

From the Highest Point: Land Surveying in Mesdag's Day



Back in 1880, while Dutch maritime painter Mesdag was standing at the top of the highest dune in the seaside town of Scheveningen making sketches for his Panorama, surveyors were travelling the length and breadth of the country to create a new map of the Netherlands. Both the artist and the surveyor sought out the highest point in the landscape – one to create an optical illusion, and the

other to measure distances. What are the differences between their methods? Visitors can find out in an exhibition called 'From the Highest Point: Land Surveying in Mesdag's Day' at Panorama Mesdag in The Hague from 31 March to 22 September 2019.

Especially for this exhibition, TU Delft conducted a surveying experiment to determine precisely where Mesdag was standing in the dunes when creating his Panorama. How accurately did Mesdag record what he saw, and how much artistic licence did he allow himself? The results of this 'land survey in the past' are presented at the exhibition.

It is a unique opportunity for visitors to admire TU Delft Library's 'Special Collections' outside the walls of the university campus. The history of land surveying is literally 'mapped out' based on measuring instruments, drawings, historical maps and scientific photographs. Digital and interactive maps illustrate the ever-changing landscape, from Mesdag's time right up until the present day.

For more information [see here](#).



Panorama Mesdag.