



Dear ,

Welcome to The Phoebus Foundation newsletter.

This month's most exciting projects, publications, and loans are finally here!

Want to know more about the treasures in our collection? Discover our *Phoebus Focus* podcast and publications!

[Discover Phoebus Focus](#)

The Phoebus Update

On the 23rd of April, parents and children can enjoy a unique visit to The Phoebus Foundation sub-collection of Maritime and Logistic Heritage. 'Sparrow beaks', 'pig ears', 'crabs', the transport of wild animals, the 'nation's horses' and pests in the port are all illustrated and explained in great detail during a tour of more than 1200 pieces from the collection.

Discover how humans and animals have worked together in the port for centuries through animal stories and delve deeper into the traditions surrounding them during [Heritage Day](#) on the 23rd of April.



Find out more about the universe of world-renowned photographer and filmmaker Anton Corbijn. Until the 16th of April, visitors of the exhibition IKONEN can enjoy a selection of portrait photographs and three unseen series at the Handelsbeurs in Antwerp.

More info and tickets available on the website of [Anton Corbijn IKONEN!](https://www.antoncorbijnikonen.nl)



© Tom D'haenens

Behind The Scenes

This month, Chief Conservator of The Phoebus Foundation Sven Van Dorst tells us about the conservation treatment of *The Crucifixion* panel by Master of the Legend of Saint Lucy. He masterfully describes how this work was created, where the stylistic influences come from, and what the damage phenomena can teach us. The power of this restoration emerges when we get closer to the heart of it through research techniques Sven employs in the process.



Before restoration

"This small panel depicting the crucifixion was painted by the Master of the Lucia Legend. His work is close to that of Hans Memling, so it is assumed that he was active in Bruges at the end of the 15th century. Based on an inscription on the back of the panel, we discovered that the little work ended up in Portugal during the 19th century in the collection of the Dukes of Palmella."



Infrared reflectography makes rear inscription readable

"Before the restoration began, the painting looked dull. The colors had a greenish appearance because the varnish was heavily discolored. With the help of Infrared Reflectography (IRR) and radiography (X-ray), it was possible to evaluate the condition of the painting in detail. As a result, we found out that the edges of the painting were completely overpainted. Originally, there was a border of about 1cm of unpainted wood around the work. This is typical of 15th-century paintings because the wooden panel was held in the frame using a groove. On the IRR, we can see some minor damage in the paint layer and the underdrawing that the painter used to draw his composition on the panel. The lines are angular, indicating the use of a "dry" drawing medium such as chalk."

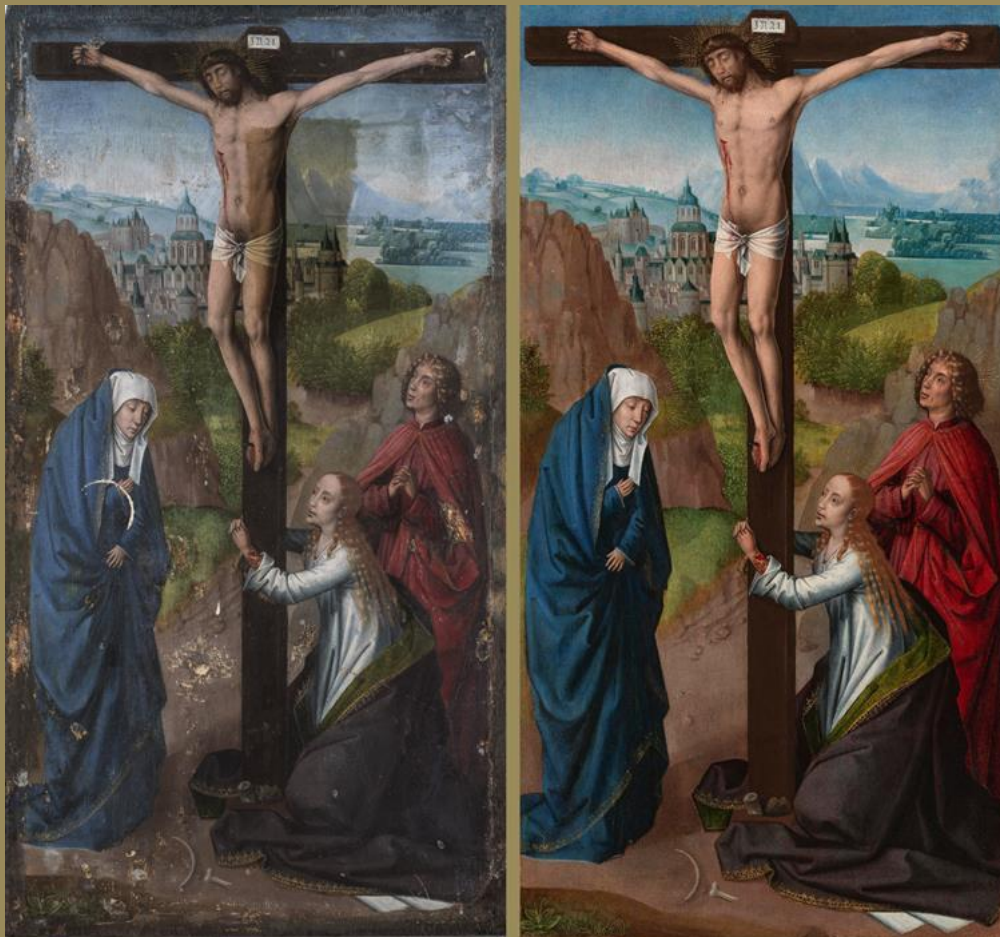


IRR (detail) shows the underdrawing



X-ray showing the overpainted edges

"After the examination, the restoration could finally begin. It took some work to remove the old layers of varnish. Using homemade gels, the varnish could be swollen in several stages and removed from the paint surface with a cotton swab. Immediately, the original vibrant colors and some of the old damage reappeared. In the next stage, the old overpaintings at the edges were removed. This was done under the microscope to avoid damaging the underlying paint."



During varnish removal process and after restoration

"Once the original surface was exposed again, the final phase of treatment could begin. First, a varnish was applied to protect the original. Next, gaps were filled and retouched to no longer stand out. The result was stunning and one of my most enjoyable projects. Now it is again possible to appreciate the refined technique and palette of the mysterious Master of the Lucia Legend."



Sven in action

[More Behind the Scenes](#)

Travelling Treasures

Discover Metsys' *Portrait of an Old Woman* from our collection at the new exhibition *The Ugly Duchess: Beauty and Satire in the Renaissance*. The exposition focuses, among others, on Metsys' portrait of the Ugly Duchess, a related drawing after Leonardo da Vinci, and other artworks portraying older women. The paintings demonstrate the artist's fascination with depicting the grotesque but also show how the rise of secular and satirical art during the Renaissance shaped attitudes that persist today.



Quinten Metsys, *Portrait of an Old Woman*, 1514-1524

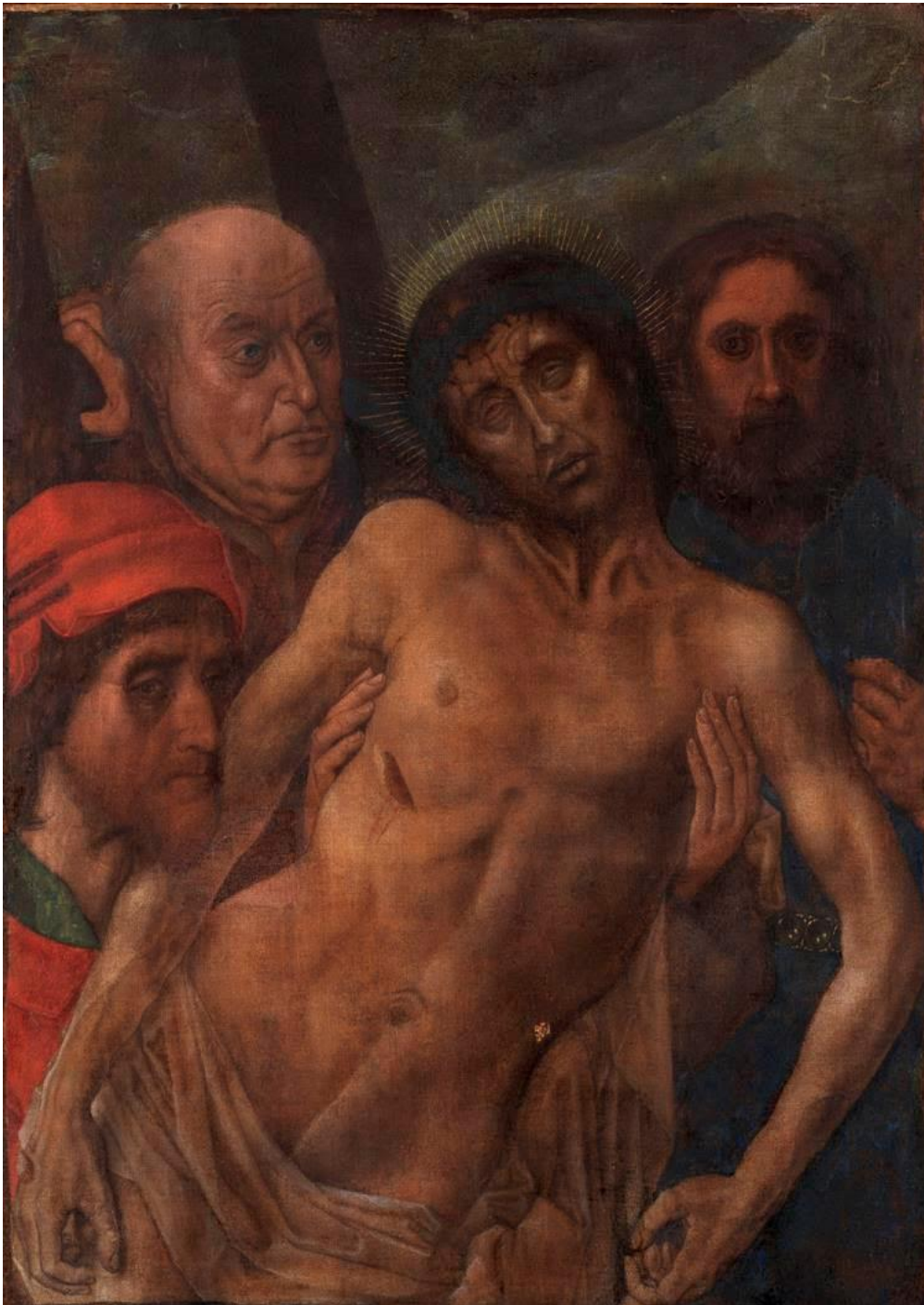
Also at the National Gallery, *After Impressionism: Inventing Modern Art* celebrates the most renowned names of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh, and Paul Gauguin, as well as their influence on younger generations of artists and the broader circles in Europe. Moreover, no less than two works from The Phoebus Foundation collection are on display!

Encounter the works of Théo van Rysselberghe and Henry Van de Velde, and discover how Impressionism radically changed the art world, becoming one of the most important periods in art history.



Théo Van Rysselberghe, *The Scheldt Upstream, Golden Dusk with Sailing Boat*, 1892

In Berlin, the Gemäldegalerie explores the works of Ghent-born artist, Hugo Van der Goes. An actual premiere as almost all of the artist's surviving paintings and drawings will be presented in one exhibition. As one of the most important names of the second half of the 15th century, Van der Goes generated much admiration with their monumental pieces displaying an astonishing and emotional expressiveness. During this exhibition, visitors can discover two pieces from our collection: *The Descent from the Cross* and *Mary with Child and Saints Thomas, John the baptist, Jerome and Louis*.



Hugo Van der Goes, *Descent from the Cross*, c.1490

More info and tickets available on the websites of [The National Gallery](#) and [Gemäldegalerie](#).

[More Travelling Treasures](#)

Phoebus Focus

This month, sculptor Jan Borman II gets the recognition he deserves thanks to sculpture specialist and Head of Collections at M Leuven Marjan Debaene. During this brand-new *Phoebus Focus* episode, the artist and his exquisite *Madonna and Child* are framed within an extensive artistic network. Contemporaries rightly praised Borman as the best sculptor.



Jan Borman II, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1480

Phoebus Focus

Under construction

This month, our photographers once again visited the Boerentoren to capture the current state of events. Several floors and more asbestos were removed, and various quality inspections were carried out on different levels of the tower.

Enjoy these unique behind-the-scenes images with us!



© Kristof Vrancken



© Tom D'haenens

[More Boerentoren](#)



WAT IS KUNST?

We also released new content on **Wat is Kunst?** Together with the main characters, Leonard and JOS, you discover more about the hidden meanings and symbols in works of art. On top of that, teachers can take this hunt for hidden meanings in art to the classroom with a brand-new [lesson suggestion kit](#) available on the website.



Want to stay up to date? Subscribe to the newsletter and discover the newest games, artworks, vlogs and DIY projects!

[WIK Newsletter](#)