

Museum van Bommel van Dam presents

Nightlife *Hanny Korevaar and Armand Bouten*

11 April to 13 September 2026



Hanny Korevaar
Vrouw in stad, c. 1920
Oil on canvas, 104 x 98 cm
Private collection, The Hague

With *Nightlife*, museum van Bommel van Dam brings together the work of the artist couple Hanny Korevaar (Amsterdam, 1893-1983) and Armand Bouten (Venlo, 1893 - Amsterdam, 1965) for the first time in thirty-five years. They painted what many of their contemporaries preferred not to see: the city's rough edges. Only in recent decades has interest in these 'un-Dutch' Expressionists begun to grow. The equally talented Korevaar long remained in the shadow of her husband. *Nightlife - Hanny Korevaar and Armand Bouten* now introduces a wide audience to the raw, compelling and surprisingly modern work of both artists. At the same time, it gives the long overlooked Korevaar the attention she deserves.

Kindred spirits

As partners in life and in art, Hanny Korevaar and Armand Bouten developed an idiosyncratic oeuvre in which life on the margins of society takes centre stage. From the turbulent 1920s to the impoverished post-war period, both artists often turned their gaze to the city at night. Alleyways, cafés, terraces, dance halls and brothels form the backdrop for scenes of poverty, desire and vulnerability. Their unvarnished approach to nightlife made their work too daring for many contemporaries.

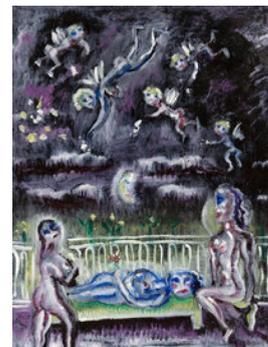
For a long time, moreover, their art remained out of public view. True to their independent spirit, Korevaar and Bouten did not join artists' associations, exhibited rarely, and spent a large part of their lives abroad. They needed little beyond each other and their art.



Hanny Korevaar
Nachtleven, c. 1930
Oil on canvas, 38 x 46 cm
Sir Harald Art Collection



Hanny Korevaar
Dames van plezier, c. 1920
Mixed media on paper, 55 x 37 cm
Sir Harald Art Collection



Armand Bouten
Zonder titel, n.d.
Mixed media on canvas, 50 x 41 cm
Sir Harald Art Collection

The early years

Hanny Korevaar and Armand Bouten met around 1915 in Amsterdam, where they studied at the Rijksnormaalschool voor Teekenonderwijs. Gradually, their attention shifted from still lifes and rural scenes to the city's nightlife. They felt at home in life outside the established order. Colours became brighter, forms more angular, and heavy outlines made their paintings even more powerful. Their work aligns with innovative European art movements such as the colourful French Fauvism and German and Flemish Expressionism. By Dutch standards, the work is remarkably direct and uninhibited. Korevaar encountered prevailing ideas about what was considered suitable art for women artists. Her expressive style and daring subjects stand out and were far ahead of their time.



Hanny Korevaar
Narcissen, 1918
Oil on canvas, 66 x 61 cm
Sir Harald Art Collection



Armand Bouten
Drie vrouwen in een kamer, 1922
Oil on canvas, 78.2 x 57.6 cm
Collection Limburgs Museum, Venlo



Hanny Korevaar
Man in gedachten met kat en figuren, c. 1930
Oil on canvas, 65 x 54 cm
Sir Harald Art Collection

Wanderlust

From late 1922, the newly married Hanny Korevaar and Armand Bouten travelled through South-East Europe. Hungary in particular, and the Roma communities they met there, strongly fired their imagination. From that point onwards, folk art and people of different ethnicities took a prominent place in their work. In 1924, Korevaar and Bouten moved to artistic Paris. Here, both artists captured the poverty and the glamour of the 1920s. They produced a great deal of new work and were clearly aware of the latest developments in modern art. Bouten drew inspiration from key figures of the so-called School of Paris, such as Marc Chagall. He also experimented with movements such as Dada, Cubism, Futurism and Surrealism. In fragmentary compositions, he depicted the hectic life of the big city. Korevaar found her way towards Surrealism, in which people, animals and urban elements merge into enigmatic figures. Although they enjoyed happy years in Paris, a darker note gradually crept into their work. Bouten's scenes grew more sombre, with emaciated bodies and lonely figures. Korevaar's alienating, dreamlike tableaux seem to turn into nightmares.



Armand Bouten
Zonder titel, n.d.
Mixed media on canvas, 50 x 34 cm
Sir Harald Art Collection



Hanny Korevaar
De vioolspeler, n.d.
Mixed media on paper, 35 x 25 cm
Sir Harald Art Collection

Poverty

In the 1930s, Hanny Korevaar and Armand Bouten moved to Brussels, where the ominous atmosphere of the approaching war became increasingly visible in Bouten's work. The people he depicted look weathered and show signs of hunger, exhaustion and mutilation. In Brussels, he also produced most of his sculptures: works inspired by African figures which he experienced as pure. For reasons unknown, Korevaar appears to have stopped painting. When post-war life in Brussels became too expensive, they returned to Amsterdam in 1953. In time, they came under strict supervision by the municipal Social Services. They found this pressure hard to bear. Meanwhile, art no longer offered the same freedom as before. Money for materials was lacking, but Bouten continued to draw, often on newsprint. Their lives as artists ended tragically: they died poor and almost forgotten. Bouten died in 1965. Korevaar outlived him by eighteen years.

Who is the artist: Korevaar or Bouten?

The exhibition is not only an introduction to Hanny Korevaar and Armand Bouten. It also raises a question that has occupied experts for quite some time: who made what? Because Korevaar's and Bouten's subjects and style strongly overlap, it is not easy to distinguish their work. Moreover, they did not always sign and date their paintings and drawings.

Did Korevaar really stop painting in the 1930s? Might they have worked together on certain works? Or have some artworks been wrongly attributed to Bouten? *Nightlife - Hanny Korevaar and Armand Bouten* challenges visitors to look critically, compare, and form their own judgement.



Anonymous, Hanny Korevaar, c. 1925-1930
Collection RKD - Netherlands Institute for Art History,
gift of A.G. Maris



Anonymous, Armand Bouten posing beside the painting
in his apartment in Paris, c. 1925-1930
Collection RKD - Netherlands Institute for Art History,
gift of A.G. Maris



Anonymous, Hanny Korevaar posing beside the painting
Vrouw in stad in her apartment in Paris, c. 1925-1930
Collection RKD - Netherlands Institute for Art History,
gift of A.G. Maris

Back to Venlo after 100 years

During their lives, Hanny Korevaar and Armand Bouten exhibited together only three times: twice in Amsterdam (1922 and 1924) and once in Venlo (1924). For Korevaar, these would prove to be the only occasions on which her work was exhibited during her lifetime. The Venlo exhibition took place in café-restaurant National, a stately celebration venue directly opposite what is now museum van Bommel van Dam, later destroyed by fire. More than one hundred years later, their work returns to almost exactly the same place.



Armand Bouten
Orchestre / Orkest, c. 1920
Watercolour and gouache on paper, 78 x 59 cm
Kiki Smit Collection



Armand Bouten
Titel onbekend, 1925
Oil on canvas, 113 x 95 cm
On loan from a private collection, Limburgs Museum, Venlo

About [museum van Bommel van Dam](#)

Museum van Bommel van Dam, housed in the beautifully renovated former main post office at Keulsepoort in Venlo, is the museum for modern and contemporary art in North Limburg. The collection is rooted in the art collection of Maarten and Reina van Bommel-van Dam. The museum holds a wide-ranging collection of post-war and contemporary art and presents a vibrant programme of exhibitions and public activities.

[museum van Bommel van Dam](#)

Keulsepoort 1 | 5911 BX | Venlo

from 11 April to 13 September 2026
Opening hours: Tuesday to Sunday: 11.00 am - 5.00 pm
tickets via: www.vanbommelvandam.nl



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