THE LEIDEN COLLECTION

Carel de Moor

(Leiden 1655 – Warmond 1738)

How to cite

Bakker, Piet. “Carel de Moor” (2024). In *The Leiden Collection Catalogue*, 4th ed. Edited by Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. and Elizabeth Nogrady with Caroline Van Cauwenberge. New York, 2023–. https://theleidencollection.com/artists/carel-de-moor/ (accessed November 22, 2026).

A PDF of every version of this biography is available in this Online Catalogue's Archive, and the Archive is managed by a permanent URL. New versions are added only when a substantive change to the narrative occurs.

© 2026 The Leiden Collection

Carel de Moor (the Younger) was born in Leiden on 25 February 1655, the son of Carel de Moor (the Elder) and Magdalena de Ridder. Carel's father hailed from Antwerp and was an ebony woodworker who specialized in making frames. In addition, he was active as an art dealer and also seems to have painted, although no known work by him has survived. He was a member of the Leiden Guild of St. Luke beginning in 1650 and held several board positions.[1]

Arnold Houbraken (1660–1719) indicated that Carel de Moor (the Younger), with whom he was personally acquainted, learned his trade from several masters. According to Houbraken, De Moor demonstrated such a great love of drawing as a young man in Leiden that his father sent him to the illustrious Leiden master Gerrit Dou (1613–75) "to be led to firm ground rules from the beginning."[2] Subsequently, De Moor left for Amsterdam "to acquire a bolder brush handling" from his former fellow townsman Abraham van den Tempel (1622/23–72).[3] When the latter died unexpectedly in 1672, De Moor, then only seventeen years old, returned to Leiden to further his studies with Frans van Mieris (1635–81). Houbraken wrote that De Moor then continued his training under Godefridus Schalcken (1643–1706) in Dordrecht. Houbraken marveled at this move by De Moor "as he [De Moor] then already understood the art of drawing better than Schalcken, unless he only did it to copy his [Schalcken's] flattering brush, for which he is famous, in his handling."[4] If Houbraken is right, his training with Schalcken may not have lasted long, because his earliest signed work, *The Duet*, dates from 1674, suggesting that he may have completed his training shortly before.[5]

After spending time in Dordrecht, De Moor returned to Leiden where, in 1683, he became a member of the Leiden Guild of St. Luke. Notably, he held the positions of headman and dean multiple times between 1688 and 1711. In 1694, he was also one of the founders of the Leiden Drawing Academy, running it along with Willem van Mieris (1662–1747) and Jacob Toorenvliet (1640–1719) until 1736.[6] In 1688, De Moor married Hillegonda Woel (1660–1716), the daughter of a Rotterdam merchant. The couple had six children, including Carel Isaac, who would follow in his father's artistic footsteps. Hillegonda died in 1716, and shortly thereafter, in 1717, De Moor ventured a second marriage, this time with Johanna Louise van Molenschot (1654–1720) of The Hague, who "hailed from a distinguished family."[7] However, this marriage did not last long, as she died a mere three years later.

Carel de Moor swiftly gained recognition and esteem, not only in Leiden but also far beyond its borders. His body of work encompasses history and genre paintings, some of which bear a stylistic and thematic resemblance to the creations of his teachers Dou and Van Mieris. He is therefore often regarded as a representative of the Leiden *fijnschilders*, who dominated painting in his native city at the time.[8] However, an equally important influence for De Moor in his quest to establish his own style seems to have been the work of Schalcken, as evidenced by paintings such as his *Diana Sleeping after the Hunt* in the Leiden Collection, which reflects Schalcken's "flattering brush."[9] He clearly modeled other paintings on the work of his close friend Jan Steen (1626–79). De Moor even painted portraits of Steen and his wife, which have not survived.[10]

While De Moor was proficient in various artistic genres, his contemporaries primarily admired him for his exceptional talents as a portrait painter. Early on, the Leiden elite found their way to his workshop and were willing to pay the high prices De Moor commanded for his likenesses.[11] His clientele, however, extended beyond Leiden, with patrons coming from such cities as Amsterdam and The Hague. Johan van Gool, for instance, recounts that in 1715 he visited De Moor's home, where he saw portraits of prominent figures, including "the likenesses of the Lord Van Aerssen, Lord of Hogerheiden, and his wife"[12] alongside those of "the High Honorable Lord Willem Lodewijk of Wassenaer, Lord of

© 2026 The Leiden Collection

Ruiven and Maeslantsluis, and his wife."[13]

Around 1687, De Moor was "elected by the noble, most honorable magistrates, in the prime of his life, . . . to paint a chimney-piece in the Aldermen's Chamber, appropriately on Justice."[14] This commission resulted in *Brutus and His Sons (Allegory of Justice)*, which remained on display in the Aldermen's Chamber of the Leiden Town Hall until falling victim to a blaze on 12 February 1929.[15] In 1692, De Moor was tasked with painting a group portrait of the governors of Leiden's Cloth Hall.[16] His talent also garnered official commissions from other cities. For instance, in 1696, he portrayed the governors of the Amsterdam Wine Merchants' Guild in front of their guild house in Koestraat. And in 1717, he undertook a monumental portrait of the entire magistrate of The Hague, including Willem Lodewijk van Wassenaer, bailiff of The Hague, previously portrayed individually by De Moor in the work admired by Van Gool.

Like the skills of his fellow townsman Willem van Mieris, De Moor's artistic abilities did not go unnoticed by foreign patrons. In 1692, at the request of Cosimo III de' Medici (1642–1723), he sent his self-portrait to Florence, where it found a place in the Grand Duke's famous portrait gallery. In recognition of this gesture, "that art-loving Prince sent him a medal, stamped with his bust, and weighing a pound of gold, hanging from a blue ribbon."[17] Similar honors fell to De Moor after receiving a prestigious commission from the imperial ambassador to The Hague, Philipp Ludwig Wentzel, Count von Sinzendorf (1671–1742). Around 1710, the latter asked De Moor to paint a double portrait of Prince Eugene of Savoy (1663–1736) and John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough (1650–1722), to commemorate their pivotal victory over the French at Oudenaerde in 1708.[18] This portrait was so well received at the Viennese court that Emperor Charles VI (1685–1740) bestowed upon De Moor the title of Knight of the Holy Roman Empire in 1714, an honor that he held until his death. Significantly, De Moor painted the portraits of Tsar Peter the Great (1672–1725) and his wife, Catherine I (1684–1727), in The Hague when they visited the Republic in 1717 during a trip through Europe. The tsar was "so pleased and delighted with this portrait . . . , that he would often lock it away himself whenever he was not present, to ensure that it would not be damaged or harmed during his absence."[19]

The numerous portraits that De Moor painted for both domestic and foreign dignitaries eventually paid off. Everything indicates that he met with financial success, especially in the latter part of his career. In 1718, for instance, he acquired the Klinkenberg estate near Sassenheim, which he subsequently sold at a profit, and in 1724, he had Leevliet, a country estate, built just outside Warmond, where Jacob Campo Weyerman, Van Gool, and others visited him; De Moor died there in 1738 at the age of 83. His demise marked the end of an era, and according to Van Gool, along with Adriaen van der Werff (1659–1722), De Moor was one of two "Knightly Art Heroes" (*Ridderlyke Kunsthelden*) who "flourished in our time and wrought wonders in Art, being so deeply imbedded in the sanctuary of Pictura, that, as Art Saints, they may not be mentioned without respect."[20]

- Piet Bakker, 2024

© 2026 The Leiden Collection

Endnotes

1. For an extensive biography of Carel de Moor the Elder, see Pamela Fowler and Piet Bakker, *Carel de Moor (1655–1738): His Life and Work, a Catalogue Raisonné* (Leiden, 2024), 15–20.
2. "Om van eersten af naar vaste grontregels geleit te worden." Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (Amsterdam, 1721), 3: 273. Translation taken from Hendrik J. Horn and Rieke van Leeuwen, *Houbraken Translated: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of the Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*, RKD Studies (The Hague, 2021), 3: 343, https://houbraken-translated.rkdstudies.nl/3-300-359/page-340-349/.
3. "Om zig tot een kloeker penceelbehandeling te gewennen." Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (Amsterdam, 1721), 3: 273. Translation taken from Hendrik J. Horn and Rieke van Leeuwen, *Houbraken Translated: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of the Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*, RKD Studies (The Hague, 2021), 3: 344, https://houbraken-translated.rkdstudies.nl/3-300-359/page-340-349/.
4. "Aangezien [De Moor] toemaals de Tekenkonst al vry beter verstont dan Schalken, ten ware hy het alleen gedaan hebbe om zyn vleyend penceel, waar door hy berucht is, in zyne behandeling af te zien." Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (Amsterdam, 1721), 3: 274. Translation taken from Hendrik J. Horn and Rieke van Leeuwen, *Houbraken Translated: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of the Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*, RKD Studies (The Hague, 2021), 3: 344, https://houbraken-translated.rkdstudies.nl/3-300-359/page-340-349/.

   For an interpretation of this passage, see Pamela Fowler and Piet Bakker, *Carel de Moor (1655–1738): His Life and Work, a Catalogue Raisonné* (Leiden, 2024), 22–23.
5. Carel de Moor, *The Duet*, 1674 (Collection of His Majesty the King, London, inv. no. 297); see Pamela Fowler and Piet Bakker, *Carel de Moor (1655–1738): His Life and Work, a Catalogue Raisonné* (Leiden, 2024), 230, no. NP A16.
6. On the founding of the Leiden Drawing Academy, see Rudolf E.O. Ekkart et al., *Leids Kunst-legaat: Kunst en historie rondom "Ars Aemula Natura"* (Leiden, 1974), 9–14; 36–42. Regarding the uncertainty surrounding the founding date, see Piet Bakker, "Crisis? Welke Crisis? Enkele kanttekeningen bij het economisch verval van de Leidse schilderkunst na 1660," *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 27 (2011): 266.
7. "Afkomstig van eene aenzienlyke Familie." Johan van Gool, *De nieuwe Schouburg der Nederlantsche Kunstschilders en Schilderessen* (The Hague, 1751), 2: 423. Her father was Rochus van Molenschot (1629–76), a lawyer and, beginning in 1672, the city secretary of Dordrecht; her mother was Catharina Splinter (1630–1704), daughter of the burgomaster of The Hague. See Pamela Fowler and Piet Bakker, *Carel de Moor (1655–1738): His Life and Work, a Catalogue Raisonné* (Leiden, 2024), 34.
8. Eric Jan Sluijter, Marlies Enklaar, and Paul Nieuwenhuizen, eds., *Leidse Fijnschilders: Van Gerrit Dou tot Frans van Mieris de Jonge, 1630–1760* (Exh. cat. Leiden, Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal) (Zwolle,

© 2026 The Leiden Collection

1988).

9. For Schalcken's "vleyend penceel," see Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (Amsterdam, 1721), 3: 177. See also note 4.

10. Wayne Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (New Haven, 2004), 230–31.

11. The Leiden professor Jacob Perizonius (1651–1715) had it recorded in his will that after his death the academy would receive his books, provided that it would set up a cabinet in the library dedicated to him for that purpose, above which should be hung "mijn portret 't welk de Heer Carel Moor onder handen heeft die daervoor 200 guldens gepretendeert heeft, en ik hem geerne geaccordeert hebbe" (my portrait, which Mr. Carel de Moor has been working on, for which he claimed 200 guilders, and which I gladly agreed to pay him). Erfgoed Leiden en omstreken, Notarial Archives, Notary A. Wolff, inv. 1589, deed 259, 7 May 1715.

12. "De Afbeeltsels van den Heere Van Aerssen, Heer van Hogerheiden, en zyne Gemalinne." Johan van Gool, *De nieuwe Schouburg der Nederlantsche Kunstschilders en Schilderessen* (The Hague, 1751), 2: 428. Referred to here are Cornelis van Aerssen (1646–1728), Lord of Hoogerheide, receiver-general of Holland, and Maria Pauw (1653–1733). Neither portrait can be identified. Cornelis van Aerssen had already been portrayed by Schalcken in 1691. Only Van Gool mentions the portrait of Maria Pauw. Jacob Campo Weyerman only mentions the portrait of Van Aerssen that he had seen in his house on Kneuterdijk in The Hague, together with the two works mentioned in note 13. See Pamela Fowler and Piet Bakker, *Carel de Moor (1655–1738): His Life and Work, a Catalogue Raisonné* (Leiden, 2024), 215n3, no. P A73.

13. "Nevens die van de Hoog Ed[ele] Heere Willem Lodewijk van Wassenaer, Heer van Ruiven en Maeslantsluis en zyne Gemalinne." Johan van Gool, *De nieuwe Schouburg der Nederlantsche Kunstschilders en Schilderessen* (The Hague, 1751), 2: 428. This is Willem Lodewijk, Baron van Wassenaer (1676–1720), Lord of Starrenburg, Ruiven, Maasland, and Maassluis. Between 1698 and 1707 he was a captain at sea, but at the time of De Moor's portrait he was bailiff of The Hague. He was married to Maria Cornelia van Aerssen (1690–1761), Lady of Maasland, daughter of Cornelis van Aerssen and Maria Pauw (see note 12). For the portrait of Willem Lodewijk and (possibly) that of his wife, see Pamela Fowler and Piet Bakker, *Carel de Moor (1655–1738): His Life and Work, a Catalogue Raisonné* (Leiden, 2024), 215–16, nos. P A74 and P A75.

14. "Door de Ed[ele] Groot Achtb[are] Magistreat van Leiden, in 't prilste van zyn leven, verkoren . . . om in Schepenskamer een Schoorsteenstuk te schilderen, toepasselyk op de Justitie." Johan van Gool, *De nieuwe Schouburg der Nederlantsche Kunstschilders en Schilderessen* (The Hague, 1751), 2: 425.

15. Marike Hoogduin-Berkhout, "'Op de geluckige regeeringe van Leiden.' Geschilderde voorstellingen in het Leidse stadhuis 1575–1700," *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 22 (2006), 96–103.

16. Pamela Fowler and Piet Bakker, *Carel de Moor (1655–1738): His Life and Work, a Catalogue Raisonné* (Leiden, 2024), 198, no. P A43.

© 2026 The Leiden Collection

17. “Waer tegen hem die kunstlievende Vorst een Medaille, bestempelt met zyn Borstbeelt, en hangt, ter zwaerte van een pont gout, aen een blaeu lint, in de plaats zond.” Johan van Gool, *De nieuwe Schouburg der Nederlantsche Kunstschilders en Schilderessen* (The Hague, 1751), 2: 428. Houbraken and Van Gool both incorrectly write that De Moor’s portrait was added to Cosimo’s portrait gallery in 1702. Weyerman does not mention a year. On this issue, see Pamela Fowler and Piet Bakker, *Carel de Moor (1655–1738): His Life and Work, a Catalogue Raisonné* (Leiden, 2024), 24–25; 47–48; 197–98, no. P A42.
18. Pamela Fowler and Piet Bakker, *Carel de Moor (1655–1738): His Life and Work, a Catalogue Raisonné* (Leiden, 2024), 241–42, no. P B1.
19. “Met dit Portret zo voldaen en ingenomen . . . , dat hy het telkens, als hy gezeten had, zelf wegsloot, opdat ‘er in zyn afzyn, geen ongemak aen zou komen.” Johan van Gool, *De nieuwe Schouburg der Nederlantsche Kunstschilders en Schilderessen* (The Hague, 1751), 2: 429.
20. “By onzen tyt gebloeit en wonderen [hebben] gedaen in de Kunst, zynde zo diep in’t heiligdom van *Pictura* gedrongen, dat men ze, als Kunstheilgen, niet zonder eerbiet noemen mag.” Johan van Gool, *De nieuwe Schouburg der Nederlantsche Kunstschilders en Schilderessen* (The Hague, 1751), 2: 6.

Literature

- Houbraken, Arnold. *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*. Amsterdam, 1718–21; rev. ed. The Hague, 1753; repr. Amsterdam, 1976, 3: 342–48.
- Weyerman, Jacob Campo. *De Levens-beschryvingen der Nederlantsche Konst-schilders en Konst-schilderessen*. The Hague, 1729, 4: 1–27.
- Van Gool, Johan. *De nieuwe Schouburg der Nederlantsche Kunstschilders en Schilderessen*. The Hague, 1751, 2: 422–37.
- Sluijter, Eric Jan, Marlies Enklaar, and Paul Nieuwenhuizen, eds. *Leidse Fijnschilders: Van Gerrit Dou tot Frans van Mieris de Jonge, 1630–1760*. Exh. cat. Leiden, Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal. Zwolle, 1988, 182–85.
- Franits, Wayne. *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution*. New Haven, 2004, 230–34.
- Horn, Hendrik J., and Rieke van Leeuwen. *Houbraken Translated: Arnold Houbraken’s Great Theatre of the Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*. The Hague, 2021, : https://houbraken-translated.rkdstudies.nl/3-300-359/page-340-349/.
- Fowler, Pamela, and Piet Bakker. *Carel de Moor (1655–1738): His Life and Work, a Catalogue Raisonné*. Leiden, 2024.

© 2026 The Leiden Collection