

# Gift: Surrealism Library for Boijmans

**Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen is to receive a unique and impressive library of Surrealist works. It represents an important addition to the museum's world-famous Surrealism collection.**

The gift from the collectors Laurens Vancrevel and his partner Frida de Jong includes monographs, catalogues and literature on Surrealism, ranging from poetry and prose to essays, published in several languages. More than four thousand, mostly unique, titles from the beginnings of Surrealism up to the present day will be transferred to Boijmans at a time to be agreed. The gift means that the museum will have a very extensive Surrealism library in the future. With this in mind, the museum has conceived the idea of opening a study centre to focus on Surrealism, which will be the first in the world.

## **Extending Boijmans's Surrealism Collection**

Boijmans's Surrealism collection began to come together in the early nineteen-sixties. It makes Rotterdam the only city in the Netherlands to hold a core Surrealism collection of world stature, with masterpieces by Salvador Dalí, René Magritte and others. The museum's current Surrealist library was designed primarily as information about our own art collection, plus a considerable number of standard works by Surrealist authors. What makes the donated library so special is that it contains a true study and working collection that has been built up gradually since 1960 and reflects the totality of the interrelationships between all the arts and the political ideas in Surrealism. The collection also provides a good picture of the movement's strongly international character. The curator of modern and contemporary art, Saskia van Kampen-Prein, says that 'this generous gift removes the traditional separation between Surrealist art and literature.'

## **Study Centre for Surrealism in Rotterdam**

In the museum's future knowledge centre, which is being created as part of the renovation works, the items in Boijmans's existing Surrealism library and Vancrevel and De Jong's library will be available to consult in the Surrealism study centre. The centre will be open to anyone with an interest in Surrealism – both lovers of Surrealist art and literature and professionals. At the moment no comprehensive Surrealist library of this kind exists anywhere. Obviously there are other libraries around the world that hold many Surrealist publications, but they are not as complete as the Boijmans library will be in future. The titles in the Bibliothèque Kandinsky in Paris and MoMA's library in New York, for instance, focus on Surrealism and visual art. Laurens Vancrevel and Frida de Jong commented: 'It is a brilliant idea of Sjarel Ex's to set up a Surrealism study centre within the museum's planned knowledge centre. This is a striking innovation in the museum presentation of Surrealist art, not just here in the Netherlands but internationally. It shows clearly that in Surrealism, as a philosophy of creativity, visual art is not detached from poetry or from the maker's view of the world. Our Surrealism library will come into its own there.'

### **Vancrevel and De Jong**

Boijmans has had a warm relationship with Vancrevel and De Jong for many years and the couple have long been closely involved with the museum. Some years ago, Vancrevel wrote an article about the museum's Surrealism library for the collection catalogue 'A Dream Collection: Surrealism in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen' which was published in 2017 (in Dutch and English). Since then, he and De Jong have donated to the museum fifty works of art by Surrealists like J.H. Moesman, Willem van Leusden, Kristians Tonny, Jan Schlechter Duvall, Theo van Baaren and Her de Vries. Curator Saskia van Kampen-Prein and Vancrevel are currently writing a Boijmans Study on the subject. This lavishly illustrated book will appear in the autumn of 2021 under the title 'Creative Chance: Surrealism in the Collection of Laurens Vancrevel and Frida de Jong'. Following these earlier contributions and gifts of art, Vancrevel and De Jong are now donating their Surrealism library to Boijmans.

### **Exceptional Gift**

Boijmans receives a few hundred gifts a year. Major donations the museum received recently came from Frans Koster and Leen Quist, which included modern European ceramics, and from Cor de Wit en Sjoukje de Wit-Jelsma, with Scandinavian glassware. Such gifts, however, are seldom as sizeable or comprehensive as Vancrevel and De Jong's Surrealism library. Their gift, moreover, dovetails perfectly with the museum's focus on Surrealism.

Images can be found in the [mediakit](#). All press releases and mediakits are available via [boijmans.pr.co](#).

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ABOUT MUSEUM BOIJMANS VAN BEUNINGEN

Boijmans Van Beuningen – een huis voor verbeelding, inspiratie en creativiteit

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**museum van  
boijmans beuningen**

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