TheRembrandtDatabase Newsletter #3, February 2016

research resource on Rembrandt paintings

X-Radiographs by Alan Burroughs online • Plans for 2016 • New partnership : The State Hermitage Museum • The Rembrandt Database and the Rijksmuseum • Revision of the website • The Rembrandt Database presents: team member Michiel Franken

Now online: 10,527 files, 200 paintings, 25 collections

And more content is in preparation; please keep an eye out for updates on our website!

Alan Burroughs, Harvard University Archives

What will the year 2016 hold for The Rembrandt Database?

After successfully concluding 2015, all eyes are on our plans for 2016.

In 2016 our new project associate Susan Smelt will sort, inventory, select and add the documentation created during the past eight years of research on the *Saul and David* of the Mauritshuis (The Hague). **Dr. Peter Klein** will continue adding dendrochronological reports to the RKD database that will be presented on our website on a rolling basis. A partnership with **The Kremer Collection** will provide the database with art-historical information and technical documentation about the painting *Bust of an old man with turban* from this collection. **The J. Paul Getty Museum** in Los Angeles will present six paintings on our website. Partnerships with the **Doerner Institut** (Munich), **Gemäldegalerie** (Berlin), the **Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands** (Amsterdam/Amersfoort) and the **Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies** (Cambridge) will be continued. And there will be more, as more documentation becomes available through new research and collaboration with other new partners.

NEW PARTNERSHIP: THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM

We are pleased to announce that the RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History in The Hague and the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg have agreed to collaborate on The Rembrandt Database. Work on the collection of the Hermitage will begin in 2017.

Alan Burroughs X-radiographs

The Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies (Harvard Art Museums) in Cambridge MA has enriched the database with X-radiographs by Alan Burroughs of Rembrandt paintings in many collections, including the Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam), the Louvre (Paris) and the Museum of Fine Arts (Boston). More X-radiographs of paintings from other collections will be published in stages over the course of the project.

The Straus Center houses the Alan Burroughs Collection of X-radiographs, the first systematic, large-scale X-ray documentation project assembled to address issues of the authenticity and attribution of paintings. Many of the X-rays were produced between 1925 and 1944 by Alan Burroughs (1897-1965). Today the collection contains approximately 8,000 X-radiographs of over 4,450 paintings from collections in America and Europe.

The Rembrandt Database and the Rijksmuseum
Anna Krekeler (Paintings Conservator, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam)

The Rijksmuseum's collection of 28 paintings by Rembrandt and/or his studio has more technical and conservation documentation than any other group of paintings in the museum. Since December 10th, 2015, over 2,000 separate records of documentation have been uploaded to The Rembrandt Database. This huge undertaking has provided the Paintings Conservation Department the fortunate opportunity to review and organize existing documentation on Rembrandt, including written reports, photographs, X-radiographs and IR-images.

The Department's work with The Rembrandt Database has coincided perfectly with many current projects, including the development of the Paint Sample Database and the ongoing research of conservation history of the paintings collection from 1800 to the present. The Rijksmuseum is eager to support the continuously growing character of The Rembrandt Database with future contributions of technical research in order to achieve a stronger understanding of Rembrandt's masterly painting technique.

ultraviolet light studies: Ektachrome (8x10 inch), overall (front), March 2001, during treatment - after cleaning (record number 19141); Rembrandt *Portrait of a woman probably Maria Trip,* c. 1639, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Revision of The Rembrandt Database website

In the coming months we will develop a new website for the database. The current user interface is a beta version and is in need of revision. To guarantee a sustainable product The Rembrandt Database is based on pre-existing RKD databases. Our new user interface will be derived from the recently successfully renewed RKD website (www.rkd.nl) to further ensure its maintainability in the future.

The new webpage will have better navigation, higher speed, comprehensive search functionalities, and tools for printing, downloading, adding comments, and making your own selections of data.

Presenting Michiel Franken

As Curator of Technical Documentation and Rembrandt and Rembrandt School, Michiel Franken has been associated with The Rembrandt Database Project from the start. He is responsible for the scholarly quality of the contents of the database. Two days a week he advises and helps the project associates and checks the art-historical information. In the future he will also participate in the Editorial Board and Advisory Committee that will be set up.

Michiel has been working at the RKD since 1999, first as project manager of the archive of the Rembrandt Research Project and since 2008 as Curator of Technical Documentation and Rembrandt and the Rembrandt School. Besides contributing to volumes 4 and 5 of *A corpus of Rembrandt paintings* he has published articles on Rembrandt and on the 'Oranjezaal' in Royal Palace Huis ten Bosch, The Hague.