



Piet Mondriaan and Simon Maris

**The photographs discovered
at the home of Mies Maris
in Amsterdam in 1997**

Paul Gorter

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Introduction

This is a revised and extended compilation based on the article: 'Mies Maris' vergeten Mondriana (part 1)' by Frans van Burkom and myself in the Dutch art historic quarterly *Jong Holland*, 1998 no. 2, in which most of these photographs were first published and described.

The article was in Dutch, never on the internet and therefore not easily accessible.

These photographic documents about Piet Mondriaan's years in Amsterdam from 1900 to 1907 showed a then - in 1998 - largely unknown, leisurely joyful side of the painter, especially those of the voyage to Spain.

Apart from a few small errors the article with the results of the research by Van Burkom and myself has proven over time to be quite reliable. It was, and still is, a source for further investigation of these documents and for their integration in Mondriaan's biography.

Nevertheless the article has often been overlooked or ignored by recent writers on Mondriaan. Wrong names or dates were given, pictures were reproduced inverted, etc. Rather disappointing, given the accuracy of our description in *Jong Holland*, ready at hand in many libraries.

Since the 1998 publication a number of new factual details have emerged and it is now possible to be even more precise about some of these pictures with the aid of the digitalized newspapers on *Delpher*.

All the original prints and negatives are, or should be, in the Simon Maris-archief at the RKD, the 'Netherlands Institute for Art History' in The Hague, and maybe some at the former Stichting Schone Kunsten rond 1900, the SSK 1900, a foundation started by (grand-) children of Dutch artists working around 1900, that has its depot at the Drents Museum in Assen.

For this new publication I used mainly (scans of) analogue reproductions and enlargements I made in 1997. I have maintained the more or less chronological order and numbering of the presentation in *Jong Holland*. Again the material is divided in three sections of photographs:

1. At Simon Maris' studio, 2. The trip to Spain, 3. About 't Gein. I extended the number of photos published in *Jong Holland* with some we left out then; these are marked with an *.

I also added a section 4 with related photographs from the Simon Maris-archief.

The discovery

Simon Maris (1873-1935) had been a friend of my grandfather's, Arnold M. Gorter (1866-1933), since in 1900 Maris became a member of the artists-association St. Lucas in Amsterdam, of which my grandfather was president at the time. Piet Mondriaan (1872-1944) had already obtained his membership in 1897 and took part in all of St. Lucas' exhibitions in the Stedelijk Museum until he left Amsterdam in 1911. Simon Maris was Gorter's successor as president of St. Lucas in 1904. Very probably Maris and Mondriaan knew each other from the time Mondriaan's uncle Frits Mondriaan (1853-1932) took painting lessons around 1888 at the studio of Simon's father, the famous Willem Maris (1844-1910), in The Hague. Frits may have brought along his nephew Piet, who was already then wishing to become an artist. Frits frequently visited his brother's family at Winterswijk at the time.

Anyway Simon, and also another pupil of Willem Maris, Cees Spoor, were to become long-time friends of Mondriaan. Simon and Piet must have met each other again at St. Lucas. This could have been as early as May 1898 when Simon visited a festivity organised by St. Lucas, because he writes in a letter he likes St. Lucas.¹ When settled in Amsterdam Simon started his Saturday afternoon gatherings of artists as described in the first chapter below. After Simon Maris had died in 1935, Simon's wife Cornelia (Noot(je)) den Breejen (1887-1985) kept organising gatherings of the widows and children of Gorter, H. M. Krabbé and Ed. Frankfort, together with younger painters like Cees Maks, Jan van Tongeren and Herman Ijkelenstam. These continued into the 1960's, when grandchildren like me came along too. I've known Noot and her daughter Mies (M.J.C.W.) Maris (1909-1997), who lived with her mother all her life, very well. Mies had a Bachelor in Law, though when her father died she did not pursue her studies, as she had to earn a living for her mother and herself. After Mies' death I remembered the Mondriaan-related documents she gave on loan to the exhibition *Mondriaan aan de Amstel* at the municipal archive in Amsterdam in 1994. And I knew there should be letters too. In order to save these I asked the executor of her will if I could try to find these in Miss Maris' home. He gave his permission.² During her last years Mies Maris' mental health had slowly declined. A clean-up of the house by the home care was necessary. Luckily Mies was still aware that some things on the attic or elsewhere in the living rooms, but long forgotten where, might have historical value. So everything that was not already completely damaged by moths or mould was put in sealed litter bags or moving boxes. She had bequeathed all the works of art of her father's and of his collection to the above mentioned SSK 1900. As a member thereof I thought this bequest should be extended to the documents concerning artists also. The executor agreed with me, although it would take a long time to examine all the bags, boxes and cupboards that could contain interesting documents. In about three months all was searched and double checked.³ I reduced about a hundred boxes and bags to a number of boxes with objects of art-historical interest. Finally finding Mondriaan's death announcement, cut from newspaper *De Telegraaf* in 1944, gave me the idea the work was done. What I found in relation to Mondriaan were two unsigned drawings that seemed to me by him, 25 of his letters and postcards to Simon, written records of Simon's dealings with Piet's paintings and these photographs.⁴ What I did not find (back) were the above mentioned documents in 1994 on loan for the exhibition *Mondriaan aan de Amstel*. A letter confirms that after the exhibition these were returned to Mies Maris, so it seems they have vanished later. Among them were some photos of which I found other prints, but more important: the well-known drawing by Simon of Mondriaan painting while sitting on a bicycle, and some letters whereof fortunately copies were made earlier by Joop Joosten.

¹ Letter to his Antwerp Academy-friend Frans Slager, 23 May 1898. The yearly exhibition was in July, so it was another event. In this letter he also writes: "June 1st I'm going to *Weesp*, it is very beautiful there. Come also to work here for a month or so."

² Apart from being a lawyer the executor was, like me, a descendant of an artist-friend of Simon's, in his case: H. M. Krabbé.

³ During this time I also made four paintings of two rooms in the apartment.

⁴ All the letters by Mondriaan and some other documents regarding him were published and described in a second article: *Jong Holland* 1998 no. 3, pp. 35-47.

Of course other documents than those concerning Mondriaan were also worth saving. What I had sorted out still filled 12 moving boxes; they were transported to my studio for closer investigation.

Of the 'Mondriana' I organised a little exhibition in my studio for which I invited the best known researchers on Mondriaan and others involved in Mies Maris' legacy.⁵

The SSK 1900, legal owner of this Simon Maris-archieff, left it in the custody of the RKD. Its contents I described in *RKD-Bulletin*, 1998 no. 2, pp. 6 -14 (Dutch and English).

§ 1. The pictures made in Simon Maris' studio, Spui 7-9, Amsterdam 1900-1902

After his studies at the Antwerp Academy were finished Simon first went to Heiloo, (near Alkmaar) with painter-etcher Waalco Dingemans, and in 1897 he settled for a while in Amsterdam. In June 1898 he rented a hotel room in Weesp. The next year he went on a grand tour through Italy and France with D. van Houten, the owner of the Van Houten chocolate factory in Weesp. Back from their last station Paris, Simon at last decided to live in Amsterdam and after having a studio in the Gapersteeg for a short time, in 1900 he rented a former photo studio on the top floor of a large porcelain and glass store at the corner of Kalverstraat and het Spui. This studio was previously in use as a photographic studio by Max Büttinghausen, who had moved to his new building named 'Helios', a studio and shop only a few steps to the right at Spui 15-17.

Good northern light was necessary for photography just as much as for painting. In these days portrait painting like Simon did and portrait photography as Büttinghausen did were closely related and both were relying on a natural light source.



This advertisement-drawing shows the many windows and the balcony on the top floor, as well as the entrance to the studio and the upper office floors on the right at no. 7.⁶

⁵ Visitors were, among others: Joop Joosten, Carel Blotkamp, Marty Bax, Boudewijn Bakker, Freek Heijbroek, Jan-Jaap Heij, Jan Theeuwisse, Ester Wouthuysen and Hans Janssen.

⁶ The 'Mercurius' building was designed in 1884 by Th. Sanders and H.P. Berlage. The top floor studio was a later addition.

In this well-lit studio Simon invited his friends on Saturday afternoon *jours* and he recorded these gatherings by the photographic means the room already was so familiar with. Lizzy Ansingh's reminiscence of these *jours* as published in 1933 in a newspaper is the most eloquent evidence in identifying the location and the people on these pictures.⁷ She described the long narrow studio-room with the heavy red curtains, the great view from the balcony and also gave some names of who came there regularly. And she writes that while the women-artists served tea, Mondriaan softly spoke trying to make clear his new ideas. Also she relates of Simon's perfect hospitality, be it that the guests had to bring their own cutlery with them if meals from a nearby restaurant were ordered up. Nevertheless Simon did not see it as the ideal studio. The sisters Anna and Jet van Houten, co-owners of the cacao-factory Van Houten, offered him to rent the house Keizersgracht 498, that could be renovated to his liking into a home with a studio above it.⁸ Therefore from late 1902 these gatherings, these *jours*, continued at that new studio, but on photos made there Mondriaan is never present (see § 4, no. 25).



0* Simon in his studio 1900/1901.

All the prints in this section reproduced below are about 8 x 10 cm. They are contact-prints, meaning that they were printed by clamping the negative on top of a photographic paper of the same size in a wooden frame, and leaving this for some time in the daylight. After some time, up to an hour, the paper was taken out and developed. Simon did this most likely himself. He also must have arranged and taken most of these pictures.

⁷ *Algemeen Handelsblad*, May 21. 1933; 'Simon Maris 60 jaar'.

⁸ The project-designs at the municipal archive for the studio on the top floor of Keizersgracht 498 were approved of by the municipality on November 14, 1901, and are signed by the said owners. Simon could move in September 1902.



1.a. At Simon's studio in 1900; left to right, standing: Arnold Gorter, unknown, painter Jan Hanau (1864-1925), the petite Lizzy Ansingh (1875-1959), Simon Maris, Lizzy's tall sister Thérèse Ansingh (1883-1968) who much later began painting under the humble name 'Sorella', and sitting: maybe Frans Deutmann (1867-1915), Marinus van Raalte, (1873-1944), stock-jobber and poet Gerrit Heinrich Kroon (1868-1945),⁹ Nelly Bodenheim (1874-1951) best known for her children's books, Piet Mondriaan and an unknown man - or as suggested Jan L. Kleintjes (1872-1955). Who took these pictures is not known, they may have been taken with the aid of a mechanical timer. With the exception of Nelly and Simon himself, all artists mentioned above participated in the 1900 St. Lucas exhibition.

⁹ G.H. Kroon is present in many pictures. He was to live in an apartment in Simon's Keizersgracht house and participated financially in some of Simon's art and antiques business. In 1939 he initiated the 'Foundation for a Museum for Anthropology and Prehistory' that as a foundation still exists and supports research and lectures. In his last will he bequeathed many of the children and widows of his and Simon's friends from the time of these photos. Mentioned are the relatives of: designer-painter Klaas van Leeuwen, Arnold Gorter, Frits Bodenheim (see note 18) and Simon Maris. Also Nelly Bodenheim and Lizzy Ansingh got their shares, as well as the widow of the poet Willem Kloos, writer Jeanne Reyneke van Stuwe. He bequeathed a painting by W. Roelofs and watercolours by Mondriaan and Van Raalte to the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.



1.b*. The same company; now in a better mood as the man on the right apparently made a joke. The original print is very faded.¹⁰

Simon, though he had lived there a while in 1897-'98, was new as a resident in Amsterdam and did not know many of his Amsterdam colleagues. Most of his new contacts and friends he made at the parties and shows of St. Lucas, which he already mentioned in a letter from May 1898 (see note 1). Some of Simon's friends he knew from the academies in The Hague, Antwerp and from his father's painting classes were also showing their work on the 1900 St. Lucas exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum, then the largest ever held. These friends were Gerrit D. Gratama, H. van Borssum Buisman, Waalco J. Dingemans and Conelis Spoor. I can't find any of them in these two pictures, be it that for Dingemans I have no reference of his likeness.

¹⁰First published in: Paul Gorter, *A.M. Gorter, Schilder van het Oost-Nederlands landschap*, 2011, p. 67.



2.a. A visit of Willem Maris (1844-1910) and his second wife Johanna van Bijlevelt (1866-1943) to Simon's studio, ca. 1901.¹¹ A very interesting picture this is because Willem is sketching a portrait of Piet. (It would be well worth searching for this sketch in one of Willem's or Simon's sketch books.) Left to right: Willem Maris, Johanna van Bijlevelt, Mondriaan, Simon, the short- legged G.H. Kroon and at the back maybe Marinus van der Maarel (1857-1921), painter from The Hague and a friend of Willem's.



Matthijs Maris

¹¹ I was not entirely certain this is Willem; the man looks a bit too small and lean. In fact the man looks more like Matthijs Maris on the only portrait extant from about this time - a drawing made by his cousin Willem Maris Jzn.. Matthijs lived in London and is not known ever to have been back in Holland. If he had been, it would certainly be reported somewhere. So it must be Willem, who might have been ill and lost weight just before this photo was made. It is known he was taken seriously ill in 1901, so it could be later that year.



2.b*. The same group, only Mondriaan and Van der Maarel have changed places.¹²
Below a picture of Marinus van der Maarel, a few years earlier.



¹² First published (another print then on loan from Mies Maris) in: Marty Bax, 'Mondriaan en zijn vrienden' in exhibition cat. *Mondriaan aan de Amstel*, (English edition: *Piet Mondriaan, the Amsterdam years*) Gemeentearchief Amsterdam, 1994; p. 36. The man I suppose is Van der Maarel looks like his portrait-photo in: F. Lurasco, *Onze moderne Meesters*, Amsterdam 1907.



3.a. This photo shows art-critic Henriëtte (Jet) Hendrix (1877-1933), Mondriaan and G.H. Kroon visiting Simon's studio. Jet Hendrix, art-reviewer of the large daily newspaper *De Telegraaf* was one of the first women on that job and certainly the youngest as she began in 1899. And she was one of the first to write favourably about Mondriaan.¹³

¹³ Jet Hendrix as a journalist spent a week in the colony of Christian-Anarchists at Blaricum in 1900; her critical yet empathic articles about how people there were trying to be self-supporting were later bundled, illustrated with her own photos. She was very fond of photographing; this is interesting in view of some of the pictures made in Maris' studio and no. 6 of Mondriaan's studio. In 1905 she married Asian art-dealer W. Holst and they first lived in Yokohama, but after the 1923 earthquake had destroyed all their belongings they moved to the U.S. Here she reviewed translated Dutch literature for the *New York Times*.



3.b*. Jet Hendrix this time visits Simon's studio alone. She is sitting on a remarkably tall chair that is also present in a picture of Mondriaan's studio at Rembrandtplein 10 taken in 1905, then apparently borrowed from Simon, who left this studio in 1902 to move to the newly renovated studio on the top floor of his home at Keizersgracht 498.



4.a. June 1901. From left to right: Mondriaan, Th. Ansingh, M. van Raalte, probably Jo Stumpff (see no. 4.b), H. Hendrix, G.H. Kroon, sculptress Georgine Schwartz (1854-1935), painter Chris Huidekoper (1878-1939), Lizzy Ansingh and Nelly Bodenheim.

Lizzy Ansingh always remained a good friend of Simon's. They wrote each other letters and she painted at least one portrait of him and one of the whole family with wife and children.



4.b*. The same group. Together with another print from this second shot, Simon's wife later wrote the date and the names of the sitters, as far as she remembered them. To the date '8 June 1901' she added: 'after the St. Lucas-exhibition'.¹⁴

All of the painters here depicted have indeed participated in that show, except Nelly. This may give a clue as to the identity of the one unknown person, because she may have been one of the 14 female artists taking part in this exhibition. Some of them, together with Lizzy and Nelly and five other friends, were to become the group of women-artists later called the Joffers. One of them shows some resemblance with the unidentified woman: Jo Stumpff (1873-1964), then a close friend of Lizzy's and Nelly's.¹⁵

In 1902 she was to marry the well-known artist Marius Bauer. It is known she had a taste for fashionable dresses and light colours. In these pictures she is indeed more fashionably dressed than the others, in an art-nouveau gown of a light colour.¹⁶

¹⁴ That one first published in: *Mondriaan aan de Amstel*, p. 29.

¹⁵ In a letter to Simon from 1900 Lizzy writes she just dined with Jo Stumpff and Nelly. They knew each other - and Mondriaan too - from their years at the Rijksakademie. With thanks to Bauer-collector Aad Streefland for suggesting Jo Stumpff.

¹⁶In the *Algemeen Handelsblad* 13 Nov. 1932 Lizzy writes: 'When the friends were young, 18,19, up to 23 years of age, one was more fashionably dressed, more elegant than the others, feted, and she was Jo later to marry Bauer, already famous then.'



5.a. Everyone on this - rather damaged - photo is dressed identically to nos. 4.a and 4.b, so it must have been made on that same 8 June 1901. Van Raalte left the room and Jet Hendrix must have taken this one. From left to right: G.H. Kroon, Mondriaan, Th. Ansingh, N. Bodenheim, L. Ansingh, G. Schwartze, S. Maris, possibly Jo Stumpff and C. Huidekoper.



Jo Stumpff, some years earlier.



5.b*. Here Simon took the picture and Jet Hendrix appeared in his place.¹⁷

This section with all the extant pictures taken at the Spui studio is incomplete, one is missing. Unfortunately I did not make a copy of it and it is not on the RKD-site either. It is reproduced in C. de Jonge, *Marinus van Raalte*, Assen 1998 on p. 19. In that book the sitters were not yet identified apart from Van Raalte and Simon. From left to right: Jet Hendrix, Simon, Van Raalte, Nelly, Kroon, Lizzy and Huidekoper having a meal at Simon's studio.



¹⁷Another copy of this, one of 3 prints given to the Haags Gemeentemuseum in 1966 by Noot Maris was first published in: Herbert Henkels, 'Mondriaan, a life in pictures', exhibition cat. *Mondrian, from figuration to abstraction*, Tokio 1987, p.194.



6. Not Simon's studio, but Mondriaan's own in the attic of *Albert Cuypstraat* 158. Piet is seen (as if) working on a portrait. This portrait was recently rediscovered and could be identified as of Betsy Bergman-Cavalini, and was made in 1901. This date fits in perfectly for the photo. The objects on the left have been the subject of several still-life paintings by Mondriaan. For instance the nos. A96, A261 (with the bust), A263 and A264 in the *Cat. Raisonné Piet Mondrian*, and for a recently discovered still-life too. The man on the right could not be identified.

§ 2. The boat-trip to Bordeaux and Bilbao in 1903.

Simon, Piet and a friend of Simon's, Frederik (Frits) Paulus Bodenheim (1876-1946), Nelly Bodenheim's favourite brother, embarked on the 28th of August 1903 at IJmuiden on the coaster 'Orion'.¹⁸ Maybe it was a business-trip for Frits, successor in his father's tailor-firm - making uniforms mainly - and he invited Simon and Piet to accompany him.

The three were given a see-off by two ladies; one was Frits' other sister, Louise (Wies) Bodenheim (1872-1958) and the second a good friend of Simon's, Mies (M.H.) van de Water (1873 -1945).

The negatives are not factory-numbered like modern ones. Nevertheless it was possible to order them chronologically and also to reconstruct the dates of this voyage with the aid of the arrival and departure reports in newspapers. Together with Simon's writings on two postcards to his father, which I also found, a sequence of events can be produced:

Newspaper: August 28, departure from IJmuiden ('cloudy, western wind').

Newspaper: September 2, arrival at Bordeaux, here they must have stayed and boarded another ship, because a newspaper gives the departure of the Orion for La Pallice (La Rochelle) at September 4. The ship is heading north, and seems to return to IJmuiden, instead of going to Bayonne. So they must have sailed by another ship to Bayonne and Spain. And indeed on September 9 a newspaper noted that the Orion had arrived at IJmuiden.

Postcard: 'Sept. 5, Bayonne' (they visit the beach at Biarritz) Simon writes: 'next we go to Spain, first Bilbao'. The pictures 15, 16, and 17 show they indeed reached Bilbao (Portugalete, Las Arenas) but it is undocumented if they went any further into Spain.

Newspaper: Sept. 18, Orion leaves Bordeaux for La Pallice (La Rochelle). Most likely with the three of them on board again, since on photo no. 18 the ship they seem to have just arrived with, looks much like the Orion. It sailed to Bordeaux and back to Amsterdam almost once a week. Newspaper: Sept. 19, Orion Leaves La Pallice for Amsterdam.

Postcard: 'Sept. 20, La Rochelle', Simon writes: 'We are on our way home. In 5 days we're in Amsterdam. This afternoon we leave'. ('5 days' fits here as the time it took from Bordeaux.)

¹⁸ In 2018 Cees Rutgers launched a theory that this was not Frits P. Bodenheim, but his youngest brother Frans A., born in 1880, then student at the Technical University in Delft. Rutgers had no direct proof of this, but stated that Frits was still in the Dutch East-Indies in 1903, because he cannot be found in the municipal registers in Amsterdam of that year. Fact is that Frits went to the Indies in 1899, but an advertisement in the *Sumatrapost* of June 19th 1901 announces an auction of the 'inboedel' (inventory) of F. Bodenheim 'wegens vertrek naar Europa' (due to departure for Europe). And indeed that newspaper listed under 'departures' a Bodenheim boarding on the ss. Sumatra on June 3th 1901. Frits may have lived with his mother and sisters, or in another town before registering again in Amsterdam in June 1904. More evidence that it is Frits on the pictures, can be found in the correspondence I had in 1998 with Frits' granddaughter Antonia Schenk-Baumann (writer of a biography about Nelly Bodenheim). She completely agreed with it being her grandfather and she still had some of these pictures herself. Frits (aged 27) on the pictures looks like a matured gentleman, not a student of 23. He was in the Indies on business for the design of new East-Indies Army officers' uniforms. On this trip to Spain he may have visited Spanish leather or uniform producers. Frits was a collector of china and faience, a pursuit he shared with Simon. The portrait sketch that Nelly Bodenheim made of Frits also seems to resemble the man on the pictures very well; reproduced under no. 8.

Newspaper: September 23, The Orion arrived in Amsterdam (IJKade) with wine, cognac, and other small cargo.

The pictures reproduced in this section - except nos. 14, 16 and 18 - are blow-ups of the negatives found, made by me in 1997. The original negatives are 9,5 x11,7 cm. and did not fit my 6x6 scale enlarger, so I could only magnify a square part from the middle of them. An advantage was that this compensated for the too large a distance at which they were often taken. The small figures so come out lively and are recognizable. And very sharp if properly focused. Simon's camera was not a cheap one.



7. At the quay in IJmuiden in front of the *Orion*, on departing day August 28, 1903. From left to right: Simon Maris, Louise Bodenheim, Mies van de Water and Mondriaan.

Mies van de Water could be identified through an annotated photo of her we found. Later that year she wrote to Simon: 'Mr. Mondriaan was so kind to send me some pictures of the four of us and the three of you; you only promised to do so!'. The identification of Louise Bodenheim, oldest sister of Frits, was affirmed by Tonia Schenk-Baumann, granddaughter of Frits Bodenheim. (Photo made by Frits.)



8. Another one at the quay: Louise, Frits, Mies and Piet (made by Simon).



Frits Bodenheim portrayed by Nellie, ca. 1894 (see note 18).



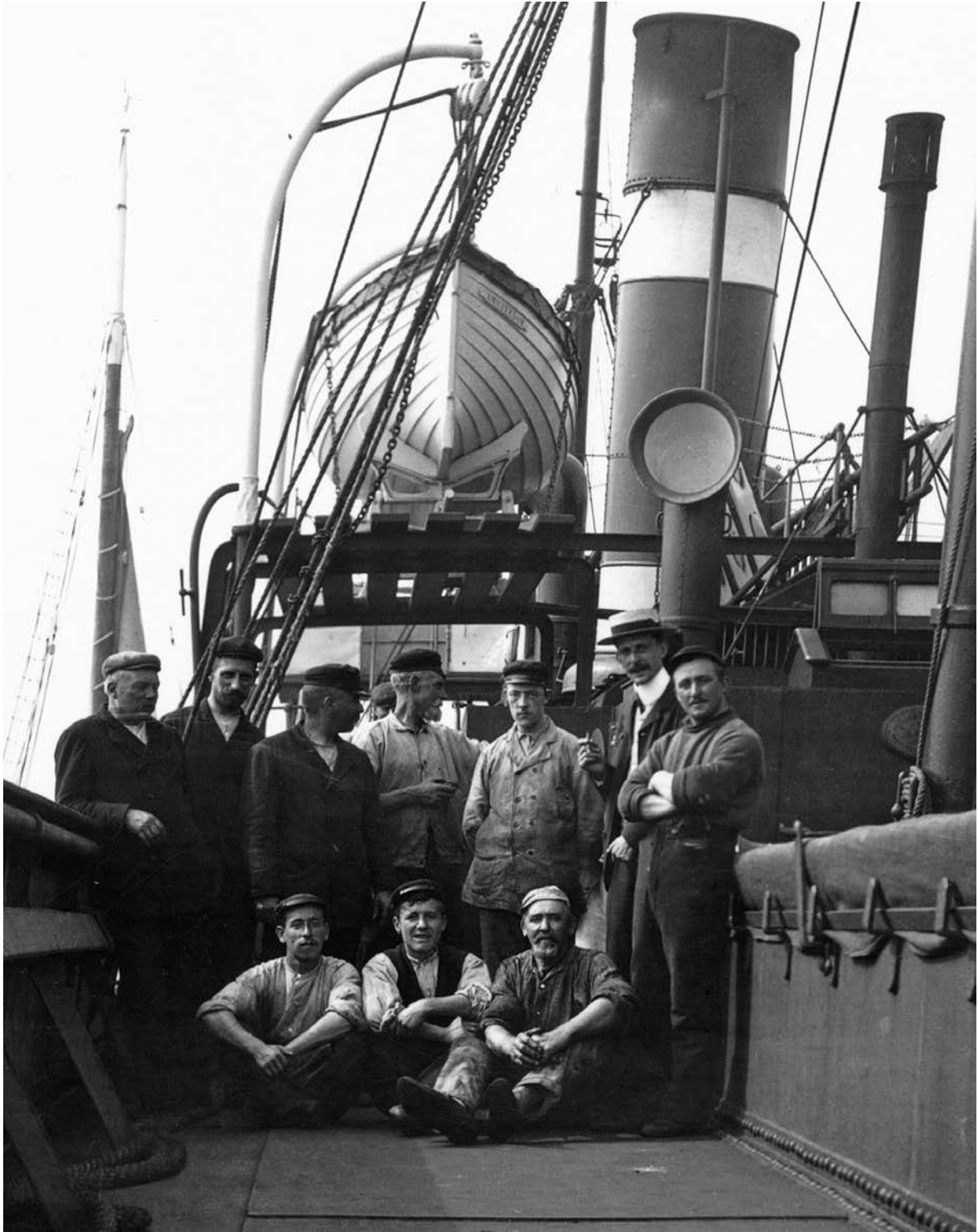
9.a. Louise stayed behind while the others walked down the railway to stage a special performance, see next one. The photos must have been made by Mies.



9. b. The 'lozenge' shape of this enlargement was not a reference to Piet's later paintings, but the result of getting the most out of this negative, not cutting off heads or hands, when I printed it in 1997.



10. At sea; Simon, standing right, and Piet, third from right, among the crewmembers of the Orion. (Taken by Frits.)



10. b*. A second negative shows the crew with Frits.



11. Also on board; Frits at the helm and Piet smoking a pipe.



12. Restaurant terrace in Bordeaux; Frits talking to a Française, Mondriaan breaking his bread. September 2, 1903.



13. a. Simon, back in his chair, and Piet toasting at the same restaurant in Bordeaux. (Made by Frits).



13. **b***. Frits and Simon walking along the Place Gambetta in Bordeaux, made by Mondriaan and the only photo for which they did not pose, with movement caught as in a snapshot; September 2 or 3, 1903.¹⁹

¹⁹ The location I found with the aid of Google Earth, searching for the typical crescent building with the sign 'Orfevrerie' across the street.



14. Old contact-print with date and place on the backing board. Simon and Piet on the beach, Biarritz, September 4, 1903, made by Frits.



15. Finally in Spain, Simon and Piet at the Arena near Bilbao (taken by Frits).



*Simon mais e P. Bodartein,
te Las Arenas.
Gronje*

16. (Old faded contact-print with note in Simon's hand.) Simon and Frits on the beach at Las Arenas near Bilbao (made by Mondriaan).



17. Something went wrong when developing this negative. Piet and Frits presumably along the coast in Bilbao.



18. The three back in Amsterdam presumably, Frits and Simon with new Spanish shoes and the Orion on the right. September 23 1903. (This one is an old contact print; no negative was found.)



18. b*. A last picture of the Orion crew, now including the captain, M. Velsen, who sits on the lower stairs. Remarkable is that he and three other men still smoke the old-style clay-pipes.

§ 3. The pictures made along the river Het Gein.

The banks of 't Gein running from Abcoude to Weesp had long been a favourite place for outdoor sketching and painting. Great 'The Hague School' artists like Willem Roelofs and Paul Gabriël and even Willem Maris had painted there in the 1880's.

As mentioned above, in the summer of 1898 Simon lived in a hotel room he also used as a studio at Weesp. His relation with the owners of the famous chocolate factory Van Houten there was probably a reason why he settled at Weesp first.

But Weesp is quite close to Het Gein. Although never really a landscape painter Simon liked to combine out-door and portrait painting, bringing a model with him.

He will have met some of the numerous artists that set up their easels along the river.

Among them at that time these could be the slightly older painters Jan Wijsmuller, Arnold Gorter, and even uncle Frits Mondriaan. Resting place along 't Gein was always Café de Vink. It was there Simon met his future bride Nootje in 1903, then a waitress at De Vink (see photo no. 23).

In 1900 Mondriaan first exhibited a work that, according to the title, was made along Het Gein.²⁰ He could of course have made works there earlier without mentioning it in the title. But 1900 could be the year of his first visit to 't Gein, later to play such an important role in his artistic development.

²⁰ *Cat. Raisonné Piet Mondrian Part 1*, nos.A 246, p. 251. At Arti, it was acquired for a lotto to the benefit of the exhibiting artists. Jet Hendrix in *De Telegraaf* praised this 'sensitive vision of the little house gables'.



19. Large professional contact-print of a glass-plate negative, pasted on cardboard. On this is written: 'Juni '04'. Photographer may be Adriaan Boer since this print is of the same quality and gradation as another print found (no. 24) that is signed by him and made in August 1904. This one is taken along the Velterslaan leading to Café De Vink, close to 't Gein. Not all people here are identifiable, on the right Simon holds a little goat, second right is a short-haired Mondriaan.²¹ Third from the left may be the female painter Betsy Repelius (1848-1921), friend of the Schwartze-Ansingh family. Fourth is Cornelia den Breejen, in 1908 to become Simon's wife.

²¹ I had my doubts about this being Mondriaan (in 1998), but when I showed it to Carel Blotkamp he was at once convinced of it. In 1904 Mondriaan lived for a long time at a small village in Noord-Brabant; nevertheless he sometimes had to be in Amsterdam for exhibitions like those of St. Lucas. His haircut here resembles of what could be the result of a visit to the local barbershop, in order not to look too alien among the farmers.



20. Another professional print of a glass-plate. Three good friends of Mondriaan at the terrace of Café de Vink, also in the summer of 1904. Left to right: Joop Siedenburg (1875-1961) chief-editor of the satiric magazine *De Ware Jacob*, amateur-painter and art collector, Simon, and Emmy Seelig, pupil of Mondriaan for whom he designed at least three ex libris.



21. A very small and faded contact-print about 6 x 9 cm. Close to café De Vink rowing-boats could be rented. Here from left to right: G. H. Kroon, unknown woman, Simon, unknown woman, Albert Gerard Hulshoff Pol (1883-1957), pupil of Mondriaan who sits next to him, Joop Siedenburg lying in the grass and hardly visible Cornelia den Breejen.

Considering Piet's hair with a parting in the middle, it may date from about 1907-1908.²²

A.G. Hulshoff Pol was a pupil of Arnold Gorter from 1902, the next year he went to Amsterdam where he rented rooms above Gorter's studio at Nassaukade 362. He was admitted to the Rijksakademie, though the teachers there advised him to leave the academy and become a landscape painter. Advice that was well received by Hulshoff Pol.

Gorter still went to 't Gein with him and there Gorter could have introduced him to Mondriaan, who since then became his teacher. Hulshoff Pol exhibited at St. Lucas and *Arti* from 1904. He bought a large *Maanlicht* ('Moonlight') by Mondriaan in 1907 on an instalment plan through Simon Maris, then already Mondriaan's custodian it seems.²³

²² See the well-known picture of M. in his studio Sarphatipark 42 dating from 1908.

²³ This picture was confused with no. 19 in: H. Janssen, *Mondriaan in Amsterdam* 2013, on p. 57.

§ 4. Additional pictures from the period, from Mies Maris' legacy.



22. An unidentified rower at 't Gein. To the right: Café de Vink. (Professional photograph). In the back the typical kind of trees Mondriaan often depicted.²⁴

²⁴ This picture, together with nos. 23 and 25 first published in: *Het Gein, levensloop van een rivier*, Abcoude 1998, on p. 106, p. 28 and p. 26.



23. On the terrace of Café De Vink. From left to right: Nootje den Breejen, G.H. Kroon, Hendrik van Borssum Buisman (1873-1951), painter and later curator of Teylers Museum, Haarlem, and Simon. Ca. 1903.



24. Along 't Gein Simon portrays Nootje, while Fieke Gorter-Hertz (1883-1979, wife of A.M. Gorter, seems to read aloud to them from a book. The woman on the left is unidentified. It is signed: 'A. B.', very likely Adriaan Boer, and dated: 'aug. 04'.²⁵

²⁵ It is a contact print of a glass-negative (11,7 x 15 cm) similar to no. 19. Here I scanned the identical print in my grandfather's legacy.



25. (The right part of a stereo photo.) About 1904, 't Gein. Simon rows Jan van der Hoeven Leonard (1872-1951) left, and Mies van de Water (see pictures nos. 7 and 8). They married in 1904.²⁶

²⁶ On Van der Hoeven Leonard see: *Mondriaan aan de Amstel*, page 34, note 51. Van der Hoeven Leonard was mistaken for Mondriaan in the description of this picture in: H. Janssen, *Mondriaan in Amsterdam*, Amsterdam/Bussum 2013, on p. 57.



26. At Simon's new studio and home Keizersgracht 498, ca. 1904. On the left: Marinus van Raalte, middle first row: Frits Bodenheim and on the right Jan van der Hoeven Leonard, a physician, who became a collector of Mondriaan's early work. In the middle on the second row: Simon, Nootje and Mies van de Water. Above them the tall painter Cees Maks (1876-1967) gives his blessing to all.



27. Simon Maris in his studio at Keizersgracht 498, ca. 1906. Above on the left Mondriaan's watercolour *Bleekerij aan het Gein* hangs on the wall. (Cat. Rais. P.M. no. A282, 1902)



28. The drawing by Mondriaan of a farmyard near Winterswijk from about 1900 that I found in one of Simon's sketchbooks. Unsigned, 32 x 41 cm. Photographed as I found it. (See *Cat. Raisonné P. M.* no. A 73 and A 74 of the same subject.)²⁷

²⁷ Both the discovered drawings are now in the Drents Museum, Assen. They were first published and described in *Drents Museum Journaal* (15) 1999, no. 2, pp. 12 -14.



29. Row of eleven poplars at 't Gein, watercolour and pencil by Mondriaan. I found this one scrolled up and torn. I photographed it the next day with its stiff dry paper straightened out by two rubber bands. Unsigned, ca. 50 x 70 cm. (See *Cat. Raisonné P. M.* no. A486, for which it seems a preliminary study.)

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