

RONNY VAN DE VELDE



Otto Van Rees (Freiburg 1884 - Utrecht 1957)

Aditya reading on the couch, 1915

Gouache on paper

390 x 490

Signed "By Rees" bottom right

Provenance:

Art Trade leendert van Lier, Amsterdam

J. Stoop, Riel

Kamenbuk collection, Netherlands

Exhibitions

Singer Museum, Laren, 2003, Otto Van Rees 1884-1957, Explorer of the Moderisme
Kortenhoeve, the old church of Kortenhoeve, Lodewijk Schelfhout and contemporaries – the arrival

Literature:

S. Van Faasen, Zwollen, 2005, Otto Van Rees (1884-1957), catalogue n°317 ill p. 327

Artist description:

The Dutch artist Otto van Rees (1884-1957), son of a family of academics, started his career in Paris, where he moved in 1904. By intermediation of Picasso, whom Van Rees met in the café Le Lapin Agile, Van Rees put up at an atelier in the Bateau Lavoir. At the Académie Carrière he became friends with George Braque. The Bateau Lavoir was a lively place where his contact with other artists, painters, (Picasso, Léger, Gris, Van Dongen) as well as writers (Max Jacob, Blaise Cendrars, Apollinaire) deepened. His wife and fellow artist, Adya van Rees-Dutilh joined him soon after. Paris would be their winter residence on and off for over 30 years. Some of his fellow artists became dear friends over many years: Severini, Segal, Freundlich, Mondriaan, Arp, Zadkine. The summers were spent at Fleury-en-Bière, a little town next to Barbizon. Kees van Dongen spent the summer of 1905 there, together with Otto and Adya van Rees in the farmhouse Van Rees rented. They painted together in the fields around the village. Picasso was also a visitor, as well as other artists: Otto Freundlich, Marc Chagall and Blaise Cendrars to mention a few. After a stay in Italy his first grand exposition of 48 luministic paintings was held in 1908 in Rotterdam at the Oldenzeel gallery, gallery famous for its exhibitions (1892-1904) of works by Vincent van Gogh. In Paris, during the early years, Otto van Rees exhibited his work at the gallery of Berthe Weil and Clovis Sagot and at the yearly Salon des Artistes Indépendants. He also had

part in the Sonderbund, Cöln in 1912 and the famous exhibition of Der Sturm in 1913. In 1912-1916 the art of Van Rees went through changes, pointillism and luminism lost his interest. His work evolved from physic cubism, as Apollinaire described it, to analytic cubism. One of the first collectors of his art then was Arthur Jérôme Eddy. During the first world war Van Rees changed his French summer residence for Ascona, little town at the Lago Maggiore. The artistic and anarchistic colony there was inspiring.

With Arp, who later spent Christmastime 1915 at the Van Rees, Otto and Adya held the famous exposition of November 1915 at the gallery Tanner in Zürich. This exposition is now seen as the beginning of Dada-Zürich. The art dealer Henri Kahnweiler named Van Rees as an artist that brought the collage technique from Paris to Zürich as the start of Dada Art. Ascona would keep Van Rees' preference. In 1928 Otto van Rees constructed a house on the hills there. The house had a ground plan of a circle and a square, announcing the famous 1930 collective art show of Cercle et Carré. After the tragic death of their oldest daughter, killed in a train accident in France, Otto van Rees spent more and more time in Holland. He moved there in 1934. In Holland the young painters called him their Nestor, who taught them the profound values on art. Many public buildings in Holland: churches, railway station, courthouse, ministry, theatres were embellished by his mural paintings .