**Nelke Bartelings**

*Catalogue of épithalames by Bernard Picart*

KBH – Den Haag, Koninklijke Bibliotheek

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GA – Amsterdam, Gemeentearchief

**I I715**

*Allegorical representation with an amorous couple, Hymen and putti in a decorated frame with the motto Nova gaudia surgunt on a cartouche.*

Etching and engraving, 127 x 182 mm, signed at lower left within decorated frame: B. Picart in. et scul. 1715.

Large vignette on the occasion of the silver wedding anniversary of Jan van Vollenhove en Maria Palm in 1715, Haarlem. Brochure with wedding poems unknown.

The couple is sitting on a sofa, situated in a garden, which is an allusion to the groom’s last name *Vollenhoven.* The palm trees refer to the bride’s last name *Palm*. Hymen, the wedding god, stands beside the couple with his torch, in order to suggest that the couple is still in love. He points at Cupid who drops a new arrow from his quiver to rekindle the love fire, while the first one still smokes. Six Cupids are eager to prepare the celebration, they make garlands, pour in a pot, and are busy with decorating. At the upper left corner of the frame the personification of America and a moose symbolize the engagement in trade of the couple. At the upper right Fortuna denotes their wealth. Below a Siren and a Triton indicate that the trade of the coupe mainly takes place over sea. The motto ‘Nova gaudia surgunt’ means New joy rises.[[1]](#endnote-1)

**II 1716**

*Allegorical representation with a young man who offers a burning heart to a young woman, seated on a bed, in an ornamental frame with the motto Nil vinclis dvlcivs illis on a cartouche.*

Etching and engraving, 119 x 145 mm, signed at lower centre below decorated frame: B. Picart inve. et sculp. 1716.

Large vignette on title-page (A1r) and explanation (A1v) in *Bruiloftzangen voor den heere Dick van Lennep, de jonge, en mejuffrouw Catharina de Neufville. Vereenigt den 7den juli, 1716*, Amsterdam: Hendrik vande Gaete, 1716. 4o

GA: Len (2443)

A young man is restrained by Liberty who has a yoke at her feet to show he is about to lose his freedom. But Cupid has enchained the future groom with garlands of flowers and is guiding him while he is offering a burning heart to his bride. She sits on a wedding bed and invites him to join by pointing at Hymen who lights his torch in order to show how lucky as if to how lucky the groom is to marry her. Juno reclining on a cloud is scattering coins and jewels to designate the great wealth which the couple possesses. Their coats of arms are united in a cordate cartouche decorated with festoons of flowers. At the upper centre the scene is crowned by a cartouche with the motto ‘Nil vinclis dulcius illis’ meaning Nothing is sweeter than these shackles; this refers referring to the garlands by which the groom is enchained.

**III 1718**

*Allegorical representation with bride and broom standing before Hymen, in an ornamental frame with the motto Nil flammis pulcrius istis on a cartouche.*

Etching and engraving, 113 x 144 mm, signed at lower centre: B. Picart invenit et sculp. 1718.

Large vignette on title-page(A1v) and explanation (A1r) in *Gezangen ter bruilofte van den heere Arent Bosch, en jonkvrouwe Eletta Thesingh, vereenigt den 3den van grasmaant* [april]*, 1718*, Amsterdam: Willem en David Goeree, 1718. 4o

UBL MNL: 1256 A 37

A couple is girted with garlands of flowers by two Cupids, leading them to Hymen who is standing next to the nuptial bed. He is lighting a torch held by one of the Cupids. Another Cupid is scattering flowers in the air. At the left stands Venus who offers the couple her golden apple to symbolize the beauty of the bride. Two turtle doves are at her feet and again another Cupid is lighting up the fire of love. On the right side, Hebe holds a beautiful drinking bowl in her right hand, thereby suggesting that the love of the couple is bound to be eternally young. She is accompanied by the eagle of Zeus, her father. In the background, a sea with ships refer to the trade of the spouses. The decorated frame is crowned by the initials of the couple held by two Cupids. The motto ‘Nil flammis pulcrius istis’ or Nothing is more beautiful than these flames, is engraved in a cartouche at the lower centre.

**IV 1718**

*Allegorical representation with a couple entering the temple of Hymen, in a decorated frame with the motto Non haec sine numine divum on a cartouche.*

Etching and engraving, 243 x 199 mm, signed at lower left: B. Picart invenit et fecit 1718.

Title print (~pi~1r) and explanation ( ~pi~1v) in *Zangen, ter bruilofte van den heere Abraham Bruin, en jonkvrouwe Debora van Vollenhoven vereenigt den IV. Van herfstmaendt. MDCCXVIII*, Amsterdam: z.n., 1718. 4o

KBH 853 G 190

Within a decorated frame the bridegroom leads his bride to the temple of Hymen, who invites them to enter. Cupids direct the couple in the right direction with garlands. In the back is a garden, which alludes to the last name of the bride *Vollenhoven*. The personification of September, the month in which the marriage took place, gives the key of this delightful garden to the groom. In her right hand she carries a horn with the heads of little children to indicate a fertile offspring. At the lower left one of the Cupids is playing his lyre, symbolizing the harmony of the marriage.[[2]](#endnote-2) Outside the frame at the right is an apple tree, at the top the trunk is without fruits, which indicates that the marriage has not borne fruit yet. But below, the branches are full of fruits due to one of Cupid’s arrows right in the middle of a heart on a shield attached to the tree, which expresses the future fertility of the marriage. At the lower centre the two coats of arms of the couple are united in a cartouche, referring to their union. In the background ships in the sea refer to their activity in trade, and on the coast there are the goods in vessels. The picture frame is crowned by a cartouche with the motto ‘Non haec sine numine divum’ or This does not come about without the will of the gods.[[3]](#endnote-3)

**V 1719**

*Allegorical representation with couple joining the right hands, in an ornamental frame with on piedestal the motto Coëunt in foedera dextrae.*

Etching and engraving, 246 x 198 mm, signed at lower left: B. Picart inv. et sculpsit 1719.

Title print (~pi~1r) and explanation (~pi~1v) in *Huwelykszangen. Ter bruilofte van den heere Jacob Alewyn Ghysen junior, en jongkvrouwe Perina Vorsterman. In den echt vereenigt binnen Amsterdam, den 19den van wintermaandt 1719*, Amsterdam: Joannes Oosterwyk, 1719. 4o

KBH: Pc 5211

In the centre of a large cartouche, attached to the central part of a column, the bridal couple join their right hands. The bride is accompanied by Hymen and Cupid who are lighting each other's torch. They are all standing before the shrine of Concord; Concord holds a plate with a heart upon it, a garland with pomegranate on her head, and the fasces in her left hand. She is the guardian of the unity and harmony that are essential for a happy marriage. She is followed by three female figures symbolizing the virtues of the bride: Fidelity with a key and a dog, Virtue with a sun upon her bosom, a spear in her right hand, and a laurel in her left hand, and Chastity hiding her face with a veil and holding a dove. This procession is closed by Abundance with her cornucopia. Behind the groom there are allegorical figures representing his qualities: Humility embracing a lamb, Charity with a pelican, Temperance with a bridle, and Prudence with a mirror and a snake. At the far left end Cupid chases Discord, represented by serpents, indicating that all marital discord should be banished for the sake of concord.

On the shore at the lower left there are tons and barrels with the trading goods. Sailing ships denote that they are engaged in trade overseas. At the lower right the river gods the Amstel and the Y recline, indicating that the couple lives and works in Amsterdam. At the lower centre of the large cartouche the two coats of arms are united in a smaller cartouche. Below on the pedestal is the motto ‘Coëunt in foedera dextrae’ engraved, meaning The right hands join to form an alliance.[[4]](#endnote-4)

**VI 1720**

*Allegorical representation with Hymen presenting a young man to a young woman sitting on a stage, in an ornamental frame with the motto Sint pacta jugalia curae on a cartouche.*

Etching and engraving, 106 x 143 mm, signed at lower centre: B. Picart invenit et sculp. 1720.

Large vignette on the occasion of the marriage of the Mennonites Willem Philip Kops (1695-1756) merchant in Haarlem and Johanna de Vos (1702-1758). The marriage has taken place on 22 September 1720 but I have not been able to track down a brochure.

With the help of Hymen, a young man tries to persuade his seemingly hesitant future bride, who is being dressed by two Graces. The third one takes a precious cloth from a box. A parrot has escaped from his cage on the balustrade, and Cupid points his arrow at her, both indicating that the bride is about to lose her virginity. The decorated frame is crowned by a cartouche wherein the coats of arms of the couple are combined. At the upper left corner are flax fibers and a spinning wheel, at the upper right corner barrels of ashes of Muscovy, all referring to their engagement in the production of linen. The background is filled with a city and ships indicating that the flax fibers are coming from far. At the lower centre of the cartouche is the motto ‘Sint pacta jugalia curae’ engraved which means Let the marriage arrangements be your concern.

**VII 1721**

*Allegorical representation with a young couple who is offering a libation to Juno, in an ornamental frame with the motto Soli tibi pronuba Juno on a cartouche.*

Etching and engraving, 118 x 149 mm, signed at lower left: B. Picart invenit et fecit 1721.

Large vignette on title-page (A1r) and explanation (A1v) in *Op het huwelyk van den heere Adriaen Maten, en de jongkvrouwe Maria van Vollenhoven. In den echt vereenigd den 6den van bloeimaand, 1721*, Amsterdam: erven J. Lescailje en Dirk Rank, 1721. 4o

KBH 853 G 184

On a tapestry two young people join their right hands to take a wedding vow before the altar of Juno. The groom pours out a libation to the Goddess. Above Cupid hovers and crowns them with two laurels. Hymen attends the ceremony, holding two candlesticks to kindle the love of both the bride and the groom. Two Cupids, one carrying a folder and a pen, and the other a music book with a baton, indicate the bride’s predilection for literature and music. The scene is situated in a lush garden because the bride is a *Van Vollenhoven*. The upper centre is crowned with the two coats of arms of the couple. The tapestry is attached to a decorated fence supported by two herms; the left one is Mercury, the God of Commerce, and the right one is Ceres, the Goddess of Agriculture. At her feet two Cupids measure grain and mark a barrel which refers to the trade of the couple, but also to the family name of the groom *Maten*. At the left another Cupid is engaged in training a moose. In the background there are ships indicating that the goods come from over sea. At the lower centre the motto Soli tibi pronuba Juno is engraved in a cartouche which means Juno protects the marriage for you alone.[[5]](#endnote-5)

**VIII 1723**

*Allegorical representation with a young man who tries, with the help of Hymen, to persuade a young woman to share with him the marriage bed. In a cartouche is the motto Ira cedit, favet dum Hymen Amori.*

Etching and engraving, 246 x 202 mm, signed at lower left: B. Picart invenit et fecit. 1723.

Title print (~pi~1r) and explanation (~pi~1v) in *Huuwelijkszangen ter bruilofte van den heere David Leeuw van Lennep, en jongkvrouwe Hester Barnaart. Echtelyk vereenigt binnen Haarlem, den 25sten van bloei-maand, 1723*, Amsterdam: Johannes Oosterwyk, boekverkooper op den Dam, 1723. 4o

KBH: 853 G 174

Hymen is guiding a bridegroom to his seemingly reluctant bride who is sitting on a four-poster bed situated in a garden. In his left hand the marriage god holds his torch behind the bride, and Cupid seems to whisper in her ear. Other Cupids are opening the curtains of the bed, and still others are shooting arrows to the couple in an attempt to persuade the bride. Above on a cloud, Juno and Venus join hands to illustrate their approval of this alliance. The four corners of the frame are crowned with the coats of arms and with the initials of the couple. At the upper centre winds are blowing from a cloud. At right below the frame Mercury hovers above the ships in the sea and the goods on the shoreline to protect the company of the groom and his family. At left below the frame the river gods denoting the Y and the Spaarne refer to Amsterdam and Haarlem respectively, the two cities where the groom and bride come from. At the lower centre of the frame is engraved in a cartouche the motto ‘Ira cedit favet dum hymen amori’ meaning The wrath disappears as long as Hymen's love is well-disposed.

**IX 1724**

*Allegorical representation with Hymen who receives two newlyweds before his temple. Below the motto Oppugnent alii, hic solus de corde triumphat.*

Etching and engraving, 252 x 203 mm, signed at lower left: B. Picart invenit et sculp. 1724.

Title print (~pi~1r) and explanation (~pi~1v) in *Huwelykszangen ter bruilofte van den heere Abraham Barnaart, en de jongkvrouwe Engeltje van Hooven. Echtelyk vereenigt binnen Haarlem, den 28sten van lentemaandt, 1724*, Amsterdam: Joannes Oosterwyk. Boekverkooper op den Dam, 1724. 4o

KBH: 853 G 178

Hymen, with a torch in each hand, stands before the entrance of a temple. He receives a bride and groom, who are accompanied by a group of joyous Fauns and Nymphs. Mercury hovers in the air as messenger of the Gods spreading the good news of the marriage. At the upper right two Cupids attach the coats of arms to a large blooming tree. At the lower bottom a third one puts a crown of flowers on the head of Thetis, signifying the Spaarne in the city of Haarlem, where the bride was born. At the lower right Minerva, here as patroness of spinning and weaving, points to the couple. In front of her Cupids spread delicate fabrics, and in the distance various ships are sailing in the see. All this indicates the trade of the groom. The scene is placed in a beautiful garden referring to the last name of the bride (Van) *Hooven,* meaning pleasure gardens. Below the scene is the motto ‘Oppugnent alii, hic solus de corde triumphat’ meaning Let others attack, only this one triumphs over the heart.

**X 1724**

*Allegorical representation with a couple sitting on a wedding bed in an ornamental frame with the motto Ne timeas, et casta thorus, tua numina, servat on a cartouche.*

Etching and engraving, 121 x 146 mm, signed at lower centre: Picart inve. et fecit 1724

Large vignette on title-page (~pi~1r) and explanation (~pi~1v) in *Bruiloftzangen, voor den heere Jacob van Lennep, Dirksz. en jonkvrouwe Susanna Catharina de Wolff. Echtelyk vereenigt in Amsterdam, den XII van herfstmaant, MDCCXXIV*, Amsterdam 1724. 4o

KBH 853 G 180

A bride and groom, seated on a four-poster bed, join their right hands to confirm their marital bond. But the bride still seems a little reluctant and the groom tries to persuade her by putting his left hand around her shoulder. Three putti are about to close the curtains. Hymen, accompanied by a Cupid with an arrow, raises his finger to remind the other Cupids of their task. At the bottom the River God and Goddess personifying the Y and the Amstel, refer to Amsterdam, the city where they have settled and have their business. In the distance there is a sea port with ships, and at the upper corners of the frame we see bundles of fabrics (silk) and a spinning wheel referring to their enterprise. Below at the centre of the frame the two coats of arms are united in a cartouche. The frame is crowned by another cartouche with the motto ‘Ne timeas, et casta thorus, tua numina, servat’ meaning Do not be afraid, and let your chaste wedding bed serve the gods.

**XI 1726**

*Allegorical representation with Cupid sitting on a peacock in an ornamental frame with the motto on a banderole Virtus sine superbia, et voluptas sine libidine, animos aeternis flammis accendent.*

Etching and engraving, 124 x 153 mm, signed at lower centre: B. Picart inv. et fecit 1726.

Large vignette on title-page (~pi~1r) and explanation (~pi~1v) in *Huwelykszangen ter bruilofte van den heere Ysbrand Vincent, en jongkvrouwe Johanna Pauw. Echtelyk vereenigt binnen Amsteldam, den 14den van gras-maand, MDCCXXVI*, Amsterdam: Willem Barents, boekverkoper, op de Voorburgwal, over de Nieuwe-straat, 1726. 4o

GA: F Vin (4142)

In the centre, Cupid is sitting on a peacock, which alludes to the family name of the bride, Pauw. Cupid carries tools in his hands, which he needs to pierce the large barrel upon which the peacock stands. The barrel is surrounded by all sorts of tools that are associated with the production of wine. And at the right a little Bacchus, god of wine, holds a glass in one hand and a wine bottle in the other, indicating that the bride’s father is a wine merchant. At the left there is a boy dressed in a fur coat, who lights a fire with (ice) blocks. The groom’s first name is *Ysbrand*, which means ice (Ys) burning (brand). The last name of his mother is *Hyver* [Yver] which means winter, symbolized by the fur coat. The vignette is crowned with the intertwined initials of the couple. On a banderole above the whole scene the motto ‘Virtus sine superbia, & voluptas sine libidine, animos aeternis flammis accendent’ is engraved which means Virtue without pride, and pleasure without lust, may inflame the emotions with eternal fire.

XII 1729

*Allegorical representation with Amor sitting on a cloud, surrounded by Minerva, Hercules and the personification of the Fine Arts, in an ornamental frame with a motto on a cartouche Amori cedant omnia.*

Etching and engraving, 118 x 155 mm, signed at lower left: L. F. D. B. inv.; at lower right: B. Picart sculp. 1729.

Large vignette on title-page (~pi~2) and explanation (~pi~1v) in *Ter bruilofte van den heere Louis Fabricius Du Bourg, en jonkvrouwe Eva de Kaersgieter*, Amsterdam: 1729.4o

KBH: CBG: D 17

The design is from Louis Fabricius Dubourg (1693-Amsterdam-1775), print maker, painter, and draughtsman, on the occasion of his own marriage. Cupid, the little love god, sits on a cloud, resting on a globe, symbolizing his domination of heaven and earth. In his left hand he holds a large bow and in his right hand he has a garland with flowers. Below the cloud, we see Hercules symbolizing valour, Minerva as personification of science, and the Fine Arts, which refer to the profession of the groom. They are all lying at the feet of Cupid to indicate that everything is subordinated to him and therefore to (marital) love. This also applies to the animals, like the lion and the tiger, who are not attacking, but lying quietly on the ground. In the upper left Hymen is fluttering around with garlands of flowers, and the scene is crowned by two Cupids in an intimate embrace. In both upper corners the two initials in a heart-shape are carried by two other Cupids. At the lower centre in a cartouche is the motto ‘Amori cedant omnia’ is engraved meaning Let everything yield to the power of love.[[6]](#endnote-6)

1. I am very grateful to Adriaan Rademaker for his comment and for translating the Latin motto’s .

   Source: Christanus Campililiensis, c. 1330 *Officia* 19.91. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. In the poems the groom is praised for his outstanding play on the lyre. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Source: Virgil, *Aeneid*, book 2, line 777. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Source: Virgil, *Aeneid*, book 11, line 292. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Source: Virgil, *Aeneid*, book 4, lines 166-167. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Source: Virgil, *Bucolica*, book 10, line 69. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)