

To Kees Rookmaaker
with compliments

Heinz-Georg Klös

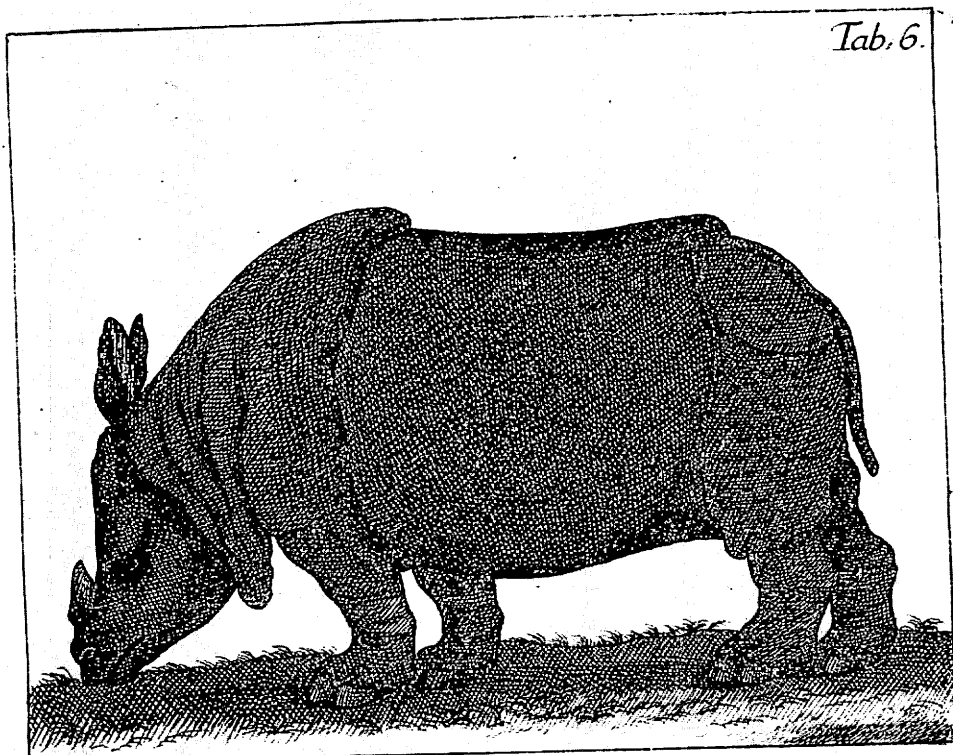
Zool. Garten N. F. 4/5, 56 (1986) S. 385-386
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KLEINERE MITTEILUNG

A visit by Douwe Mout's Rhinoceros to Copenhagen¹. — The Indian Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) that was imported to Europe in 1741 by the Dutch captain DOUWE MOUT VAN DER MEER is one of the most famous specimens in the history of rhinoceroses in captivity. It arrived in London in 1741 and the same year it was transported to Holland from where it made a number of visits to cities all over Europe during the following years.

One of the first cities outside Holland to be visited was Berlin where it was on exhibit in 1746 (KLÖS 1969). The visits to many other cities are documented by a large number of etchings, drawings, paintings, commemorative medals etc. made by local artists. The exceptional iconography is documented by L. C. ROOKMAAKER (1973, 1983).

Until recently traces seemed to be lost in Verona 1751, although there are hints that it might have been in Holland as late as 1758 (ROOKMAAKER 1979), and that it came to London the same year where it presumably died (FAUST 1976). The hints do not come from contemporary sources, however, but from notes made several years later.



Tab. 6.

Johanna Kösse ad vivum delin. et fec.

¹ Herrn Prof. Dr. HEINZ-GEORG KLÖS zur Vollendung des 60. Lebensjahres gewidmet.

Now it can be documented that Captain DOUWE MOUT's rhinoceros visited Copenhagen in 1755. During a meeting with some art historians, I happened to tell the story of DOUWE MOUT's rhinoceros and its travels in Europe — and got the unexpected feedback that a rhinoceros had been on show in Copenhagen at roughly the same time. In the collection of drawings in the Royal Museum of Arts is a drawing by JOHANNA FOSIE (1726—1764). The drawing, which is shown here, carries the sentence "JOHANNA FOSIE ad vivum delin. et fec.", i.e. JOHANNA FOSIE saw it and drew it.

Looking through the archives of the City Magistrate of Copenhagen, I found that King FREDERIK by letter of June 12 1755 informed the Magistrate that he had received an application from Captain DOUWE MOUT (sic), asking for permission to exhibit a rhinoceros just outside the City Walls. The King granted the permission on the condition that 50 Thaler was paid to the poor. The royal permission is noted in the proceedings of the City Magistrate on June 16 1755.

Literature

FAUST, I. (1976): *Zoofreund*, no. 18.

KLÖS, H.-G. (1969): *Von der Menagerie zum Tierparadies: 125 Jahre Zoo Berlin*. Berlin.

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— (1983): *Bibliography of the Rhinoceros*. Rotterdam.

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