

Willem Middelkoop (Geneva, August 21, 1962) is an entrepreneur and investor who became known as a photojournalist, columnist and market commentator on TV. Today, as founder-director he works full time for the Commodity Discovery Fund and is also an internationally sought-after speaker and commentator on monetary and geopolitical issues. He is a member of the Advisory Board of the London-based monetary think-tank OMFIF.

Journalist

Between 1980 and 2000, Middelkoop is a freelance photojournalist for various daily and weekly newspapers and news agencies (Reuters/AP). Among other things, he covers many (state) visits of the Dutch royal family. During the same period he is also a freelance television reporter. Between 1998 and 2000 the Dutch daily newspaper Het Parool employs him as editor in chief of the photo department. For that newspaper from 1999 onwards he also writes financial-economic columns. He also makes special report from within North Korea. From 2001, he became a stock market commentator at RTL Z, reporting live from the Amsterdam stock exchange floor a total of 3,000 times over many years.

Investor

In the 1990s, he acquires many apartments in Amsterdam and rents them out to expats. He is amazed at the ease with which he can finance them and begins an inquiry into the origins of money. As early as 1999, in his financial column, he warns about the record high valuations on Wall Street. Indeed, the tech bubble pops the following year. He decides to swap his real estate for precious metal investments, as a hedge against the growing risks in the monetary system. In a column in 2003, he warns that the leading Dutch insurer Aegon could collapse during a coming crisis. Indeed, the insurer needs to be bailed out five years later, during the Lehman crash.

Discovery Investing

As an equity investor, from 2014 onwards Middelkoop specializes in successful Canadian exploration companies responsible for new precious metal discoveries. In 2005, he starts an English-language newsletter, the Middelkoop Discovery Alert, in which he tips investors about "Discovery Investing". In 2006, privately he invests in a small exploration company (Aurelian Resources), which shortly thereafter has a major gold discovery in Ecuador (Fruta del Norte). The stock price explodes from \$0.20 to \$43 within two years.

AmsterdamGold

In 2008 he starts AmsterdamGold, an accessible webshop for buying physical gold and silver. Within three years, annual sales rise to 100 million euros and the company reaches the top 10 of the largest Dutch web shops. Middelkoop sells the company to Value8.

Startup Bootcamp Amsterdam

In 2011, together with Ruud Hendriks and Patrick de Zeeuw, Middelkoop is one of the founding shareholders of Startup Bootcamp Amsterdam, the largest business accelerator outside the US. Through that platform, he invests in dozens of startups, including Sendcloud, in which Japan's SoftBank takes a stake in 2021 at a valuation of more than 550 million. A cash investment of 15,000 euros rises to a value of 7.2 million. One third of these startups have take-overs within 10 years.

Commodity Discovery Fund

In late 2008, together with former Optiver traders Jan Dobber and Edwin Bergshoeff, Middelkoop founded the Commodity Discovery Fund. From the office Aerdenhout in The Netherlands, supported by researchers in Hong Kong and the U.S., the fund analyzes significant mining programs worldwide to invest in the most successful exploration companies. Shortly after the inception of the fund, the Lehman crash happens. During the recovery, the fund rises more than 300% within three years. After a severe correction between 2011 and 2015, Middelkoop buys out both co-founders. The fund then grows rapidly and reaches 160 million euros assets under management (AUM). Since its inception in 2008, no less than four times an annual (gross) return of more than 70% is achieved. More than 75 times, small successful exploration companies in which the fund has invested, are acquired by larger mining companies in search of reserves.

Books

In August 2007, Middelkoop publishes his first Dutch book, *The collapse of the Dollar*. In it he warns of the imminent end of the global dollar system and the risk of a global crisis. He follows suit with more Dutch books: *The Permanent Oil Crisis* in 2008, *Survive the credit crisis* in 2009 and *Gold and the Secret of Money* in 2012. In 2014, he releases the English-language book *The Big Reset*, predicting that the global monetary system will have to be drastically reformed around 2020. In that book, Middelkoop also speaks about the possibilities of Bitcoin for the first time, designating the first crypto currency as "digital gold". This book has been translated into eight languages, including Chinese and Arabic. In 2017, *The Tesla Revolution* is published, which is translated into German, English and Chinese (Mandarin). Lastly, in 2018, he publishes *Patterns of Deception* with an analysis of the U.S. *Deep State* power structures.

An overview of Middelkoop's news photos taken between 1980 and 2000 appeared in the photo book *Code Willem*. All in all, the sales of Middelkoop's books numbers around 150,000. The Big Reset has also been downloaded tens of thousands of times.

International speaker

After the international success of *The Big Reset*, Middelkoop is now a sought-after speaker abroad. He has already appeared as a guest speaker in dozens of countries on all continents (including Spain, Portugal, Germany, Kazakhstan, China, Australia,

Dubai, South Africa, Peru, USA, Canada and Hong Kong). He also performed with Tony Robbins in 2021, and gave guest lectures at universities in the Netherlands and China.

Influencer

With more than 125,000 followers, Middelkoop has the most followed Twitter account in the mining world. Here, he comments daily on events in the financial and geopolitical arena. His interviews on YouTube have been viewed millions of times. Photos and publications by or featuring Middelkoop have appeared in many magazines, newspapers and websites (e.g. New York Times, The Sunday Times, Stern, NRC, The OMFIF bulletin).