Keizersgragt tussen de Drie Koningen ende
oude Lelystraet allernaest de Poort, strekkende de mijn aen
Ued: geschreven; ne mijn onderdanig Respect aen
u Wel Ed: Gestrenge te betuigen, en Eerbiedig tegroeten
blijve

Wel Ed: Gestrenge Heer

u Wel Ed: Gestr: Verplichten Dienaer
[illegible]

1734

Aen
De Wel Edele Gestrenge
Heere
Balth: Huidecoper

24 *Letter from Arnoud van Halen to Baltazar Huydecoper*, 1727. Utrecht, Utrechts Archief, inv. no. 67 Huydecoper Family, 188.

25 Arnoud van Halen, *Portrait of Balthazar Huydecoper (1695–1778)*, 1715–32. Mezzotint and engraving, 18.1 cm x 14.1 cm Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1903-A-23761.

26 Jan Maurits Quinkhard, *Portrait of Bernardus de Bosch (1709–1786)*, 1743. Oil on copper, 11 x 9.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-791.

27 Jan Maurits Quinkhard, *Portrait of Margaretha van Leuvenigh (1705–1785), Wife of Bernardus de Bosch*, 1743. Oil on copper, 11 x 9.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-792.

28 Tibout Regters, *Jan de Bosch (1713–85) and his family. With Bernardus de Bosch second from left with his wife. In the background a cabinet decorated with a painting by Jacob de Wit*, 1754. Oil on canvas, 77 x 98 cm. Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum, inv. no. SA 23538.

The zeal that De Roode displayed when adding the portraits of contemporary poets to the collection reflected the growing desire on the part of these writers to profile themselves (literally) as the new faces of Dutch letters. When the previously mentioned Pieter de la Ruë visited De Roode in 1735, he was impressed not only by the cabinet itself, but at least as much by the immense volume of written praise and gratitude that De Roode had received from 'the foremost living poets'.[67] He could not resist the temptation to send De Roode his own panegyric to the Panpoëticon. His flattering words did not go unnoticed, and were interpreted by De Roode as openly soliciting for a place in the Panpoëticon. De la Ruë was rewarded with the 'unrefusable request' to have his portrait painted by Quinkhard for inclusion in the Panpoëticon.[68] 'I sat on two occasions, for roughly three hours', the poet reported.[69] De la Ruë was not the only writer permitted to enter the collection after penning an ode to it. The same happy fate befell the subsequently forgotten poets Jacques van Musschert and Joan Vermeulen. So it was that active involvement with the collection could ultimately result in a portrait among the lauded literary giants.

De la Ruë was not the only poet to be enthused by his inclusion in the Panpoëticon. Bernardus de Bosch (1709–1786), an Amsterdam poet who mostly wrote edifying verse, was personally touched by his likeness. De Roode granted him the honour of having his portrait painted for the collection after De Bosch had made himself useful over several years writing odes in praise of the Panpoëticon. The painting – made once again by Quinkhard – was installed in the cabinet in 1741 (Fig. 27). An ode penned by a contemporary describes the vital energy evoked by the portrait and how well it matched the poet's personality. The poet's intellectual and physical characteristics are both placed on a higher level here than his work. The concise poem highlights the growing need to get to know the writer behind the work. The poet praises De Bosch's intellect ('the mind in the being') before stating that his work could be read in his 'merry eyes'.[70] De Bosch himself was also evidently charmed by the personality evoked by the little portrait. Not only did he commission a copy from Quinkhard, in 1743 he had a matching portrait painted of his new wife, Margaretha van Leuveningh (1705–1785) (Fig. 28).

THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT AS (SELF-)PROMOTION

The growing popularity of portraits of contemporary poets meant that authors' likenesses played an increasingly important role in the representation of

67 'der voornaamste thans levende digteren'. De la Ruë (3, 11, 8–9).
68 'onweigerbaar verzoek'. De la Ruë (3, 11, 8–9).
69 'Tweemaal hebbe ik er, omstreeks drie uurs voor gezeten'. De la Ruë (3, 11, 8–9).
70 'den geest in 't wezen'; 'vrolyke oogen'. *Arnoud van Halen's Pan poëticon Batavüm verheerlijkt* 1773, 200.

authorship in the course of the eighteenth century. Portraits were used more and more to promote poets' literary preferences. Many of them depicted the poet in his or her own natural working environment, the study. A well-filled bookcase in the background, with the names of famous writers legible on the spines of the books, served not infrequently as tangible proof of the literary tradition to which an author wished to belong.

Joan Jacob Mauricius (1692–1768) illustrated how the authors' portraits in the Panpoëticon could also be actively deployed in a writer's poetic (self-) representation. The diplomat and poet, who was stationed in Hamburg, was asked by De Roode during a visit to Amsterdam in 1736 whether he would agree to having his portrait painted. The ostensible reluctance with which Mauricius consented to the request is expressed in the poem that he dutifully wrote to his portrait, to which he gave the revealing title 'Verlegenheid om een dankdicht, aan den here Michiel de Roode' ('Discomfiture at a verse of gratitude to Mr Michiel de Roode'). Mauricius did not only send the poem to De Roode, he also included it in his collection *Dichtlievende uitspanningen* ('Poetical Diversions') published in 1753 – just over fifteen years after his portrait was added to the cabinet. In an accompanying note that he appended to the latter publication, the poet once more recalled his unease at De Roode's request. The chief reason for his hesitation, Mauricius concluded in retrospect was that he had been 'entirely out of touch with Dutch poetry' at the time.[71] Consequently, not only did the writing of a simple ode to his induction push his ability to the extreme, Mauricius also doubted whether he deserved his place among 'the ranks of Dutch poets'.[72]

Beneath the cloak of poetic humility, there is a kernel of truth in this case. According to the poet himself, his lengthy residence in Hamburg had estranged him from the Dutch language: 'Or is my tongue unused to speaking pure Dutch,/ And has the softness of our nation's sound been/ Rendered harsh by the German that rings yet in my ears?'[73] It was not only the sounds of German that had clouded Mauricius's love of his homeland's poetry: the poet had become embroiled in his youth in one of the most intense poetic debates in Dutch history. A fierce dispute raged in the 1710s regarding the future course of the country's poetry. This 'War of the Poets' (Poëtenstrijd) triggered a tenacious schism among the ranks of Dutch poetry writers: the patriotic camp continued to view Vondel as the great example, but others felt that a reorientation towards modern French playwrights like Racine and Corneille was the way out of the blind alley in which Dutch poetry had found itself. Although Mauricius initially sat somewhat uneasily on the fence, he eventually aligned himself with the pro-

71 'de Hollandsche Poëzy geheel ontwend'. Mauricius 1753, 122.

72 'den ry van Nederlands Poëeten', Mauricius 1753, 122.

73 'Of is myn' tong ontwend van zuiver Duitsch te spreeken,/ En is de zachtheid van het Vaderlandsch geluid/ Verbromd door 't Hoogduitsch, dat my steeds in de ooren tuit?'. Mauricius 1753, 122–23. See Besseling 2013, 152–53 for Mauricius's time in Hamburg.

French side of his childhood friend P.A. de Huybert (1693–1780). This French literary orientation shaped Mauricius's literary practice for many years, undeniably to good effect. He managed to associate himself with the great French literary minds of his age. On one memorable evening in 1740, for instance, he accompanied Voltaire to a dinner at the home of the Abbé de Fénélon. When the original manuscript of *Télémaque*, written by the abbot's uncle, was produced, the trio fell into a discussion of the difference in style between tragedies and operas.[74]

A few months after this *rendez-vous*, the Amsterdam painter Cornelis Troost (1696–1750) captured Mauricius's ambivalent attitude towards Dutch poetry and his penchant for the exotic in a portrait (Fig. 30).[75] The result is an unprecedentedly colourful work, of which it is hard to find an equivalent in the eighteenth-century Republic. Troost painted the poet full length in a relaxed pose at a table covered with a Persian cloth. He gazes penetratingly at the viewer, a piece of writing paper in his hand. The globe at his feet gives away his next destination: South America. The *bric-à-brac* laid out on the table illustrates Mauricius's penchant for the exotic and foreign: a porcelain cockerel, symbol of France, can be seen among the Oriental trinkets and tropical seashells. Here too, the contents of a well-stocked bookcase on the rear wall reveal the sitter's literary tastes. The spines testify to Mauricius's pronounced preference for modern French dramatists, with the works of Racine, Molière and Corneille lined up amicably together on a shelf. The painting hanging on the wall behind the poet is one that Troost had completed three years earlier, in 1738, depicting a scene from the popular comedy *Jan Claasz of de gewaande dienstmaagd* ('Jan Claasz or the Supposed Servant Girl', 1682) by Thomas Asselyn (c. 1620–1701). The painting struggles, however, to match the French literary talent towards which Mauricius leans both literally and figuratively.

By the time Mauricius returned to the Republic after almost ten years, his attitude towards Dutch poetry had softened. Back on Dutch soil, he revealed himself to be a fierce champion of original national drama. He had to watch sadly in 1753, when a campaign he had backed to found a Dutch Theatre in The Hague capable of competing with the local Théâtre français came to nothing.[76] It also evident from the publication of *Dichtlievende uitspanningen* that Mauricius's literary tastes had shifted in the intervening years. The poet had not forgotten his inclusion in the Panpoëticon, and sixteen years later, he incorporated the poem of thanks that he had written for De Roode among the works collected in the first volume of his anthology. The collection also begins with a revealing title engraving, in which the association of the author's portrait in the Panpoëticon is used as a visual explanation of his former struggle with Dutch literature.

74 Offerhaus 1962, 121.

75 Ibid., 120.

76 Mauricius 1753, 225–28. Offerhaus 1962, 122–23.

The strongly cosmopolitan atmosphere of Troost's portrait has given way in the engraving (Fig. 31) to a style that evokes an emphatically national discourse. The engraving shows a poet on a ship that is barely holding steady in a raging storm. Yet the writer seems to pay little heed to the violence of nature that threatens him. Immersed in his thoughts, he is ambushed by an intriguing image of a woman, wearing a simple dress of local manufacture. There is no trace of bombastic or exotic ornament, and she is adorned with a simple chain and a sober coif. She clutches the symbols of poetry – the laurel crown and lyre – in her right hand, while in her left she holds the author's portrait of Mauricius. The woman is the personification of his nation's poetry, who admonishes the poet for the lack of appreciation he showed her in the past: 'I am Dutch Poetry,/ which in your youth you once loved,/ But which you have since banished from your senses'.[77] Mauricius is not the only one, however, to have turned his back unforgivably on the poetry of his fatherland. 'I was also cast aside and forgotten in my native land', she laments, 'My acolytes, worthy of the name, are spread thinly,/ While French song drowns me out all around'.[78]

A decade after his accession to the Panpoëticon, however, Mauricius too had grown more optimistic about the future of Dutch letters. In his view, the literary tide turned with the restoration of stadtholder rule, giving the Republic a strong leader for the first time in more than forty-five years. The installation of William IV not only brought a powerful political figurehead but also a long-absent patron of the arts capable of leading Dutch literature into a new and flourishing era. It had become clear to Mauricius in the meantime that French literature was not superior because of its quality, but purely because it enjoyed a crucial stimulator of the arts in the shape of Louis XIV. The Republic now also finally had such a figure in William IV. The porcelain cockerel in Troost's portrait could be swept from the table, and the storm clouds behind the personification of Dutch poetry could lift. It speaks volumes that Mauricius himself used his Panpoëticon portrait in the engraving for his *Dichtlievende uitspanningen* to highlight a turning point in his literary views: the poet had now turned his back on foreign, French literature and had wholeheartedly committed himself to Dutch poetry. It is precisely in this context that the reference to his earlier inclusion in the Panpoëticon as a symbol of flourishing Dutch verse is so revealing. He employs his author's portrait – held by the personification of Dutch Poetry and decades after it was placed in the Panpoëticon – as the embodiment of his rediscovered faith in the literature of his native land.

77 'Ik ben de Duitsche Poëzy,/ die gy in uw' jonkheid pleegt te minnen,/ Doch die gy sedert hebt verbannen uit uw' zinnen'. Mauricius 1753, 146.

78 ''k Was ook in 't Vaderland verstooten en vergeeten'; 'Myn off'raars, waardig aan dien naam, zyn dun gezaaid,/ Terwyl de Fransche zang random my overkraait'. Ibid., 146.

29 Cornelis Troost, *Portrait of Joan Jacob Mauricius (1692–68), Governor General of Surinam*, 1741. Pastel and gouache on paper, 73 x 58 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-4060.

30 Simon Fokke, *Title engraving for Joan Jacob Mauricius's* Dichtlievende uitspanningen *(1752)*, 1752. Nijmegen, Universiteits Bibliotheek, inv. no. OD 1052 c 196.

31 Arnoud van Halen (after print by Jacob van Meurs), *Portrait of Sibylle van Griethuysen (c. 1620–after 1662)*, 1700–32. Oil on tin, grisaille, 11 x 9.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-4591.

32 Nicolaas Verkolje, *Portrait of Katharina Lescailje (1673–1746)*, 1746. Brush and grey ink, black chalk, pen and black ink. Haarlem, Teylers Museum, inv. no. PP 0780.

WOMEN WRITERS IN THE PANPOËTICON

Women writers were a special category of contemporary poets whose portraits De Roode commissioned for the Panpoëticon. It was during the eighteenth century that female authors increasingly began to claim their place in the literary world. Although women writers were far from unique by then, gender remained one of the dominant organising principles of the literary world.[79] All the same, acceptance and appreciation of female authors grew perceptibly in the eighteenth century, as can also be seen in the history of the Panpoëticon. A total of fifteen women writers would ultimately be included in the cabinet.

From the very beginning of the collection, women were considered fully-fledged members of the literary family assembled in the wooden cabinet. Arnoud van Halen's efforts to include female writers in the Panpoëticon nevertheless presented him with a challenge. The artist, who worked exclusively from existing likenesses, struggled with the limited availability of women authors' portraits. The issue did not go unnoticed by contemporaries either: the proportion of women in the collection was noted in even the earliest responses. Bidloo, for instance, reserved the final part of his panegyric for an explicit discussion of the problematic position of women in the literary world. He paid particular attention to the scarcity of their portraits. Bidloo suggested three possible explanations for the limited number of existing likenesses: perhaps existing portraits had failed to withstand 'the ravages of time' and had been lost over the years.[80] Others had not been made in the first place, due to the negligence of the women's contemporaries. And the number of portraits of female poets had also suffered, Bidloo continued, from a negative attitude towards women that was still prevalent in the 'man's world' of literature. In reality, the most plausible reason for the scarcity of portraits was the limited number of independent publications by women writers, whose poems chiefly appeared in anthologies published by male colleagues. Engraved author's portraits were most likely to appear, by contrast, in popular editions of an author's collected poems or plays.

Faced with the limited availability of portraits of women writers, Van Halen went in search of a solution. Where no model portrait was available, but Van Halen felt that the author in question deserved a place in his literary 'Treasure Chest', he occasionally set aside his customary working method to paint a commemorative work – most likely a tombstone – in the writer's honour, rather than a portrait. The painter applied this creative solution to women writers in particular. This was the case, for instance, with the poet sisters Anna (1584–1651) and Maria Tesselschade Roemer Visscher (1594–1649), of whom Van Halen was

79 A good deal has been written about the emancipation of women authors in the literary market place. Schenkeveld-van der Dussen 1997 is an excellent place to start. See also: Van Gemert 1994; De Jeu 2000.

80 ''t geweld des Tyds'. Bidloo 1720, 273.

unable to locate likenesses and so painted 'for each of them, a commemorative piece'.[81] It was definitely not the intention for these works to remain in the cabinet indefinitely: if a likeness of the poet in question were to turn up, she could then be properly immortalised in a portrait. The commemorative piece that Van Halen painted of the Amsterdam publisher's daughter Katharina Lescailje (1649–1711), for instance, was replaced decades later by an actual portrait (Fig. 32).[82] Absolute preference was ultimately given to the ability to stand literally eye-to-eye with the admired literary predecessor.

All the same, the portraits Van Halen did manage to turn up did not always resonate in the collective memory. '*Ladies*', Bidloo wrote apologetically, 'I cannot always tell, from the countenance,/ Who you are or were'.[83] The portrait of the humanist author and scholar Anna Maria van Schurman was the only one to elicit a vivid account from the poet. Bidloo presented Van Schurman – the first woman to penetrate the hermetic walls of the university – as a *femina universalis*, the example of the female sex most worthy of emulation. In her successful literary and academic career, he saw the blueprint for the ideal woman writer. He invited female (would-be) poets to contemplate Van Schurman's portrait in the cabinet and to see in it how high the star of female literary figures could rise. According to Bidloo, despite her domestic responsibilities, a woman who did not waste her free time on useless diversions but devoted herself instead to study, as Van Schurman had done, had a solid chance of succeeding in the world of literature.[84]

The trouble that Arnoud van Halen took to add the portraits of women writers to his collection and the explicit attention that Bidloo paid to female authorship illustrate how the tide was turning for women poets in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. All the same, the scarcity of available model portraits and Bidloo's self-confessed unfamiliarity with the female portraits he saw, are an indication that the number of *publicly known* women remained disappointing. The collection was located on the precarious cusp between an old attitude in which women were not permitted an active role in the literary world, and a new vision in which, in the margins, a growing space was gradually emerging for women writers, who, supposedly, were no longer automatically excluded from the literary world.

As already noted, this development was actively continued under the Panpoëticon's second owner, Michiel de Roode. When he took ownership of the cabinet in 1732, De Roode immediately commissioned a new and improved portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman. A comparison between the old and the new portrait of Van Schurman illustrates how slowly an alternative view of the woman

writer took hold (Figs. 34 and 35).[85] The image of the poet as a learned woman, looking up from her book with a thoughtful expression, has given way to a more feminine and fashionable figure. The library setting, in which the viewer makes out the contours of Athena, goddess of wisdom and art, has been replaced with a view of Utrecht cathedral. This is no longer simply about a female poet as a scholar pursuing the same status as her male colleagues, but also about her as a woman. In this way, the two portraits highlight two qualities of women authors.

The portraits of six other contemporary poets were also added to the collection under De Roode's inspirational management: Jetske Reinou van der Malen (1687–1752), Christina Leonora de Neufville (1713–1781), Anna Rethaan (1686–1724), Fransina Jacoba van Westrem (?–1748) and Anna Insma (before 1680–after 1693). The inclusion of their portraits did not go unnoticed. Interestingly, it was precisely these contemporary female authors who received by far the most attention in De Roode's visitors' book. For the most part, these odes highlight the dual quality of the sitters: they were praised on the one hand for their literary or intellectual achievements, and on the other for their typically female characteristics. The Arnhem minister's wife Fransina Jacoba van Westrem, for instance, was lauded for both the fruits of her pen and her social position as a devoted wife. A similar theme is found in the ode that Johanna Margaretha Radaeus composed on viewing the portrait of her recently deceased mother, Anna Rethaan. The grieving daughter memorialised her mother not only as a devout poet, whose edifying verses 'Excelled above others', but also as a caring mother.[86] The comparison between male and female literary qualities came up time and again. The Frisian poet Jetske Reinou van der Malen, for instance, supposedly owed her literary fame first and foremost to her 'Ladylike hand, with a man's verve'.[87]

Although male yardsticks continued to be applied, the occasional woman poet managed to establish herself through her literary qualities. This was the case, for instance, with Christina Leonora de Neufville (1714–1781), the daughter of an Amsterdam patrician family. She staked her claim as author with the publication in 1741 of *Bespiegelingen voorgesteld in dichtkundige brieven* ('Reflections Presented in Poetic Letters'), a collection of six rhyming letters on philosophy, based in part on Voltaire's essay *Discours en vers sur l'homme* (1738). It was this publication that earned de Neufville her place in the Panpoëticon. Shortly after it appeared, Nicolaas Verkolje was commissioned to paint her portrait from life for the collection. The installation of her likeness in the cabinet was praised by Pieter Boddaert (1694–1760):

81 'geen Afbeeldsel kunnen magtig worden, en … daerom, voor ijder van haer, een Gedenkstuk [heeft] gemaeld'. *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt* 1773, xvi.

82 Ibid., xxiii.

83 *'Jonkvrouwen …* 't lukt my niet, door 't aangezigt, te weten/ Wie, of gy zyt, of waart'. Bidloo 1720, 269.

84 Ibid., 272.

85 For the different portraits of Anna Maria van Schurman, see: Van der Stighelen 1987.

86 'Blonk boven andre uit'. *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt* 1773, 144.

87 'Jufferlyke handt, met mannelyke zwier'. *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt* 1773, 167.

Thus did Verkolje's hand capture Neufville in paint,
That clever maiden, the jewel of the world city on the Y [Amsterdam],
To give new lustre to the Panpoëticon.
Voltaire's poetry, followed by her in Dutch verse,
Shows that her art does not yield to his:
Her fame too shall live as long as the Frenchman's.[88]

While not everyone shared Boddaert's enthusiasm, de Neufville functioned as an example for other writers of her gender, precisely because of her explicitly philosophical interests. The words which Elizabeth ('Betje') Wolff (1738–1804) devoted to de Neufville in a satirical poem of 1774 are revealing in this regard:

You know that I read Neufville's fine works day and night;
Her I call a genius of the most noble kind.[89]

In 1771, Wolff followed in the footsteps of de Neuville, whom she admired so much, when the new owner, Arnoud de Jonghe (?–1772) asked her to sit for her portrait for the Panpoëticon. The popular Wolff, who, together with her close friend Agatha Deken (Fig. 36), cemented her reputation in Dutch literary history with the publication of the epistolary novel *Historie van mejuffrouw Sara Burgerhart* ('The History of Miss Sara Burgerhart', 1782), was happy to oblige. The portrait was added to the cabinet that same year. She shared her joy at her inclusion in the Panpoëticon with her readers:

For (did you but know it) I, yes I! have taken my place
in the Panpoëticon among the band of Dutch poets.
(May these be the death throes of my languishing ambition!)[90]

Despite her initial enthusiasm, the poet was ultimately disappointed with Hendrik Pothoven's portrait of her. She used the opening poem in her collection *Lier- Veld- en Mengelzangen* ('Lyrical, Pastoral and Miscellaneous Poems') published barely a year later, to scrutinise her installation in the Panpoëticon along with the other portraits made of her over the years. The poet's simultaneously humorous and barbed account echoes the growing self-confidence and freedom with which women writers had begun to move in the literary world in the second half of the eighteenth century. It also made Wolff the first woman to reflect at some length on her portrayal for the Panpoëticon and on her public image as formed through portraits.

88 'Dus bragt *Verkoljes* hand Neufville in schildery,/ Die schrandre Maagd, 't sieraad der Waereldstad aan 't Y,/ Om 't Pan Poëticum een nieuwen glans te geven./ *Voltaires* Poëzy, door haar in Neêrduitsch dicht/ Gevolgd, toont, dat haar kunst niet voor de zyne zwicht:/ Ook zal haar roem zo lang als die des Franschmans leven'. Ibid., 219.

89 'Gy weet, 'k lees dag en nacht Neufvilles schoone werken;/ Haar noem ik een genie van de allereêlste soort'. Wolff 1774, 47.

90 'Want (of gy 't weet) ik heb, wel ja ik! plaats genomen/ In 't *Panpoëticon* van Neêrlands dichtren schaar./ (Mogt dit de doodstuip van myn' kwynende eerzucht weezen!)'. Wolff 1772, [**r].

33 Arnoud van Halen, *Portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1676)*, 1700–19. Oil on tin, 11 x 9.5 cm. Utrecht, Centraal Museum, inv. no. 1538.

34 Jan Maurits Quinkhard, *Portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1676)*, c. 1740. Oil on copper, 11 x 9.5 cm. Utrecht, Centraal Museum, inv. no. 2484.

35 Antoine Alexandre Joseph Cardon (after drawing by W. Neering), *Double Portrait of Betje Wolff and Agatha Deken*, c. 1778–1800. Etching, 25 x 18.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1909-518. Gift of H.P. Gerritsen, The Hague.

36 Attributed to David Wolff (after print by Antoine Cardon), *Glass goblet with the portrait of Agatha Deken*, c. 1785–95. Clear, colourless glass with stipple engraving, 17.5 x 8.3 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. BK-16528.

37 Attributed to David Wolff (after print by Antoine Cardon), *Glass goblet with the portrait of Agatha Deken*, c. 1785–1795. Clear, colourless glass with stipple engraving, approx. 17.5 x 8.3 cm. Current location unknown. RKD IB no. 109873.

38 Paulus Constantijn La Fargue, *The Meeting Room of the Society Kunst wordt door Arbeid Verkregen*, 1774. Oil on canvas, 59 x 73.5 cm. Leiden: Museum De Lakenhal, inv. no. S900.

In the opening lines of the collection, she apologises to her readers for the lack of a portrait engraving in the edition. Celebrated portraitists in the Republic such as Joseph Marinkelle (1732–1782), Tako Hajo Jelgersma (1702–1795), Daniël Bruyninx (1724–1787) and Johannes Mertens (1742–1823), never managed to immortalise the poet's vivacious appearance. '*Marinkel* did his best; yet could not quite catch me', she lamented. Others agreed that the likeness was faulty: 'It is masterfully done, says each who sees it./ But for all that, it does not look like you.'[91] According to the poet, the portraits refer only distantly to her true appearance:

This one caught my mouth quite well, that one my brow here and there
And something too –the second artist especially –
Of posture, eyes, colour and features.
Yet this is not enough; you ought to discover
In the likeness the face of your friend at its liveliest.
When one is dead,
Then this will persist, who shall compare?
The original is gone, the copy all that remains.
But it is another matter when we
Are not yet *ad patres*.* And should you desire,
That I, for the sake of the best painting
(The best likeness, that is), shall part this life?
For all that I am inclined to please you,
Yet shall I not be so easily persuaded;[92]

* [gone] to one's ancestors

As far as Wolff was concerned, a successful portrait was very much a replica of reality. So long as artists failed to capture her likeness satisfactorily, the poet preferred a *letterschildery* – a literary self-portrait that would sketch a faithful image of her through carefully chosen words.[93] How her likeness would be treated after her death was beyond her control. All the same, Wolff would have concurred with the words of Lord Byron (1788–1824) written decades later in his *Don Juan*, in which he laments the impossibility of immortal fame: 'To have, when the original is dust,/ A name, a wretched picture and worst bust'.[94]

91 *'Marinkel* deed zyn best; maar wist my niet te treffen';
''t Is meesterlyk gedaan; zegt ieder, die het ziet./
Maar, met dit al, U lykt het niet'. Ibid., [**v].

92 'Dees trof myn mond vry wel, die 't voorhoofd hier en daar/ Ook nog wel iets, — vooral de tweede kunstenaar,/ Van houding, oogen, kleur en trekken./ Maar dit is niet genoeg, gy moest, in 't beeldtenis,/ 't Gelaat van uw vriendin op 't levendigste ontdekken./ Indien men overleden is,/ Dan gaat dat zo wat heen', wie zal 't collationeeren?/ 't Origineel is weg; men heeft alleen't copy./ Maar, 't is een andre zaak, als wy/ Nog niet *ad patres*** zyn. En zoudt gy wel begeeren,/ Dat ik, ten voordeel van de beste schildery/ (Dat is, die best gelykt) dit leven zal verlaaten?/ Hoe zeer ik ben geneigd om u pleizier te doen;/ Hier toe liet ik my tog niet makkelyk bepraaten;'. Ibid., [**2v-**2r].

93 Ibid., [**3r].

94 Byron 1819, 59.

Wolff's plea came at a moment when the representation of women's authorship was distinctly under attack. Her ironic and confident tone heralded in a new phase in the process of emancipation that women authors were experiencing in the early modern period. She was the first woman to offer a critical and self-aware public response to her introduction to the Panpoëticon.

IN THE HANDS OF A LITERARY SOCIETY

After almost forty years tending to the Panpoëticon, De Roode was obliged by old age to look for a suitable successor. He had yet to find one, however, by the time of his death on 12 January 1771. Contemporaries were surprised when the cabinet went unsold at the auction of De Roode's estate later that year, most likely because the reserve price was too high.[95] A few years later, Cornelis Heyligert, secretary of the poetry society *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen*, provided an account of the Panpoëticon's unusual sale history. The only plausible explanation, he thought, was that 'its true value must either not have been known, or for some reason kept hidden'.[96] Whatever the true reason, the unsold cabinet came into the possession of Arnoud de Jonghe, a nephew of De Roode, who acted as his executor. Although De Jonghe only owned the Panpoëticon for a few months, he added three portraits to the collection and also had several damaged pieces repaired.[97]

Arnoud de Jonghe lived barely a year after taking ownership of the Panpoëticon. The collection, now comprising '327 discerningly painted likenesses of the most famous Dutch Poets and Poetesses', was scheduled for auction on 7 July 1772.[98] This time there was greater enthusiasm. The Leiden poetry society *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* secured the purchase of the collection before the scheduled auction date.[99] The portraits were hurriedly assembled and the cabinet was loaded onto a cart so that it could be brought to its new home that same evening. Every effort was made to ensure that those waiting impatiently at home would not be kept in unnecessary suspense regarding the acquisition of the coveted Panpoëticon Batavûm.

Once in the hands of *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen*, the Panpoëticon became part of the culture of societies and associations, which flourished in the second half of the eighteenth century.[100] It was precisely within the walls of societies like this that literary celebrity culture reached its peak.[101] The painting that Paulus Constantijn la Fargue (before 1729–1782) made of the society's meeting room in 1774 shows how the cabinet flourished amid the select literary

95 Cf. 'The cabinet remained closed for several years after De Roode's death, as it failed to command the set amount at public auction' ('Na de Roode's dood bleef het kabinet eenige Jaren gesloten, daar het, bij openbare veiling, de bepaalde som niet kon opbrengen'), J.C.K. 1852, 188.

96 'deszelfs waerde, of niet genoeg bekend, of om reden verduisterd'. *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt* 1773, viii.

97 Ibid., viii–ix.

98 '327 keurlyke geschilderde afbeeldingen der beroemste Nederlandsche Dichters en Dichteressen'. *Cat.* Amsterdam 1772.

99 *Het vijf-en-twintigste verjaerfeest* [1791], [31].

100 See, for the heyday of literary associations in the second half of the eighteenth century: De Vries 2001.

101 De Vries 2005, 142–49.

and historical memorabilia assembled by *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* (Fig. 39). Members were surrounded during their annual meetings by the portraits and poems of their esteemed predecessors. A replica of the memorial placed on Vondel's grave in the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam in 1772 decorated the wall[102] and the long table was decked out on special occasions with literary ornaments. A laurel tree, for instance, was placed on the table to mark the society's silver jubilee. The portraits of the celebrated Dutch poets Vondel, Spiegel, Hooft and Cats adorned the octagonal pot,[103] while the society's pride and joy, the Panpoëticon Batavûm, was aligned with the long table. The placement of the cabinet in the meeting room was significant; it was opened up during annual meetings to give members a sense of belonging to the illustrious literary company it contained.

Following its purchase, the cabinet immediately became the focal point of the meeting room in Leiden and hence also of the literary activities of one of the Republic's largest poetry societies. The Panpoëticon also prompted several of the society's members to express the long-cherished wish to raise Dutch letters to a new level. A variety of other projects were also initiated in the spirit of the Panpoëticon, with the goal of increasing knowledge of Dutch literature and its figureheads. When the society acquired the cabinet, it also came into possession of several manuscripts containing biographical sketches of the depicted authors. The idea arose almost immediately of publishing 'a comprehensive work, containing accounts of the lives of our nation's most important poets and poetesses'.[104] This would finally grant *den Nederlanderen* 'the privilege of knowing their nation's poets and poetesses at close hand in the same way' as they had already made the acquaintance of their painters through the artists' biographies of Van Mander, Houbraken and Gool.[105] The first volume of *Leven der Nederlandsche Dichteren en Dichteressen* ('The lives of Dutch Poets and Poetesses') was published in 1782 and contained four biographical essays.[106] The foreword ties the initiative directly to the Panpoëticon.

PICTURING LITERARY CELEBRITIES

When the society purchased the cabinet, it also found itself the owner of a seemingly nondescript box of blank portraits and frames that had yet to be filled. These inspired the society's administrators to perpetuate the Panpoëti-

102 Backer 1789, 263–64. The Vondel monument in the Nieuwe Kerk is an early example of a public memorial to a writer. Reactions to its installation had less to do with honouring a poet, however, and much more with Vondel's Catholicism and his problematic place in the protestant Dutch Republic. De Vries 1995, 142–44.

103 Thobokholt 1983, 21–22.

104 'een volledig Werk, behelzende de Leevensbeschrijvingen der voornaemste Dichteren en Dichteressen van ons Vaderland'. *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt door lofdichten en bijschriften* 1773, xxv

105 'den Nederlanderen … vergund worden, de Dichters en Dichteressen van hun Vaderland op gelijke wijze van nabij te kennen'. *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt* 1773, xxv; *Leven der Nederlandsche dichteren en dichteressen* 1782, iii–iv.

106 As in any good eighteenth-century society, competitions were organised to seek input for these biographies. It ultimately proved impossible to complete the series as planned. Although the overwhelming response that had been hoped for on the part of the literature-loving Netherlands failed to materialise, the society continued to announce contests with themes that would help define Dutch poetry. De Vries 2001, 92, 132. *Handelingen* 1781, 4, 7. *Handelingen* 1786, 7.

con's status as an open and active collection. Portraits of both contemporary poets and deceased literary greats were added to the collection with considerable ceremony. It became the tradition for the chairman to show the portrait to the members and then to read an ode to the subject.

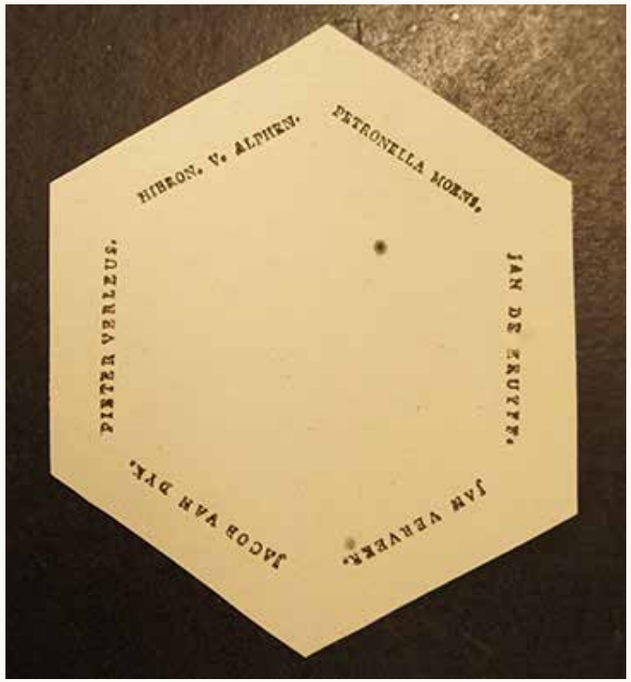
The society mostly kept things close to home when selecting its poets; from the moment it was acquired, the Panpoëticon was used to honour exceptionally successful members of the society. Similar reasoning lay behind the decision in 1773 to add the portrait of Johannes le Francq van Berkhey (1729–1812) to the collection. In some cases, the society's administrators anticipated the fame an author would achieve in later years. When a young Rhijnvis Feith (1753–1824) inaugurated the new meeting room in 1780 with an ode, he was rewarded with an invitation to sit for his portrait.[107] The poet did not take much persuading, and his likeness was added to the cabinet before the year was out. In this way, he was granted a place among the literary greats before his literary masterpieces had even left the press. It was not only the society's literary big names who secured themselves a place in the cabinet. It was decided that portraits of the society's patrons would also be added to the collection. Their likenesses were kept in the top drawer of the cabinet.[108] In 1794, the society's servant, Jan Klinkenberg, was rewarded for twenty-five years' loyal service with the title of 'Governor of the *Pan*'.[109] His portrait was placed in the little key drawer of the cabinet, so that the servant could 'watch vigilantly over the poets'.[110]

Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen continued the earlier approach towards the inclusion of women writers. Although women were still not admitted as active members of societies, they were evidently able to play a role from the sidelines.[111] The celebrated poet Juliana Cornelia de Lannoy (1738–1782), for example, who became an honorary member of the society in 1778, was invited to sit for a portrait for the Panpoëticon. A youthful Willem Bilderdijk (1756–1831) informed De Lannoy on 5 May 1781 that the artist and overseer of the Panpoëticon, Nicolaas Reyers, was 'outside himself with joy at the privilege of painting the poetess De Lannoy herself'.[112] 'I long to see the Panpoëticon glorified by it', sighed the infatuated Bilderdijk, 'What a celebration when it is inaugurated!' The day must have turned out very differently than Bilderdijk had expected, as the forty-three-year-old De Lannoy died suddenly on 18 February 1782.[113] The addition of the portrait thus assumed the character of a memorial service accompanied by the mellifluous words of the chairman Daniël Hovens (1735–1795):

> What do we see? Can it be true? Could Lannoy yet breathe?
> Are these not her features, does that bright eye not live?
> Alas! That the artist's brush should deceive us so!

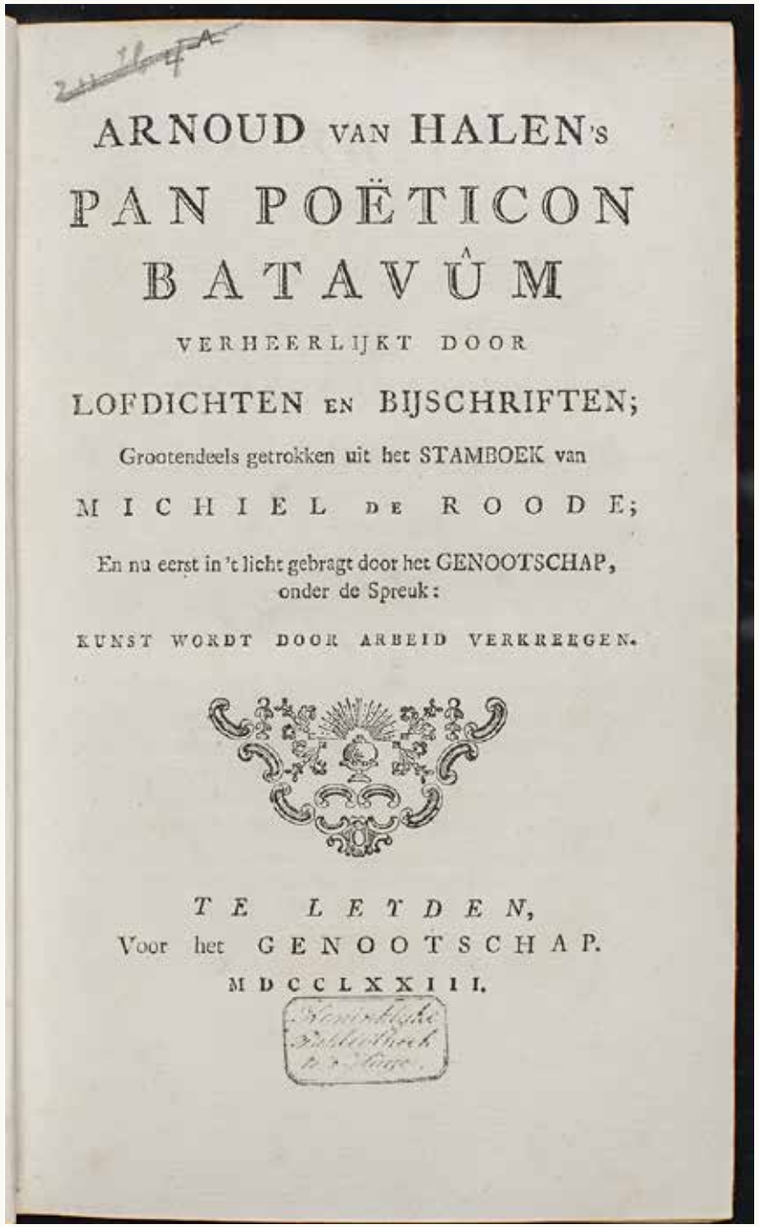
107 *Handelingen* 1781, 4; *Het vijf-en twintigste verjaerfeest*, [43–44].
108 Pelinck 1956, 156.
109 'Gouveneur van het *Pan*'. *Handelingen* 1794, 6.
110 'de Digters nauwkeurig bewaeken'. *Handelingen* 1794, 6.
111 On the role of women writers in literary societies: Baarde Weerd 2009; Van Oostrum 1994–95; De Vries 2001, 137–40.
112 'buiten zich-zelven [is] dat het hem vergund wordt de dichteresse de Lannoy zelve te schilderen'. De Jager 1897, 447–48.
113 'Ik verlang er het Pan poëticon door verheerlijkt te zien'; 'Wel een feestdag wanneer het ingewijd staat te worden!'. De Jager 1897, 447–48.

39 Niels Rode, *Portrait of Juliana Cornelia de Lannoy (1738–1782)*, 1778. Oil on panel, 26 x 23 cm. 's-Hertogenbosch, Noordbrabants Museum, inv. no. B 841 PG.



41 *Result of the election in 1789*. The Hague, National Library of the Netherlands, inv. no. 296 A 27:17, reverse of the minutes.

40 *Voting slip for the first election to the Panpoëticon by the society Kunst wordt door Arbeid verkregen*, 1789. The Hague, National Library of the Netherlands, inv. no. 296 A 27:17.



ARNOUD VAN HALEN'S

PAN POËTICON BATAVÛM

VERHEERLIJKT DOOR

LOFDICHTEN EN BIJSCHRIFTEN;

Grootendeels getrokken uit het STAMBOEK van

MICHIEL DE ROODE;

En nu eerst in 't licht gebragt door het GENOOTSCHAP, onder de Spreuk:

KUNST WORDT DOOR ARBEID VERKREEGEN.

TE LETDEN,

Voor het GENOOTSCHAP.

MDCCLXXIII.

42 *Title page of the commemorative anthology* Arnoud van Halen's Pan Poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt door lofdichten en bijschriften. The Hague, National Library of the Netherlands, inv. no. KW 1752 G 29.

43 Noach van der Meer, *Frontispiece for the commemorative anthology* Arnoud van Halen's Pan Poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt door lofdichten en bijschriften, 1773. Title page and engraving combined, The Hague, National Library of the Netherlands, inv. no. KW 1752 G 29.

O Reyers! Could you not have given us more than almost life!
Then, alas! however highly we exalt your art,
It could catch the likeness perfectly, but not the life.
...
Come, let us safeguard this jewel,
And unite Lannoy in the Pan with her peers![114]

While Hovens lamented the premature loss of his 'Friend in Art', he simultaneously emphasised the consolidating character of the Panpoëticon.[115] Great literary figures lived on in the cabinet in each other's company.

The desire arose over time for a more systematic approach to the creation of national heritage, and so it was decided at the annual meeting of 1789 to structure the process of inclusion in the Panpoëticon. Henceforth, the society's members were given the opportunity at each year's general meeting to vote on six nominated *living* poets. The two writers with the most votes then had their portraits painted at the society's expense for the Panpoëticon. In the unlikely event of one or both the elected poets declining the honour, the committee reserved the right to select 'the most appropriate and meritorious' figure among deceased Dutch poets to be added to the collection instead.[116] Serious lobbying emerged with a view to influencing which contemporary poet would receive the honour of being admitted to the illustrious company of authors in the Panpoëticon. The apparent seriousness with which the society's administrators approached the elections is confirmed by the voting slips that were distributed among the members at the annual general meeting. To ensure that the procedure was as fair as possible, the names of the six nominated poets were not presented in a list, but on the six edges of a hexagonal piece of paper, 'so that none might be given priority' (Fig. 41).[117]

It is questionable whether the society's administrators achieved the intended objectivity through this systematic approach to voting, since virtually all the elected poets were drawn from within its own ranks. In some cases, the apparent objectivity of the unbiased elections merely functioned as a facade concealing all manner of internal and external goings-on. In the turbulent closing decades of the eighteenth century, the wooden cabinet began to creak under the weight of cronyism, mutual animosity and increasing political tension.[118] Several noteworthy literary figures missed out, for instance, during the elections. Although the poet Hieronymus van Alphen (1746–1803), who remains popular

114 'Wat zien we?... kan het zijn! – zou LANNOY nog leven?/ Zijn dit haer trekken niet? leeft niet dat schrander oog?/ Helaes! dat hier 't Penseel ons niet zoo sterk bedroog!/ Ô *Reyers*! kost ge ons meer dan *bijna* 't leven geven!/ Dan, ach! hoe hoog we uw kunst verheffen,/ Zij kon het beeld wel juist, maer 't leven zelf niet treffen,/ .../ Komt, laet ons dit juweel bewaren,/ En LANNOY in 't Pan met haer's gelijken paren!'. *Handelingen* 1785, 10; *Mengeldichten*, 12.

115 'Kunstvriendin' *Handelingen* 1785, 10.

116 'de best geschikste en meestwaerdigste zelve te verkiezen'. *Handelingen* 1789, 12.

117 'rondom afgesneden, ten einde geenen voorrang in dit voorstel aen te geeven'. *Handelingen* 1789, 12.

118 Whereas in the 1770s, political quarrels were largely kept outside the walls of the society, divisions swiftly sharpened in the decade that followed. *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* aligned itself firmly with the Patriot faction within the Republic's political system, and dozens of 'Orangists' quit the society from 1783 onwards. The group's political stance fed through into the selection of authors for the Panpoëticon. In 1786, for instance, the administrators commissioned portraits of Jacobus Bellamy (1757–1786) and the enlightened Groningen preacher Gerard Jacob George Bacot (1743–1822), both of whom were champions of the Patriot cause.

to this day, might only have lost narrowly during the first election (Fig. 42), no further attempt was made to include him in the Panpoëticon – something that did occur with other runners-up. The absence of his portrait in the collection might have reflected his ambivalence towards *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen*. Van Alphen was involved in further controversy a few years later. In 1782, a young and impetuous Rhijnvis Feith launched a fierce attack on the poet, whom he accused of renouncing Dutch literature and of displaying a clear preference for the foreign.[119] Authors like him were plainly at odds with the strong national literary tradition visualised in the Panpoëticon.

PUBLIC AND ACCESSIBLE

One of the society's most important goals was to increase the public character of the Panpoëticon. It was decided immediately after the acquisition of the collection to publish Michiel de Roode's album. *Arnoud van Halen's Pan poëticon Batavûm verheerlijkt* (Figs. 43 and 44) appeared in 1773, motivated by the duty 'not to deprive the public of the labour of so many men'.[120] In addition to the originally intended selection of panegyrics, the commemorative anthology contained a comprehensive history of the Panpoëticon and an alphabetical list of the depicted authors and the makers of their portraits. It was decided at the annual meeting to present 'one copy, attractively bound' to the hereditary stadtholder.[121] The society also undertook to continue the tradition and to inaugurate a new album.

Literature lovers were still warmly welcome to come and view the Panpoëticon in person. The society placed an advertisement in the *Algemeene Konst- en Letterbode* ('General Arts and Literary Messenger'), stressing that its doors were always open to interested visitors. 'Aficionados and art lovers' who wished to view 'this artful and memorable piece' had only to send a simple message to one of the committee members.[122] Over the years, literature enthusiasts from all over the country came to visit the Panpoëticon. Visitors from outside the Republic also travelled to the meeting room in Leiden. The Swedish philologist and bibliophile Jacob Jonas Björnstål (1731–1779), for instance, paid a visit during one of his journeys through the Netherlands. In his account of the trip, he conflated the Panpoëticon with the room: 'Mr Van Alphen then took us to the *Pan Poëticum*, or the place where a Leiden association of the fine sciences holds its meetings … In the room … are kept the likenesses of all Dutch poets'.[123]

119 The controversy is dealt with by Buijnsters 1973, 135–40.
120 'den arbeid van zoo veele beroemde Mannen het publiek niet te onthouden'. *Het vijf-en twintigste verjaerfeest* [1791], [33–34].
121 'een Exemplaer, net gebonden'. *Handelingen* 1773, 5.
122 'Liefhebberen en Konstminnaren'; 'dit konstbaar en bezienswaardig Stuk'. *Algemeene Konst- en Letterbode*, 1790 (Jan.-Jul.), 203.
123 'Daaröp bragt de heer Van Alphen ons in het *Pan Poëticum*, of naar de plaats, alwaar een Leidsche maatschappij van fraaije wétenschappen vergadert …. In de zaal … worden de afbeeldzels van alle Néderlandsche dichters bewaard'. Björnståhl 1783, 395.

The heightened visibility of the Panpoëticon Batavûm inspired various contemporaries to establish similar collections. Members of both the Rotterdam literary society *Studium scientiarum genetrix* and the poetry society *Kunstliefde spaart geen vlijt* ('Love of Art Spares No Industry') set up 'Pans' of their own in imitation of their colleagues in Leiden.[124] Similar initiatives also cropped up in a private context. The Haarlem merchant and art-lover Willem Kops (1724–1776), for instance, created a collection of portraits to which he also gave the name 'Panpoëticon Batavûm'. His unique collection, which, in addition to drawings and prints, included various authors' autographs, can now be found in the Teylers Museum in Haarlem. These different collections provided plenty of scope for cross-fertilisation. In an attempt to complement the Panpoëticon, for instance, *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* asked Kops if it might borrow his portrait of Katharina Lescailje. Kops consented to the request, motivated by 'a noble desire to immortalise this poetess'.[125] In this way, Nicolaas Reyers (1719–1784) was given the opportunity to paint the author's portrait as a replacement for the old commemorative piece that Van Halen had placed in the cabinet.

It is not surprising that the eyes of the literature-loving Republic were focused so strongly on the meeting room in Leiden. Under the wing of *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen*, the Panpoëticon Batavûm became a touchstone of literary quality in the final decades of the eighteenth century. It was a frequent point of reference for literary fame. A reviewer from *Maandlykse uittreksels, of Boekzaal der geleerde waerelt* ('Monthly Extracts, or Reading Room of the Learned World'), for instance, ended his article about the latest publication by the Zeeland poet Jan Macquet (1731–1798) with the following words: 'Mr Macquet, … provides us here with very good and distinguished poems from his able pen, which earn him a place in the *Pan Poëticon Batavum*'.[126] It is clear that not everyone shared the critic's opinion, given that Macquet never made it into the Panpoëticon. All the same, the comment shows that contemporaries viewed the cabinet as an iconic monument to Dutch literature. The addition of an author's portrait to the collection and the numerous odes this tended to generate, established or confirmed the writer's fame.

FROM WOODEN CABINET TO STONE STATUE

The wooden cabinet formed a direct link in this way to a tribute mechanism that had become firmly established by the turn of the nineteenth century: the erection of monuments and statues to writers.[127] One of the sporadic forerunners to this trend was the memorial to Vondel, mentioned earlier, which members

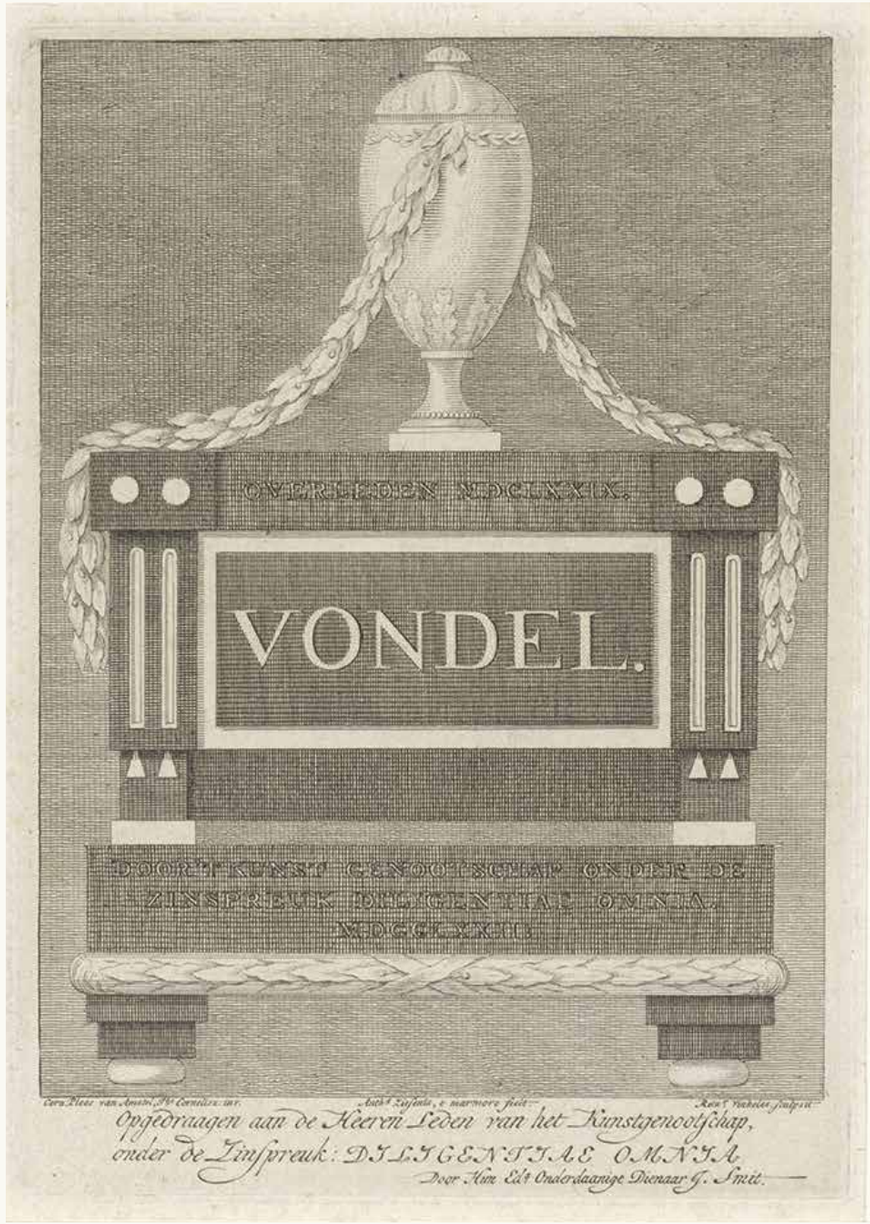
124 De Vries 2001, 377–78.
125 'eene edele zucht tot de vereeuwiging deezer Dichteresse'. *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon verheerlijkt* 1773, xxiii.
126 'De Heer, J. Macquet, … lever tons hier zeer goede en onderscheide stukken van zyne bekwaame Pen, die hem met recht eene plaats doen verwerven in het *Pan Poëticon Batavum*'. *Boekzaal der geleerde waereld* 1779, 463.
127 De Vries 1995, 142–44.

of the poetry society Diligentiae Omnia installed in the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam in 1772 (Figs. 45 and 46). When the celebrated poet Lucretia Wilhelmina van Merken (1721–1789) (Fig. 47) died in 1789, the wish was immediately expressed within *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* to commemorate her in an appropriate way. A few years later, a small package was enthusiastically received from her widow and fellow poet Nicolaas Simonszoon van Winter (1718–1795). The latter, who had already earned his place in the Panpoëticon during De Roode's time, presented the society with the posthumously published collection of his wife's poetry, together with the proofs of portrait engravings of the couple. The poems were added to the society's collection of the best literary works while the portraits were naturally placed in the Panpoëticon.

The plans, already advanced, to install a memorial at the poet's tomb in the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam, were proudly presented at the following annual meeting.[128] Reinier Vinkeles had completed the design 'of a simple and beautiful monument, full of expression and of masterly taste',[129] and the Amsterdam municipal sculptor Anthonie Ziesenis (1731–1801) had been commissioned to make the piece. This planned escalation in the commemoration of literary heroes came, however, at a price: Ziesenis estimated the cost of the project at the not inconsiderable sum of three thousand guilders.[130] Before the members were invited to place their contributions in the collection box, the chairman made an animated plea in which he stressed the need for the monument as a tribute to the late poet. A discussion of the initiative by Petrus Loosjes (1735–1813) reveals that the Panpoëticon Batavûm had come to set the standard for paying tribute to literary heroes. Loosjes made a direct link between the plans for the stone memorial and the monumentalising function of the wooden cabinet. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Panpoëticon was no longer enough: a poet of Van Merken's calibre deserved a 'larger and more public display of honour'.[131]

It is clear from Loosjes's words that the honouring of poets was about to take a new turn. At the end of the eighteenth century, the pioneering role that the Panpoëticon had played for almost a century led to calls for a more publicly accessible memorial for writers. For the time being, however, these wishes were in vain: despite the optimistic noises at the 1790 annual meeting, the planned memorial to Van Merken never materialised. It was not until 1828 that a monument in memory of husband-and-wife poets Nicolaas van Winter and Lucretia van Merken was installed at the Oude Kerk (Fig. 48).[132] A permanent shift followed in the early nineteenth century in the way writers were commemorated – away from the safe, domestic environment or society meeting room and towards the public space.

128 *Handelingen* 1790, 7–11.
129 'van een eenvoudig schoon Monument, vol uitdrukking en van een Meesterlijken smaek'. *Handelingen* 1790, 10.
130 Ibid., 10.
131 'grooter en openbaarder Eerbetooning'. Loosjes 1799, 43–44. Another commemorative anthology, *Lykdichten, ter gedachtenisse van Grotiusste der Nederlandsche dichteressen, vrouwe Lucretia Wilhelmina van Merken* (1790), was published shortly after Van Merkem's death. This paper memorial included the praises of nineteen current poets. See Jensen 2014, 257–61.
132 Janse 2004, 336.



44 Reinier Vinkeles, *Design for the Joost van den Vondel memorial*, 1772. Etching and engraving, 16.6 cm. x 11.8 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1906-1192.

45 H.P. Schouten, *Interior of the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam. Memorial to Joost van den Vondel against the pillar in the middle (installed in 1771).* 1795. Drawing. Amsterdam, Atlas Splitgerber collection, inv. no. 010001000570.

46 Reinier Vinkeles (after drawing by Hendrik Pothoven), *Portrait of Lucretia Wilhelmina van Merken*, 1792. Etching and engraving, 19.3 cm. x 14.4 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1906–1177.

47 Heyds and Abraham Vinkeles, *Memorial stone in the Reformed Oude Kerk in Amsterdam: in memoriam N.S. van Winter and L.W. van Merken*, 1828. Amsterdam, Stadsarchief, Atlas Dreesmann Collection, image no. 010094003717.

THE PANPOËTICON AFTER 1800

The history of the Panpoëticon Batavûm ended with a bang. Catastrophe struck Leiden city centre in the afternoon of 12 January 1807 (Fig. 49). A ship filled to bursting with gunpowder exploded on the Rapenburg canal, reducing the centre of town to rubble with a single, deafening explosion. The disaster also affected the Panpoëticon Batavûm. The meeting room of *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen* was wrecked: the wooden cabinet was badly damaged, the sculptures torn to pieces and the portraits scattered over the floor. A local preacher, Jan Roemer (1769–1839), wrote a detailed report of the disaster, in which he stated that 'the ensemble [might have been] destroyed forever'.[133]

Roemer was not far from the truth: passion and fellowship had waned at *Kunst Wordt Door Arbeid Verkregen*, just as they had at other associations. The Leiden poetry society never got over the literal blow it had suffered. In a final, desperate attempt to clear its debts, it offered the Panpoëticon to the newly founded Koninklijk Museum, for the hefty sum of five thousand guilders.[134] This direct precursor of the Rijksmuseum had opened a few months earlier at the behest of the new king, Louis Napoleon, on the upper storey of the Palace on Dam Square in Amsterdam. The purchase was firmly rejected, however, by the newly appointed director of the museum, the Amsterdam art dealer Cornelis Sebille Roos (1754–1820) (Fig. 50). Repeated appeals not to judge the ensemble 'by its artistic value, but only as a unique and fine collection', fell on deaf ears.[135] Roos saw little reason to acquire the collection merely because the portraits 'are all the same size and because they fit in little drawers in a little cabinet and can be shut away'.[136] Any connoisseur, he continued, 'who desires to see the portraits of our poets [ought] rather … to turn to the originals (including fine prints) than to make do with extremely mediocre copies'.[137] As far as 'modern' poets were concerned, it had to be concluded that they were far from complete. He described the few portraits that were included as 'dreadful daubs'.[138] It is plain from Roos's rejection that the Panpoëticon had lost its topical value. The abundance of authors' portraits available on the market meant the enthusiast could now readily find alternatives – frequently better ones – elsewhere. What's more, Roos argued, the form and structure of the collection, modelled on the typically eighteenth-century collector's cabinet, had fallen out of fashion.

A second attempt to sell the cabinet to the king proved no more successful. The issue, once again, was the inferior aesthetic quality of the collection. All the same, the Panpoëticon must have struck a certain chord with the king, who '[was] still interested [in it], less from the point of view of art, "So long as the

133 'het geheel [misschien] voor altijd verwoest'. Roemer 1809, 91.
134 L.J. 1853, 187.
135 'beoordeelen na deszelfs konstwaarde, maar alleen als unique en nette verzameling'. Letter from Roos to Meerman, 15 July 1809. Letter from Roos to Meerman, 15 July 1809. In: *Kopieboeken* 1809–10, 5–6.
136 'van één groote zijn en omdat ze in Laadjes in een Kabinetje passen en weggesloten kunnen worden'. Ibid.
137 '[I]edere kenner … welke de Portretten van onze Dichters begeerd te hebben [zou] zich liever … voorzien van de originelen (waaronder fraaje Prenten zijn) dan zich te vreden te stellen met zeer mediocre Kopijën'. Ibid.
138 'elendige afbeeldzels'. Ibid.

portraits are accurate", as that, as these words suggest, to use them for a historical work'.[139] Louis Napoleon once again declined to purchase the collection, this time on the advice of the 'National Historian', Martinus Stuart (1765–1826).[140] The asking price of five thousand guilders was deemed excessive.

The court librarian Willem Bilderdijk, who had been involved in the negotiation, was instructed on 29 June 1810 to inform the owners that the king would not be purchasing the collection.[141] It was an ironic task for a man whose own youthful portrait had been placed in the Panpoëticon over thirty years earlier. Times change, however; where in 1779 the twenty-three-year-old Bilderdijk had used the customary superlatives to express how 'moved, confused, astonished, excited' and 'delighted' he was to be included among the 'Dutch Homers' in the Panpoëticon, more than a quarter of a century had passed in the meantime, during which he had become the most depicted artist in the country.[142] Consequently, his Panpoëticon portrait seems in retrospect to have left exceptionally little impression on him. 'One of the oldest [portraits] is in Leiden in the *Pan Poëticon*. My wife thought it hideous when she saw it. I no longer recall it', he wrote in 1795.[143]

His specific memory of his Panpoëticon portrait had probably become entangled in the mass of likenesses made of Bilderdijk in the course of his lifetime. The poet complained in a letter to his sister-in-law about the portrait mania that held sway in his time. The unhealthy compulsion to own portraits of poets even gave rise to profiteering. 'Then there are scholars who wish to measure themselves against me or me against them, and artists who want to portray me or draw a silhouette. They use my likenesses, whether accurate or not, to carry on what has become one of the biggest branches of commerce and industry.'[144] This widespread fascination for the author's portrait would ultimately pursue Bilderdijk until his death in 1831. Shortly after he had breathed his last, images of the poet on his deathbed (Fig. 51) began to sell like hot cakes. His face was also immortalised in a death mask (Fig. 52). Because of the rather clumsy removal of the plaster, the poet eventually went to his grave without his eyebrows.[145] Apparently all was fair in the early nineteenth century when it came to preserving the poet's face for posterity. The invention of photography in January 1839 came just too late for Bilderdijk.[146]

Now that the likelihood of a second life at the Koninklijk Museum had seemingly evaporated, the Panpoëticon was sold again. The cabinet was purchased in 1818 by Anthonie Kluijtenaar (?–1849), but the growth of the collection had now run its course: the wooden cabinet was locked up and no new portraits would be added. For the first time in history, the collection became a static ensemble. On 17 October 1849, the cabinet – now in the home of Kluijtenaar's widow on the Herengracht in Amsterdam – went under the hammer once again. At the auction house, located just a stone's throw from where the foundations of the collection had been laid a century and a half earlier, it now passed into the hands of a hard-nosed art dealer called Samson.[147] The latter's commercial instincts outweighed the knowledge that the collection had been together for almost 150 years. To maximise his profit, Samson broke it up and sold off the parts. A substantial proportion of the collection cropped up decades later in Venice at the *Academia Reale di Belle Arti di Venezia*, from which it was purchased in 1880 by the Nederlandsch Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst.

So it was that after an Adriatic detour, seventy-two of the little portraits found their way after all into what is now the Rijksmuseum. The ensemble continues to grow to this day, through the acquisition of portraits like the one of the young Hugo Grotius, with which this study opened. Where the eighteenth-century character and variable aesthetic value of the cabinet once persuaded the museum's first director, C.S. Roos, not to acquire the collection, the portraits nowadays fit seamlessly into the Rijksmuseum's guiding philosophy, in which – firmly in the spirit of Huizinga – art and history are presented in close proximity with one another. The eighty-two portraits serve within the walls of the Rijksmuseum as unique historical documents from a lively and poorly known period in Dutch cultural history.

139 'nog al belang in [stelde], minder uit het oogpunt der kunst, "Mits maar de Pourtraiten gelijken", dan wel, zoo als men uit deze woorden mag opmaken, om er voor een historisch werk gebruik van te maken'. L.J., 1853, 187.
140 See Koolhaas-Grosfeld 2010, 261 for the relationship between Louis Napoleon and Stuart.
141 Wenckebach 1810; L.J. 1853, 187.
142 'ontroerd, verward, verbijster, opgetogen [en] verrukt] … Nederlandse Homeeren'. Bilderdijk 1809, 178–79; Leemans and Johannes 2013, 135–36.
143 'Een van de oudste [portretten] is te Leyden in 't *Pan Poëticon* berustende. Mijne vrouw vond het afschuwelijk toen zy het zag. Ik herinner het my niet meer'. Bilderdijk 1834, 184.
144 'Dan zijn er geleerden die zich met mij of mij met hen meten willen en schilders die mij portretteren willen of een silhouette willen trekken. Met mijn goed of slecht lijkende afbeeldingen beoefenen zee en van Grotiusste taken van koophandel en industrie'.Letter from Bilderdijk to his sister-in-law. Groningen, 5 or 6 May 1795, in: Mathijsen 1997, 45.
145 Honings and Van Zonneveld 2013, 491.
146 Geerts 2007, 1.
147 *Cat.* Amsterdam 1849, lotnr. 327.

48 Carel Lodewijk Hansen, *The Rapenburg in Leiden*, 1807. Oil on canvas, 94.5 cm. x 125.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-3925.

49 Adriaan de Lelie, *Cornelis Sebille Roos (1754–1820). Art Dealer in Amsterdam and Inspector of the National Konst-Gallery and the Huis ten Bosch in The Hague*, 1815. Oil on canvas, 68 cm. x 54.3 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-3098.

50 Philippus Velijn (after painting by Gerrit Jan Michaëlis), *Willem Bilderdijk on his Deathbed*, 1833. Engraving, 23.9 cm. x 25.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1904-4091.

51 Anonymous, *Death Mask of Willem Bilderdijk*, 1831. Plaster, 34 cm. x 27 cm. x 17 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. BK-1999-25. Long-term loan Museum Cuypershuis.

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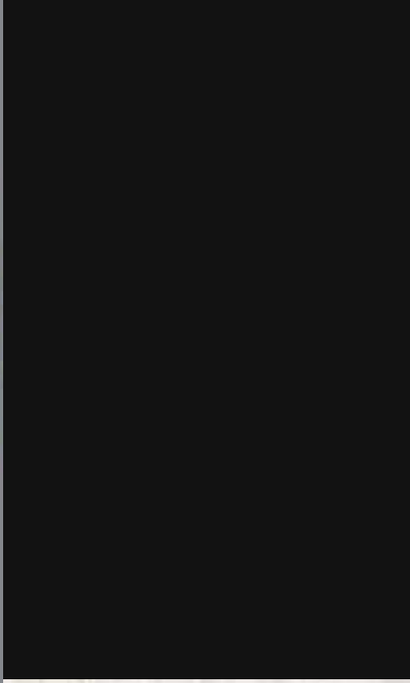
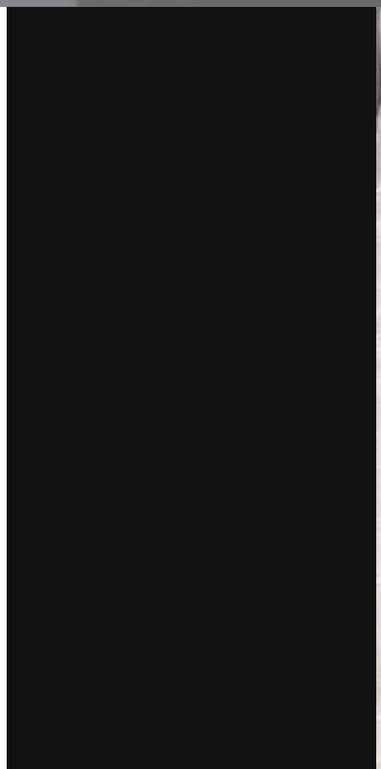
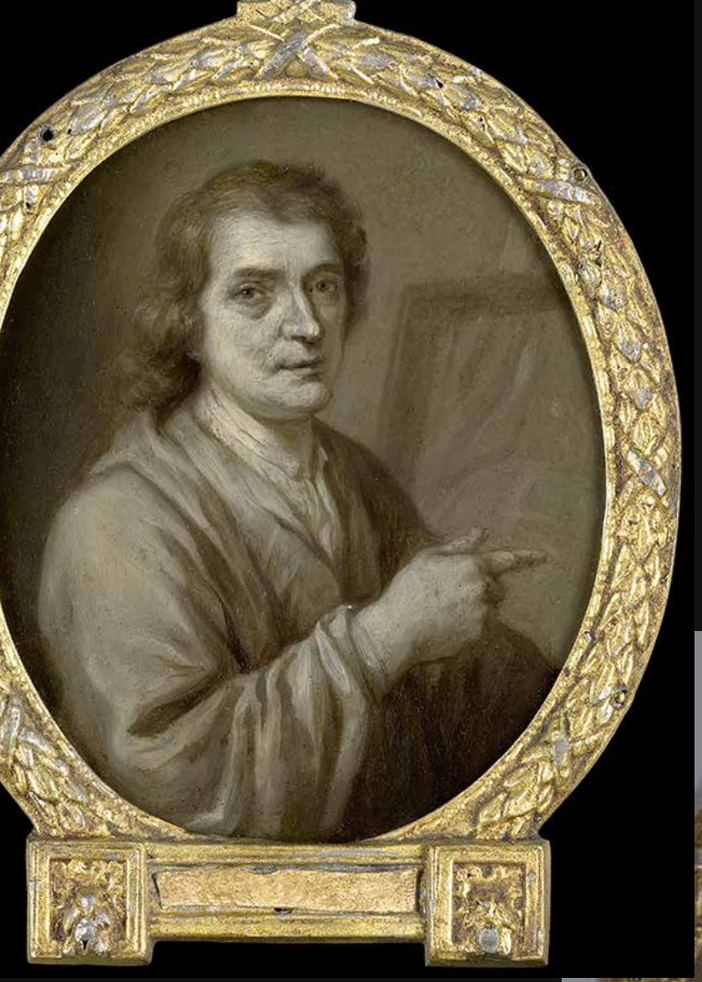




SELECTIE VAN PORTRETTEN
Hoe willen jullie deze bij-schriften?

52
Alle portretten aanwezig in de collectie van het Rijksmuseum + portretje van Diederik Liebergen (van Robert-Jan te Rijdt); Samuel van Hoogstraten (RKD) en Jacob de Witt (Museum van Gijn).

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