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Margriet Benak

The paintings of the Groningen Ploeg Altink painter (1885-1971) were fun risen in price. And suddenly surfaced - spring 1991 - at various auction houses between Groningen and Amsterdam in many Altink. Only they were all false. At least, that was the judgment of gallery owner Renée Smithuis in Heiloo. Great panic. The renowned auction house Sotheby's pulled - seized by doubt - the dubious Altink 'Havengezicht Daman' and 'Winter' at the last moment from the auction. Other auction houses, including Christie's, followed. Out of fear. The Altink were quickly labeled as 'infected'. The trail to the contributor, who served several names, led by Cornelis Teunis van Loenen, a painter living in Holthe. Are oblivious. A criminal investigation ensued. Van Loenen even went several days behind bars and 31 paintings, including alleged Altink counterfeits, were along for further investigation. In March 1993 Justice blew the case. Due to "lack of legal and convincing evidence." For if 'forger' depicted Cor van Loenen, who caught later nine thousandths of compensation, the matter was settled. But his opponent, gallery owner Smithuis, surrendered so easily won. The Altink flawed as it does not and the investigation nor wrong. So Justice must do its homework, only better, find Smithuis, supported by the Groningen art dealer and Team specialist Cees Hofsteenge.

Smithuis silent temporarily. But hoping silently that justice will prevail. And Cor van Loenen? That would finally rest at the front. "There's been so awful lot of dirt came over me. And the art world is basically a good world. But all seems rotten fish swimming. Hebbberds that are 't. They save and cover each other for money, power and prestige. So does that. "Rest is Cor van Loenen not awarded. Smithuis keeps him and his Altink safely stored in a vault

- Haunting in its hunt for the truth. Because she then so mistaken? Although Renée Smithuis no enjoys great popularity in the art world - "she is an absolute troublemaker which at all costs its equivalent will bring", "it's like a witch hunt" or "She simply has a big mouth" to many it still give equal . Clarity on 'true or false' has not, to date the Altink Van Loenen. As is the case dismissed by Justice last year, remains the doubt about the collection Altink. "If Cor van Loenen itself is so convinced of the authenticity of his Altink why he does now in the collection room? He called last year so that he was fully rehabilitated and no doubt existed. If so, you still walk back to Sotheby's to try again ?, "Find the Groninger Altink scholar and art dealer Sibbele Ongerling. But he has not discovered again. "Possibly the best." Ongerling has when auctioneer Rob Snape Sotheby's rushed to him in Groningen traveled with the accused Altink 'Winter' and 'Havengezicht Den Helder "seen enough" That was certainly not Altink. Before that I have seen too much of his work in my life. "

What others are also thinking and saying, Cor van Loenen one thing is certain: his Altink really. Only he keeps them now only as safe and secure. He's already hefty bumped his nose. "And

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I became suspicious in a healthy way "in his farm to Holthe waving the painter meanwhile furiously with him so conveniently fallen material examination of the Forensic Laboratory in Rijswijk in mid 1992. The conclusion.; there is not backdated. "So they are good," says Van Loenen. But the public prosecutor emphatically stated in a letter: "It is no authenticity certificates.

There followed a written examination. Because the material research has now demonstrated that there is simply not unduly with J. Altink was signed. But in his zeal to convince the outside world of his innocence, Cor van Loenen had disregarded the results of the written examination. According to an official report of the handwriting expert is however certainly something wrong with the signature on some suspicious paintings. The conclusion of the writing-expert on four out of five examined Altink is destructive, "The signatures are unlikely to be of the hand of the painter J. Altink." The expert finds too many deviations in the suspect work as compared to the signatures in undisputed Altink towels. Only the report by Van Loenen as blasting result only put in writing by the Forensic Laboratory on 15 June 1993. The research into the Altink counterfeits is already stopped long (March 1993). The late appearance of reports is due to prolonged illness of the scripture knowledgeable expert. But in January, is the essence of the conclusion of the ill handwriting expert does nicely by a call to justice by a colleague. So justice could continue with the case. But in January, is the essence of the conclusion of the ill handwriting expert does nicely by a call to justice by a colleague. So justice could continue with the case. But in January, is the essence of the conclusion of the ill handwriting expert does nicely by a call to justice by a colleague. So justice could continue with the case.

How destructive writing science research afterwards on paper may seem, the Amsterdam public prosecutor LAJ Dun maintains that "lack of conclusive evidence was provided for a criminal", "Then you have a lot more needed proof. And just to prove that the paintings are fake, you are not there yet. it must be demonstrated that the trader had since science also. And I have my decision to dismiss, then based on the entire police report. It consisted of many pages. "

Cor van Loenen refers to the report of the expert writing to the trash. From Altink according to the painter known that he was careless with signings. And the man has created thousands of works. Then it is logical that there is a difference in his signatures. Cor van Loenen has even a study of it. And therefore perhaps the leading expert when it comes to the signatures of Altink, finds himself. The Groninger Altink specialist Sibelle Ongerling declares that Altink just 'had a pretty steady hand sign. "Just some simple, unfortunately. One does have to speak but just a few hours to sit for, and it seems quite something. "

Prosecutor Renee Smithuis grips with its ally Cees Hofsteenge writing science research, and especially the late appearance of it, as one of the many failures, thereby reopening the counterfeit-affair is justified. Smithuis' counsel, Mr. Hammer from Amsterdam, agrees that the authorities will at that time have interfered with the forgery affair, coarse stabbing have dropped. And scientific research into the signature is for the prosecution to reconsider the matter definitely a novelty. "At the moment the public prosecutor took the decision to dismiss the case, he was conscious report does not even officially in writing. And what now says a phone call! "The research is as mr. Hamer just 'one of the four weak elements in the investigation. What other "technical" mistakes are, he would rather keep to themselves, until the Court makes a statement, "What they have done is lean. But hey, the prosecution will not make daily with paintings forgery. "Cor van Loenen puts up another document, which according to him the evidence that the

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Altink are indeed good. Because he has a valuation of his canvases. Last year, drawn up by certified appraiser and broker in art W. Auke van der Werff to Broek in Waterland. Not the very first, says Van Loenen. Van der Werff, a top expert widely respected modern art that was for years associated with Sotheby's, the twelve controversial Altink valued piece by piece, in August 1993, several months after Justice decided to abandon a criminal case. The total taxatiesom the controversial Altink collection has been set at 136,000 guilders. But W. Auke van der Werff have a number of observations, So the valuation is to be used only for insurance and not for commercial or legal purposes. And moreover, the assessment is preliminary, he wrote in a separate letter.

But according to Cor van Loenen does not diminish the value of the appraisal report. "A valuation is a valuation. And feed you only if you are convinced that the work is good. So its authenticity certificates. "The W. by Auke van der Werff accompanying letter in which the top expert pronounce his doubts about the authenticity of the work and the artist specifically recommends several experts Altink collection available yet to agree, Van Loenen find extremely cowardly. "You appraises or not. And from that. Winter is valued at 22,000 guilders and Hill Landscape Pic de Luc at 15,000 florins. You do not come to such amounts if in doubt. "Appraiser Van der Werf has never doubted August last year on the good faith of Cor van Loenen. Now he regrets. And he, in retrospect, might have done better with a big bow to walk around the disputed Altink. He just wanted to help the man from Holthe. To ensure his paintings. Everyone had been kicking him. And Smithuis was so unsophisticated engaged. She screamed bloody murder. It looked like a witch hunt, Van der Werff retrospect: "Moreover, it is very easy to immediately say 'false'." So he valued. And wrote in an accompanying letter: "It is not a collection which I immediately think this is all good ... It is recommended that in the future to see the collection again with some experts for a more definitive judgment ... The origin of so big party Altink is too vague and amateurish way of framing is not right ... "and finally:

Auke W. van der Werf thinks Cor van Loenen not neatly omspringt with its valuation. And it would be an authenticity certificate. is already completely was beyond words. "Al Van Loenen had only followed my advice, ask for another few experts for a final judgment. The wick was thus off. Now the story only gets more complicated and warriger. And I fear that Van Loenen here is so bitten that he believes his own lies. "For Cor van Loenen has Auke W. van der Werff been dismissed. A thick letter has gone towards Broek in Waterland: "What good is a pathetic sentimental story. Your Values. Yes or no. He's a frightened weasel. And why should I get experts again at. There is already a report of the Forensic Laboratory. And have all the auction houses not occupied my Altink because they enjoyed it work? Those are all top experts. And stood in a catalog of an auction even one printed in full color. So we are talking more about "The origin of his Altink according to the Van Loenen nothing wrong. "Why vaguely" The Altink he collected properly. Initially, with his now deceased sister in Schoorl. And through what barter (for antique paintings) and not the bank lent money Cor van Loenen was able in 1990 to expand its Altink hefty collection. Oil cloths, gouaches, watercolors and drawings, more than 30 pieces. He moved them from one somewhere in Limburg resident Van den Berg respectively - "an old And stood in a catalog of an auction even one printed in full color. So we are talking more about "The origin of his Altink according to the Van Loenen nothing wrong. "Why vaguely" The Altink he collected properly. Initially, with his now deceased sister in Schoorl. And through what barter (for antique paintings) and not the bank lent money Cor van Loenen was able in 1990 to expand its Altink hefty collection. Oil cloths, gouaches, watercolors and drawings, more than 30 pieces. He moved them from one somewhere in Limburg resident Van den Berg respectively - "an old And stood in a catalog of an auction even one printed in full color. So we are talking more about "The origin of his Altink according to the Van Loenen nothing wrong. "Why vaguely" The Altink he collected properly. Initially, with his now deceased sister in Schoorl. And through what barter (for antique paintings) and not the bank lent money Cor van Loenen was able in 1990 to expand its Altink hefty collection. Oil cloths, gouaches, water

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known - and a certain Jansen from Amsterdam. "I was so delighted with the collection. And I have never doubted its authenticity. Addresses so I never asked. "The goods Altink, says Van Loenen, intended to keep. "I am not a dealer but a painter and collector." But Holthe had to be built a studio at the farm. And though Van Loenen stood on its head, the bank lent nothing. He should sell some work from his collection of paintings. Through ads Van Loenen tried to interest individuals. Thus in 1990 he also met late gallery owner Renee Smithuis in Heiloo. She harbored a keen interest, was keen on Van Loenen, but they did not buy. But she had another Altink enthusiast.

The story of Renée Smithuis want them then immediately saw the work shown by Altink was false. Only the gallery owner had then no appetite to disappoint the Van Loenens. By it referred interested Altink enthusiast, in Blaricum resident Prof. A. Dingenaers of Hillegonsberg -. Also a board member of the Singer Museum in Laren buy a few days later, he runs specially for Holthe. "That man was so excited. And he even Smithuis thanks for the tip, "Van Loenen know. "And later, she claims that they were false .." Cor van Loenen has to pick up later sought redress from the then very happy buyer, because hunting Van Loenen at that time was just opened by Smithuis. He could therefore make good use of the support of Hillegonsberg. "He did not respond to my letters; when I called him. You know what he said, "Mr. Van Loenen, true or false, right or wrong, truth or lie, I want nothing to do with this matter of doing." That is someone who is very highly regarded in the art world. What a hypocrite. "And gallery owner Smithuis can be 'hysterical cry of all," the tortured Cor van Loenen know stories about "that man Smithuis' that characterize its excellent. He cites an example. The late writer and art dealer Adriaan Venema - who once wrote a book about the Groningen artists' group De Ploeg - devotes in his memoirs a few pages to the affair Altink and in particular Smithuis. He made the art dealer star with during his visit to Sotheby's to watch the suspect Altink "They all tried to convince me before I had seen anything. With arguments that were neither here nor there. They showed in no way to be an expert, at most, a span prosecutor ... "said Venema's memoirs. The Alkmaar art dealer Wim de Boer its request calls "a tricked, common man. Wim was recently the victim of Smithuis' practices, he says. "It grants no sales. If you ask me, they're just dirty tricks, "says De Boer, who then can imagine well that Cor van Loenen 'victim'.

While there the Altink still "a dirty taste is" the art dealers are not eager to rekindle the Altink affair. Smithuis would do better to fight to stop to get her right, they are. For sow again panic and fear among the art-loving public, no one benefits from. The auctioneer will Groningen and Altink scholar Johan van der Hende, how good he is also friends with gallery owner Smithuis that the 'gestook' may be more recent. "What is being offered to Altink, with bona fide auction houses, is certainly good. Moreover, the false works of Altink are now circulated at that time known to everyone. I have no doubt that they are false. But really proof of that supply remains difficult. Before work Altink is too late. "The oil that Altink worked in his last years, in terms of composition, color and brand are the exact same paint that nowadays still used. That makes things more complicated.

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At some undated paintings after the Forensic Laboratory has also released at that time no thorough material research.

For Altink scholar Johan van der Hende is therefore primarily a matter of looking good. He certainly has auctioned some 600 works from the estate of Altink. "I have had all the fingers. So I can say that I am sufficiently knowledgeable." His colleague Groningen art Sibelle Ongerling has neither high expectations of a renewed investigation. "If all the laboratory can not provide enough evidence ... I look daily at Altink to. But look is so subjective. "

Ongerling therefore wonders whether raking still makes sense. "Because if you want to have evidence to accuse someone of forgery, then have agent and officer as if peering over the shoulder of the painter and then him red-handed as he places them at the auction."