

Fondation  
Custodia



17 June  
17 Sept.  
23



Rein Dool  
Drawings

Rein Dool (Leiden 1933)  
Twente, 2019  
Charcoal on oriental paper.  
– 565 x 765 mm  
Collection of the artist



# EXHIBITION AT THE FONDATION CUSTODIA

From 17 June to 17 September 2023

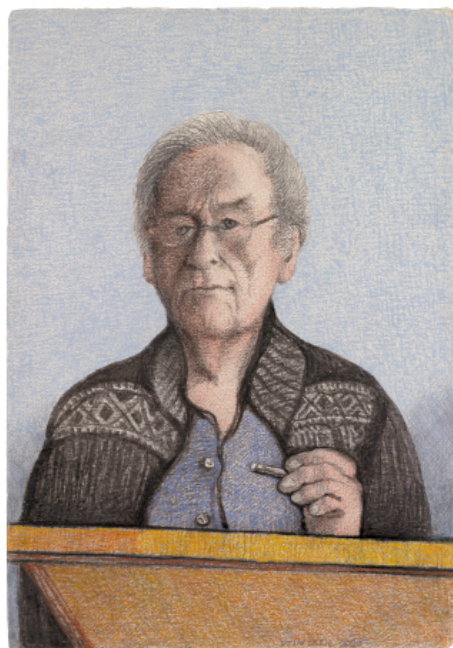
## *Rein Dool. Drawings*

Following a first venue at the Dordrechts Museum, the exhibition *Rein Dool. Drawings* is on display at the Fondation Custodia from 17 June to 17 September 2023. Aiming to demonstrate the full range of Rein Dool's drawings, the show, containing around 50 sheets, includes loans from the Rijksmuseum, the Dordrechts Museum, from private collections and from the artist himself.

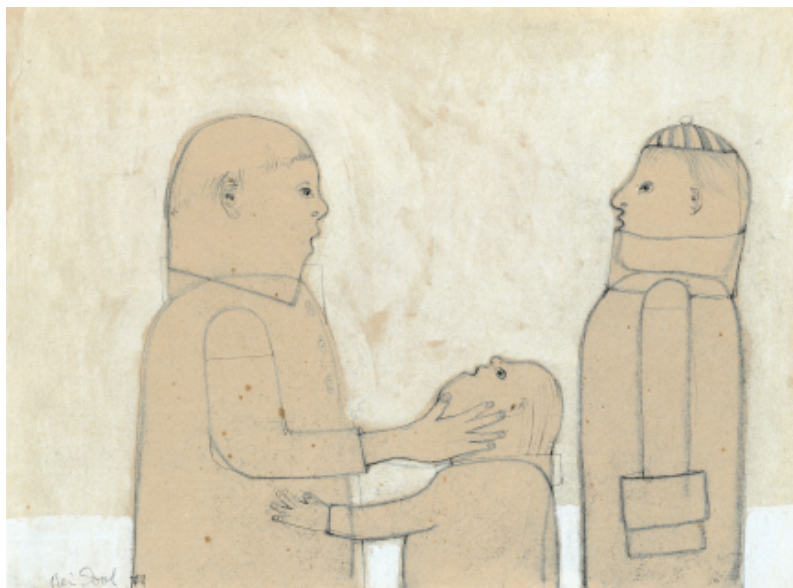
The exhibition is held at the same dates as *Jacobus Vrel. Enigmatic Forerunner of Vermeer*, previously on show at the Mauritshuis in The Hague.

**D**RAWING HAS BEEN at the heart of the work of Rein Dool (born in Leiden on 3 February 1933) for more than seventy years [fig. 1]. He showed a predisposition for the technique of drawing from his earliest years and has been practising it throughout his career as a painter. A talented draughtsman, Rein Dool's enduring love for materials, particularly paper, persists. His work consists of landscapes, portraits, still lifes and figures, often semi-abstract, revealing an impressive diversity of styles and techniques.

This exhibition, which first opened at the Dordrechts Museum – Dordrecht being the town where Rein Dool lives and works – forms part of the Fondation Custodia's effort to present works on paper by contemporary figurative artists to the public, such as Gèr Boosten (2015), Siemen Dijkstra (2020) and,



**1. Self-Portrait, 2020**  
Charcoal and pastel. – 565 x 390 mm  
Collection of the artist  
Photo © Adriaan van Dam



**2. *Only Child*, 1970**  
Pencil and gouache. – 320 x 420 mm  
Collection of the artist  
Photo © Adriaan van Dam

more recently, Charles Donker (2021-2022). Ger Luijten, director of the Fondation Custodia since 2010, who passed away suddenly on 19 December 2022, was behind the initiative to bring this exhibition, devoted exclusively to the drawings of Rein Dool, to Paris.

The display follows a chronological and thematic course. It begins with a work that occupies a key role in the artist's career: *Only Child*, 1970 [fig. 2]. The drawing shows a young boy standing

between two adults. The father is holding his son's head in a gesture that is at once protective and menacing; the child raises his eyes with a look in which a variety of emotions can be discerned: respect, fear and a desire to be loved.

Rein Dool was raised in a household in which the father behaved in a despotic manner towards his wife and son. Drawing became a means of escape. As he roamed the countryside, Dool developed a talent for drawing from nature, based on close and detailed observation. This was to continue as a fundamental part of his art throughout his career.

Dool began his training as a lithographer at the age of 14. He learned freehand drawing for letters and decoration, and how to mix inks in order to obtain the correct colours for photo-lithography. At the same time, he took courses in life drawing at the *Ars Aemula Naturae* in Leiden, one of the oldest artists' societies in the Netherlands. When his training was finished, Dool worked as a lithographer for various companies. The first surviving works by him – figure studies, landscapes and portraits – are not dated and it is difficult to establish their chronology. An etched portrait of his mother (1958) shows the influence of Rembrandt van Rijn, as do his early landscapes.

In 1958, Dool was awarded a beginner's prize for painting by the Fonds Willink van Collen. A few years later, in 1961, the artist decided to devote his time entirely to his art. He practised drawing and lithography as well as painting. In 1973, Dool purchased the house in Dordrecht in which he still lives to this day. In 1979 he was appointed as a teacher of life drawing at the Academy in 's-Hertogenbosch, later teaching lithography and painting there as well for nine years.

The work of Rein Dool, as this exhibition demonstrates, is particularly varied. Although the artist is a master of drawing from life, he also often sees this as a constraint on his creative freedom. During the 1970s, the artist succeeded in translating powerful emotions through the medium of very simplified drawn faces [see fig. 2]. This is also the way he manages self-mockery. The latter is particularly striking in his representations of hospital patients. The list of ailments from which the artist has recovered is impressive. Dool has endured a number of long hospital admissions, but as he himself comments: 'I have never laughed so much as I do in hospital. You witness the most extraordinary events. It's enough to make you split your sides. The sinister and the hilarious go hand in hand. You see the underbelly of life. There's the world outside and the world inside. And in the world inside, two qualities are indispensable: humour and imagination. It's the same with art'. On this theme, the exhibition presents a self-portrait of the artist lying in bed wearing prism spectacles, a device that allows the patient to lie flat in bed while seeing straight ahead [fig. 3].



**3. Bed Prism Spectacles (Self-Portrait)**, c. 1976  
Lithographic chalk, petrol, white gouache. – 430 x 620 mm  
Collection of the artist  
Photo © Adriaan van Dam

A passionate admirer of naïve art, Dool led the initiative to exhibit the work of the Georgian painter Niko Pirosmani (1862-1918) at the Dordrechts Museum in 2012. Dool's admiration for the naïve painters translates into a desire to expose the feelings behind each subject and to detach himself from reality. The portraits he executes of his artist and writer friends should be viewed mainly as an expression of their character rather than an exact representation of their appearance [fig. 4]. Dool is particularly interested in how just a few strokes can be used to compose a head. As he draws a simple zig-zag line and adds an eye, the 'Dool' head is born [fig. 5].



**4. Chris (Chris Tonbreeker)**  
Charcoal on oriental paper. – 635 x 990 mm  
Rijksprentenkabinet. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam,  
inv. no. RP-T-2015-21-5



**5. Mulberry Tree**, 2001  
Charcoal and watercolour. – 620 x 790 mm  
Collection of the artist  
Photo © Adriaan van Dam



These heads recur frequently and form an integral part of this artist's multi-faceted output [fig. 6].



**6. *Wonderment*, 2017**  
Watercolour. – 580 x 795 mm  
Collection D. Berghout  
Photo © Peter Ebben

Throughout his career, Rein Dool has always alternated semi-abstract scenes with periods spent drawing landscapes from life. He is a keen traveller and has sketched in Burma, France and Scotland [fig. 7]. More recently he has steeped himself in the landscapes of Spain [fig. 8]. With his Spanish panoramas he has created a personal style well suited to the rough oriental paper he likes so much.



**7. *The Isle of Skye (Scotland)*, 2001**  
Brush and bistre on oriental paper. – 245 x 315 mm  
Collection of the artist  
Photo © Adriaan van Dam



**8. *Ejea de los Caballeros (Meseta, Northern Spain)*, 2004**  
Pen and black ink, brush and grey ink and coffee on oriental paper.  
– 200 x 300 mm  
Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-T-2008-24

In 2013 he began the series titled 'Parks'. These large charcoal drawings demand enormous concentration from the artist; they are characterised by rich tones used to convey a peaceful atmosphere [fig. 9]. The imposing 'parks' bear no resemblance to his pen drawings from nature [see fig. 8].



**9. Wantijpark (Dordrecht), 2015**  
Charcoal on oriental paper. – 700 x 970 mm  
Dordrechts Museum, Dordrecht, inv. no. DM/021/T2009  
Photo © Jørgen Snoep

Always close to writers and poets, Dool has also produced a series of large, semi-Surrealist charcoal drawings illustrating the poems of Hans Faverey (1933-1990), an important post-war Dutch poet [fig. 10]. The exhibition ends with some recent sheets of his drawings; at the age of 90, the artist and draughtsman is still at work.

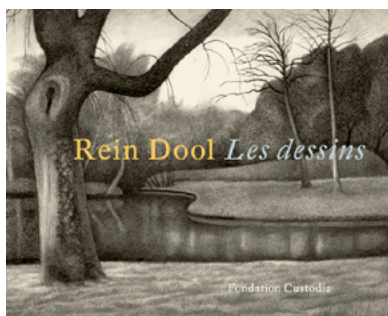


**10. It's Snowing, 2013**  
Charcoal on oriental paper.  
– 700 x 970 mm  
Rijksprentenkabinet,  
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam,  
inv. no. RP-T-2015-21-3

In spite of the great diversity of techniques, materials and styles of drawing used by Dool, a strong relationship can be perceived pervading all the work. It arises from the artist's keen sense of observation, from his original style, from the themes that he returns to again and again; it demonstrates his wonder at what the world has to offer, his compassion and his sense of humour when faced with humankind and human emotions.

## Catalogue

The exhibition catalogue, written by Huigen Leeftang, curator of the Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, is available in French and Dutch.



*Rein Dool. Les dessins* | *Rein Dool – tekenaar*  
Waanders Publishers, Zwolle, Dordrechts Museum,  
Dordrecht and Fondation Custodia, Paris, 2022  
116 pages, c. 70 illustrations in colour, 24.5 x 30.5 cm,  
hardcover  
ISBN 978 94 6262 460 3 (French version)  
ISBN 978 94 6262 437 5 (Dutch version)  
€ 29.95

This exhibition is organised in collaboration with the Dordrechts Museum, where it was shown from 11 December 2022 to 21 May 2023.

**DORDRECHTS**  
**MUSEUM**



# TWO EXHIBITIONS AT THE FONDATION CUSTODIA

From 17 June to  
17 September 2023  
Fondation Custodia,  
Paris

## Practical Information

### EXHIBITIONS

*Rein Dool. Drawings*

From 17 June to 17 September 2023

*Jacobus Vrel. Enigmatic Forerunner of Vermeer*

From 17 June to 17 September 2023

### PRESS OPENING

Friday 16 June 2023 from 10 to 11.30 am

### VERNISSAGE

Friday 16 June 2023 from 6 to 8.30 pm

### OPENING HOURS

Every day except Monday, from 12 to 6 pm

### ADMISSION CHARGES

Full price € 10 / Reduced € 7

The entrance ticket gives  
access to both exhibitions

### LOCATION

Fondation Custodia  
121, rue de Lille – 75007 Paris  
[www.fondationcustodia.fr](http://www.fondationcustodia.fr)

### ACCESS BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Metro: Assemblée Nationale (line 12) or Invalides (lines 8 and 13, RER C)

Bus 63, 73, 83, 84, 94: Assemblée Nationale

### COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Gaëlle de Bernède

[contact@gbcom.media](mailto:contact@gbcom.media)

Tel: +33 (0)1 75 43 46 80

### INTERNATIONAL PRESS

Roxane Latrèche

[contact@gbcom.media](mailto:contact@gbcom.media)

Tel: +49 176 8006 5583

### PRESS CONTACTS NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM

Noepy Testa

[noepy@entesta.nl](mailto:noepy@entesta.nl)

Tel: +31 (0)6 29 14 10 54

Heidi Vandamme

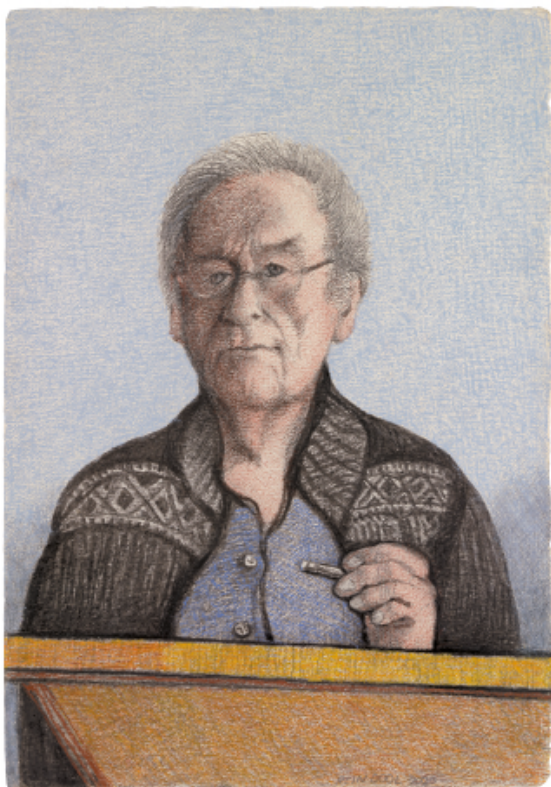
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Tel: +31 (0)6 29 53 26 86



# Images Available to the Press

## *Rein Dool. Drawings*

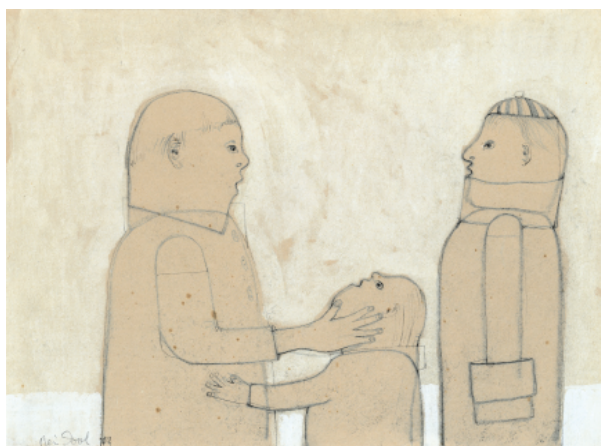


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