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VA**
MUSEUM



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FROM MAKER
TO COLLECTOR

**SLOW
ROAST
SLOW
CRAFT**

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EXHIBITION
14 NOVEMBER – 11 JANUARY



SLOW ROAST SLOW CRAFT

From maker to collector

On a table stands a silver coffee pot. It is gleaming and seems to be waiting for a conversation, a gesture, a moment of attention. Around this one coffee pot unfolds the exhibition *Slow Roast. Slow Craft*. It invites you to pause and reflect on everything that comes together in an everyday object: history, craftsmanship, interaction and ritual.

The starting point for this exhibition is a coffee pot from the mid-18th century. It connects two important events for the museum: the 50th anniversary of the Pierre Lunden donation and the completion of the master-apprentice project 'From historical silver to contemporary craftsmanship' in the DIVA studio.

The coffee pot was once part of the collection of Pierre Lunden, a resident of Antwerp with a passion for art, music and flowers. He donated his exceptional silver collection to the museum in 1975. His donation is still one of the cornerstones of the DIVA collection to this day.

At the same time, the master-apprentice project selected this same coffee pot for an intensive exercise in craftsmanship. Silversmith Max Gielis, goldsmith Michel Mekke and metal restorer Annick Mertens examined the historical piece down to the smallest details. Based on this study, they made a single reproduction together and each created three new pieces with their own character, but indebted to the original.

The exhibition therefore brings together three perspectives: the collector, the makers and coffee. It highlights how a single object can tell a story that spans centuries and generations. From 18th-century silverware to contemporary craftsmanship, from coffee as a status symbol to a daily ritual and moment of connection.

The exhibition invites you to look, slow down and experience what craftsmanship can mean today.

ARE YOU A COLLECTOR?

Everyone collects something. Stamps, comic books, shells, *figurines* or other mementos. Collecting is a very human phenomenon: we give meaning to the things around us by collecting, organising and preserving them.

Pierre Lunden (1887–1975) was also a passionate collector. He grew up in a family in Antwerp, played piano, composed music and loved gardening and flowers. But his greatest passion was collecting. First Chinese porcelain and later silver. From the 1950s onwards, his main focus was silverware from Flanders and the Prince-Bishopric of Liège. He had a clear vision: a collection should grow in terms of quality, not quantity. If necessary, he sold pieces from his porcelain collection to purchase exceptional silver.

Lunden donated his collection to the museum fifty years ago, in 1975. Since then, his donation has formed one of the cornerstones of the collection of the DIVA museum. Thanks to his passion for collecting, we can now see unique works of art that might otherwise have been dispersed or forgotten.

But collecting does not always have to revolve around precious objects. It can also be something small and personal: a cupboard full of records, old coins or books that you cherish. Every collection, no matter how modest, tells a story about the collector: about their interests, memories, dreams, etc.

Pierre Lunden collected in order to preserve the beauty of craftsmanship and share it with others. Why do you collect?

1



Photograph of Valentine Van Hal, ca. 1887

Photograph of Valentine Lunden-van Hal playing the piano, taken by Albéric Lunden (1840-1899) at the Bisschoppenhof in Deurne. Valentine van Hal was Albéric Lunden's second wife and Pierre Lunden's mother

2



Photographs of Pierre Lunden, 1965

3



Portrait of Albéric Lunden, Alexander van Antro, Antwerp, 1892

In 1890, Antwerp-born photographer and painter Alexander van Antro (1841–1902) painted a portrait of four-year-old Pierre Lunden. Two years later, he painted the portrait of his father Albéric Lunden.

The Lunden family coat of arms is depicted in the top left corner. The work is signed in the top right-hand corner:

A. Van Antro / Anvers 1892.

4



Photograph of Albéric Lunden, 1897 (?)

5



Series of twelve photographs, Albéric Lunden

Amateur photographer Albéric Lunden was an inspired image maker. With both his travel and studio camera, he set out to bring stories to life. This album tells the story by Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897) *L'enfant espion*, in twelve photographs. We present a selection here. Pierre Lunden recorded how he himself, his mother and sister appeared in several scenes from this literary story.

6



Drawing in ink and watercolour on tracing paper, Chinese landscape with birds, Pierre Lunden

Pierre Lunden enjoyed drawing and modelling motifs from nature and symbolism. This drawing was inspired by a Chinese porcelain dish with flowers and birds, probably from his own collection.

7



**Two photographs from photo album,
Photo C. Verhoustraeten, Brussels, 1955**

During the First World War, the Lunden family moved to Manchester. Brothers Pierre and Philip worked in the textile industry, an experience that shaped their careers. After 1918, they returned to Belgium and became directors of the Royal Exchange Assurance, a London-based insurance company with offices on the Meir in Antwerp. After Philip's death, Pierre continued to run the agency on his own.

These photographs show Pierre Lunden at his retirement party. After the formal part, with thanks and gifts, the party becomes informal: Pierre plays the piano and the guests dance 'royally' with paper crowns on their heads. A playful moment that reflects the warm atmosphere of the occasion.

8



**Pierre Lunden and Marie-Louise
Coppejans, Brussels, 1970, and Pierre
Lunden at the birthplace of Marie-Louise
Coppejans, Kaprijke, 1925**

Marie-Louise Coppejans assisted Pierre Lunden for 56 years continuously. She already worked for the Lunden family when they stayed in England during the war years, playing an important role in the household, such as keeping safe the unique gold snuff box that was dug up by the chickens in the vegetable garden. Pierre never married, but the two had a close bond: various photographs show him at Marie-Louise's family home over the years, and shortly before his death he dedicated a composition to her. Marie-Louise became the heir to his artistic collection, and was entrusted transferring it to the Provincial Museum Sterckshof.

9



Photographs of Pierre Lunden gardening, Antwerp and Kaprijke, 1948, 1960 and 1964

Pierre Lunden inherited a love of music from his family, as well as a keen eye for nature. During his time in England, rare flowers such as orchids captured his imagination. He was regularly invited to be a judge at national and international ornamental flower competitions. In 1931, a dahlia won the grand prize in Lyon and was named after Pierre Lunden. The dahlia, a typical product of the 18th century, quickly became an exhibition plant. Pierre himself cultivated many varieties in his garden.

10



Photo of silver display case in Pierre Lunden's home in Brussels

Display cabinet in Pierre Lunden's home in Ixelles, as described in his will, with a kettle by the Antwerp master with a beehive from the family collection on the top shelf and, on the bottom shelf from left to right: Coffee pot, Jacques-Philippe Leducq, Mons, 1740-1741 or 1741-1742 (inv. no. S75/82); Chocolate pot, Augustin Jozef Vandewinckele, Kortrijk, 1779 (inv. no. S75/66); Coffee pot, Master with two flaming hearts, Mons, 1747-1748 (inv. no. S75/83). Above the display cabinet hangs the portrait of four-year-old Pierre Lunden painted by Alexander van Antro (inv. no. S75/222), DIVA, Lunden bequest file.

11



Opening of the Lunden Room in the Sterckshof, 13 October 1977

12



Scores for Rêverie (June 1966), Sonatine (September 1966), Jour d'Automne (November 1966) and Impromptu n° 1 (February 1967), Pierre Lunden

Pierre Lunden did not receive any formal musical training, but improved his technique through practice. His mother taught him to read scores, so he could easily sight-read, even though he did not know the formal notation of clefs and keys. To score his improvisations, he created his own musical notation. His friend Verhoustraeten recorded his improvisations with the very first tape recorders, which resulted in collections of compositions in manuscript and on tape. They reveal another facet of Lunden's seemingly reserved personality.

13



Sheet G. & A. Decoster, Brussels, relating to S75/82

This sheet shows the offer by antique dealer G. & A. Decoster to Pierre Lunden of a coffee pot from Mons, attributed to Jacques-Philippe Leducq (1740-1742) (inv. no. S75/82). One striking aspect is the detailed pencil drawing of the coffee pot, including the accurately rendered marks with which the antique dealer illustrated his expertise.

14



Landscape with castle, Petrus Joannes van Regemorter, Antwerp, 1778

Pierre Lunden owned several objects by the Antwerp-based painter Petrus Joannes van Regemorter (1755-1830), his maternal great-great-grandfather. This oil painting on panel was displayed next to the engraved portrait of the painter near his grand piano. The signature can be found on the first step of the staircase at the farm: *P Van Regemorter 1778*.

15



Baby grand piano Régy, 1926

ARE YOU A COFFEE DRINKER?

In this room, you can see six coffee pots, a water jug, a teapot and a chocolate pot from the Pierre Lunden collection. All of them are made of silver and date from the 17th and 18th centuries. Can you recognise the coffee pots?

Unlike teapots, coffee pots are often taller and slimmer in form, with a long, straight spout that makes pouring easier. Chocolate pots, on the other hand, usually have a hinged lid, to insert a whisk for stirring. So take a good look: each pot has its own function and its own story.

But how did coffee actually end up here? The coffee plant originates from Ethiopia. According to legend, it was the shepherd Kaldi who observed that his goats were more active after eating certain berries. From Ethiopia, coffee spread via Yemen to the Arab world, where the beans were roasted, ground and had hot water poured over them.

Coffee arrived in Europe, via trade routes, in the 16th and 17th centuries. Traders, travellers and diplomats introduced the drink and coffee houses opened their doors in cities. Coffee became an invitation to conversation and dialogue.

These days, we rarely serve our coffee from silver pots. We use stainless steel, ceramic, glass or thermos flasks. Materials that are better suited for our daily use. The silver coffee pots are now a part of heritage: a symbol of hospitality, globalisation, craftsmanship and ritual, but also of status and exclusivity.

How do you drink your coffee? In which mug, cup or glass? And what's your coffee ritual?

16



Miniature portrait of Willem Frans Lunden, c. 1690

Willem Frans Lunden (1664-1704), who married Suzanna Hellinckx (1672-1733) in 1691, had his portrait painted in clothing inspired by Ancient Rome. The miniature is mounted in a hinged box covered in shagreen. The lid bears the inscription (translated): *this is the portrait / of Guil^{mo} Fran^{co} / Lunden*. He was the son of Willem Lunden (1624-1692) and Anna Maria Bosschaert (1626-1702). His father had previously been married to Catharine Lunden (1625-1658), daughter of Arnold (1595-1656) and Suzanna Fourment (1599-1643).

17



Signet ring Pierre Emile Lunden, Belgium, 1869-1942 (?)

18-carat gold signet ring with the coat of arms of the Lunden family. Charles II confirmed the credentials of Willem Lunden (1624-1692) on 4 December 1679. Based on the 750 standard hallmark, the ring can be dated somewhere between 1869 and 1942, subject to reservation.

Donated to the museum in 1982 by René Pandelaars (1923-2016), son of Romanie Coppejans (1885-1976) and representative of the Pierre Lunden bequest.

18



Vase, China, 1662-1722

The porcelain vase dates from the Kangxi imperial period. The décor in *famille verte* features symbols that are a reference to the *pa pao* or eight Buddhist treasures. Mount *K'un-lun* is depicted four times, referring to the four cardinal points. To suit European tastes, gilt bronze mounts were added to the vase.

Pierre Lunden purchased the vase in March 1946 for 70,000 Belgian francs from J.P. Van Goidsenhoven in Brussels.

19



Pair of bowls, China, 1723-1736

The ideogram *nien-hao* was applied to the underside of the two porcelain bowls. As such, the porcelain can be dated to the era of Emperor Yongzheng. In China, the quails on the bowls symbolise courage.

Pierre Lunden purchased the bowls in May 1935 for 30,000 Belgian francs from J.P. Van Goidsenhoven in Brussels.

20



Teacup with saucer, China, 1723-1736

The porcelain dates from the era of Emperor Yongzheng. For the allegorical representation of summer, the painter used a print entitled *Æstas* by Jeremias Wolff (c. 1663–1724) as a source of inspiration. Jeremias Wolff was an important publisher in Augsburg who initially worked as a clockmaker and automaton maker.

The ensemble was purchased on 26 November 1949 for 10,000 Belgian francs at the Georges Giroux auction in Brussels. The teacup and saucer came from the collection of Edouard Brunard, whose collection was auctioned at the Galerie Themis in Brussels from 20 to 22 March 1933

21



Teacup with saucer and cream jug, China, c. 1740

The porcelain tea service with a light purple plume and acanthus motif was produced in China around 1740.

The design is sometimes attributed to the studio of Cornelis Pronk (1691-1759). Pronk is known to have created designs for porcelain services made in China on behalf of the Dutch East India Company.

The teacup and saucer from the Mallet collection in London were purchased in March 1931 for 8,500 Belgian francs from J.P. Van Goidsenhoven in Brussels. The cream jug was purchased from the same antique dealer in June 1932 for 3,800 Belgian francs.

22



Kettle, Master with beehive, Antwerp, 1734-1735

The kettle, *moor* or *bouilloire* is divided into eight sections with engravings on a granulated background. The handle is finished with a baluster-shaped ivory grip. The earliest mention of a teakettle in Antwerp dates from 1706. The kettles are often valued together with a brazier and, exceptionally, together with a coffee and cream jug. One of the oldest examples from the Southern Netherlands was produced in Mons in 1704-1705 by Jacques Philippe i Levieux (†1733). The Antwerp master with the beehive is best known for his table silver from the period 1724-1747, including a cooler for wine glasses.

The kettle comes from the family collection: *Cette pièce de famille est d'une facture admirable*. Pierre Lunden also considered it a *Pièce Capitale* (...).

23



Chocolate pot, Guillielmus van Eesbeek, Brussels, 1734-1737

At least three chocolate pots are known to have been produced by the Brussels-based silversmith Guillielmus van Eesbeek (1688-1761), who specialised in table silver. The oldest example, from the Museum Broodhuis in Brussels, dates from 1727-1730 and rests on four curved legs, whereas this example has a base. The lid has a removable knob, so that the chocolate frother or *mousoir à chocolat* can whisk the chocolate.

On 26 March 1955, Pierre Lunden purchased the chocolate pot for 19,500 Belgian francs at an auction at the Galerie Georges Giroux in Brussels. Pierre Lunden considered this to be a *Pièce importante*.

24



Coffee pot, Jacques-Philippe Leducq, Mons, 1740-1741 or 1741-1742

The silver coffee pot with ivory handle was produced by the master with the crowned and bearded profile head. This master was previously identified as Jacques-Gaspard de Moitemont (1695-1750) or Jean-Baptiste Leducq (1671-1736), but is now identified as Jacques-Philippe Leducq (1679-1745). He is known to have produced several pear-shaped coffee pots on three legs in the 1730s. Only the engravings, decorative frames, lid knobs and handles vary.

Purchased on 14 April 1956 by Pierre Lunden as a *Pièce capitale* and *Pièce de grande Classe* for 26,500 Belgian francs from G. & A. Decoster Frères in Brussels.

25



Teapot, Guillielmus Vander Haeghen, Bruges, 1762

Guillielmus Vander Haeghen (*1707) was confirmed as a master craftsman on 6 February 1744 and his shop was located on the Grote Markt in Bruges. Small teapots, used at breakfast for one or two people, are quite rare. Moreover, hardly any other work is known by this silversmith, whose master's mark was an anvil.

Pierre Lunden purchased the teapot as a *Pièce importante* and *Très rare* on 12 December 1963 at an auction in the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels, for 29,000 Belgian francs.

26



**Coffee pot, Jan Baptist Cassé,
Antwerp, 1771**

Jan Baptist Cassé (1712-1777), master silversmith since 1748, is one of the most important proponents of the Rococo style in Antwerp. This coffee pot and the three-spouted pot in the DIVA museum are excellent examples. He produced a wide range of objects. The following inscription was engraved on the bottom of the coffee pot: *Pt D6783/D6435 [scratched out]/ 70013 ait.*

Pierre Lunden purchased the coffee pot in August 1972 as a *Pièce importante* from fellow collector Baron Bertrand de Giey (1931-2020), for the price of 160,000 Belgian francs.

27



**Coffee pot, Michel Paul Joseph Dewez,
Brussels, 1779**

The coffee pot forms a set with a cream or milk jug. The owner's initials, *V:F:R:*, are engraved on both objects. At least four coffee pots by Michel Paul Joseph Dewez (1742-1804) are known to exist. The oldest example dates from 1772, the year he was confirmed as a master silversmith in Brussels. Dewez had previously worked as first assistant in the studio of Jacques Roëttiers (1707-1784) in Paris and was later appointed court silversmith by Governor-General Charles Alexander of Lorraine (1712-1780).

Pierre Lunden purchased the coffee pot and accompanying cream or milk jug from the family estate as *Pièces Capitales* for 120,000 Belgian francs.

28



Coffee pot, Maurice Joseph Evrard, Mons, 1787

Maurice-Joseph Evrard (1752-1830), trained in the workshop of jeweller Antoine Mortiau (1720-1776), passed his master's test in 1778, consisting of an antique ring with a brilliant-cut diamond. As a jeweller and silversmith, he targeted a fashionable clientele, as evidenced by the name of his shop: *Magasin de Paris dit 'La Bruxeloise'*. This coffee pot, of which there is another example from 1770, is a perfect example of the Neo-classical style that predominated at the time, also known as Louis XVI style. He is also known to have made the only *persane* from Mons.

Purchased by Pierre Lunden in 1970 from Lucien Delplace in Brussels for 50,000 Belgian francs.

29



Coffee pot, Master with brazier, Brussels, 1793

Despite the significant quantities of preserved works from the period 1777-1793, including at least six coffee pots, the Brussels master with brazier has still not been identified. The weight indication 31 [ounces] 14 [English] (975.092 grams) for the silver roughly corresponds to the current weight including the wooden handle (1,021.62 grams). A similar jug from 1792, auctioned in 1996, has an ivory handle instead of a wooden one.

Pierre Lunden purchased the coffee pot in 1968 from Georges Decoster in Brussels for 50,000 Belgian francs.

WHO DO YOU LIKE TO DRINK COFFEE WITH?

People have come together around coffee since the 17th century. When the first coffee houses opened their doors in Venice (1645), London (1652) and Paris (1669), something remarkable happened: new public spaces emerged where it wasn't alcohol that was consumed, but a stimulating drink instead.

Drinking coffee became more than just a custom in these coffee houses. It became a ritual that took people out of their private sphere and brought them together around a table. These places offered a secular ritual, a moment of shared experience that held society together.

Coffee houses were such an important social phenomenon that philosophers and sociologists later described them as the cradle of the modern public sphere. This was where newspapers were read, pamphlets were disseminated and heated discussions took place on art, politics and economics. Access did not depend on social rank or noble title, but on participation. The coffee house was a breeding ground for debate and democratic culture.

In the 20th century, coffee houses became a 'third place': a space in between home and work where people could come together freely and informally. These venues – cafés, neighbourhood shops or squares – strengthen the sense of community.

Coffee still plays a connecting role today. Think of the coffee corner at the office, trendy bars with professional baristas or family celebrations with coffee and cake. Coffee provides an opportunity for meeting, conversation and relaxation, but can also provide a moment of me-time or allow one to escape the day's rat race.

Who is your favourite coffee companion, and where do you drink?

30



Coffee pot, Master with two flaming hearts, Mons, 1747-1748

The coffee pot was produced by the master with two flaming hearts. The model closely resembles slightly older examples from Mons. The weight *34 ounces* (1,045.84 grams of silver) was engraved on the base, which roughly corresponds to the current weight including the wooden handle (1,080 grams). Works by this silversmith – sometimes identified as Pierre-Joseph de Bettignies (1702-1778) – are known to have been produced between 1733 and 1749-1750. A similar coffee pot, albeit more richly decorated with shells and rocaille, bears the escutcheon of Claude-Antoine-Pierre Rault de Ramsault de Raulcourt (1721-1776) and Marie-Ursule-Caroline de Benoist (*1725), who were married in 1747.

Pierre Lunden purchased the coffee pot on 26 October 1966 as a *Pièce importante* for 79,200 Belgian francs at an auction at the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels.

31



Interior of a London coffee house, anonymous, c. 1650–1750

This drawing depicts the interior of a London coffee house. A maid stands behind a counter with a white lace curtain, a waiter takes clay pipes out of a box and in the middle another waiter pours coffee. On the right is a group of men with newspapers and cups, with a kettle over the fire in the background and paintings and notices on the wall.

People gathered in coffee houses to exchange information, discuss politics and art, drink coffee, smoke and read pamphlets. The use of coffee houses as a forum for political discussion prompted concern among the authorities. King Charles II banned them in 1675. The exchange of information in coffee houses led to the development of financial journalism, the modernisation of the London Stock Exchange and the incorporation of companies such as Lloyd's Insurance. This drawing is a rare visual record of a London coffee house in the late 17th century, in a style similar to that of fan decorations from the same period. The clothing worn by the subjects suggests a date around the 1690s.

WHAT CAN YOU LEARN FROM A COFFEE POT?

A silver coffee pot may seem like a utilitarian object, but for silversmith Max Gielis, goldsmith Michel Mekke and metal restorer Annick Mertens, it became the subject of a master-apprentice project in the studio of the DIVA museum. This project focuses on passing down craftsmanship and expertise, and is supported by the Flemish Government.

Together, they chose a coffee pot from the Pierre Lunden collection in the DIVA collection. They studied the object, investigated how it was made and translated that into their own practice. For two years, they worked an average of one day a week on a reproduction, and each created a new, contemporary interpretation.

The pot for the reproduction was forged from a silver plate, the feet and spout were first created in wax, the lid was chiselled and the handle was carved from wood. Only then did they choose the most successful pieces to assemble everything to form the pot. The result is not an exact copy, but a composite object that shows the traces of study, practice and dialogue.

Their journey was not only about technical expertise, but above all about insight. How exactly is a coffee pot constructed? What choices does a silversmith make in terms of shape, construction and finish? By experimenting together, questioning each other and drawing on historical examples, they discovered together how craftsmanship unfolds step by step.

In this way, the coffee pot became a bridge between the past and the present: heritage that can only be admired in a display case inspired new work and shared insight. What you see here is not just an object, but time, dedication, collaboration and intangible heritage in action.

Which object would you like to learn something from?

32

Reproduction of the 'coffee pot, Master with two flaming hearts', Max Gielis, Annick Mertens and Michel Mekke

A silver coffee pot may seem like a utilitarian object, but for Max Gielis, Michel Mekke and Annick Mertens, it became a master-apprentice project. Together, they selected a coffee pot from Pierre Lunden's donation to the DIVA collection. They studied the object, investigated how it was made and translated that into their own practice. For two years, they worked an average of one day a week on a reproduction, and each created a new, contemporary interpretation.

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Table with tools

Overview of the tools and some of the pieces from the master-apprentice project, including hammers and stakes, wax models and forged bodies in tombac. Forging a coffee pot is a slow and intensive process, combining technique, patience and aesthetic insight. The process starts with an in-depth study of the object. Photographs, drawings and preliminary studies help to accurately capture the shape and details. Based on this, moulds and models are made and custom tools are crafted, such as hammers and stakes, which fit perfectly in the hand for the thousands of taps needed to shape the silver.

The participants first practise with tombac, a cheaper alternative to silver, to master the corpus and the shapes. After this, the various parts are produced: the lid, the spout, legs and ornaments, often first made in wax and then cast. Each part is carefully finished and finally assembled into a complete coffee pot. The process takes two years, with sessions lasting a few hours at a time, so that the participants can combine the intensive work with their other activities. The emphasis of the project is not only on transferring techniques, but also on mastering silversmithing: attention to tools, materials and procedures is essential, and each phase requires concentration, perseverance and precision.

WHAT IS CRAFTSMANSHIP?

Craftsmanship is an attitude. "Craftsmanship is the desire to do a job well for its own sake," writes sociologist Richard Sennett in his book *The Craftsman*. He describes craftsmanship as a fundamental human impulse that can provide meaning and enrich our lives.

Craftsmanship can be recognised in many different fields: in the precision of a surgeon, in the care of a chef perfecting a dish, in the concentration of a musician practising a passage over and over again, or in a computer programmer writing, rewriting and refining code. It is always the same principle: the desire to do a job well.

In silversmithing, you can see this process in a very tangible way. An object is not created in one go, it slowly grows. Every hammer tap, every manipulation, every correction is part of a slow process. Mistakes are not erased, but form the key to better understanding. In this way, a craftsman not only builds an object, but also knowledge, patience and craftsmanship.

Craftsmanship goes beyond technique. It requires an open attitude: daring to look, listen, try and improve. Craftsmen often work together, exchanging ideas and learning from each other. In this way, a community is created in which knowledge is shared and enriched.

Today, craftsmanship may seem rare at first glance, but if you look carefully, you will see craftsmanship all around you: the pole vaulter who wants to jump higher and higher, the journalist who keeps digging, or ... The master-apprentice project and the silver coffee pot, with all its details and concealed labour, remind us that value lies both in the result and in the path to it.

Craftsmanship is not only the ability to make something, but also to understand and respect what time, care and practice involve.

Where do you recognise craftsmanship?

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Video installation: on craftsmanship, coffee and makerspaces

This video installation explores craftsmanship in the past, present and future. Tonny Beentjes, metal conservator and restorer, provides historical insight. He also researched the booklet *Wegwijs voor aankomende zilver- en goudsmeden* (Guide for aspiring silversmiths and goldsmiths) by Willem van Laer (1674-1722), one of the first publications on passing down craftsmanship. The present is represented by three members of the master-apprentice project, who explain what craftsmanship means today. For the future, we spoke to futurist Eva De Smedt about possible, likely and desirable scenarios regarding expertise. The importance of coffee was also a key theme here: how coffee houses connect and function as 'third places'. We linked this concept to studios and *makerspaces*, places where people come together, learn and exchange ideas. Researcher Vic Bervoets explains the young landscape of *makerspaces* in Flanders and Brussels. We also offer an intimate and detailed look inside the studio, where the members of the master-apprentice project are at work.

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Willem van Laer, *Weg-wyzer voor aankomende goud- en zilversmeden*, 1754-1788

This handbook, written by the Zwolle-based silversmith Willem van Laer and originally printed around 1721 in Amsterdam, offered young gold and silver-smiths practical instructions, formulas and craft secrets. Van Laer explains techniques step-by-step, such as soldering, polishing, casting and making wax models, as well as the physical and chemical principles behind them.

At a time when a lot of knowledge was passed down orally and as a secret of the guild, van Laer made his professional knowledge accessible and lasting. His *Weg-wyzer* helped students become independent more quickly, and portrayed smithing as a craft that requires skill, knowledge and intellect. The handbook remained popular and was reprinted in 1730 and 1768, ensuring van Laer's lasting reputation and legacy.

READING COFFEE GROUNDS?

If you look closely at the hands of a craftsman or woman, you see more than just technique. These hands contain knowledge, a memory that cannot be put into words. A butcher wielding a knife, a silversmith shaping silver with a steady hand, a barista making the perfect espresso: they no longer need to think about it. Their bodies know what to do.

For centuries, this embodied knowledge was passed down, but since the industrial revolution, work has increasingly been taken out of human hands: first by machines, now by algorithms. What used to be the hammer is now the code. Machines do not get tired, and artificial intelligence learns to improve by itself.

This prompts questions. If we leave learning, practising and acting to machines, will there be anything human left? Fortunately, acquiring a skill is more than just efficient production. It shapes our senses, our patience, our ability to observe and understand.

Perhaps the future of craftsmanship does not lie in resisting technology, but in collaborating with it. The maker of tomorrow uses digital tools, but retains a feel for the material, the form and the meaning. Craftsmanship is evolving from a battle between man and machine to a dialogue in which intuition, machines and algorithms complement each other.

Thinking about the future is always a bit like reading coffee grounds, but one thing seems clear: as long as there are people who want to *feel* how something is created and have the desire to do a job well, craftsmanship and skilled work will not die out. It will simply change form.

What possible future scenarios do you see for craftsmanship?

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Max Gielis

This new work is inspired by the coffee pot *Master with two flaming hearts*. Since such large pots are no longer needed these days, Max produced a smaller, more intimate version, intended for coffee during a tête-à-tête.

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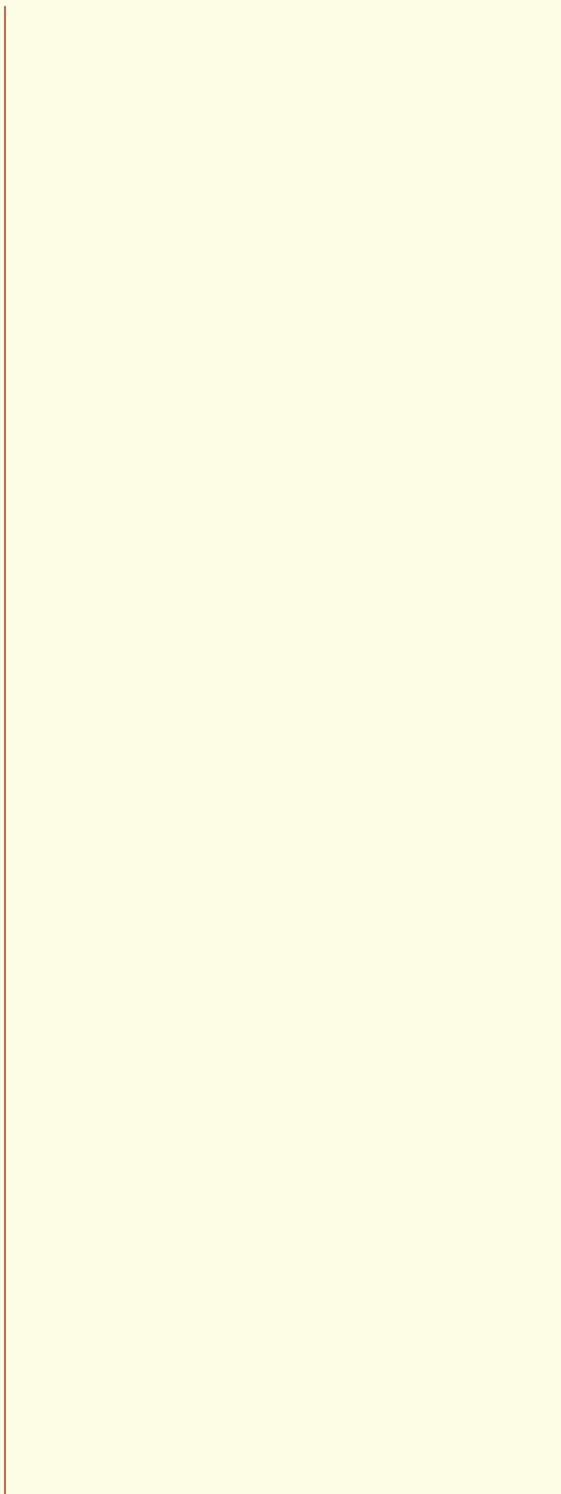
Annick Mertens

This new work is based on research into the coffee pot *Master with two flaming hearts*. Annick went back to the core of its function: pouring a liquid, in this case water, and created a new, functional water jug.

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Michel Mekke

This new work is inspired by the coffee pot *Master with two flaming hearts*. Michel left out all decoration and frills and used the corpus of the coffee pot as the basis for a functional vase.



FIFTY YEARS OF PIERRE LUNDEN'S LEGACY

Jonkheer Pierre Emile Marie Lunden passed away on 13 April 1975 in Ixelles. He was about to turn 88, having been born on 29 April 1887 in Bisschoppenhof Castle in Deurne. He had grown up there with his (half-) brothers and sisters. Pierre was a son from the second marriage of Albéric Lunden (1840-1899) to Valentine Van Hal (1857-1914). By his birth alone, Pierre enjoyed privileged aristocratic and artistic connections.

Pierre's father was an amateur photographer and a descendant of Willem Lunden (1624-1692), who, through his second wife, had family ties with Helena Fourment, the second wife of the painter Pieter Paul Rubens.

Pierre's mother was a talented pianist who was descended on her mother's side from the painters Ignatius Josephus and Petrus Joannes van Regemorter, and on her father's side from Jean-Jacques Van Hal. In 1815, both Petrus Joannes van Regemorter and Jean-Jacques Van Hal, as members of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts, played an important role in bringing back paintings by Pieter Paul Rubens to Antwerp. Paintings that had been claimed by the French twenty years earlier. As a token of gratitude for his efforts, Jean-Jacques Van Hal received a gold snuff box from King William I of the Netherlands. This exceptional snuffbox, produced in Paris and designed by Juste-Aurèle Meissonnier, had an eventful life, as it was buried in the garden of Bisschoppenhof Castle during difficult times. Thanks to the

good care of the staff, in particular Romanie and Marie Louise Coppejans, it stood the test of time.

Insurance broker and amateur

During the First World War, Pierre Lunden stayed in Manchester with his brother Philippe. When they returned to Belgium, they took up positions as directors at the Royal Exchange Assurance company, whose office was located on the Meir in Antwerp. The Belgian headquarters of this London-based company moved to Ixelles. Pierre therefore reluctantly moved to Ixelles.

Pierre Lunden was interested in both culture and nature. His main passions were collecting art, music and gardening. Like his mother, he played the piano and was a great admirer of Robert Schumann. As a self-taught musician, having never studied at an academy or conservatory, he wrote numerous compositions of his own. During his stay in England, he developed a strong interest in growing rare flowers, especially orchids and dahlias. A dahlia was named after him in 1931. He was also an illustrator and sculptor. He copied porcelain decorations and designed the cover of the poetry collection *Le cycle des jours et des mois* for his good friend, antique dealer Jean-Pierre Van Goidsenhoven.

Pierre Lunden the porcelain collector

Lunden and Van Goidsenhoven shared a passion for Chinese porcelain. Pierre Lunden collected porcelain up until the mid-1950s, some of which he purchased

from Van Goidsenhoven. Lunden published several articles on the subject: *La céramique chinoise* and *Trente ans avec les Tsing: notes sur la porcelaine de Chine de collection*. In 1936, Van Goidsenhoven dedicated one of his publications on Chinese porcelain to Pierre Lunden.

Pierre Lunden's silver collection

Pierre Lunden believed that a collector should strive to improve quality and that the collection should evolve in line with life itself. We do not know why he shifted his focus from porcelain to silver, but it is a fact that he started collecting silver from the Prince-Bishopric of Liège and the Southern Netherlands in the 1950s. He was willing to use part of his porcelain collection to finance purchases of precious metalwork at auctions, from antique dealers or from fellow collectors. He also attached great importance to preserving or acquiring family silver. The interior of Bisschoppenhof Castle, the name referring to the bishops of Liège, his attachment to the city of Antwerp and his ancestors' family ties with Rubens were not only important factors in how he built up his collection, but also influenced his wish to find a good home for it after his death. The Rubenshuis was first considered, but in the end, on 8 September 1970, it was stipulated in his will that his entire collection would be bequeathed to the Provincial Museum of Arts and Crafts, located in Sterckshof Castle in Deurne, a stone's throw from the house where he was born. Piet Baudouin, director of the provincial cultural service and honorary curator of the Sterckshof Museum, and René Pandelaers, son of Lunden's maid Romanie Coppejans, played a crucial role in the discussion and follow-up of the bequest.

When his bequest was accepted by the Province of Antwerp, the total value of the antique silverware, porcelain and various art objects was estimated at 11,462,000 Belgian francs. In 1992, the bequest was one of the foundations for the establishment of the Silver Museum. It still forms a substantial part of the DIVA museum, and is essential for research into silver from the Southern Netherlands and the Prince-Bishopric of Liège.

The collection, consisting almost exclusively of silverware from the 17th and 18th centuries, is well balanced both typologically and geographically. Almost all the important production centres in modern-day Belgium are represented (Aat, Antwerp, Mons, Bruges, Brussels, Tournai, Ghent, Ypres, Kortrijk, Leuven, Liège, Mechelen and Namur), although Antwerp silver got relatively more attention. The collection also includes a few candelabras from Maastricht and rare silver from Hasselt and Ostend. This silver will be a matter of advancing insight or in-depth research, as the sugar bowl and teapot were initially identified as silverware from Virton and Bruges respectively. In terms of the type of objects, the focus is on corpus work. Cutlery, often a specific and, on closer inspection, less expensive area of collecting, is barely represented, except for a 17th-century spoon from Antwerp, an 18th-century sugar spoon from Antwerp and two knives with porcelain handles and silver blades from the family collection. Cups, vases, bowls, dishes, platters and trays, sprinklers, mustard pots, salt cellars, oil and vinegar sets and sauce boats, teapots and teacups, coffee and chocolate pots, stoves, candlesticks, snuff boxes, toilet boxes and soap boxes are well represented. For larger or rare objects, Lunden limited himself to a good specimen or set:

a sconce, a mill cup, a kettle, a washbasin with basin and a tureen with dish. Silverware related to worship or devotion only makes up a small part of the collection: altar candelabras, a pair of ampullae, a sanctuary lamp, a holy water font, a statue of Our Lady and an openwork book cover with floral motifs. The silver binding features *Christelijcke gebeden en litanien voor de catholijcke jonckheyt* (Christian prayers and litanies for the Catholic squire). A rare work with a fictive address in Antwerp, published in 1710 by Gysbert Gasiniet, who was actually active in The Hague.

Masterpieces

Each purchase was meticulously documented and annotated in French by Pierre Lunden. The marks were carefully copied onto the index cards. Descriptions such as important, of capital importance or (very) rare were entirely accurate. His assessments, even after so many years, proved to be correct, as on 24 January 2025, no fewer than seven silver or gold cultural artefacts from his collection were recognised as masterpieces by the Flemish government: a 17th-century statue of Our Lady with later additions by the house Constant Minne-Coone (Ghent, 1835/43-1869) and Wolfers Frères (Brussels, 1942-1954/75); a pair of square pipe candelabras (Brussels, 1687-1690); a tea canister by Michiel van de Kerckhove (Bruges, 1720-1721); a teapot by Martinus de Clerck (Ostend, 1731-1732); a snuff box by Pierre Croissant (Paris 1739-1740); a tureen on a dish by Antoon de Raedt (Mechelen, 1765-1766) and a *Persane*-style coffee pot by Jean Louis Philippront (Aat, 1783). The gold snuff box and the tureen from Mechelen bearing the escutcheon of Léopold-Joseph-Simon van Gameren and Reine-Jeanne-Joséphine Lunden de Ter

Elst came from the family collection. The pipe candelabras, tea canister and teapot were purchased from the usual dealers in Brussels, namely Georges Giroux, Lucien Delplace and the art auctions at the Centre for Fine Arts. The silver statue of Our Lady was purchased from Van Herck in Antwerp. One of his earliest acquisitions was the Brussels candelabra from the collection of the de Schoutheete de Tervarent family. Pierre Lunden immediately set the bar high with this purchase, both in terms of rarity and price. Lunden only purchased items abroad in exceptional cases. This was the case for the tea canister from Bruges from the collection of David David-Weill, which was sold at the Hôtel Drouot in Paris on 4 and 5 May 1972. With the exception of a few family heirlooms, the pipe candelabras and the tea canister were given the highest insurance value when the bequest was accepted.

Dr. Wim Nys, curator DIVA



File G. & A. De Coster concerning the purchase of a coffee pot by the then unidentified master with crowned and bearded profile head from Bergen, Brussels, [1956] - DIVA, File S75/82



Photograph of display cabinet 1 in room 2 in Pierre Lunden's home in Ixelles, as described in his will, with a kettle by the Antwerp master with a beehive from the family collection on the top shelf and, on the bottom shelf from left to right: Coffee pot, Jacques-Philippe Leducq, Mons, 1740-1741 or 1741-1742 (inv. no. S75/82); Chocolate pot, Augustin Jozef Vandewinckele, Kortrijk, 1779 (inv. no. S75/66); Coffee pot, Master with two flaming hearts, Mons, 1747-1748 (inv. no. S75/83). Above the display case hangs the portrait of four-year-old Pierre Lunden painted by Alexander van Antro (inv. no. S75/222) - DIVA, Lunden bequest file.



Anne-Marie Claessens-Peré (*1946) in conversation with Governor Andries Kinsbergen (1926-2016) at the opening of the Lundenzaal on 13 October 1977 in the Provincial Museum of Arts and Crafts - Sterckshof. On the left, the portrait photograph of Valentine Van Hal by Albéric Lunden (inv. no. P75/8); in the centre, the 17th-century silver statue of Our Lady (inv. no. S75/92); and on the right, a watercolour painting with a view of the Schijn River by Petrus Josephus van Regemorter (inv. no. P75/4). - DIVA, Lunden bequest file - Photo service Province of Antwerp

THE COFFEE POT WITH TWO FLAMING HEARTS. ON CRAFTSMANSHIP, COFFEE HOUSES AND THE STUDIO AS A SOCIAL SPACE

In the studio of the DIVA museum, a coffee pot takes centre stage. Not just any coffee pot, but a historical piece with a story. It is the coffee pot of the Master with two flaming hearts, produced in Mons in 1747-1748. This coffee pot was the focus of the master-apprentice project *From historical silver to contemporary craftsmanship*, a two-year project in which silversmith Max Gielis shared his knowledge with metal restorer Annick Mertens and goldsmith Michel Mekke. This project, supported by the Flemish Government as a grant for passing down craftsmanship, offered participants the opportunity to deepen their knowledge. Together, they selected this coffee pot from the DIVA collection. They studied the object, investigated how it was made and translated that into their own practice. For two years, they worked an average of one day a week on a reproduction of the coffee pot, and each created a new, contemporary interpretation. This project was more than just passing down technical expertise: it was an exercise in focus, time and mutual coordination. The coffee pot served as a lens through which the past and present, thinking and doing, became visible.

What is craftsmanship? American sociologist Richard Sennett describes craftsmanship as an enduring, basic human impulse, the desire to do a job well for its own sake. For Sennett, craftsmanship is not so much about acquiring skills, but is primarily a way of being. It is not about efficiency or

profit, but about the action itself. In silversmithing, this is reflected in thousands of hammer taps, in the interaction between hand and material, in the patience to let the metal speak until a form emerges that seems self-evident.

The master-apprentice project at the DIVA studio subtly restored an essential part of a more conventional learning environment, which is generally lacking in current training programmes. While courses for jewellery focus on basic skills, this project offered the opportunity to reconstruct a silver object from start to finish. Knowledge was not imparted through courses, but together – without any hierarchy – through observation, experimentation, correction and planning.

This form of knowledge transfer is slow, physical and relational. The tap of the hammer, the grip of the hand and the glow of the silver are nuances that cannot be written down, but can only be revealed through countless repetitions. An object is not created in one process, it slowly grows. Each manipulation is a step in understanding the material. In this way, one not only builds an object, but also knowledge, patience and insight. Craftsmanship goes beyond technique; it is, as Sennett writes, an attitude. It is a fundamental human impulse that can provide meaning and enrich our lives. We recognise this attitude in many areas: in the precision of the surgeon, in the care of the chef who perfects

a dish, in the concentration of the musician who endlessly practises a passage over and over, or in the programmer who writes and rewrites code. There is always the same desire: to do something well, not out of necessity, but out of dedication.

II

The choice of the coffee pot as the central object for this master-apprentice project was no coincidence, as it embodies not only historical craftsmanship, but also a social dimension. The coffee pot is an object that invites ritual. It mediates between the individual and the community. Pouring coffee means sharing warmth, time and attention. In this sense, the silver coffee pot of the Master with two flaming hearts becomes an object with social significance.

Early modern coffee houses formed the backdrop to a new social structure. When coffee reached Europe in the 17th century, it not only added something to our palate, but also set something in motion in society. In the coffee houses of London, Paris and Vienna, what the German philosopher and sociologist Jürgen Habermas later described as the *bourgeois public sphere* emerged. In these coffee houses, newspapers were read, pamphlets were shared, and art, politics, and economics were discussed. Places where citizens practised speaking, listening and debating. Access did not depend on noble title or social rank, but on participation. In this way, coffee became an invitation to conversation, dialogue and democratic culture.

In the late 1980s, American sociologist Ray Oldenburg referred to these venues as 'third places'. Neutral spaces between home (first place) and work (second place) where people come together to relax,

exchange ideas and build community ties. They are low-barrier and accessible places that foster social cohesion and create a sense of community. The classic examples are cafés, parks and libraries.

Today, we see that third places are under pressure and have been replaced by commercial coffee bars or digital working environments. Nevertheless, we see that public studios, collective workshops, *fablabs* and *makerspaces* are performing this role once again. They do not offer a service, but a place where people come together to practise, fail and improve themselves. The studio of the DIVA museum fits into this continuum. It is a space that is not only productive, but also reflective.

If the coffee pot symbolises community, then the silversmith's hammer brings people together around a shared activity. In this sense, the master-apprentice project is a social project, as it restores a form of intimacy in which people can learn in close proximity to one another.

Learning therefore becomes a social act. As Sennett points out, craftsmanship has a moral dimension: it requires cooperation, respect for materials and for each other. The master is not an authority who possesses knowledge, but a figure who maintains relationships. Over the long duration of the master-apprentice project, spread over two years with weekly sessions, a rhythm developed that reflects craftsmanship itself. The slow progress turns the studio into a space for thinking, reflection and research. In this sense, the master-apprentice project is not a course, but a practice related to what is sometimes referred to in contemporary art as practice-based research.

III

A master-apprentice project poses questions that each generation has to answer each time: *how can craftsmanship be preserved?* Not by preserving it under a glass dome, but by practising it over and over. Craftsmanship exists as long as it is practised.

In the 18th century, the Zwolle-based silversmith Willem van Laer put craftsmanship into words in his *Weg-wyzer* (Guide) for aspiring gold and silversmiths. It is even one of the first manuals of its kind to shatter the secrecy that prevailed in the guild system. His handbook is a more than commendable attempt to systematise and therefore preserve the craft of silversmithing and goldsmithing. Nevertheless, in some respects this handbook was limited to abstractions, and the practical aspects escape any form of definition. The master-apprentice project is also finely balanced between these two forms of imparting knowledge: written and embodied knowledge. Documentation of the process, drawings, moulds and film footage form a contemporary *Weg-wyzer*, but the practice itself remains intangible heritage, albeit tangible through the actions it produces and continues to repeat.

Here, preservation does not mean recording, but actively repeating and passing down actions. In the master-apprentice project, preserving knowledge is embedded in the actions themselves: in hammering, annealing and polishing. Each tap echoes previous taps, each improvement builds on previous improvements. The craftsman's memory is not in words, but in their actions.

The master-apprentice project makes that

principle tangible. Imparting knowledge is not a one-way street from old to young, but a circular process in which all parties learn by doing. The 'master' is reminded of the reason behind their manipulations, the 'apprentice' discovers that learning consists mainly of repetition. In this way, a community of hands is created, as well as a collective form of memory that cannot be archived.

Preserving craftsmanship is not a nostalgic gesture, but an act with an eye to the future. By continuing to create, we also continue to innovate. Craftsmanship proves its vitality precisely through its mutability, and each new piece adds a nuance to a tradition. In this sense, 'repeating in order to preserve' is not the end of a history, but rather the start of a new story.

Silversmithing is slow. The time it takes to craft silver seems obsolete today, where speed equates to value. Yet silver smithing shows that there can also be progress if we slow down. The master-apprentice project at the DIVA museum was not only an experiment, it was also a statement: it proposes relearning how to learn, by slowing down in order to understand better.

If we see the public studio or *makerspace* as a new social space, then that is also a form of resistance. Against the digitalisation of labour and against the replacement of touch by algorithms. It reminds us that knowledge can also be embodied and is not only to be found in text or on a screen. Each piece bears traces of hands, breath, saliva and conversation. It is precisely in these traces and conversations that the future of craftsmanship lies.

The master who crafted a silver coffee pot

in Mons in 1747–1748 probably already knew that craftsmanship emerges from dialogue, because, whether or not it is coincidence, his master's mark consists not of one, but of two flaming hearts. A *mark* that making something will always be a form of encounter. And perhaps that is what craftsmanship whispers to us today: an invitation, or as Tom Waits sings *"Meet me out for coffee, where we'll talk about it all."*

Tom Iriks, public relations, DIVA museum

1. Sennett, Richard. *The Craftsman*, Amsterdam: Boom, 2009, p. 15–20
2. Idem.
3. Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1962.
4. Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*, New York: Paragon House, 1989.
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6. Willem van Laer, *Weg-wyzer voor aankomende goud- en zilversmeden*, DIVA library, inv. no. OD-3002

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