The Golden Age of Dutch Tiles
1580-1725

Hans van Lemmen
Scholar and Author

About the lecture: The talk will examine the origins, design, and uses of Dutch tiles made between 1580 and 1725. An expanding middle class in 17th century Holland bought tiles made in Delft, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and elsewhere for both utility and decoration, and there was an enormous export of Dutch tiles in the early 1700s for palaces and stately homes across Europe. The talk will explain how tiles were made and decorated, and it will discuss subject matter ranging from soldiers and biblical subjects to animals and scenes of daily life.

About the speaker: Hans van Lemmen taught art and design history at Leeds Polytechnic and Leeds Metropolitan University. He is President of the British Tiles and Architectural Ceramics Society and a longstanding member of the Dutch Tile Society, and he may be the most widely published author on European tiles. His many publications range from medieval tiles to the 20th century, including Delftware Tiles, Laurence King, 1997; Art Nouveau Tiles (with Bart Verbrugge), Laurence King, 1999; and ‘Delft Pottery: A Brief History’ in Delft Ceramics at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2003. The British Museum Press and Smithsonian Books published his 5000 Years of Tiles in 2013.

This month, our Facebook page will show tile installations.

Probably made in Hoorn, The Netherlands
Tile picture of a tulip, c. 1620-40
Tin-glazed earthenware, each tile about 13.2 x 13.2 cm
Nederlands Tegelmuseum, Otterlo (photo: Hans van Lemmen)
**SFCC 2017-18 Lectures**

**Legion of Honor Theater name change:** The theater in the Legion of Honor has been renamed to honor ongoing support to the FAMSF from John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19,** Gunn Theater. **Vanessa Sigalas,** independent scholar and Managing Editor, American Ceramic Circle *Journal,* “Vienna and Berlin: Ceramics at the Time of Klimt,” in conjunction with the upcoming Klimt and Rodin show at the Legion.


**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8** (tentative): SFCC will sponsor a ceramics talk in the Fine Arts Museums’ annual conference on Arts of Oceania and the Americas.

**SUNDAY, MARCH 18,** Gunn Theater: t.b.a.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 15,** Gunn Theater: Sally Kevill-Davies, cataloguer of the English porcelain at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, will speak on Chelsea porcelain figures. The talk will follow up on SFCC’s donation of the Chelsea *Carpenter* to the Legion of Honor in 2016.

**SUNDAY, MAY 20,** Gunn Theater: SFCC member and former Vice President Glenn Berry, distinguished collector of neoclassical porcelain, will speak on his current research.

**New SFCC Directors**

Mady Jones and Kathryn Mosher joined the Board SFCC Board of Directors in April to get a head start on learning our procedures. The membership elected them to full terms at our Annual Meeting on September 17. Mady is a scholar and collector of contemporary ceramics and a former Board member at The San Francisco Art Institute. Kathryn is the mainstay of the FAMSF docents’ teaching program in the ceramics study room. It’s great to have these new perspectives on our Board!

**The San Francisco Fall Art & Antiques Show**

This year the San Francisco Ceramic Circle is again a cultural partner of the San Francisco Fall Art & Antiques Show. The partnership provides unlimited free admission for SFCC members. The show will be in the Festival Pavilion at Fort Mason, October 26-29: Thursday - Saturday, 10:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; Sunday, Noon to 5:00 p.m. More information on the show at [www.sffas.org](http://www.sffas.org). The photo shows a pair of Derby porcelain campana vases painted by William Pegg, c. 1815-20, offered by SFFAS regular Earle D. Vandekar of Knightsbridge.
Hans van Lemmen’s latest book illustrates 5000 years of tile history, but European decorated tiles began with northern European floors in the late Middle Ages. Raw clay was pressed into carved or molded designs. The recesses could be inlaid with clay of another color, usually white against red, and coated with clear lead glaze before firing. Patterns included coats of arms, animals, and geometric shapes, sometimes on single tiles and sometimes across panels. Such tiles were expensive and easily worn down, so they were used mainly in sites such as churches and palaces.

In the 1400s, Islamic tin-glaze painting spread from Spain into Italy and France and then to the southern Netherlands. By the 1500s these countries were making brilliantly colored faience floor tiles. In Spain and Portugal they climbed up the walls, and the fashion lasted into the 1800s there and in Italy. Few such pavements survive from before the 1700s because painted tin-glazed tiles were even more expensive and fragile than inlaid tiles. In the 1830s the Gothic Revival coincided with the Industrial Revolution, and British potters invented durable inlaid “encaustic” tiles.
Spanish rule introduced faience tiles to the Netherlands, but they took a new direction after 1600. The independent United Provinces developed a large middle class that enjoyed the beauty and cleanliness of glazed tiles, but seldom to the point of wearing them out as pavement: they tiled kitchen walls, and fireplaces, dados, or wall baseboards (like the double tile on p. 1) in other rooms. They also developed a huge export market. This trade peaked in the early 1700s with spectacular ensembles for elite buildings.

Unknown factory, Harlingen, the Netherlands
Wall tiles with men-of-war and other ships, c. 1640-60
Tin-glazed earthenware, overall about 40 x 40 cm
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Francis P. Garvan, 1979
(Photos: SFCC)

Unknown factories in Rotterdam and possibly Delft
Assembled tile schemes, early 1700s
Kitchen, the Amalienburg pavilion, 1734-39
Tin-glazed earthenware
Nymphenburg Gardens, Munich (photos: SFCC)

The Industrial Revolution re-launched wall tiles as well as floor tiles. Machines made “dust-pressed” tiles faster, stronger, and cheaper than handwork. Decoration was like tableware, with transfer printing as the basic technique. Mid-priced tiles had hand enameling over the prints, and luxury tiles were still completely hand-painted. The Art Nouveau period added “tube-lining,” where squeeze bags (as in icing for cakes) laid down ridges of colored slip to separate glaze colors. In our time, factory-made tiles have spectacular strength, colors, and textures, while studio ceramists explore tile-making.

Minton, Hollins & Co., Stoke-on-Trent
Reinstalled Iznik-style tiles from the Hertford House smoking room, London, 1872-75
Glazed earthenware with transfer print & enamel, each 20 x 20 cm
The Wallace Collection, London (photo: SFCC)
Inset: Minton Hollins tile, 20 x 20 cm, SFCC member collection