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From drawing manual to academy. The training of Brussels 19th-century female amateur artists pertaining to the nobility

*Du manuel de dessin à l'académie. La formation des artistes amatrices de la
noblesse à Bruxelles au 19^e siècle*

*Van tekenhandleiding tot academie. De opleiding van adellijke
amateurkunstenaresen in Brussel in de 19^e eeuw*

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EDITOR'S NOTE

To see the figures in a better resolution, open the article online and click on “Original” below them.

Introduction

- 1 In the 19th century all girls from the middle class, the nobility and the royal families in Europe received an artistic education. A few decided to become professional artists, which was made possible, among other things, by the growing range of education on offer. This also happened in Belgium. In recent decades, the education, professional practice and oeuvre of Belgian women artists have been extensively studied [Van Cauwenberge and de Jong, 1999; Sterckx, 2005; Creusen, 2007; Laureux, 2016]. Their peers who practiced the visual and applied arts as amateurs are briefly discussed in these studies in order to frame the career path of the professional women artists.

Although they formed the vast majority, their artistic upbringing, artistic activities and self-made objects remain poorly researched [Wiertz, 2020]. However, in the last two decades, foreign publications changed things [Vickery, 1998; Bermingham, 2000; Sloan, 2000; Rosenbaum, 2010]. In Belgium, this research is still lagging behind.

- 2 In this article I focus on the artistic education of amateur women artists. I specifically investigate which educational opportunities those women exploited and how they used them. The results deepen the knowledge about amateur women artists and the artistic landscape at the time, while contextualizing the findings about professional women artists.
- 3 As a case study, I analyse the artistic education of noblewomen in Brussels during the 19th century. Since the early modern period, nobility attached great importance to artistic education, but rarely produced professional artists. At the same time, it is possible to study this group in depth through the abundance of diaries, letters, works of art, applied art objects and oral stories carefully preserved in private archives, private collections and family memories. Brussels forms the geographical background. The Belgian capital was not only the favourite residence for many noble families, but as a cultural hot spot it offered many educational opportunities ranging from drawing manuals to training at the academy.

1. The basics through drawing tutorials, family members and drawing teachers

- 4 In the early modern period, the practice of art was considered a suitable pastime for the elite. Previously, drawing and painting were only associated with craftsmen and seen as manual labour. The 1528 book *Il Libro del Cortegiano* (The Courtier's Book) by the Italian humanist Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529) contributed greatly to the spreading of this idea. First royals and noblemen all over Europe followed. At the end of the 18th century, the bourgeoisie gave in, causing the number of amateur artists to increase exponentially. At the same time, the non-professional practice of art feminised, as mainly the number of female amateurs increased drastically. Men also learned to draw and paint, but could apply those skills elsewhere. For example, they could use it when building their own art collection, during their military service or in professions as architects. Women were unable to engage in most of these activities. For them, drawing and painting as a leisure activity were the goal in itself. There was, however, no consensus for them about the importance of drawing and painting as opposed to sewing and embroidery [Castiglione, 1991: 28-88, 183-191; Burke, 1995: 129, 138-140; Bermingham, 2000: 3-6, 14-17; Wiertz: 2016].
- 5 Due to the large increase in the number of amateur artists and especially female artists, producers and merchants began focusing on them. They offered beautifully executed drawing and painting materials. In Brussels, from the second half of the 19th century on, Félix Mommen (1827-1914) developed his *Établissements Mommen*, a well-functioning firm in art supplies, exhibition spaces and studios [Depelchin, 2015]. For Antonine de Mun, Duchess d'Ursel (1849-1931), it was her favourite place to buy brushes, oil paint and canvases¹.
- 6 In addition, writers of drawing and painting manuals increasingly focused their books on a female target audience. Although such books were produced in Brussels, *Le dessin*

sans maître. Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner de mémoire by the French artist Marie-Elisabeth Cavé-Boulenger (1809-1883) – published in 1851 – was by far the most popular. In her book, Cavé explained step by step through a series of letters to the adolescent Julie how to learn to draw from the head [Cavé, 1851; Klarenbeek, 2012: 44-45].

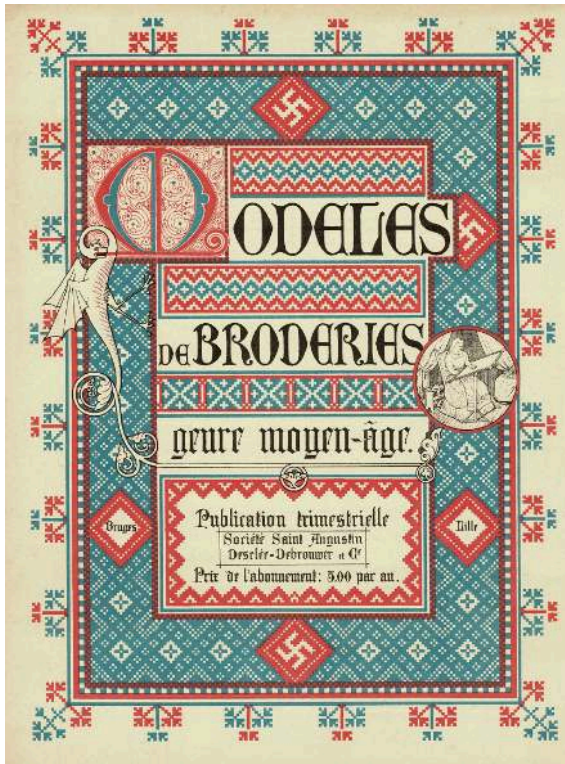
- 7 Despite the wide range of manuals for learning the arts as a self-taught artist, few noble women in Brussels followed this method. Most started drawing, embroidering and watercolouring between the ages of seven and twelve. Some did so under the watchful eye of their mother, who taught her children at home as a *mère-educatrice*. This is how Élisabeth de Caraman-Chimay, Countess de Greffulhe (1860-1952) remembered the “interminables journées d'études” that her mother Marie de Montesquiou, Princess de Caraman-Chimay (1834-1884) imposed on her, her brothers and sisters [de Cossé Brissac, 1991: 33]. The visual arts, music and dance were part of these endless study days.
- 8 Often a governess assisted the teaching mothers or performed the task all by herself. As a home teacher, she also had to be skilled in various arts, in order to be able to transfer these skills to the children entrusted to her. The latter was apparently so common that no one specifically referred to it, although anecdotes about governesses appeared regularly in letters and memoirs.
- 9 Other noble families in Brussels hired art teachers to teach their children the basics of drawing. They came to the families' homes or had their pupils come to them. In the first decade of the 19th century, a certain *dessinateur*, called F. Jacops, was very popular with the Brussels nobility². He gave drawing and painting lessons to, among others, Marie Anne de Robiano, Countess de Robiano (*1775), Cécile Jeanne Le Gros de Saint-Martin, Artan (1779-1846), Mimi Hannosset, Countess de Baillet (1788-1861) and Eulalie de Steenhault, Moreau de Bellaing (1788-1817). Sisters often attended classes together, like, for example, Madeline de Maldeghem, Marquise de Trazegnies (1785-1844) and Henriette de Maldeghem, Countess de Lalaing (1787-1866) did [Salon Gent, 1808, 1810].
- 10 Jacops' pupils were all over the age of twelve. Their works exhibited at the Salons of Ghent in 1808 and 1810 show that they followed the standard drawing method [Salon Gent, 1808, 1810]. Like aspiring artists, they first copied prints and drawings by the hand of their teacher, masters of the past or contemporary masters. Jacops' pupils regularly chose works by Raphael, Rembrandt or Van Dyck. Then they drew from plaster busts to learn how to represent volumes correctly. The last step, drawing from a nude model, was out of the question for women until the end of the century, regardless of whether they were pursuing an artistic career or not. Some professional artists found solutions to learn how to properly reproduce the human body. Amateur artists hardly did that. Like the majority of professional female artists, they focused on the so-called lower genres of the visual arts, such as the (flower) still life, the landscape and the portrait. Occasionally they copied historical pieces and genre scenes, two of the genres considered more important at the time.
- 11 After the women had learned to draw well, they switched to watercolour painting. A few, including Jacops' pupil Baroness Suzanne-Augustine de Steenhault (1783-1860), took up oil painting [Ghent Salon 1808, 1810; Brussels Salon 1811, 1836; Antwerp Salon 1834, 1837, 1840, 1843; Creusen 2007: 25, 338]. Still, their numbers were limited, as the paint itself had to be rubbed, which was time-consuming and labour-intensive. Prepared paint could be obtained in pig bladders, but it had a limited shelf life

[Jonkman and Geudeker, 2010: 63-64, 122-123, 207-214]. After the invention of the paint tube in 1841, oil paint could be bought ready-made and stored for a long time. Due to this ease of use, the number of amateur women painters increased significantly.

2. In the boarding school

- 12 For most noble girls, home schooling was the rule, although many of them completed their education in a boarding school. They also built a network there. In the early 1840s, the sisters Emilie (1826-1894) and Marie (1827-1869) van Outryve d'Ydewalle were pupils at the Couvent des Dames de Berlaymont in Brussels, where the Berlaymont building now stands. Like that of the Dames anglaises in Bruges and the Pensionnat des Dames in the old abbey of Doornzele near Ghent, this convent school was a popular choice for daughters from both Belgian and foreign ultra-Catholic noble families [Ruberg, 2005: 107; Gubin, 2010].
- 13 Just like in other boarding schools, the Berlaymont's curriculum consisted of French, history, arithmetic, geography and religion. Much attention was also paid to the *arts d'agrément* which included singing, piano lessons, drawing and needlework³. Some of those lessons had to be paid extra, something many parents did.
- 14 In their letters, Emilie and Marie van Outryve d'Ydewalle regularly referred to drawing, but especially to embroidery. Shortly after her arrival in Berlaymont, the first wrote that four and a half hours a week was spent on great needleworks. But she said that too much time was wasted, which could be more usefully spent on smaller crafts⁴. It shows how much she had internalised the then feminine value of diligence.
- 15 A few years after Emilie left boarding school, she married Jean-Baptiste Bethune (1821-1894), who became the leading neo-Gothic architect in Belgium. In addition to buildings, he designed furniture, funerary monuments, monumental paintings, mosaics and religious embroidery, which were realised by his employees.
- 16 Both sisters of Outryve d'Ydewalle were involved in Bethune's venture. For example, they executed some of Bethune's embroidery patterns. In addition, Emilie edited the magazine *Modèles de broderie, genre moyen-âge* and kept the accounts [Helbig, 1906: 110, 394; Sabbe, 1979; De Maeyer, 1994: 129, 575, 662] (Figure 1). In addition, the sisters played a much larger role than previously known. Emilie maintained correspondence with (potential) clients, including several of her former Brussels fellow pupils. She also ensured the timely delivery of the documents and prepared the invoices. In addition, she taught other women to perform embroidery in a medieval style. Her sister Marie was responsible for the purchase of the fabrics, oversaw the collaboration with workplaces in Bruges and Ghent and kept her sister informed of any competitors⁵. Through these acts, both women contributed to the family income and entered the professional sphere. However, they only developed these activities because Bethune had opted for an existence as an architect and designer. Nevertheless, they contributed to the success of his embroideries. They were able to do this because of the knowledge, skills and connections they had acquired during their artistic upbringing and their boarding school years.

Figure 1. Front cover of the magazine *Modèles de broderies*. Genre moyen-âge. Publication trimestrielle, 1889-1892



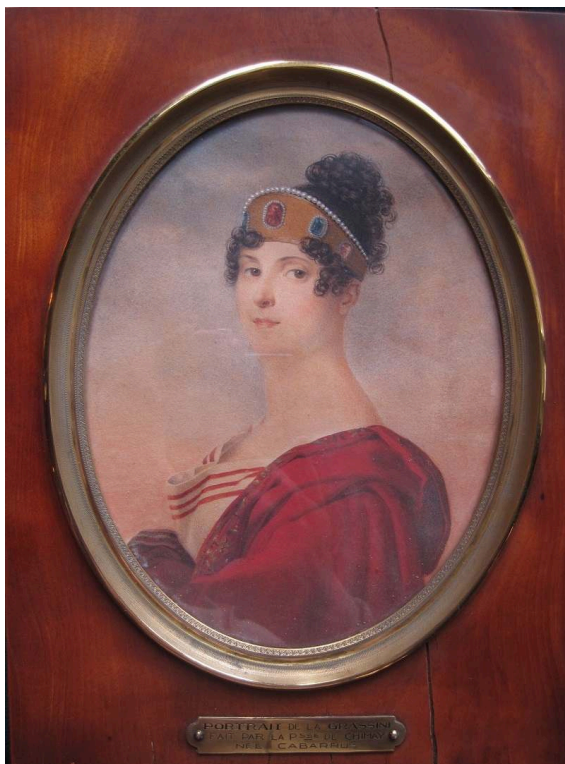
Marke, Archives of the Bethune Foundation
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3. Private lessons from professional artists

- 17 The large increase in the number of amateurs at the end of the 18th century led to an increase in the number of artists offering lessons. It generated income and potential contracts for the latter. Renowned examples gave rise to the cliché that “nobility brought famous artists to their homes” [Van Cauwenberge and de Jong, 1999: 70]. For example, before her marriage to King Leopold I, Queen Louise (1812-1850) received private watercolour lessons at home in Paris from the famous flower painter Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759-1840) [Dierkens and Duvosquel, 1991]. Pauline van Arenberg, Princess von Schwarzenberg (1774-1810) also received private lessons in the Brussels Arenberg Palace, the current Egmont Palace, by the painters Joseph François (1759-1851) and Antoine Cardon (1739-1822) [Neu, 2006: 250- 251].
- 18 Many artists preferred to organise the lessons at their home: in this way they did not lose time by being on the road and they could supervise several students at the same time. One of them was the neoclassical painter and Academy director François-Joseph Navez (1787-1869). From the 1820s, following the example of his teacher Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825), he taught men and women at his home. He not only trained the later professional artist Adèle Kindt (1804-1884), but also introduced Teresa Cabarrus, Princess de Chimay (1773-1835) to oil painting [Coekelberghs, Jacobs and Loze, 1999: 65-69, 96; Creusen, 2007: 31].

- 19 The Princess de Chimay had enjoyed an artistic upbringing during her long years in Parisian boarding schools. She then took miniature painting lessons with the French artist Jean-Baptiste Isabey (1767-1855). Her watercolour copy of the portrait of La Grassini, the Italian opera singer Giuseppina Grassini (1773-1850) (figure 2), dates from this period. At Navez she wanted to focus on painting portraits in oil. She did this by taking joint lessons with other women from the nobility and bourgeoisie at Navez's home. Those lessons gave Cabarrus the opportunity not only to become proficient in oil painting, but also to make friends with her noble classmates [Gilles, 1999: 15, 334; Cornaz, 2002: 58]. Since Cabarrus spent much of the year outside Brussels, she sent her “croutes”, as she called her works, along with her questions to Navez in Brussels⁶. Her letters show that she struggled a lot with the new genre and material. The Princess had difficulties in finding volunteers to pose. Her son barely granted her two sessions, while other models found the long sitting so exhausting that they started to yawn or even burst into tears⁷. There were also accidents, such as “[u]n domestique a gâté le fond avec sa main sale,”⁸ after which Cabarrus had to improvise to rescue the work. Yet she persisted, alternating her role as a submissive student with that of an authoritarian critic. For example, she once thought that Navez had chosen too insignificant a model to portray as a saint and that he should start all over again⁹. Despite this critical note, Navez received several portrait commissions from the Princess and her husband. His former student Adèle Kindt was also asked to produce some works.

Figure 2. Teresa Cabarrus, Princess de Chimay, *Portrait of La Grassini (1773-1850)*, c. 1805. Watercolour, dimensions unknown



Chimay, Castle of Chimay
Photo: author

- 20 Navez was not the only artist in Brussels who gave lessons to noble women. For example, Flore Maleingreau-d'Hembise, Houzeau de Milleville (1790-1864) learned to

paint miniatures around 1810 through Michel d'Argent (1751-1824) [Brussels Salon, 1811, 1813]. Hortense de Burbure de Terbrugge, Gilissen de Meisenberg (1797-1865) chose the same genre some twenty years later, but with Alexandre Delatour (1780-1858) as her teacher [Brussels Salon, 1827]. For many other women from the first half of the 19th century it is not known with whom they took lessons in Brussels, although the offer, as in Paris and other European cities, must have been greater than half a century earlier.

4. Ernest Blanc-Garin's ladies' studio

- 21 In the second half of the 19th century, Navez's son-in-law, the Orientalist painter and Academy director Jean-François Portaels (1818-1895) gave advice to the Countess of Flanders (1845-1912), King Albert I's mother. After his death, the Countess visited Ernest Blanc-Garin's (1843-1916) ladies' studio in Saint-Josse-ten-Noode [Clément-Bodard 1990: 47] ¹⁰. He had settled in Brussels since the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) and was successful as a portraitist, although he also painted genre scenes, cityscapes and landscapes. In addition to his own production, he taught men and women, who had access to their classrooms through separate entrances [Van Cauwenberge and de Jong, 1999; Creusen, 2007: 45-47; Laureux, 2016: 52].
- 22 The female students could learn to draw, to paint pastels, to watercolour and to paint in Blanc-Garin's studio. So many of them belonged to the nobility and the upper bourgeoisie, that it seemed as if *le tout Bruxelles* visited his studio. In January 1904, the magazine *Bruxelles féminin* wrote: "L'atelier de M[onsieur] Blanc Garin est devenu le lieu de rendez-vous de toutes les jeunes femmes de l'aristocratie belge, qui s'intéressent à un titre quelconque aux choses de la peinture¹¹." Both this article and a second one that the magazine devoted to Blanc-Garin's studio in May, contain about twenty names of noble women. The more famous were the immensely wealthy Baroness Lambert, née Lucie de Rothschild (1863-1916), Countess Ghislaine de Caraman-Chimay (1865-1955), who later became Queen Elisabeth's faithful lady-in-waiting, and Countess Jeanne de Merode (1853-1944), who – at the beginning of the 20th century – had her own castle built, which became Westerlo's town hall in 1973¹².
- 23 Noble women chose Blanc-Garin's women's atelier for various reasons. First of all, his education produced successful professional artists, which indicated a high quality. Second, the presence of the Countess of Flanders, a member of the royal family, added prestige. Finally, the high tuition meant that only the elite could come together in that studio. On average, private studios charged 30 frs per month. The most expensive tuition was 70 frs per month. Blanc-Garin's women's atelier belonged to the more expensive category with 60 frs¹³.
- 24 From the 1890s, the female students were able to work after a female nude model on payment of a monthly fee of 75 frs instead of 60 frs¹⁴. According to the feminist magazine *La Ligue. Organe belge du droit des femmes*, which devoted an article to Blanc-Garin's women's studio in 1894, his female students could be divided into two groups. The first group came to the studio to pursue an artistic career. They worked independently of those who wanted to improve the quality of their work, but avoided the study of the nude model [Creusen, 2007: 46]. *La Ligue* thus implied that only the students with professional ambitions opted for figure drawing.

25 Did this mean that Riri d'Ursel, Countess de Boissieu (1875-1934) had the ambition to become “une vraie artiste”? That question remains unanswered. In 1897, however, Riri d'Ursel did draw for a few months after a female nude model and in preparation she bought an anatomy book¹⁵. An album with 72 sketches, drawings and watercolours of clothed and naked women, of clothed men and of her classmates who look up from their drawing sheets, has been preserved (private collection, ca. 1897) [Wiertz, 2013: 86-88] (Figure 3). According to her cousin Duke Henri d'Ursel (1900-1974), she also had “les dons voulus pour devenir une vraie artiste mais l'influence très tyrannique et conservatrice de ma grand'mère a toujours pesé sur son imagination¹⁶.” Despite Riri's intensive training with various teachers – Cécile Douard (1866-1941), Alfred Cluysenaar (1837-1902) and in the women's studio of Blanc-Garin as well as in an unknown studio in Paris –, her fluent skill in oil painting and her good representation of the human body, her oeuvre consisted for a while of watercolours depicting still lifes, interiors, landscapes and portraits. An example is the portrait of Henri d'Ursel, which she watercoloured after a photo from his childhood and gave him as a wedding present (Figure 4). Moreover, the Countess rarely showed her works to the outside world. Her cousin Henri attributed this reluctance and her preference for unoriginal subjects to her very dominant mother Antonine de Mun, Duchess d'Ursel [Bungeneers and De Vlioger-De Wilde, 2006: 151, 158]. The latter was an esteemed amateur portraitist who showed her work at charity exhibitions and Salons in Brussels and Paris [Brussels Salon, 1881, 1884; Sanchez and Seydoux, 2006]. Moreover, she was mentioned in Sparrow's *Women Painters of the World*, an early survey of female artists [Sparrow, 1905: 256]. Still, she prevented her daughter from following in her footsteps. Could it be that she did not tolerate a second and possibly better amateur artist in the family?

Figure 3. Riri d'Ursel, Countess de Boissieu, Study of a seated female nude. In: *Album*, c. 1896. Pencil on paper, 210 x 140 mm



Private collection
Photo: author

Figure 4. Riri d'Ursel, Countess de Boissieu, *Portret van Henri, hertog d'Ursel (1900-1974)* [Portrait of Henri, Duke d'Ursel (1900-1974)], 1923. Watercolour on paper, 270 x 190 mm



Private collection
© Castle d'Ursel

5. To the Academy

- 26 From the end of the 19th century, the Academies of Fine Arts in Belgium gradually allowed female students. The two most prestigious Belgian institutions, those of Brussels and Antwerp, both admitted women from 1889 on¹⁷. The other academies in the country did the same in the following decades. In doing so, they followed the example of Belgian universities and foreign academies. For example, the Université libre de Bruxelles, the Université de Liège and the Universiteit Gent welcomed women from the early 1880s, while the Royal Academy of Art in London, the Rijksacademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam and the Academie van Beeldende Kunsten in The Hague respectively accepted female students in 1861, 1871 and 1872. Since the Parisian École des Beaux-Arts and the Berliner Hochschule der Künste only admitted female students in 1897 and 1919, the Belgian academies were neither frontrunners nor latecomers [Gaze, 1997: vol 1, 51, 82; Van Cauwenberge and de Jong, 1999; Creusen, 2007: 19-77; Behling and Manigold, 2009: 13; Klarenbeek, 2012: 54-56; Laureux, 2016, 17-30].
- 27 Gaining access to these masculine strongholds was an important step for aspiring female artists to gain equal educational and professional opportunities. They had to overcome many obstacles to be admitted to these institutions. At the same time, the first generations of female students had to continue their battle, because they were not

- immediately given the same opportunities as their male fellow students [Nochlin 1971; Greer, 1979; Garb, 1994].
- 28 Six women applied at the Brussels Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts at the beginning of the academic year 1889-1890. A year later, the noble sisters Elise (1870-1952) and Delphine (1873-1915) Horion also applied¹⁸. They continued their education until 1897 and from 1892-1893 always included *peinture nature* – painting after a male nude model – in their curriculum. Initially, women in Brussels took this course together with their fellow male students, but problems soon arose. For the sake of decorum, the then Academy director Portaels no longer used completely naked models. The result was that “le nu ne faisait plus la base de l'enseignement vraiment classique”¹⁹. The creation of a separate *cours de peinture pour jeunes filles* was considered [Mayer, 1987; Ollinger-Zinque, 1987; Van Cauwenberge and de Jong, 1999; Sterckx, 2001; Creusen, 2007: 58-60]. It was only officially introduced in 1896, but the women already attended the course in a separate class since 1892. For four years they received little guidance, while their male peers did receive valuable education and the necessary support. This changed from 1896 on through the efforts of interim director Joseph Stallaert (1825-1903) [Wiertz and Desmedt, 2018]²⁰.
- 29 After 1897, Elise and Delphine Horion no longer applied to the Academy. Delphine married Baronet Adolphe Raoût (1883-1950) in 1909. Elise remained unmarried. According to their family, Elise and Delphine Horion were “artistes peintres”, but that expresses their admiration for their talent rather than an artist's existence [Coomans de Brachène, 1964: 24-25]. No testimonies were found indicating their participation in exhibitions, membership of artists' societies or mentions in art magazines.
- 30 The Antwerp Academy, which was as prestigious as the Brussels Academy, approached the matter in a completely different way. In 1889 the institution immediately opted to separate female students from the men. They entered the building through a separate entrance and were given their own program, the “Cours des jeunes filles”. They followed the theoretical classes in the same room as their male peers, but were separated from them during the practical classes. In addition, they were not allowed to participate in all classes. Figure drawing was of course impossible [Van Cauwenberge and de Jong, 1999: 74-75]²¹.
- 31 The *Registre d'inscriptions* 1885-1891 mentions Hendrika de Villermont, the Dutch name of Countess Henriette de Villermont (1855-1940), for the academic year 1890-1891²². De Villermont's diary records that she attended classes only between February 20 and March 15, 1891. Accompanied by her brother Carlo, the Countess entered the Academy for the first time on February 20. Three days later she was introduced by Academy director Juliaan De Vriendt (1842-1935) to Frans Van Kuyck (1852-1915), the class teacher. She started by drawing a head of Moses in charcoal. Three weeks later, on March 15, was her last day at the Academy²³. Her diary does not mention why the Countess stopped so quickly. It is also remarkable that de Villermont listed Brussels as place of birth and place of residence in the registration register. From that point of view, it would have been more practical to take classes in the capital. Nevertheless, she probably chose Antwerp because education was separated according to sex and no figure drawing was taught to women.
- 32 When de Villermont was studying at the Antwerp Academy, she had already received advice from the painters Charles Ligny (1812-1889) and Portaels and from the sculptor Jean-Joseph Jacquet (1822-1898), artists of which her father was a patron²⁴. She herself

specialised in portraits. She was commissioned for a paid portrait, but it turned out to be a mishap²⁵. After that, she mainly painted family members, as she had done before. The portrait of her niece Anne-Marie de Villermont (1894-1978) (figure 5) bears witness to this.

Figure 5. Countess Henriette de Villermont, *Portret van Anne-Marie de Villermont (1894-1978), later moeder Marie de Saint Jean-Baptiste*, [Portrait of Anne-Marie de Villermont (1894-1978), later Mother Marie de Saint Jean-Baptiste,] 1903. Oil on canvas, 65 x 83 cm



Private collection
Photo: private owner

- 33 Few noble women chose the academy. When they did, they could make use of the access to and the teaching offered at the institutions in very different ways, as the sisters Horion and Henriette de Villermont demonstrated. But even noblemen, who had never been excluded from the academies, rarely applied. Nevertheless, they had been very welcome for a long time and were given good seats in the figure drawing lessons [Loir, 2004: 40-41]. The hope was that these men would continue to support the academies and become patrons of one or more young artists. This role seems to have diminished towards the end of the 19th century with the emergence of galleries and artists' societies, but without disappearing completely.

Conclusion

- 34 In this article I examined the artistic education of female amateur artists through noble women in Brussels during the 19th century. These women made use of all the educational opportunities that the Belgian capital had to offer. They learned to practise the arts through drawing manuals, family members, art teachers, through lessons in

the boarding school or with professional artists. Some even attended the academy and learned figure drawing.

- 35 The abundance of source material indicated the many possibilities the female amateur artists made use of. This shows that they combined different learning methods. They learned the principles at home or in a boarding school. When they had mastered these principles, they took lessons with professional artists. A first reason for choosing a particular teacher was the type and quality of education. A second reason was that the practice of art was a social activity for these female amateur artists. They used the joint lessons to establish and strengthen their contacts with other women from the royal families and the nobility. The sources also revealed how the female amateur artists made use of the educational opportunities. At the same time, they offered a glimpse into personal ambitions, feelings and occasional rivalries.
- 36 As the Belgian capital, Brussels was the country's unmistakable cultural hot spot. Though, just like other European cities, overshadowed by Paris, the local academy opened its doors to female students twenty years before the *École des Beaux-Arts*. In addition, the women had immediately access to figure drawing, which was not possible in other institutions.
- 37 Finally, the research on amateur women artists contextualises the findings on professional female artists. Professional artists, who mainly came from the middle class, had largely followed the same course as the amateurs during their training. It often also consisted of a combination of different educational methods. The difference was that at some point they aspired to a life as a professional artist and to be acknowledged in the art world. Most middle-class women and almost all women of the nobility and the royal families did not share those goals. In Belgium, for example, just one female professional artist with a noble background is known before the 19th century, namely Baroness Alix d'Anethan (1848-1921). That doesn't mean that d'Anethan's classmates did not rejoice when they received a compliment from their teacher or an art connoisseur, their work was selected for an exhibition, or their name was mentioned in a publication. Yet they seem to have mainly used this recognition to gain more respect in their own network. Practising the arts together was a social activity, in which connection with others and one's own ambitions could go hand in hand.

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NOTES

1. Brussels, AE, *Fonds famille d'Ursel*: F434, F454-F457; Le1575.
2. The identification of F. Jacobs as the Southern Netherlandish painter and draftsman Pierre François Jacobs (1780-1808) [Creusen, 2007: 25] is incorrect: Jacobs had already died in 1808, when Jacobs' pupils exhibited in the Salon of Ghent in 1810 [Salon Gent, 1810]. The first had also moved to Rome in 1803, where he lived until his death [Coekelberghs and Loze, 1985: 178-179].
3. Marke, Archief de Bethune, Emilie van Outryve d'Ydewalle 06 04 4/2: 03/04/1842: Emilie writes to her parents about her first days in Berlaymont; May 26 [n.d.]: Emile writes to her mother about Marie's approaching arrival in Berlaymont; Sunday 05/06/1842: Marie and Emilie write to their mother; 06/11/1842: Emilie writes to her parents about a visitor and her school results; Marie's *Dames Anglaises* report.
4. Marke, Archief de Bethune, Emilie van Outryve d'Ydewalle 06 04 4/2: Berlaymont 03/04/1842: Emilie writes to her parents about her first days in Berlaymont.
5. Marke, Archief de Bethune, Jean-Baptiste Bethune 06272: "Documents et Correspondances [...] concernant divers travaux de broderie [...] 1re série (1860-1869)" and "Documents et Correspondances [...] concernant divers travaux de broderie (2me série) 1870-78"
6. Brussels, KBR, *correspondentie Navez*: undated [autumn 1828]: Princess de Chimay writes to Navez about her arrival in Brussels.
7. Brussels, KBR, *correspondentie Navez*: Chimay 09/09/1828: Princess de Chimay informs Navez about the portraits of her son and chambermaid; undated [autumn 1828]: Princess de Chimay writes to Navez about her arrival in Brussels.
8. Brussels, KBR, *correspondentie Navez*: undated [autumn 1828]: Princess de Chimay writes to Navez about her arrival in Brussels.
9. Brussels, KBR, *correspondentie Navez*: Chimay 09/09/1828: Princess de Chimay informs Navez about the portraits of her son and chambermaid.
10. Belgium, private archive, *Correspondentie hertogin d'Ursel-gravin van Vlaanderen*: Brussels, 21/04/1896: The Countess of Flanders writes to the Duchess d'Ursel about her studies with Blanc-Garin.
11. J.G., Nos artistes. M. Blanc Garin. In: *Bruxelles féminin Bruxelles féminin* 3, 1 (01/01/1904), 2-3.
12. J.G., Nos artistes. M. Blanc Garin. In: *Bruxelles féminin* 3, 1 (01/01/1904), 2-3; J.G., Le Salon Blanc-Garin. In: *Bruxelles féminin*, 15/05/1904, 4-6.
13. Brussels, ASB, *Cours de peinture pour jeunes filles*, letter from Stallaert to the Mayor and Aldermen 10/03/1896, letter from Stallaert to Alderman Lepage 16/10/1896. 30 frs in 1895 now corresponds to 157 euros, while 70 frs in that year would now be 367 euros.
14. Brussels, AE, *Fonds famille d'Ursel*, F457.
15. Brussels, AE, *Fonds famille d'Ursel*, F457.
16. Belgium, private archive, Duke Henri d'Ursel, *Mémoires*, ca. 1950.
17. On the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the Antwerp Academy in 2013, Van Cauteren en Huvenne, 2013, Pas, Dockx en de Bruyn, 2013 and de Bruyn, Dockx en Pas, 2014 published, but none of these publications spoke about the admission of women at this institution.
18. Brussels, ARBA, *Registres matricules des élèves de l'Académie*.
19. Brussels, ASB, *Cours de peinture pour jeunes filles*, letter from Joseph Stallaert to Alderman Lepage 04/02/1896.

20. Brussels, ARBA, *Registres matricules des élèves de l'Académie*; Brussels, ASB, *Cours de peinture pour jeunes filles*.
21. Antwerp, Académie, *lessen voor jonge vrouwen aan de Koninklijke Academie voor Schone Kunsten*.
22. Antwerp, Académie, *Registre d'inscriptions*, 1885-1911.
23. Boussu-en-Fagne, private archive, Henriette de Villermont, *Journal*: Antwerp 20/02/1891 untill 15/02/1891: Henriette de Villermont about her time at the Antwerp Academy.
24. Boussu-en-Fagne, private archive, Marie de Villermont, *Ma mère*. Correspondence, 1848-1890: 22, 90; Marie de Villermont, *Mes Souvenirs*, c. 1925: 62-63, 90; Jeanne de Villermont, Memorandum, 1867-1926; Henriette de Villermont, *Journal*, 1884-1918.
25. Boussu-en-Fagne, private archive, Henriette de Villermont, *Journal*, 1884-1918: 22/11/1902-20/03-1905.
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ABSTRACTS

In the 19th century, girls from the middle class, the nobility and the royal families in Europe received an artistic education. A few decided to become professional artists, which was made possible, among other things, by the growing range of education on offer. The understudied majority practiced the arts as amateurs. This article focuses on the artistic education of amateur artists and specifically on that of noble women in 19th-century Brussels. For the nobility, artistic education was very important, however it rarely produced professional artists. The capital offered ample education opportunities. The results from sources in private archives deepen the knowledge about amateur female artists and the artistic landscape, while contextualizing the findings about professional female artists.

Au 19^e siècle, les jeunes filles de la bourgeoisie, de la noblesse et des maisons royales d'Europe recevaient une éducation artistique. Si quelques-unes firent des arts leur métier en tirant profit d'une offre de formation en plein essor, la majorité – peu étudiée – d'entre elles pratiquait les arts en amateur. Cet article se concentre sur l'éducation artistique des artistes amatrices, en particulier celle des femmes de la noblesse dans le Bruxelles du 19^e siècle. Pourtant très sensible à l'importance d'une éducation artistique, la noblesse ne vit naître dans ses rangs que de rares artistes professionnelles. La capitale offrait un vaste choix de formations. Des sources d'archives privées permettent d'approfondir les connaissances sur ces artistes amatrices et le paysage artistique de l'époque, tout en contextualisant les données liées aux artistes professionnelles.

In de 19^{de} eeuw kregen meisjes uit de burgerij, de adel en het koningshuis in Europa een artistieke opvoeding. Enkelen maakten van de kunsten hun beroep, wat door het groeiende opleidingsaanbod mogelijk was geworden. De weinig onderzochte meerderheid beoefende de kunsten als amateur. Dit artikel concentreert zich op de artistieke opvoeding van amateurkunstenaresen en specifiek op die van adellijke vrouwen in het 19^{de}-eeuwse Brussel. De adel hechtte veel belang aan een kunstzinnige educatie, maar bracht zelden beroepskunstenaren voort. De hoofdstad bood ruime opleidingsmogelijkheden. Via bronnen uit privéarchieven wordt de kennis over amateurkunstenaresen en het artistieke landschap verdiept, terwijl bevindingen over beroepskunstenaresen worden gecontextualiseerd.

INDEX

Trefwoorden Brusselse samenleving, cultuur, onderwijs, gender, geschiedenis

Mots-clés: société bruxelloise, culture, enseignement, genre, histoire

Subjects: 1. histoire – culture – patrimoine

Keywords: Brussels society, culture, education, gender, history

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