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The 'Illustre Lieve Vrouwe Broederschap' (Brotherhood of her Illustrious Dear Lady) resides in 's-Hertogenbosch (Den Bosch) since its religious confirmation in 1318, and since 1483 in its own building ('Zwanenbroedershuis') located at the Hint-hamerstraat. At that time the painter Jheronimus Bosch was also a member of the Brotherhood, which originally had the veneration of Mary as objective. Among the most important traditions of the Brotherhood still belong the Caritas and sharing a meal. This 'Fraternal Meal' takes place once a year in the Great Room (1).

The current Zwanenbroedershuis was inaugurated in 1847 to replace an earlier building at the same location. The building is a rare example of the neo-gothic architecture in The Netherlands and not only acts as a home where members of the Illustre Lieve Vrouwe Broederschap meet regularly. It is also a museum where visitors can appreciate the history of the brotherhood and its versatile collection.

The collection of the brotherhood mainly consists of objects connected to the rich history of the brotherhood, and which were produced or commissioned, or were donated (mostly by members) over the centuries. Among the highlights are two wooden sculpture display cases that were once part of the Marian altar by the sculptor Adriaen van Wesel commissioned in 1475-77 for the brotherhood's



2

nearby chapel in the cathedral of St. John in Den Bosch. The cases show Saint John of Patmos and The vision of Emperor Augustus (2). The Marian altar was dismantled after the Iconoclastic Fury of 1566 and apart from these two cases only smaller parts of this altar are preserved in other museums.



3

The large 16th century choir books (3) contain masses and motets by composers from the Renaissance, such as Pierre de la Rue, Nicolas Champion, Adrian Willaert and Jean Mouton. Among these books are three rare manuscripts from the studio of the famous music copyist Petrus Alamire and three choir books by Philippus de Spina who worked as a singer for the brotherhood for thirty-five years.

Unique is the collection of eighteen pewter wine jugs from the 16th and 17th Century, used by the brothers during their meals. Each brother had his own jug and on the lids the names and coat of arms of the owner was engraved. The collection includes the jugs of Willem of Orange, the earls Frederik and Floris van Buren and Maximiliaan van Egmond (4).



4

In 1881-1885, the brotherhood commissioned a 560-piece blue and white dinnerware set with 'De Porceleyne Fles' in Delft. The set is decorated with the emblem of the brotherhood (the lily among thorns) and the accompanying motto 'Sicut Lilium inter Spinās'.



5



6

Among the attractive loans is a painting by Pieter de Neijn (1597-1639) depicting the siege of 's-Hertogenbosch by Frederik Hendrik in 1629 from the Rijksmuseum (6). The Noordbrabants Museum loaned the portrait of Johan Gans (1596-1674), one of the first non-Catholic members of the brotherhood who joined in 1642.

The neo-gothic style of the building is also reflected in many details in the decoration, including the cast iron stove and in the two cabinets in the Great Room, gifts of the Knighthood of North Brabant, which regularly gathers even now in Zwanenbroedershuis. Throughout the house, the family coat of arms of former and current members of the



brotherhood can be seen, including on the backs of the chairs in the halls, on the ceiling in the Great Room, the books with coats of arms from the 17th and 18th Centuries and the paintings of coats of arms of members throughout the Centuries.

The bond with the Royal House is illustrated by portraits of the royal Zwanenbroeders Queen Juliana and Princess Beatrix, as well as busts of Willem of Orange, Willem II, Queen Wilhelmina and Prince Hendrik. The personal coat of arms of King Willem-Alexander is embroidered on the seat which His Majesty uses during his presence in the Zwanenbroedershuis.



MUSEUM 'HET ZWANENBROEDERSHUIS'

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www.zwanenbroedershuis.nl

Opening times:

See www.zwanenbroedershuis.nl

Guided tours for groups:

by telephone appointment with the Kring

Vrienden 's-Hertogenbosch, see

www.kringvrienden.nl

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Entrance Fee:

Adults and children: €5.00

Children under 12 years: €2.50

The 'Museumjaarkaart' and ICOM cards are not valid.

MUSEUM HET ZWANENBROEDERSHUIS

