

Jan Dijkma: The Economist who kept things simple

Jan Dijkma was born on April 23, 1942, in Nijkerk and grew up in Amersfoort. A business economist by trade, he served as an Associate Professor at Erasmus University and as a Professor at Radboud University Nijmegen and Nyenrode Business University. From a young age, he assisted his father, an independent small-business bookkeeper. Following his father's passing, Jan even took over the business for a period before beginning his studies in Business Economics in Rotterdam during the 1960s. Despite his academic achievements, he always viewed himself primarily as a "simple bookkeeper." This perspective was reflected in his work as an editor for the reference series '*Jaar-in - Jaar-uit*' (Year In - Year Out), where he meticulously organized and categorized the annual reports of listed companies.

The Bruna Connection: Simplicity and Color

It was this appreciation for simplicity that drew Jan to the work of Dick Bruna—not only the minimalist forms of the characters but also the iconic use of color. His passion for collecting began modestly in the 1960s with newspaper clippings of *Oliver B. Bumble* (Ollie B. Bommel) and continued into the 1980s, when the first signs of his Bruna interest emerged through the '*Zwarte Beertjes*' (Black Bears) book series and Dick Bruna posters for his children. Upon his retirement in 2007, his collecting began in earnest. He started by attempting to complete the entire '*Zwarte Beertjes*' collection—a feat far more difficult than one might imagine. This expanded into a general passion for all things Dick Bruna: posters, complete collections of Miffy books in languages ranging from Japanese to the Rotterdam dialect, and various other memorabilia.

The Accounting of Collecting

The vibrant colors, the beauty of simplicity, and the methodical process of archiving, rubricating, and cataloging were the true drivers behind his collection. Jan approached his passion with the same precision he applied to his professional life—a concept he beautifully captured as "*De boekhouding van verzamelen*" (The Accounting of Collecting). He lamented the absence of a definitive, complete catalog of Dick Bruna's work, as he believed such a resource was essential to the unique joy of the "slow completion"—the patient, disciplined journey of bringing a collection to its final, perfect state.

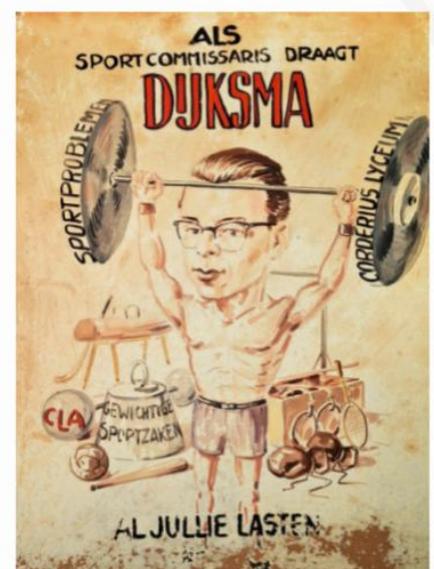
A Legacy Shared

Jan had hoped to visit Japan to experience the immense popularity of "Miffy" firsthand and — as he would add with the smile of a true economist — to perhaps sell some items at a profit. Since that is no longer possible, Van Sabben Poster Auctions is the chosen place to offer these posters. He saw it as a welcoming venue with an excellent auctioneer, where one could experience the live tension of the "profit and loss account" in person, and the only place to truly acquire Miffy posters.



Jan at the Bommel-statue in Zeeland, 2012

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From Enamel Advertising to Paper Advertising Art

It all began with an enamel advertising thermometer at my grandmother's house. It hung beside her door, and as a child I could never stop looking at it. That simple design has always stayed with me. My grandfather, whom I never had the chance to know, worked at the Orion Oil Factory in Zaandam until his retirement, after being forced to give up his livelihood as a fisherman in Elburg. With his own boat, he could barely make ends meet, and eventually he had to find work ashore.

Years later, I discovered by chance that a similar thermometer was coming up for auction at De Eland auction house in Amsterdam. I was instantly captivated and simply had to have it. I probably paid far too much, but that didn't matter; it was mine! After my grandmother's thermometer, one advertising thermometer quickly followed another. Soon, my collection expanded to include enamel advertising signs of all shapes and sizes. The thermometers, in particular, held a special fascination for me. They felt alive: never the same from one day to the next, always in motion, constantly presenting a different image. That gave them something dynamic and truly distinctive.

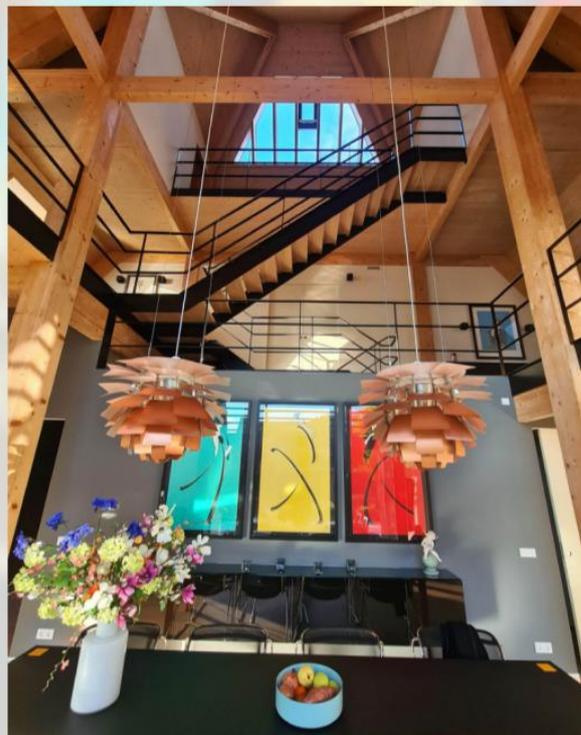
However, as enamel advertising became increasingly popular, and therefore more expensive, there came a point when it simply became unaffordable for me, or at least more than I was willing to spend. I decided to change course. My interest shifted from enamel to paper: advertising posters. My love of imagery fully blossomed there. I bought anything that appealed to me, that sparked my imagination. I soon discovered that paper advertising, unlike enamel signs, was available in far greater quantities. Naturally so: many more companies used this medium, resulting in enormous variety. Precisely because of that abundance, I decided to focus on the artists who moved me most at the time: René Gruau (pseudonym of Renato de Zavagli, 1909–2004) and Razzia (pseudonym of Gérard Courbouleix, 1950–). René Gruau became my favorite because of his great versatility and his unparalleled sense of style. As an advertising illustrator for major fashion houses such as Dior and the car brand Maserati, he was able to capture the essence with just a few lines. A playful lock of hair, a pair of bright red lips, that was all he needed for a powerful lipstick advertisement such as those for Rouge Baiser (lot nos. 207 and 217). His excursions into Japanese samurai imagery and his impressive interpretations of Kabuki theatre masks also left a deep impression on me. This combination of elegance, strength, and versatility still makes him unique in my eyes.

Razzia represents a completely different style. The way he portrays the human figure, women in particular, appeals to me enormously. His work exudes a sleek, often mysterious atmosphere, with clear Art Deco influences and subtle accents of gold. His posters are powerful, stylish, and timeless. To this day, new works by his hand continue to appear. Moreover, his art is, in many cases, still affordable. Both artists, beautifully framed, bring the walls of our self-designed home to life!



Jan's Kabuki painting
by Gruau,

The Gruau's hanging
in Jan's home



Gruau in his studio

© Jan de Boorder, 2026

Collection “Top-of-the-Pop”

It was 2002. That was the year my adventure as a Pop Art collector truly began. Of course, I was familiar with the classics from the books: Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Keith Haring, Robert Indiana and Mel Ramos. But a whole new world truly opened up to me when I stepped into a newly opened Pop Art gallery in Amsterdam.

There, alongside the great names of classic Pop Art, I discovered contemporary artists who immediately resonated with me: Romero Britto, James Rizzi, Charles Fazzino and Takashi Murakami. What began as a passion for collecting soon evolved into the professional buying and selling of Pop Art, becoming an art dealer. During those years, a wealth of merchandising and memorabilia by various American Pop Art artists was available. Before long, I was purchasing at auctions all over the world, from Japan to the United States, acquiring a wide variety of works. At times it involved a 20-foot container filled with Pop Art design tins from Brazil; at other times, a rare LOVE screenprint that I managed to obtain through an obscure kind of Japanese marketplace. Galleries in the Netherlands and Germany were not always pleased with my approach, as I often proved just a bit more agile and faster in buying and bidding. Collectors increasingly sought me out with specific requests: whether I could acquire a particular work on their behalf or assist in tracking down exceptional pieces.

The (partial) collection you will find in this auctions catalogue has been carefully assembled over the past 15 to 20 years. The emphasis lies on the “top five” of Pop Art, with Robert Indiana as my absolute favorite. His iconic LOVE sculpture is unrivalled, yet his other works continue to fascinate as well. Several years ago, I ventured to guess that I owned the largest collection of Robert Indiana in Western Europe. In this selection you will find, among other highlights, screenprints from 1967 (lot no. 131) and rare LOVE sculptures originating from the Indianapolis Museum of Art (lot no. 307). The collection also includes iconic works by Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein and Keith Haring. Pop Art captivates, fascinates and inspires and above all, it remains a joy to behold. From screenprint to lithograph, from graphic work to object; the diversity is immense. The apparent simplicity of a soup can (lot nos. 328 and 329), the wink, the cheerfulness, the direct visual language. Think of an iconic Marilyn screenprint, Lichtenstein’s comic-style Ben-Day dots, or the sensual nudes of artists such as Ramos.

Pop Art truly deserves its nickname: Top of the Pop.

Other art can be beautiful, but nothing moves, surprises and intrigues me as enduringly as Pop Art.

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*Hans standing
besides his
collection*



*Robert Indiana in
his studio.*