

# TECHNICAL ART HISTORY COLLOQUIUM

## Special Edition

# Back to Black

**The making of a research-driven exhibition as a collaborative project**

**Date:** Thursday 20 June 2019  
**Time:** 15:00 – 17:30  
**Location:** Zaal Dodoens, Museum Hof van Busleyden  
**Address:** Frederik de Merodestraat 65, 2800 Mechelen  
**Registration:** Required, email [j.briggeman@uu.nl](mailto:j.briggeman@uu.nl) before 13 June  
**Admission:** Free

15:00 – Introduction, prof. dr. Sven Dupré (UU and UvA)

15:05 – 'The Art of Dyeing Black before 1700' - dr. Natalia Ortega-Saez (UAntwerpen)

15:30 – 'The Legacy of Burgundian Black-Dyers' - Art Proaño Gaibor (RCE)

15:55 – 'The Burgundian Black Collaboratory' - dr. Jenny Boulboulle (UU and UvA)

16:20 – Coffee/tea break

16:35 – 'From Historical Recipes to the Creation of Contemporary Art Works' - Claudy Jongstra

17:00 – 'Back to Black: a Museum Combination of Research and Participation' - dr. Samuel Mareel and Marijke Wienen (Museum Hof van Busleyden)

The Technical Art History Colloquia are organised by Sven Dupré (Utrecht University and University of Amsterdam, PI ERC ARTECHNE), Arjan de Koomen (University of Amsterdam, Coordinator MA Technical Art History), Abbie Vandivere (University of Amsterdam, Coordinator MA Technical Art History & Paintings Conservator, Mauritshuis, The Hague), Erma Hermens (University of Amsterdam and Rijksmuseum) and Ann-Sophie Lehmann (University of Groningen). The Technical Art History Colloquia are a cooperation of the ARTECHNE Project (Utrecht University and University of Amsterdam), the Netherlands Institute for Conservation, Art and Science (NICAS), the University of Amsterdam and the Mauritshuis. The ARTECHNE project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 648718).





This edition of the Technical Art History Colloquium is organised in collaboration with Museum Hof van Busleyden, on the occasion of the exhibition **Back to Black** (21-06-2019 – 21-06-2021). The colloquium will have the format of a mini symposium and serve as an introduction to the exhibition. The event is free of charge, but **please make sure to register through an email to [j.briggeman@uu.nl](mailto:j.briggeman@uu.nl) before June 13.** Only registered attendants of the colloquium will receive an invitation for the vernissage of the exhibition at the Museum Hof van Busleyden (starting at 19:30).



*Portraits of Sir Thomas Gresham and Anne Fernely,  
Anthonis Mor, c. 1560 - c. 1565, oil on panel, h 90cm × w 75.5cm, Copyright Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam*

### **The Art of Dyeing Black before 1700**

***dr. Natalia Ortega-Saez (Cultural Heritage Department, University of Antwerp)***

This presentation will focus on the dye technology and the ingredients used to dye wool black before 1700. Much of dyers' technological knowledge for which Flanders was famous under Burgundian reign got lost and the rare black textiles that have survived do not easily reveal the art of their making. Understanding historic dyeing technology needs a multifaceted approach. In particular, because the study of historical textiles has many aspects referring to technology such as the complex nature of the wool fibre, the dye technology and the ingredients to obtain the black colour. Chemical material analysis in addition with research and reconstruction of historical recipes are an intriguing way to evaluate the practical dyeing customs and to investigate how closely practical dyeing and written sources are aligned. The historical recipes were reconstructed in order to understand the practical dyeing and the feasibility of the historical recipe. The aim of this methodology is to assess broader information on practical dyeing customs such as historical techniques, methodology and used ingredients.

### **The Legacy of Burgundian Black-dyers - Textile Objects in Netherlandish Collections**

***Art Proaño Gaibor (Research Laboratory of the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands)***

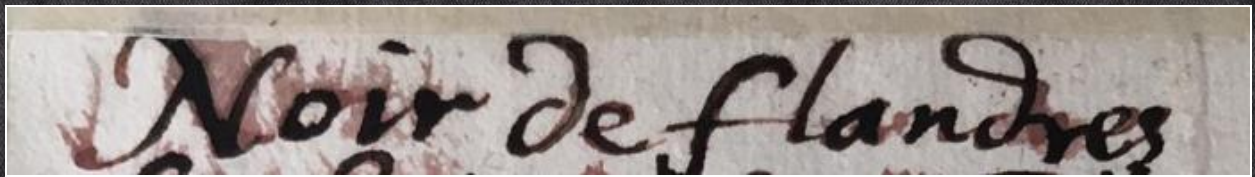
The organic dye specialist Art Gaibor Proaño will demonstrate how object-based analyses and recipe reconstruction experiments can provide insights into the making processes of rare historical textiles that have survived in today's museum collections. The recipe research that has been conducted in the context of the Back to Black project contributed to a better understanding of the dyestuffs that were detected in historical garments. Examples from the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and from other collections will give the audience a vivid impression of the visually compelling black-dyed wools and silks that were fashionable during the Burgundian-Habsburg period and throughout the seventeenth century.



## **The Burgundian Black Collaboratory - a Look behind the Scenes**

***dr. Jenny Boulboulé (ARTECHNE project, University of Utrecht and University of Amsterdam)***

In this virtual tour through the exhibition I will highlight some results of the collaborative research we conducted with our partners from Studio Claudy Jongstra, University of Antwerp and the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. We will take a look behind the scenes of the Burgundian Black Collaboratory, a three-day workshop on a Frisian farm where we gathered with historical dye experts, recipe scholars, and today's master dyers from Studio Claudy Jongstra to experiment with centuries-old recipes. Our attempts to revive the splendors of Burgundian black dyed textiles are displayed in the exhibition in the form of a sample book that I will present to you. We will also have a closer look at historical recipes we found in early modern manuscripts and print books, in particular two forgotten recipes for perfect and durable black dyes, entitled "tinctonica belgica" and the "noir de flandres" that I found in the archives of the Royal Society in London and which we reworked with the artist.



## **From Historical Recipes to the Creation of Contemporary Art Works**

***Claudy Jongstra (Studio Claudy Jongstra)***

A conversation with the artist about the new installation she made for the Back to Black exhibition and the artistic research into Burgundian black dyes.

## **Back to Black: a Museum Combination of Research and Participation**

***dr. Samuel Mareel and Marijke Wienen (Museum Hof van Busleyden)***

The Back to Black-project offered the Museum Hof van Busleyden, an institution with a strong focus on audience participation, a unique opportunity to realize a museum presentation that combines historical research, scientific re-enactment and citizen science (i.e. active input of the public) in a meaningful way. In this presentation we sketch the coming about of Back to Black. Particular attention is paid to the search for methods and techniques enabling the visitors to relive the black color experience of the past, thus enriching their perception and understanding of the color black. The active participation of the audience in turn procures new data for the European funded Artechne research.