

Oboe collection Han de Vries in Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has acquired the famous collection of oboes of the well-known oboe player Han de Vries (1941). The collection exists of 69 oboes (most early or rare examples) and 14 'works on paper', such as fingering tables. A selection of the instruments and objects is until January 22th on display in one of the rooms of the Rijksmuseum.

Han de Vries stopped playing the oboe several years ago, on Dutch television he confessed that during his musical career he had to use tranquilizers to deal with the tensions of the concerts. And he knew of several other musicians with the same problems (Han de Vries played in the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra). But it must also have been worrying to have such a lovely instrument collection in his home in Amsterdam. The transfer of the oboes and other stuff to the Rijksmuseum was not an easy process and lasted many months: money had to be found and there are with such transactions always issues to be solved in relation to last will declarations, insurance policies or taxes. It was the explicit desire of Han de Vries that his complete collection went to the Rijksmuseum; he even asked me two years ago if I could take measures if he should die before the transfer process was finished. The Rijksmuseum has with this acquisition now one of the finest oboe collections in the world, including some exceptional fine instruments by Dutch makers of the 17/18th century.



Oboe by F.Richters, in brown stained boxwood, ivory rings and silver keys.