

**Willem van Konijnenburg, *Paedestinatie (Dance of Fate)***

verso: *Dove on a Branch*

1868 – The Hague - 1943

black and colored chalk on paper

47 ½ by 31 ½ inches (120 by 80 cm.)

signed with the artist initials and dated: 'WAvK 1918'

In the original artist's frame

- provenance: G.F.H. (Frits) van Kooten Kok, The Hague, The Netherlands;  
G.F.H. van Kooten Kok jr., on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1935;  
G. Oudshoorn, The Hague, The Netherlands;  
Mrs. S.H. Oudshoorn-Spaan, The Hague, The Netherlands;  
Mrs. Tine Bottema, The Hague, The Netherlands;  
Sale, Christie's Amsterdam, 7 December 1994, lot 246;  
Private collection, The Netherlands
- exhibited: The Hague, Pulchri Studio, *Hollandsche Teeken-Maatschappij 42ste Tentoonstelling*, 6 – 30 September 1919, no. 42.  
Leiden, Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal, *Willem van Konijnenburg*, 5 April – 7 May 1922, no. 12.  
Amsterdam, Arti et Amicitiae, *Tentoonstelling van werken door H.P. Berlage, W.A. van Konijnenburg en R.N. Roland Holst*, 8 November – 13 December 1922, no. 6.  
The Hague, Pulchri Studio, *Eeretentoonstelling W.A. van Konijnenburg*, 12 February – 8 March 1928, no. 17.  
Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum 1935, permanent loan, no. 138  
Utrecht, Centraal Museum, *Willem van Konijnenburg 1868-1943*, 26 October – 2 December 1990.  
Assen, Drents Museum, *Willem van Konijnenburg 1868-1943*, 15 December 1990 – 11 February 1991.  
Breda, De Beyerd, *Wendingen 1918-1932. Architectuur, kunst en vormgeving*, 23 March – 13 May 2001.
- literature: Dr. G. Knuttel, *Elsevier magazine* (edition LIX) 1920 pp. 3 -4 (ill.) review of the 1919 exhibition)  
Albert Plasschaert, "Willem van Konijnenburg" in: *Wendingen* 4, Vol. 1/2', 1921, pp. 4-13, ill. p. 20.  
Franz Dulberg, "Willem van Konijnenburg", in: *Winterboek VI*, Amsterdam, 1927, pp. 52-90.  
H. de Boer a.o., *Willem A. van Konijnenburg. Schilderijen en teekningen in de verzameling G.F.H. van Kooten Kok*, part II, The Hague 1929, ill. pp. 144-145 with a poem by P.G. Boutens  
*Willem A. van Konijnenburg. Gemälde und Zeichnungen Sammlung G.F.H. van Kooten Kok*, The Hague 1929.  
*Willem A. van Konijnenburg. Paintings and drawings belonging to the collection of G.F.H. van Kooten Kok*, The Hague 1929.  
Gerard Knuttel, *Willem van Konijnenburg*, Amsterdam (Paletreeks), 1941, ill. p. 37.  
Mieke Rijnders, *Willem van Konijnenburg 1868-1943*, Assen 1990, p. 104, ill. p. 235 (nr IX).  
Mieke Rijnders, *Willem van Konijnenburg, Leonardo van de Lage Landen*, Zwolle 2008, p. 312, no. 143 ill.

note:

*Paedestinatie* is one of the finest drawings by Willem van Konijnenburg. It belongs to a program of six dances (fig. 1): *Dans der jonkheid (Dance of Youth)*, 1917; *Rituele dans (Ritual Dance)*, 1918; *Fatalisme (Fatalism)*, circa 1918, *Heksendans (Witch Dance)*, 1919 and *Krijgsdans (War Dance)*, 1919. Together with Jan Toorop, Leo Gestel and Jan Sluijters, the Hague artist Willem van Konijnenburg represented the face of Dutch modern art abroad during the Interbellum. In his youth, Van Konijnenburg was famous not so much for his artistic skills as for his dandy-like appearance and his active involvement in The Hague art circles. From 1900 on, he abandoned The Hague School of Impressionism and started to develop his own classical idiom. Using an invented system of rules in which symmetry and mathematical patterns played an important role, Van Konijnenburg created harmonious compositions, which won him considerable fame. His theme was no longer landscape, but the idealized individual. Van Konijnenburg's unique interpretation of modern art was considered highly innovative at the time. He received important commissions, among them the relief in Berlage's Gemeentemuseum in The Hague, and participated in numerous exhibitions.

When the well-respected art critic Albert Plasschaert announced in 1912 that Van Konijnenburg was a better draughtsman than his contemporary Jan Toorop (1858-1928), a true rivalry ensued.<sup>1</sup> In 1919 when the present series was first exhibited at Pulchri Studio in The Hague, Van Konijnenburg demanded to be exhibited next to Toorop, surely to enable a comparison. While Toorop was represented with eleven drawings, Van Konijnenburg contributed two series: the present large format pastels and five slightly smaller anatomical studies to demonstrate that he mastered rendering the body accurately, securing his nickname the 'Leonardo of the Low Countries.' Toorop and Van Konijnenburg could not have been more different in their choice of color scheme and rendering of line. Whereas Toorop's interest in the Flemish Primitives was evident in his work, Van Konijnenburg was considered the modern Renaissance artist and esthetic intellectual. That all six drawings were presented in monumental artists' frames surely helped solidify his reputation.

Van Konijnenburg was, like Piet Mondriaan, an avid dancer. As fellow artist Chris de Moor noted "Mondriaan en "Konijn" dansten beiden urenlang de tango, de een in Parijs, de ander in de House of Lords in den Haag" (Mondriaan and "rabbit" both danced tango for hours, one in Paris and the other in the House of Lords in The Hague).<sup>2</sup> The present *Predestination* and the other drawings of the series, executed between 1917 and 1919, all have an ecstatic dance as theme. Five of the six drawings, exhibited in a group exhibition at Pulchri Studio in The Hague in 1919 were acquired shortly afterwards by Frits van Kooten Kok and remained together until they were offered for sale at the 1994 auction when they all diverged. Fritz Kok, a merchant in tea and quinine, amassed mostly works by Van Konijnenburg for his collection. When Franz Dülberg visited Kok's stately residence in 1921, he referred to it as the "real Museum Konynenburgs".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A. Plasschaert, "Teekeningen van Willem van Konijnenburg (Miedema Rotterdam)," *De Amsterdamer*, 17 November 1912.

<sup>2</sup> J. Havelaar, "W.A. van Konijnenburg, Kunstzaal Kleykamp", *Het Vaderland*, 18 December 1926.

<sup>3</sup> Dülberg, *op.cit.*, p. 73.