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Pieter Bruegel the Elder: art discourse in the sixteenth-century Netherlands

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Stellingen

1. If there is a categorical notion in which Pieter Bruegel the Elder's later peasant paintings could be subsumed, it is 'painted art theory' rather than any of the traditional genre qualifications.
2. The historical practice of interpreting Bruegel's paintings should not be confused with a modern scholarly hermeneutics, but situated within a sixteenth-century convivial context in which multiple viewpoints, whether right or wrong, are encouraged for the purpose of good conversation.
3. Comparable to the poetic program of the Pléiade in France and rhetorician societies in the Netherlands for the enrichment of the vernacular language using formal qualities of classical Latin, Bruegel's monumental peasant paintings should not be understood as antithetical to classicist, Italian art, but rather as an effort to cultivate an 'artful' vernacular style that mediates visual concepts and pictorial motifs from ambitious painted *historiae* into scenes of 'natural' rustic life.
4. Bruegel's practice of 'interpictoriality' extends beyond showing artistic influence, but also would have awakened a repertoire of references—visual, literary, religious—that the viewer brought to the act of looking, leading to discussions regarding possible thematic connections between Bruegel's rustic scenes, the visual sources he incorporates and the lived experiences of the viewer.
5. The differences between the academic cultures of American and Dutch art historical scholarship can be understood in terms of one culture being bound by capitalism and the other by Calvinism.
6. Good undergraduate teaching is the foundation of a university. Without it, the quality of graduate research will inevitably suffer.
7. Reality television is an oxymoron.
8. Speaking of reality, despite clear ideological differences, the conservatism of the current United States executive branch and the tolerance of Dutch culture are surprisingly similar.
9. As long as you enjoy sixty percent of what you do in your job, consider it ideal; everyone has to take out the trash.
10. Tien stellingen zijn te veel.