



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Panorama Mesdag and TU Delft move together onto a higher plane with the exhibition *From the Highest Point: Land surveys in the time of Mesdag***

**14 March 2019, Den Haag** \_ In 1880, while Mesdag was making sketches for his Panorama from the highest dune in Scheveningen, land surveyors were trekking across the entire country drawing up a map of the Netherlands. The painter and land surveyors alike sought out the highest points in the landscape: the first to create a spatial illusion and the latter to measure distances accurately. What similarities and differences were there in the approach of the artist and that of the surveyors? Thanks to a collaboration between Panorama Mesdag and TU Delft, this theme is explored and explained in an accessible way.

#### **TU Delft Library collection at Panorama Mesdag**

TU Delft Library is offering visitors a unique opportunity to come and admire its Special Collections outside the walls of the campus. In the exhibition rooms of Panorama Mesdag, the history of land surveying is 'mapped', as it were, using measuring instruments, drawings and historical maps. Scientific photos show the highest points on the landscape, including spectacular temporary constructions that were specially built for surveying the land. Visitors can also stroll through digital and interactive maps that show earlier measurement points used by Cornelis Krayenhoff and the National Committee. These maps also show how the landscape has been constantly changing from Mesdag's time to today.

#### **Unique experiment**

Specially for this exhibition, TU Delft students and researchers performed a land surveying experiment involving the Panorama to determine exactly where on the Seinpostduin Mesdag stood when painting his huge canvas. The starting points are the lighthouse, water tower, Oude Kerk (church spire) and other elevated spots Mesdag depicts. Even today these reference points are clearly visible and recognisable on the landscape of Scheveningen. Now, 137 years later, using traditional techniques, the position of these points in the Panorama are compared to their actual coordinates. How accurate was Mesdag and how much artistic license did he allow himself? The

fascinating results of this experiment in 'surveying the past' are presented and explained at the exhibition.

The exhibition *From the Highest Point: Land surveys in the time of Mesdag* is in collaboration with TU Delft and is on display at Panorama Mesdag from 31 March to 22 September 2019.

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**Note for editors:**

For more information about this exhibition and additional images please contact Caroline Rijks, Marketing, Communication & PR, Panorama Mesdag.

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**Images:**

- 01\_Repeating circle, TU Delft Library, Special Collections, Inv. no. 2000.0106.GEO
- 02\_Land Surveying equipment, TU Delft Library, Special Collections, Inv. no. 2000.0055.GEO
- 03\_A land survey of Terlet, 1889, Land Registry Museum collection, Arnhem
- 04\_Land survey of the Panorama, December 2018, Panorama Mesdag, The Hague

Images are also available via our website: <https://www.panorama-mesdag.nl/beeldmateriaal/>. We kindly request you to credit the source in your captions.