



Sleeping Beauty: A Marble Briar Rose by Frans Stracké

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Sleeping Beauty has just fallen into a deep sleep. The fairy-tale princess sits elegantly on a simple upright chair, one arm resting on the back, the other lying over her crossed legs. Her head, lolling forward in sleep, could easily have compromised the aesthetic quality of the figure, but the sculptor achieved a graceful pose by having her support her head on the hand resting on the back of the chair. Sleeping Beauty wears a dress with a tight bodice with a square neckline, slashed puff sleeves and a long flowing skirt. There are crowns and coats of arms on the hem to indicate her royal status. She has roses in her hair, for she is also known as Briar Rose. The sculptor's signature 'F. Stracke/ inv' et Sculp'/ Arnhem. / 1867' appears on the back of the backrest (figs. 1-3).

According to the fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm, an angry fairy placed a curse on Sleeping Beauty at the party to celebrate her birth: the princess would prick her finger on a spindle and die.¹ Fortunately there was a good fairy who still had a gift to bestow. Although she was unable to reverse the curse, she decreed that the princess would not die, but would sleep for a hundred years, and with her everyone else in the castle, until a prince woke her with a kiss. Years later as she wandered around the castle, the princess came across a

< Fig. 1
FRANS STRACKÉ,
Sleeping Beauty, 1867.
Marble,
70 x 57 x 39 cm.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. BK-2016-2.
Inscribed, on the
back of the chair:
*F. Stracke/ inv' et
Sculp'/ Arnhem. / 1867.*

woman spinning, pricked her finger on the spindle and fell asleep. Frans Stracké (1820-1898) translated this key moment in the story into marble with a masterly touch. The princess has fallen asleep, but only just. The spindle has yet to fall from her right hand, and she still holds the bobbin in her left. The dove beside Sleeping Beauty symbolises the enchanted inhabitants of the castle: its head is tucked under its wing and it stands on a single leg; it, too, is asleep.

The *Arnhemse Courant* of 25 February 1867 reported that at that time *Sleeping Beauty* was still unfinished in Stracké's workshop, and that the work was destined for the 'salons' of 'den heer Banck' (Mr Banck); on 15 October 1868 the newspaper stated that the work would be sent to Mr Banck in The Hague in a few days.² The Rijksmuseum's *Sleeping Beauty* is dated 1867, so it is likely that it is the same sculpture. John Eric Banck (1833-1902) of The Hague was a lawyer. He lived on the money he had received from his father, a Dane who had made his fortune on Java: John Eric Banck was able to buy the island of Schiermonnikoog from his inheritance. The statue probably belonged to Banck; what happened to it after that is unclear until it was discovered in a garden in Het Gooi, a cluster of villages south-east of Amsterdam.

> Figs. 2, 3
Front and side view
of *Sleeping Beauty*
(fig. 1).





After almost a century and a half, *Sleeping Beauty* was found by her own fairy-tale prince, for on a summer's day in 2015, an auctioneer visited a house in the woods of Het Gooi and there in the garden, hidden among the trees, he found a moss-covered marble statue.³ A year later, through the intermediary of an art dealer, the Rijksmuseum was able to purchase the statue. A restorer then took it in hand and removed the discolouration caused by algae and moss, so that the statue is now in almost pristine condition.⁴ It was decided not to reinstate the point of the spindle, which had broken off, because there was no way of knowing what it looked like originally: some spindles are simple sticks, others – probably including Stracké's *Sleeping Beauty*'s, given that she pricked her finger on it – have a pointed end that can be used to fix the spindle to the floor so that the spinner can turn it more easily as she spins. The restoration of this unusual sculpture has brought it back to its former glory; in what follows the oblivion into which it had been relegated may also be rectified by shedding light on its original context.

Frans Stracké's Career

Frans Stracké was the most important scion of an originally German family of sculptors. In 1842 he moved with his parents and a brother from Rees, a town near Cleves in the lower Rhine region, to Arnhem around fifty kilometres to the north-west. He learned the trade from his father Ignatz, who had worked for some time in the workshop of the famous Berlin sculptor Christian Daniel Rauch (1777-1857).⁵ In 1847 Frans set himself up as an independent sculptor in Arnhem, where from 1852 to 1870 he also taught modelling at the 'Teekenschool' (art school) of the local *Teken- en Bouwkundig Genootschap Kunstbeoefening* (society of art and architecture) to make ends meet.



Stracké's principal patron in his Arnhem years was Alexander Ver Huell (1822-1897), also spelt Verhuell. He had studied law, but he is best known for his illustrations for the *Studentenschetsen* by the scholar Johannes Kneppelhout (1814-1885), for *Zoo zijn er!*, the student drawings he published himself, and for *Op het ijs*, caricature sketches with which he also had success abroad.⁶ He lived near Oosterbeek, home to many artists and the location of Kneppelhout's country estate. Ver Huell was in touch with local Gelderland artists and owned a number of works by the painters Frederik Hendrik Hendriks (1808-1865), Corstiaan Hendrikus de Swart (1818-1897) and Johannes Warnardus Bilders (1811-1890). Ver Huell helped Stracké by giving him various commissions; in 1861, for example, he asked Stracké to make a monument which Ver Huell had designed for

Fig. 4
W.H. STAM after
C.J.W.F. KACHEL,
*Chair by Frans
Stracké* (c. 1862,
whereabouts
unknown), engraving
in *Kunstkronijk* NS 5
(1864), plate 7,
after p. 26.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum
Research Library,
110 D 13.

his father Maurits's tomb. In 1865, Ver Huell designed another monument, this time for Frederik Hendriks, which Stracké also executed.

Besides giving him commissions, Ver Huell supported the sculptor by publishing articles singing his praises in the *Arnhemsche Courant*.⁷ In 1860 he wrote about a sculpted table by Stracké, and in 1862 about a pendant for it, a sculpted chair based on a poplar stump decorated with all kinds of animals and putti (fig. 4). Both pieces were made for Lodewijk Evert, Baron van Heeckeren van Enghuizen (1830-1883).⁸ In his article about the table, Ver Huell praised the sculptor's artistic abilities: 'All actions are easy and unforced, and the whole is new in form and new in invention.'⁹ In the piece about the chair he called on potential clients to follow Van Heeckeren's example and grant Stracké commissions. Banck also wrote about the chair, in *Kunstkronijk* in 1864.¹⁰ Decades later, in an article written shortly after Stracké's death, Banck said that it was Ver Huell who had alerted him to Stracké's work in 1862. Banck also mentioned that he had owned the clay model for the chair for some considerable time.¹¹ This is interesting, because Ver Huell wrote in his diary that Stracké had given him the model as a gift: 'This evening the good F. Stracké surprised me with the gift of the modelled design for the chair intended for Mr. Bar.n. van Heeckeren, for which this Gentleman had provided him with a poplar trunk.'¹² If Ver Huell and Banck both had the model for the chair in their possession, Ver Huell may have passed it on or sold it to Banck. In any event the chair, and Ver Huell's remarks about it, were the basis of Banck's interest in Stracké's work.

Ver Huell also recommended Stracké to members of his circle of acquaintances and commented: 'My recommendations have done Strackée [*sic*] a lot of good.'¹³ In his diary Ver Huell

explicitly mentions his recommendation to yet another lawyer, the notary Rudolph Willem Jan Ketjen (1820-1894) from Doesburg.¹⁴ Ketjen subsequently ordered a marble version of *The Honey Thieves*, also known as *Malum melli dulcius dolor*, which was made in the same period as *Sleeping Beauty*.¹⁵ There is a plaster version in the Dordrechts Museum (fig. 5).¹⁶

Ver Huell wrote in his diary that he had introduced Stracké to Gilles André de la Porte, the principal of the art school where Stracké was appointed as a lecturer.¹⁷ This suggests that Stracké also owed Ver Huell a debt of gratitude for this appointment. And finally, during the reorganization of the *Koninklijke Akademie van*

Fig. 5
FRANS STRACKÉ,
The Honey Thieves,
c. 1867. Plaster,
104 x 52 x 52 cm.
Dordrecht,
Dordrechts Museum,
inv. no. DM/871/S10.



Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam in 1870, Ver Huell, supported by Banck, whose backing he had called for in an 'urgent letter', proposed Stracké as the successor to Louis Royer (1793-1868).¹⁸ Stracké was appointed as a lecturer in sculpture at the newly formed *Rijks-akademie van Beeldende Kunsten*.

Stracké moved to Amsterdam, where he would remain until he retired in 1889. After the death of his first wife he married one of his students, Sara van Bosse (1837-1922). She was also a competent sculptor: she made, for example, the colossal portrait bust of Samuel Sarphati in the park of the same name in Amsterdam South. In 1889 the couple moved into Villa Eemwijk in Baarn, which continued to be occupied by members of the Stracké family until it was bought by Baarn Local Authority in 1948.¹⁹

The Stracké family numbered many other sculptors besides Frans and his father. Their first names are similar and when they are mentioned, particularly in the nineteenth century, they are inconsistently spelled, so that the various Strackés are still easily confused: *Sleeping Beauty* was also wrongly attributed to a different Stracké.²⁰ The accompanying diagram (fig. 6) provides an overview of the sculptors in the different generations of this family.²¹

Sleeping Beauty and Snow White: Sleep and Death

In the period when Stracké made *Sleeping Beauty*, he also created *Snow White* (fig. 7). We only know of a version in plaster, which is now in the Dordrechts Museum.²² Banck suspected incorrectly that the design had been lost because he could no

Fig. 6
Diagram of the
sculptors in the
Stracké Family.

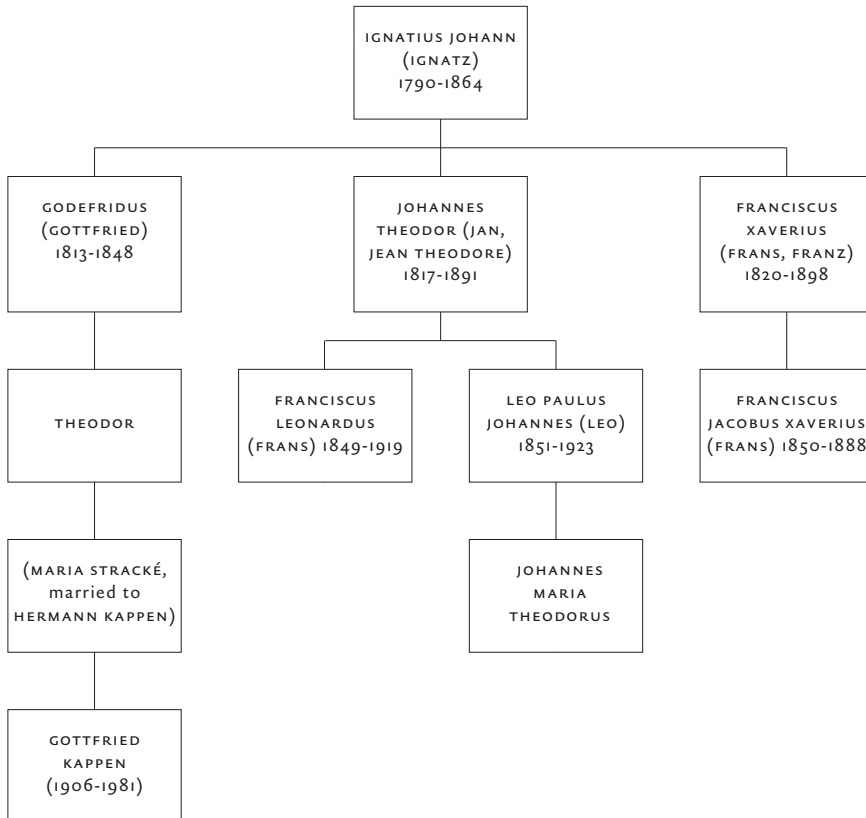




Fig. 7
FRANS STRACKÉ,
Snow White, c. 1867.
Plaster,
55 x 61 x 129 cm.
Dordrecht,
Dordrechts museum,
inv. no. DM/904/512.

Fig. 8
JEAN-JOSEPH
HALLEUX, *Monument
for Françoise
Lanhay*, 1865.
Marble, size unknown.
Liège, Robermont
Cemetery.
Photograph:
Jean-Louis Hens.

longer see it in Stracké's workshop.²³ Snow White is laid out, apparently dead after eating a piece of poisoned apple, which would later be dislodged from her throat when the seven dwarfs accidentally dropped her.²⁴ Like *Sleeping Beauty*, she too still holds the object that nearly killed her.

Stracké's decision to make a statue of a sleeping or seemingly dead young woman twice is remarkable and calls for an explanation. Stracké may have been interested in an old topos in the history of sculpture – playing with the illusion that the lifeless marble can be brought to life. This goes back to a myth from Classical Antiquity, in which the sculptor Pygmalion fell in love with the statue he had made of Galathea, whereupon the statue came to life. As it is in three dimensions, a sculpture can come extremely close to a human figure, but the lack of movement prevents it from creating a convincing illusion that it is truly alive. Depicting someone sleeping



largely overcomes this constraint because a body asleep is almost motionless.

Another possible explanation is that Stracké's *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White* could have been used as monuments on graves. A theme that has a direct relationship with death, but at the same time conveys the comforting promise that death is only seeming, is eminently suitable for memorial art. A sleeping figure that represented the deceased was used in the earliest sculptural tombs, usually supine on the tomb.²⁵ One famous example from Dutch history is the 1681 monument for Michiel de Ruyter (1607-1676) by Rombout Verhulst (1624-1698).²⁶ *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White* are ideally suited for a young girl's grave. A contemporary example of a similar funereal application is the monument Jean-Joseph Halleux (1815-1876) made in 1865 for Françoise Lanhay, a girl from Liège who died at the age of eighteen (fig. 8). Specific details in the pose

of the body, particularly the raised knee, which we see in Halleux's sculpture and Stracké's *Snow White*, give the impression that the girl is not dead but only sleeping. We do not know whether Stracké was aware of Halleux's statue at the time when he began his *Snow White*, nor do we know whether he did indeed create his *Sleeping Beauty* and his *Snow White* for use on graves.

Possible Sources of Inspiration for Stracké's *Sleeping Beauty*

The source from which Stracké borrowed the theme for his *Sleeping Beauty* is fairly easy to trace, although the story of *Sleeping Beauty* is hundreds of years old and exists in various versions. As long ago as 1340, there was a romance titled *Perceforest* in circulation, in which the girl pricks herself on a flax needle. The best-known variations of the story are those by Charles Perrault (1628-1703) and the brothers Jacob Ludwig Karl (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Karl Grimm (1786-1859). In 1697 Perrault's *Histoires ou Contes du temps passé* was published in Paris by Claude Barbin.²⁷ It contains the story of *La Belle au bois dormant*, a title rendered in English as 'The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods'. A Dutch translation of Perrault's fairy tales was published in 1754.²⁸ The name Briar Rose appears for the first time in 1812, when the *Realschulbuchhandlung* in Berlin published the first edition of the fairy tales that the Brothers Grimm had collected under the title *Kinder- und Haus-Märchen*: fairy tale no. 50 is entitled 'Dornröschen'.²⁹ The first Dutch edition came out in 1820.³⁰

In Perrault's tale the girl pricks her finger on a bobbin (*fuseau*), in the Brothers Grimm's version on a spindle: 'But no sooner had she touched the spindle than she stabbed herself with it, and immediately she fell into a deep sleep.'³¹ Stracké depicted both the bobbin and the spindle, so this sheds

no light on which source he used. But the Brothers Grimm also describe how the doves on the roof fell asleep; they sat with their heads tucked under their wings. Perrault's story makes no reference to doves, but to a dog called Pouffe. Stracké's decision to add roses (reflecting the name *Dornröschen* i.e. Briar Rose) and a dove to the scene – and not a dog – indicates that he used the Brothers Grimm's version of the fairy tale as his inspiration.

The Brothers Grimm's fairy-tale characters soon inspired art, initially in the form of illustrations in books of fairy tales. The high-speed printing press was invented in the eighteenth century, and in the decades that followed it was developed further.³² This meant that printed matter could be produced

Fig. 9
FRANZ HEGI after
LUDWIG EMIL
GRIMM, illustration
for 'Dornröschen', in
Jacob and Wilhelm
Grimm, *Kinder- und
Haus-Märchen*,
Berlin: Georg Reimer
Publisher, 1825.
Berlin, Staats-
bibliothek,
Sign. B IV 1b, 752 R.



cheaply for a wide public, and the circulation of the fairy tales and the accompanying illustrations benefited.

The first publication by the Brothers Grimm in 1812 contained no illustrations at all. When the brothers started to collect fairy tales in 1807 it was for scholarly reasons.³³ They regarded fairy tales as an essential part of German cultural heritage, which was worth preserving. If there were multiple versions of a story, they chose the best and mentioned the alternatives in their notes. The second edition in 1819 had a single illustration, drawn by their brother Ludwig Emil (1790-1863), who had trained at the *Akademie der Bildenden Künste* in Munich. In 1825, probably inspired by the illustrations the caricaturist George Cruikshank (1792-1878) made for English translations of their fairy tales, the Brothers Grimm published a collection of tales with seven illustrations in the form of engravings designed by Ludwig Emil.³⁴ One of them was of *Sleeping Beauty* (fig. 9).

In the middle of the century, editions of the Brothers Grimm's fairy tales compiled by others were also published in Germany. The illustrations for these publications were for the most part made by renowned painters. From 1845 onwards, for example, the famous painter Ludwig Richter (1803-1884) supplied the illustrations for the brothers' greatest rival, Bechstein's book *Deutsches Märchenbuch*.³⁵ The twelfth edition in 1853 contained 174 woodcuts and the 1857 edition thirteen more, all made by Richter (fig. 10). At the beginning of his career Richter mainly painted landscapes, but he increasingly concentrated on the making of illustrations.

Moritz von Schwind (1804-1871) was another well-known painter who illustrated fairy tales. He supplied illustrations for some of the thirty fairy tales by the brothers that were published in the *Münchener Bilder-*



bogen from 1848 onwards.³⁶ Von Schwind's best-known illustration is probably his *Puss in Boots* of 1848 (fig. 11).

Von Schwind was one of the artists who also depicted fairy tales in paintings. Between 1852 and 1854 he made a monumental painting almost five metres wide titled *Das Märchen vom Aschenbrödel* (Cinderella, fig. 12). In the centre there are a series of scenes from the tale of Cinderella; at the top he added small scenes from the story of Cupid and Psyche, and at the bottom small scenes from the fairy tale of *Sleeping Beauty*.³⁷ In his *Aschenbrödel* Von Schwind thus subordinated a subject from Antiquity to a popular fairy tale from his own country. He showed the work widely, including an exhibition in Munich

Fig. 10
After LUDWIG RICHTER, illustration (89 x 66 mm) for 'Dornröschen', in Ludwig Bechstein's *Märchenbuch*, Leipzig: Georg Wigand Publisher, 1853. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Research Library, 677 A 8.



Fig. 11
After MORITZ
VON SCHWIND,
illustration
(442 x 350 mm) for
'Der Gestiefelte
Kater', in
*Münchener
Bilderbogen*
no. 48, Munich:
Braun &
Schneider, 1848.
Karlsruhe,
Staatliche
Kunsthalle,
inv. no. II 3262.

in 1855, and in 1861 it featured in the *Zweite allgemeine deutsche und historische Kunst-Ausstellung* in Museum Wallraf-Richartz in Cologne. The painting was a great success in Germany.³⁸

We do not know whether Stracké visited these exhibitions, but knowledge of the work of the German illustrators certainly reached Dutch artists. One was Matthijs Maris (1839-1917), the painter who in 1873-74 incorporated a theme akin to *Sleeping Beauty* in various paintings of women spinning (fig. 13). Maris is known to have learned about the German illustrators from German fellow students while he was at the *Antwerpse Schilderschool* (academy in Antwerp) in the eighteen-fifties and he bought copies of the *Münchener Bilderbogen*



Fig. 12
MORITZ VON
SCHWIND, *Das
Märchen vom
Aschenbrödel*
(detail), 1854.
Oil on canvas,
wood, 152 x 480 cm.
Munich, Neue
Pinakothek,
inv. no. L84,
on loan from
the Bundesrepublik
Deutschland.
Photo: bpk |
Bayerische Staats-
gemäldesammlungen.



Fig. 13
MATTHIJS MARIS,
The Spinner, 1873.
Oil on canvas,
91 x 61 cm.
Otterlo, Kröller-
Müller Museum,
inv. no. KM 104.970.

Fig. 14
ROBERT CAUER,
Dornröschen, 1860.
Ivory plaster
(Cauermasse),
h. approx. 25 cm.
Whereabouts
unknown.
Photo: Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. RP-F-00-9692.

including *Gestiefelte Kater* (Puss in Boots, 1857-58), *Hänsel und Gretel*, *Brüderchen und Schwesterchen* (Little Brother and Little Sister, 1857), *Schneewittchen* (Snow White), *Aschenbrödel* and *Dornröschen* (1860, fig. 14). They were small and made from a relatively cheap material ('Cauermasse', also called ivory plaster), so that the middle class, with whom they were very popular, could afford them. They were sold through catalogues and sent all over Europe. They were also made in a larger size for those who had the means: in 1872, for instance, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin ordered a marble *Sleeping Beauty* 1.2 metres high from Robert Cauer.⁴⁴

There are unmistakable similarities between Stracké's *Sleeping Beauty*

in The Hague.³⁹ Moreover, in 1861, he and his brother Jacob travelled through Germany and he saw the exhibition in Cologne.⁴⁰ In the years 1859-61 and in 1864 Maris stayed in the Oosterbeek artists' colony on a number of occasions and might have met Stracké, who lived nearby, so they may well have influenced one another.⁴¹

Emil Cauer (1800-1867) and his son Robert (1831-1893), sculptors from Kreuznach, introduced the Brothers Grimm's fairy tales into German sculpture. In 1866 the *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung* even praised Robert Cauer as the fairy-tale sculptor *par excellence*.⁴² Around 1856 Emil had embarked on a number of statuettes of fairy-tale characters including *Gänseliesel* (the Little Goose Girl) and *Rotkäppchen* (Little Red Riding Hood).⁴³ In 1858 Robert joined the workshop and father and son went on to work together for twelve years. From then on it is no longer clear who made which figure, or whether they may have worked together on subjects. The Cauers' fairy-tale repertoire ultimately contained a whole series of figures around twenty centimetres tall,



and Cauer's.⁴⁵ As in Cauer's work, we see Sleeping Beauty sitting on a chair, and not on a throne, lying on a bed or standing beside a spinning wheel. She also holds a bobbin in one hand and a spindle in the other; here it seems that Stracké introduced a small variation by reversing the left and right hand. A more important difference is that the princess's pose has changed; by moving the chair a quarter turn, Stracké made it possible to support the head and rectify the inelegant position of Cauer's Sleeping Beauty, with her head hanging backwards.

Another source which may have influenced Stracké was Jules Hetzel's 1863 reissue of Perrault's fairy tales in Paris.⁴⁶ Hetzel's publication received glowing reviews and worldwide reprints followed in a dozen languages. The forty-two magnificent illustrations were made by the painter and illustrator Paul Gustave Doré (1832-1883).

In the eighteen-sixties he illustrated all kinds of other publications, including the Bible (1866), the tales from *A Thousand and One Nights* (1865) and John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1866).⁴⁷ There are six illustrations in Hetzel's version of the Sleeping Beauty tale. Most are of the prince's search for the sleeping princess, but the opening illustration shows the girl as she is about to prick her finger on the bobbin (fig. 15). The dress in Stracké's *Sleeping Beauty* reflects Doré's illustration; both girls wear a bodice with slashed puffed sleeves. Stracké's patron Ver Huell may have had a hand in this: an illustrator himself, he was a lover of printmaking and a great admirer of Doré. Ver Huell had visited Doré's studio in Paris in 1861 and even ordered a copy of the painting *Un poète inspiré par les anges*, which focuses on sculpture: it shows a sculptor working on a cathedral (fig. 16).

Frans Stracké, Master of Genre Sculpture

Stracké may have been inspired by other artists like Cauer for his *Sleeping Beauty*, but when we look at the rest of his work we see that the subject is wholly in line with his own preferences. His oeuvre contains countless examples of light-hearted themes with genre-like figures or small scenes. His *Snow White* and the *Honey Thieves* have already been mentioned. Another example is *Two Mothers*, a group of a young woman and her child accompanied by a bitch and her pups. Stracké made a marble version of this group, now in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, and later a terracotta version that is in the Rijksmuseum (fig. 17).⁴⁸ The terracotta version also has a pendant in which the child is a few years older. In Baarn there is a sculpture of a girl with a goat and a marble of a young boy lying on his stomach drinking from a bucket.⁴⁹ This piece was made in 1893 and is Stracké's last known work: it shows

Fig. 15
After GUSTAVE DORÉ, *Cette bonne femme n'avait point entendu parler des défenses que le roi avait faites de filer au fuseau* (1862), opening illustration (245 x 196 mm) for 'La belle au bois dormant', in Charles Perrault, *Les contes*, Paris: Jules Hetzel publisher, 1862. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, inv. no. RES-Y2-179.





Fig. 16
GUSTAVE DORÉ,
*Un poète inspiré
par les anges /
The Sculptor, s.a.*
Oil on canvas,
130 x 98 cm.
Arnhem, Museum
Arnhem,
inv. no. GMO5049.



Fig. 17
FRANS STRACKÉ,
Two Mothers, 1893.
Terracotta, h. 90 cm.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. BK-2003-23.



Fig. 18
FRANS STRACKÉ,
Sarah, before 1877.
Marble, h. 76 cm.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. BK-15438.

that he was still interested in this type of sculpture several decades after *Sleeping Beauty*. As well as full-length figures, he also made busts in the same style, such as *Sarah* (fig. 18), and *Duyfje* and *Wolmet*. He produced several replicas of these two girls in (imaginary) Marker traditional dress.⁵⁰



Fig. 19
FRANÇOIS RUDE,
*Young Neapolitan
Fisher Boy Playing
with a Tortoise*, 1833.
Marble,
82 x 88 x 48 cm.
Paris, Musée
du Louvre,
inv. no. L.P. 63.
Photograph: ©
Musée du Louvre,
Thierry Ollivier.

In the subjects he chose Stracké reflected the genre sculpture that had come from Southern Europe in the mid-nineteenth century. The best-known example of this is Neapolitan fisher boys, a subject executed by many sculptors, which François Rude (1784-1855) introduced at the Salon in Paris in 1831 (plaster model) and 1833 (marble, fig. 19).⁵¹ Stracké also took up this theme, as we see in a marble version dating from 1869 (fig. 20), and a replica in *pierre de Caen*.⁵² This trend in sculpture flourished in Italy in the Milanese School. The best-known example is *La Leggitrice* (1856), a life-sized marble statue of a girl reading, made by Pietro Magni (1817-1877).⁵³ With works like *Sleeping Beauty*, Stracké placed himself alongside his

international colleagues thematically, and with his technically clever execution he was in no way inferior to them.

Stracké's skill was highly appreciated, but his following of international genre sculpture certainly did not meet with everyone's approval in the nineteenth-century Netherlands – nor, after the eighteen-sixties, did it find favour with Ver Huell.⁵⁴ He now preferred more traditional, allegorical representations of social virtues, monumentally executed in public spaces, where they could uplift the people; he wanted to free art from being a commodity and was an opponent of the selling exhibitions that were staged, for example, by *Arti et Amicitiae* in Amsterdam: 'In their hands art products become fashion items, lose their intrinsic or acquire a spurious value and are playthings for advertising.'⁵⁵ At the presentation of the plaster versions of *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White* at the Exhibition of Living Artists in Amsterdam in 1871, there was no reference to them whatsoever in *De Gids*, a magazine that devoted a great many of its pages to art.⁵⁶ In the twentieth century, too, there was still little appreciation for genre sculpture in the Netherlands. Pieter Kornelis van Daalen, the Netherlands' leading writer about nineteenth-century sculpture at that time, thought that Stracké was too influenced by the Italian sculptors who were internationally successful with their technically very skilful statues, which were, however, often regarded as intrinsically empty.⁵⁷ These types of statues were however extremely popular at the internationally orientated court in The Hague: 'fashionable' works from Italy were bought by Queen Anna Pavlovna and Queen Sophie. Examples of works which came to the Netherlands by way of the nobility include the pendants *L'Innocenza difesa dalla fedeltà* (fig. 21), a dog protecting a sleeping girl from a snake, and *La Riconoscenza*, in which



Fig. 20
FRANS STRACKÉ,
*Neapolitan Fisher
Boy*, 1869.
Marble,
87 x 37 x 27 cm.
Arnhem,
Museum Arnhem,
inv. no. GM 05817.

Fig. 21
GIOVANNI MARIA
BENZONI, *Innocence
Defended by Fidelity
(L'Innocenza difesa
dalla fedeltà)*, c. 1848.
Marble,
84 x 54 x 54 cm.
The Hague,
Gemeentemuseum,
inv. no. BEO-1901-0001.



the girl removes a thorn from the dog's paw, both by Giovanni Maria Benzoni (1809-1873).

With his virtuoso craftsmanship and his feeling for international developments, Frans Stracké is credited with introducing genre-like subjects into Dutch nineteenth-century sculpture. Stracké would continue to produce this type of sculpture from the eighteen-sixties to the eighteen-nineties, even though he did not achieve the success in the Netherlands that his foreign colleagues enjoyed in their home countries with similar work. *Sleeping Beauty* is an early and typical example of the genre in which Stracké excelled and a superb interpretation of the contemporary developments of sculpture in Europe.

ABSTRACT

The interest in fairy tales grew strongly over the course of the nineteenth century, particularly in Germany, the birthplace of Frans Stracké (1820-1898). Renowned artists made illustrations for popular publications of fairy tales and in the middle of the century characters from fairy tales also appeared in paintings and sculptures. The sculptor Frans Stracké was inspired by this development and in the eighteenthies created a *Sleeping Beauty* and a *Snow White*. He may have chosen these designs because the sleeping figure offers greater sculptural possibilities, for example in funeral art. He showed *Sleeping Beauty* at the precise moment she falls asleep, after she had pricked her finger on a spindle. Stracké followed the fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm from 1812, in which the ill-fated event was predicted during the celebration of *Sleeping Beauty*'s birth. *Sleeping Beauty* (also known as Briar Rose) was precisely the sort of subject Stracké preferred: he excelled in making genre-like sculpture of a very high standard. This was little appreciated in the Netherlands, whereas in France and Italy practitioners of this type of sculpture enjoyed considerable success. Stracké is credited with introducing contemporary developments in European sculpture into the Netherlands; *Sleeping Beauty* is a relatively early and typical example.

NOTES

- 1 Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Kinder- und Haus-Märchen*, Berlin 1812, pp. 225-29.
- 2 With thanks to Bieke van der Mark who drew these newspaper articles to my attention. *Arnhemsche Courant* of 25 February 1867 and 15 October 1868. See Delpher: www.delpher.nl (consulted 11 January 2019).
- 3 The sculpture was found in August 2015 by Ronald van Zadelhoff, the director, auctioneer and valuer of Van Zadelhoff Veilingen & Taxaties in Hilversum.
- 4 The Rijksmuseum purchased the statue from Kunsthandel Strydhagen in Nijmegen, through the intermediary of Diederik van Pabst. See Frits Scholten, 'Recent Acquisitions (no. 13, Franz Xaverius Stracké)', *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 65 (2017), no. 2, pp. 238-39. The statue was restored by Nicolas Verhulst.
- 5 'J. (sic) Stracké aus Dorsten an der Lippe von dem K. Ob. Präsidenten v. Vinke wurde mir empholen 1824, ausgetreten 1825.' Jutta von Simson, *Christian Daniel Rauch: Oeuvre-Katalog*, Berlin 1996, p. 477.
- 6 Johannes Knepelhout (ps. Klikspaan), *Studentenschetsen*, 3 vols., Leiden 1841-44; Alexander W.M.C. Ver Huell, *Zoo zijn er!*, Leiden 1846; Alexander W.M.C. Ver Huell, *Op het ijs*, Leiden/Amsterdam 1848.
- 7 In the *Arnhemsche Courant* dated 5 July 1860 and 13 November 1862; the articles were also published as Alexander W.M.C. Ver Huell, 'Een gebeeldhouwde tafel' and 'Een gebeeldhouwde stoel', *Schetsen met de pen*, 3^e bundel, Arnhem 1876, pp. 42-44 and 45-47. Ver Huell refers in his diary to writing about the table and chair, see *Het dagboek van Alexander Ver Huell 1860-1865* (eds. J. Bervoets and R. Chamuleau), Zutphen 1985, p. 47 (11 March 1862) and p. 60 (3 November 1862).
- 8 *Dagboek van Ver Huell* 1985 (note 7), p. 47 (11 March 1862) and p. 60 (3 November 1862).
- 9 'Alle actiën zijn gemakkelijk en ongezoekt, en het geheel is nieuw van vorm en nieuw van vinding.' Ver Huell 1876 (note 7), p. 44.
- 10 J.E. Banck, 'Een kunstenaarsdroom. Naar aanleiding van een gebeeldhouwden stoel door Strackée [sic]', *Kunstkronijk* ns 5 (1864), pp. 31-32.
- 11 J.E. Banck, 'Ter nagedachtenis van F. Stracké', *Eigen Haard* 23 (1898), no. 41 (8 October), pp. 627-31 and 648-52, esp. p. 631.
- 12 's Avonds komt de goede F. Stracké mij verrassen met het geschenk van het geboortseerde concept van den stoel voor den Hr. Bar.n. van Heeckeren bestemd, waartoe deze Heer hem een popelstronk heeft bezorgd.' *Dagboek van Ver Huell* 1985 (note 7), p. 47 (11 March 1862).
- 13 'Mijne récommandatie's hebben Strackée [sic] veel goed gedaan.' *Ibid.*, p. 61 (3 November 1862).
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 39 (13 December 1861) and p. 61 (3 November 1862).
- 15 A marble version of *The Honey Thieves* is now owned by Rijnstate Hospital in Arnhem; we do not know enough about its provenance to establish whether this is the statue that previously belonged to Ketjen.
- 16 In 1871 A.C.A. Beelaerts van Emmichoven of Arnhem donated a plaster version to the Dordrechts museum (inv. no. DM/871/S10).

- 17 *Dagboek van Ver Huell* 1985 (note 7), p. 61 (3 November 1862).
- 18 Banck 1898 (note 1), p. 648.
- 19 The Eemland Archives cannot provide any information about what happened to the contents of the house at the time Eemwijk was sold, or what they consisted of (archive no. 0480-1358, consulted by the archivist on 12 January 2017). In 1944 the Antiquities Department of Baarn Local Authority asked Frans Stracké's daughter-in-law to donate a number of sculptures and models, which were then in the coach house and the stable, and as a result a number of works by Stracké can now be seen in Baarn. <https://groenegraf.blogspot.com/2017/01/eemwijk-en-stracke.html> (consulted 24 September 2018).
- 20 For example, the chair, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White* were incorrectly attributed to Jan instead of Frans; the information about Frans, Jan's brother, was assigned to Frans, Jan's son; *Boerhaave* was attributed to J.F. instead of J.T. (Jan) and the *Minerva* was attributed to Franz Ignatius instead of to Ignatius Johann.
- 21 Where possible, official documents such as a birth certificate from the register of births, deaths and marriages were used for the spelling of the names. I also consulted the records in the Netherlands Institute for Art History – RKD and followed what is most common in literature. Family members who were not sculptors are not included, with the exception of Maria Kappen-Stracké.
- 22 *Snow White* (inv. no. DM/904/S12) was given to the Dordrechts Museum by J.D. van Brinkgreve in 1904. This may be Jan Dirk Brinkgreve, sculptor and teacher, who also showed his work at the Exhibition of Living Artists in Amsterdam in 1871, which featured Stracké's *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty*.
- 23 Banck 1898 (note 1), p. 649.
- 24 Grimm 1812 (note 1), pp. 454-56.
- 25 For examples see Erwin Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture: Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini*, New York 1992; the sarcophagus in Melfi, fig. 59, is an early example from Classical Antiquity.
- 26 See the website of De Nieuwe Kerk Amsterdam: www.nieuwekerk.nl/zeeheldenmonumenten/ (consulted 19 January 2019).
- 27 Charles Perrault, *Histoires ou Contes du Temps passé, avec des moralités: Contes de ma Mère l'Oye*, Paris 1697.
- 28 Charles Perrault, *Contes de ma Mere l'Oye, met negen kleurlijke koperplaatjes, zeer gediensig voor de jeugdt om haar zelve in het Fransch en Hollands te oeffenen*, The Hague 1754. After p. 34 there is an illustration of *De schone slaapster in het bosch* (Sleeping Beauty in the woods).
- 29 Grimm 1812 (note 1).
- 30 Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Sprookjes-boek voor Kinderen*, Amsterdam 1820.
- 31 'Kaum aber hatte sie die Spindel angerührt, so stach sie sich damit, und alsbald fiel sie nieder in einen tiefen Schlaf.' Grimm 1812 (note 1), p. 226.
- 32 H.W. Lintsen (ed.), *Geschiedenis van de techniek in Nederland. De wording van een moderne samenleving 1800-1890. Deel 11. Gezondheid en openbare hygiëne. Waterstaat en infrastructuur. Papier, druk en communicatie*, Zutphen 1993, pp. 228-32. Rita Ghesquière, Vanessa Joosen and Helma van Lierop-Debrauwer, *Een land van waan en wijs. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse jeugdliteratuur*, Amsterdam/Antwerp 2014, pp. 347-48.
- 33 Heinz Wegehaupt, *Hundert Illustrationen aus zwei Jahrhunderten zu Märchen der Brüder Grimm*, Berlin s.a., pp. 10-14.
- 34 The English translation with illustrations by Cruikshank is Edgar Taylor (ed.), *Grimm's Collection of German Popular Stories*, London 1824-26.
- 35 Ludwig Bechstein, *Deutsches Märchenbuch*, Hildesheim 1845 (the title was changed slightly in later editions).
- 36 *Münchener Bilderbogen*, Munich: Braun & Schneider, 1848-98.
- 37 Cupid and Psyche after the narrative in *The Golden Ass: Metamorphoses* by Apuleius, and *Sleeping Beauty* after Grimm. Siegmund Holsten (ed.), *Moritz von Schwind, Meister der Spätromantik*, exh. cat. Karlsruhe (Staatliche Kunsthalle)/Leipzig (Museum der bildenden Künste) 1996-97, p. 200.
- 38 Exh. cat. Karlsruhe/Leipzig 1996-97 (note 37), p. 201. Leopold Zahn, *Moritz von Schwind*, München 1922, p. 44-45.
- 39 Ria Laanstra, *Vluchten in schoonheid. De Prerafaëlieten en Nederlandse kunstenaars rond 1900*, Harderwijk 2008, p. 25.
- 40 Richard Bionda, *Matthijs Maris*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 2017, p. 15.
- 41 For the dates of the stays in Oosterbeek, see exh. cat. Amsterdam 2017 (note 40), pp. 15-16.
- 42 *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung* 46 (1866), no. 38, see Elke Masa, *Die Bildhauerfamilie Cauer im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert: neun Bildhauer aus vier Generationen*, Berlin 1989, p. 116 note 22.
- 43 Masa 1989 (note 42), p. 129.

- 44 Ibid., p. 130.
- 45 Around thirty-five years after *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White* were made, Banck also wrote that Stracké was inspired by Robert Cauer's fairy-tale figurines, see Banck 1898 (note 11), p. 649.
- 46 Charles Perrault, *Les Contes*, Paris: Jules Hetzel et Compagnie, 1862. Although printed as if it had been published in 1862, the book actually appeared in 1863.
- 47 *La Sainte Bible: Traduction nouvelle selon la Vulgate par J.J. Bourassé et P. Janvier*, 2 vols., Tours 1866. *Les Mille et une Nuits* (ed. Antoine Galland), Paris 1865. John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (ed. Robert Vaughan), New York/London 1866.
- 48 See also Margreet Boomkamp, 'Twee Moeders', in J. Reynaerts (ed.), *1800-1900*, Amsterdam 2017, pp. 198-99.
- 49 The plaster model of *The Little Goat* is in the Baarn Oudheidkamer and a marble version of the little boy with the bucket is in Baarn Town Hall.
- 50 See also Margreet Boomkamp, 'Sarah', in Gijs van der Ham et al. (eds.), *Nederlandse kunst 1800-1900*, Amsterdam 2009, pp. 192-93. Banck 1898 (note 11), p. 649.
- 51 See also H.W. Janson, 'Historical and literary themes', in H.W. Janson and P. Fusco, *The Romantics to Rodin: French Nineteenth-Century Sculpture from North-American Collections*, Los Angeles 1980, pp. 70-82.
- 52 Marble: Museum Arnhem inv. no. GM 05817. Pierre de Caen: Dordrechts Museum inv. no. DM/871/S11, donated in 1871 by A.C.A. van Beelaerts van Emmichoven of Arnhem.
- 53 The 1851 *David* by Magni is in the Rijksmuseum, inv. no. BK-B-84. See Reynaerts 2017 (note 48), pp. 84-85.
- 54 He was admired by Alberdingk Thijm, for example: 'Hij [Stracké] heeft de klei of het marmer maar aan te raken om iets grootsch of bevalligs, altijd iets korrekst en beziels in het leven te roepen.' (He [Stracké] only has to touch the clay or the marble to create something great or charming, always bringing to life something most correct and animated.) See J.A. Alberdingk Thijm, *Over nieuwere beeldhouwkunst vooral in Nederland*, Rotterdam 1886, p. 28.
- 55 'Onder hun handen worden de kunstvoortbrengselen modeartikelen, verliezen hun intrinsieke of krijgen een schijnwaarde en zijn een speelbal der reclame.' Jan Bervoets, *Alexander Verhuell (1822-1897), een levensbeschrijving*, Zutphen 1992, p. 147.
- 56 Back issues from 1867 to 1872 consulted.
- 57 Pieter Kornelis van Daalen, *Nederlandse beeldhouwers in de negentiende eeuw*, The Hague 1957, p. 62.



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