



Ton Smits Huis: Cartoon Museum

Ton Smits Huis used to be the home and working studio of the cartoonist Ton Smits (1921-1981) whose cartoons have a timeless appeal. His work was published widely in American magazines during the late Golden Age of cartoons, and internationally celebrated.

Ton Smits was trained at a local art college in the Netherlands in the 1930s. During the Second World War, living in Eindhoven, he drew portraits lampooning Hitler, Goebbels, and Goering. These cartoons were hidden for fear of reprisals, but immediately after the war they were sold as postcards, shifting hundreds of thousands of copies throughout several European countries.

During this time, 1945, Ton Smits was given a copy of Look magazine by an American soldier. Struck by its cartoons, he decided to try his luck and send work to American magazines. No European cartoonist had at that time been published in the States before, however, John Bailey, humor editor of The Saturday Evening Post, was the first to recognize the universal appeal of Smits's effortless cartoons. Smits was a master in observing the human psyche, and expressing this in subtle, gentle drawings.

Ton Smits's first cartoon was published in America in 1949. Many more followed, and Smits became the first European cartoonist to have work printed in The New Yorker. He became a regular contributor to The New Yorker throughout the 1950s and 1960s as well as the The Saturday Evening Post, Look and Collier's Magazine.

These US magazine commissions allowed him to build a house with a studio in Eindhoven. Overlooking the park, the house is painted in the pink and blue pastel colours he also loved to use in his work. In his studio, he created not only cartoons, but also paintings. He called his paintings abstract, but with their dreamlike qualities they have a surrealist appeal as well.

Visitors to the Ton Smits House can wander around his studio, view his paintings, as well as changing exhibitions of a selection of his cartoons. (The permanent collection contains over 20.000 cartoons)

People can also browse through his cartoons on internet ([www. archieven.nl](http://www.archieven.nl))

Ton Smits's work won many prestigious prizes. This cartoon (chicken/egg) was awarded the Golden Palm in Italy (1964).