NEW RESEARCH ON ART AND ITS HISTORY

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Northern European art

Van Gogh's Oslo self-portrait | A rediscovered bust by Niclaus Gerhaert | Winckelmann and England
Pieter de Hooch in Delft | Van Dyck in Munich | Tony Garnier in Lyon | Nam June Paik in London

conservation service (on materials and technique). This sturdy volume will sit prominently on the Van Dyck shelf and be frequently consulted in the future.

1 Catalogue: *Van Dyck*: *Gemälde von Anthonis van Dyck*. Edited by Mirjam Neumeister with contributions by Eva Ortner, Jan Schmidt and Julia Thoma. 420 pp. incl. 400 col. ills. (Alte Pinakothek and Hirmer Verlag, Munich, 2019), €39.90. ISBN 978-3-7774-3336-3.

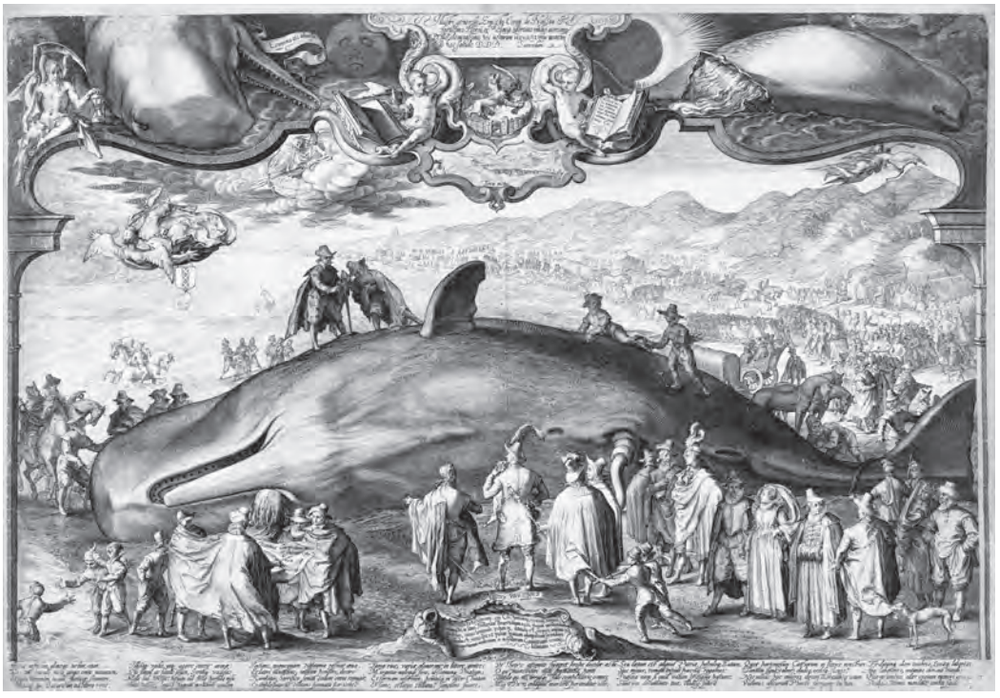
De Wind is Op!: Climate, Culture and Innovation in Dutch Maritime Painting

New Bedford Whaling Museum
2nd July 2019–1st May

by **ARTHUR K. WHEELOCK JR**

Filled with paintings and prints that depict Dutch whaling in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this engaging and informative exhibition, curated by Christina Connett Brophy and Roger Mandel, is drawn almost exclusively from works in the New Bedford Whaling Museum's permanent collection. Over twenty paintings, including pen paintings, maps, pen-and-wash drawings, Delft tiles, ships' furniture and a remarkable eighteenth-century grandfather clock with a ship automaton have been thoughtfully installed.[1] The exhibition provides insights into the history and character of Dutch whaling and the opportunities it provided for artists to demonstrate their creativity, issues that were explored further in an accompanying symposium.[2] The paintings vary in quality, from masterpieces such as Ludolf Backhuyzen's *Whaling in the Polar Sea* (Fig.18) to provincial, yet energetic, works by minor Dutch and Flemish artists. Despite that unevenness, one senses the abiding pride of the Dutch in their prowess for hunting whales in the Arctic's frigid waters.

The impact of climate change on Dutch whaling is an important leitmotif in this exhibition. The 'Little Ice Age' is often discussed in the context of skating scenes by Hendrick Avercamp (1585–1634), but it also affected the character of Dutch whaling in the seventeenth century. The harsh cold that froze rivers and canals changed ocean currents, which impacted trade routes to Asia and America. The Dutch were particularly innovative in coping with these climate challenges. They not only built sledges to transport goods across frozen inland waterways,

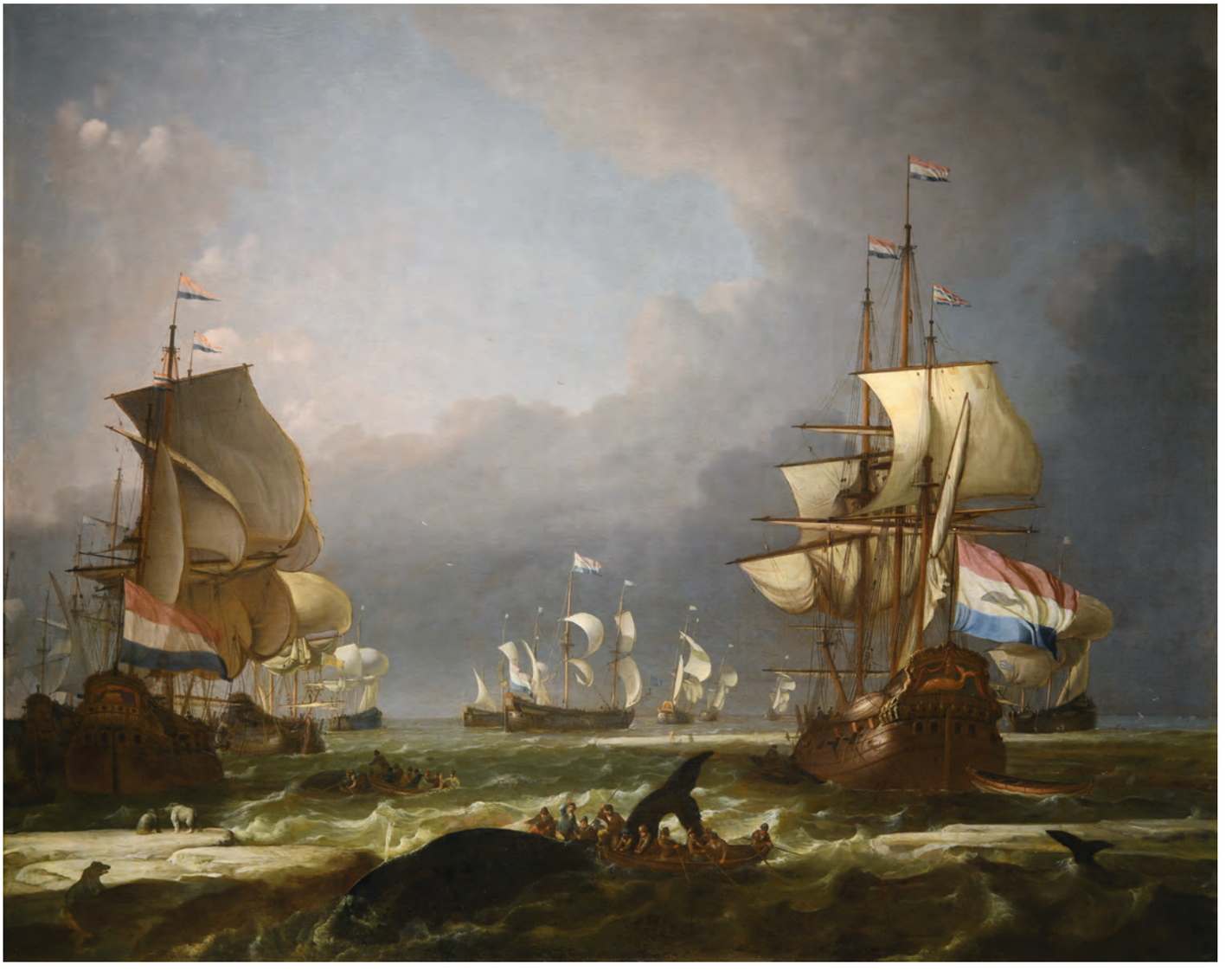


17. *Stranded whale near Beverwyck*, by Jan Jansson after Jan Pietersz Saenredam. 1618. Engraving, 38.6 by 58.6 cm. (New Bedford Whaling Museum).

they also adapted '*fluitschips*', their reliable transport ships for the Baltic trade, so that these vessels could hunt whales in the Arctic. Merchants sent these modified whaling ships to the spawning and feeding grounds that the Dutch had discovered at Spitsbergen Island (known today as Svalbard) and Jan Mayen Island, recognisable by its towering volcano, Beerenberg. The Dutch pursued a 'shore-based' method of whaling, which they learned from French and Spanish Basques who also whaled in this area. In the shallow waters off these islands they would harpoon and kill bowhead whales. Bowhead whales float after death, which allowed seamen to flense them (cut the blubber from the carcass) in their small whaling boats. Seamen would then transport strips of blubber to shore for butchering and rendering into oil in furnaces (*tryworks*). This type of whaling with *fluitschips* is seen in one of the largest and most dramatic of the paintings in the exhibition, *Amsterdam whaleships at Jan Mayen,* attributed to Bonaventua Peeters (1614–52), where smoke rises on the beach from trywork fires. In the painting's foreground, a capsized boat, with seamen climbing on its overturned hull to save themselves, emphasises the treacherous nature of this battle between man and the whales they hunted.

At Jan Mayen Island, casks of processed oil would be stored in tents or sheds until whaling vessels returned to Amsterdam or other Dutch harbours. Whale oil was in great demand for lamps since it burned bright and clear. In 1614, in an attempt to market whale products and to keep the price of oil artificially high throughout Europe, a group of cities formed a Dutch whaling cartel, the Noordsche Compagnie (Northern Company). The cartel, however, had only limited success, as independent merchants also sent whaling ships to the Arctic. The growth of the whaling industry was considerable: by 1670 almost 150 Dutch whaling ships were active in Arctic waters.

The 'shore-based' approach to whaling at Jan Mayen Island proved unsustainable, in part because Basque marauders destroyed the



18. *Whaling in the Polar Sea*, by Ludolf Backhuyzen. c.1700. Oil on canvas, 96.5 by 122 cm. (New Bedford Whaling Museum).

Dutch processing facility there in 1631, and in part because of climate change. Extreme cold caused shallow harbours to freeze, but whales also began to migrate to Greenland because the cold affected ocean currents. In the whaling grounds off Greenland the entire process of rendering blubber into oil had to be done on ship, which induced the Dutch to modify the designs of their whaling vessels. They constructed broad, arched-stern whaling ships, called *bootschips*, that were more capacious and stable, and better suited for whaling than the *fluitschips*.

Backhuyzen's painting features a Dutch fleet consisting entirely of *bootschips* engaged in open-water whaling off the coast of Greenland, near ice flows populated by polar bears. The captain of the large vessel at the right, *De Vergulde Walvis* (*The Golden Whale*), identifiable by the carved and brightly painted whale on its stern board, probably commissioned this painting. The Dutch whaling flag, a right whale superimposed upon the white band of the Netherlands tricolor, flies from her taffrail. Backhuyzen, who sailed in the North Sea to study wind, waves and light, carefully studied whaling vessels in Amsterdam's harbour and accurately painted the vessel as well as the activities of open-water whaling. In the centre foreground, he depicted seamen in a small whaleboat harpooning a thrashing bowhead whale, while seamen in another whaleboat nearby flense a whale so that its blubber could be processed into whale oil. Once the blubber had been rendered into oil, the oil would be stored on board until *De Vergulde Walvis* returned to the Netherlands.

Few artists actually sailed to the Arctic with whaling vessels and many paintings depicting Dutch ships navigating raging Arctic seas and battling enormous whales are largely fanciful. The names of those who commissioned these works are rarely known, although dramatic images of whaling in inhospitable realms would have appealed to those connected to the whaling industry. To place these imaginative visions of Dutch whaling in context, the exhibition opens by presenting late sixteenth-century

paintings and prints that depict terrifying storms and whales, images that allude to man's deep-seated fears of the sea. In a print after Marten de Vos (1584–85), for example, Jonah is cast from a floundering ship before being swallowed by a gaping whale, whereas in an engraving by Theodoor Galle (c.1600) a wrecked ship flounders in a turbulent sea filled with enormous, threatening whales.

Some of the mysteries surrounding deep-sea mammals were dissipated in the early seventeenth century when a few sperm whales washed ashore in the Netherlands, one near Beverwyck in 1601 and another near Katwijk in 1617. Painted and printed images of these events reveal the fascination that these beached whales had on all social levels of the populace: huge crowds came to gawk, while scientists measured and conducted scientific experiments, as shown in an engraving after Jan Pietersz Saenredam (Fig.17). These whale beachings were yet another example of the impact of climate change during the 'Little Ice Age': sperm whales, forced to seek prey farther north than normal, often became stranded in shallow shoals off the Dutch coast.

The exhibition fits seamlessly into the New Bedford Whaling Museum's mission, which is to celebrate New Bedford's importance as a whaling centre and its industrial past. The vast majority of the Dutch and Flemish paintings came to the museum in 2001 when it merged with the Kendall Whaling Museum.[3] The museum, which also has a remarkable collection of American, European, and Japanese whaling prints, scrimshaw, logbooks and journals, now houses many whaling artefacts and the largest collection of whaling paintings outside the Netherlands.

1 There is an online catalogue, available at https://www.whalingmuseum.org/explore/exhibitions/de-wind-is-op/, accessed 13th January 2020. Further information about the collection is available in S.M. Frank: *Dutch and Flemish Old Master Paintings in the New Bedford Whaling Museum*, New Bedford 2018.
2 See https://www.whalingmuseum.org/programs/de-wind-is-op-symposium/, accessed 13th January 2020.
3 The Kendall Whaling Museum, Sharon MA, was founded in 1955 by Henry P. Kendall (1879–1959).

The Mayor and the Architect

Archives Municipales de Lyon
16th October 2019–21st March

by **ANDREW SAINT**

The mayor featured in this exhibition's title is the charismatic Edouard Herriot, who ran the city of Lyon like a fiefdom from 1905 until his death in 1957. The architect and the show's hero is Tony Garnier (1869–1948). Garnier – not to be confused with the designer of the Paris Opéra, Charles Garnier (1825–98) – hogs the limelight in the roll-call of Lyon's twentieth-century architecture. He spent his whole adult career in the city, and so one must go to Lyon to get a material flavour of his work, a fine town hall in the Paris suburb of Boulogne-Billancourt apart. Architectural exhibitions, of course, are always bedevilled by abstraction because it is impossible to include the real thing. The last important show devoted to Garnier, at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, in 1990, was necessarily abstract in that sense, although accompanied by the publication of his *œuvre complète*.[1] The present exhibition is broader and more enlightening.[2] By including letters and municipal dossiers alongside drawings and photographs, it underlines the creative urban context within which Garnier worked. And by being in Lyon, it allows the visitor to seek out the reality and the present condition of much that is on display. The upshot is sometimes rewarding, sometimes not.

Garnier's reputation will always rest on his utopian *cité industrielle* (Fig.20). The son of a Lyon textile designer and amateur painter, he studied architecture in the local art school before transferring to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1890, where he mastered the prevailing blend of classicism, clear planning and modern construction. In due course he was sent to Rome. From there, alongside dutiful reconstructions of antique sites, he shocked the Beaux-Arts authorities in 1901 by sending home an elaborate design for an ideal industrial city. It was failed, provoking a row that brought him to public attention. He exhibited a reworked version of the project in 1904, but it was not then fully published.

At the time, utopianism and town planning were everywhere in the air. Garnier's city was wholly architectural, and that has always been its appeal. The graphic elegance with which he set out separate gridded zones for housing, heavy industry and public buildings

19. The cattle market at La Mouche, Lyon, by Tony Garnier. 1928. Photograph, 13 by 18 cm. (Archives municipales de Lyon).