

On the river Gein

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On the river Gein

Between Driemond and Abcoude flows the Gein, a small river about six kilometers long, meandering through an archetypal Dutch landscape of water and meadows, farms and mills. It is the area where Piet Mondrian (1872-1944) could often be found at the beginning of his artistic career. In his Amsterdam period, the artist regularly went out by bicycle to sketch and paint along the river Gein. The landscape constantly inspired the young painter to experiment with color, light and composition.

Between 1905-1907, the landscape around the Gein was practically the only thing Mondrian painted. He made over a hundred works along the river during that period. The region has changed over time and not all of the locations Mondrian captured can be traced. Groups of trees have disappeared and numerous farms have been demolished. The map in the center of the room shows reproductions of Mondrian's works, which can still be recognized in today's landscape.

The Gein is also a popular subject in landscape art today. Annemieke Harkema and Anna Khodorovich each depict the beauty of the river landscape in their own unique way. Admire the Gein through their eyes in rooms 6 and 7.

The photograph in this room was taken by Dannis van der Heiden.

On the river Gein, Annemieke Harkema

The Dutch landscape plays a central role in the work of Annemieke Harkema (1958). With her sketchbook under her arm, the artist travels to the most beautiful peatlands and polder landscapes in the Netherlands.

In her studio in Amersfoort she elaborates these sketches into expressive drawings with charcoal, pencil or watercolor. The nature around the river Gein is a familiar and beloved place for Harkema who grew up in Abcoude. As a child who loved the outdoors, she often went to play by the river. Here her fascination for the Gein began. It has become an integral part of both her life and her art.

In her work, Annemieke Harkema is in search of space. Drawings are built up layer by layer in a style that is loose and very precise at the same time. This nonchalant precision demands the utmost concentration. It can take several days before the first streaks are on paper.

On the river Gein, Anna Khodorovich

Anna Khodorovich (1974) was born in Russia and has lived and worked in the Netherlands since 2004. She prefers to paint outdoors, where the ever changing nature grips her again and again. From her studio in Amsterdam, the artist - like Mondrian over 100 years ago - regularly cycles to the Gein to paint on the waterfront. For Khodorovich, the area around the Gein is a place where time seems to stand still, regardless of what is happening in the world.

To capture the moment, Khodorovich works quickly; the works she paints outdoors are finished in one session. With vibrant colors and loose brushstrokes, she captures a personal interpretation of the moving landscape. The river has her special attention in this regard. Khodorovich likes to be inspired by the flowing water that gets its color in the reflection of its surroundings.