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Design Ingenuity from the Netherlands, 1890–1940, To Grace The Wolfsonian–FIU

Modern Dutch Design (November 18, 2016–June 11, 2017)
marries the country's rich history of groundbreaking art and design with
a large-scale, contemporary architectural intervention for Miami Art Week 2016

MIAMI BEACH (August 11, 2016) — In Fall 2016, The Wolfsonian–Florida International University will debut *Modern Dutch Design*, an examination of innovative design from the Netherlands between 1890 and 1940. On view November 18, 2016 through June 11, 2017, the exhibition traces how Dutch designers, architects, and artists evolved in the modern age—cementing their country's reputation as a center for cutting-edge design—and follows the development of unique styles and movements including Nieuwe Kunst, the Amsterdam School, and De Stijl. Over 200 works ranging from furniture and metalwork to posters and drawings will reveal how these pioneers responded to radical shifts in social and political life, promoted international travel and trade, and found inspiration from the cultures of the Dutch colonies overseas.

In tandem with *Modern Dutch Design*, The Hague-based contemporary artist Christie van der Haak will activate the exterior of The Wolfsonian's iconic Mediterranean Revival-style building and its lobby by wrapping sections with her signature, tapestry-inspired patterns. Van der Haak's bright, intricate ornamentation will visually announce *Modern Dutch Design* to passersby in South Beach, bring the legacy of Dutch design shown in the galleries into full public view, and bridge the exhibition's historic focus into the now. Funded by generous support from the Mondriaan Fund,

Creative Industries Fund NL, and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the installation, entitled *More Is More*, promises to be among the largest public art experiences on Miami Beach during Miami Art Week 2016—spanning three levels on two sides of the façade, and reaching a height of more than sixty feet above street level. Nightly wall projections on the museum’s north face will also expand on this exciting encounter with contemporary Dutch design.

“During these decades, Dutch design shows a constant tension between structure and decoration,” said Wolfsonian curator Silvia Barisione, who organized the exhibition. “Together with an emphasis on geometry, this tension reaches its purest form in the plain and abstract language of De Stijl, the avant-garde movement that had such a major impact on postwar and contemporary designers. We’re thrilled to be mining the riches of The Wolfsonian’s collection to illustrate this trajectory to the public with some of the greatest examples of Dutch design in the U.S.”



Rendering of Christie van der Haak’s project
More Is More.

“When I saw the tiered façade of The Wolfsonian, I was over the moon,” explained van der Haak. “It is the perfect canvas for my work, which consists of patterns and the interweaving of different patterns. By changing patterning by floor, my project will trigger associations with design from various cultures and ages, mirroring the exhibition inside.”

“Every December during Art Basel Miami Beach and DesignMiami/, the latest, trendsetting designs are presented to the world. We could not ask for better timing to present Christie’s project alongside our unparalleled Dutch collection,” said Tim Rodgers, Wolfsonian director. “The synergy between our exhibition of modern Dutch design

and Christie’s transformation of the museum’s façade will highlight the significant contributions Dutch designers and artists have made both in the past and in the present. Without a doubt, these presentations will be the talk of the design community during Miami Art Week.”

Showcasing selections from The Wolfsonian’s world-renowned collection of Dutch decorative arts and works on paper in addition to loans from the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and the Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art, Denver, *Modern Dutch Design* will provide a basic chronology of “Dutch style” during its most influential period. After beginning with Nieuwe Kunst’s flat, geometric, stylized motifs adapted from batik from the Dutch East Indies, the exhibition then explores two rival avant-garde stylistic movements: The Amsterdam School (with more ornate, sculptural elements) and De Stijl (featuring a minimalist palette of primary colors), which opened the way to Nieuwe Bouwen (New Building), the Dutch branch of Functionalism. From low-income housing plans to luxurious ocean liners and Bensdorp chocolate ads, *Modern Dutch Design* reflects design’s mark on all aspects of Dutch life in this time—the public, private, and commercial spheres alike.

Key works include:

- A model of a mosque (c. 1893) that served as an advertising display for J.W. Smitt Tea and Coffee’s products from the East Indies, expressing Europe’s taste for the exotic and possibly showcased at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair;

- A 1898 poster by the Java-born artist Jan Toorop, announcing a lottery held at the National Exhibition of Women's Labor, which championed the improvement of the working conditions of the female labor force, and showing Indonesian influence through "fear" of empty space (*horror vacui*);
- Architect and designer Michel de Klerk's deep purple velvet armchair (1916) from a suite produced for the Amsterdam company 't Woonhuis, with expressive sculptural forms and references to Indonesian architecture;
- A chandelier (c. 1915) with marine motifs and references to navigation and trade, also by de Klerk and featured in the offices of the Scheepvarthuis (Shipping House), the headquarters for six Amsterdam shipping companies that was widely considered the Amsterdam School's "manifesto";
- A clock and set of incense burners (c. 1920) by Amsterdam School sculptor Hildo Krop, whose works populate buildings, low-income housing, and bridges throughout Amsterdam;
- Sculptor Bernard Richters' c. 1920 silk shade table lamp decorated in the batik technique, the Javanese wax-resist method adopted by Dutch Nieuwe Kunst artists and the Amsterdam School for bookbindings, objects, and furniture;
- The *Peer* [Pear] service (c. 1926) of Leerdam glassware by Andries Copier, exemplifying the new modern style that merged geometric proportions with natural forms, in this case a pear;
- *Giso 404* (1927), a piano lamp of balanced geometric forms designed by J.J.P. Oud, one of the founding members of De Stijl, and produced by the Rotterdam manufacturer W.H. Gispen;
- A 1930 poster promoting the annual trade fair Utrecht Jaarbeurs, founded in 1917 to revive the economic and commercial situation in the Netherlands, in De Stijl-inspired primary colors; and
- *Van Nelle's Pakjes Koffie* [Van Nelle's Packed Coffee], a c. 1930 advertisement for the Rotterdam tobacco, coffee, and tea factory Van Nelle, evoking the De Stijl movement and German industrial design aesthetic to project Van Nelle's progressive, modern public image.

The Wolfsonian will publish a full-color book to accompany the exhibition, with essays by Barisione; Marjan Groot, senior lecturer in the history of design at the VU University Amsterdam; Frans Leidelmeijer, Dutch decorative arts expert; and Mienke Simon Thomas, senior curator of decorative arts and design at the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam.

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Exhibition Support

Modern Dutch Design is made possible by the National Endowment for the Arts; the Dutch Culture USA program by the Consulate General of the Netherlands in New York; the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Miami; the Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs; and the Netherland-America Foundation. *More Is More* is supported by Dr. David and Linda Frankel; the Mondriaan Fund; Creative Industries Fund NL; Stroom Den Haag; and AAA Flag & Banner.

About Christie van der Haak

Based in the Hague, Christie van der Haak (b. 1950) is a painter by origin. For more than a decade, she has been increasingly involved in designing and weaving intensely patterned tapestries and fabrics for immersive environments. The prestigious Ouborg Prize awarded to the artist in 2015 made possible her exhibition at the Gemeentemuseum Den Haag and companion book *Sproken/Fairy Tales*, a project which inspired The Wolfsonian to invite van der Haak to create a monumental public art project on Miami Beach.

About The Wolfsonian–Florida International University

The Wolfsonian–FIU is a museum, library, and research center that uses objects to illustrate the persuasive power of art and design, to explore what it means to be modern, and to tell the story of social, historical, and technological changes that have transformed our world. The collection comprises approximately 180,000 objects from the 1850s to the 1950s—the height of the Industrial Revolution through the aftermath of the Second World War—in a variety of media including furniture; industrial-design objects; works in glass, ceramics, and metal; rare books; periodicals; ephemera; works on paper; paintings; textiles; and medals.

The Wolfsonian is located at 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, FL. Admission is \$10 for adults; \$5 for seniors, students, and children age 6–12; and free for Wolfsonian members, State University System of Florida staff and students with ID, and children under six. The museum is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, 10am–6pm; Friday, 10am–9pm; Sunday, noon–6pm; and is closed on Wednesday. Contact us at 305.531.1001 or visit us online at wolfsonian.org for further information.

The Wolfsonian receives generous and ongoing support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture; and City of Miami Beach, Cultural Affairs Program, Cultural Arts Council.

About Florida International University

Florida International University is classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as R1: Doctoral Universities - Highest Research Activity and recognized as a Carnegie engaged university. It is a public research university with colleges and schools that offers 196 bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs in fields such as engineering, computer science, international relations, architecture, law and medicine. As one of South Florida's anchor institutions, FIU contributes almost \$9 billion each year to the local economy. FIU is Worlds Ahead in finding solutions to the most challenging problems of our time. FIU emphasizes research as a major component of its mission. FIU has awarded more than 220,000 degrees and enrolls more than 54,000 students in two campuses and three centers including FIU Downtown on Brickell, FIU@I-75, and the Miami Beach Urban Studios. FIU's Medina Aquarius Program houses the Aquarius Reef Base, a unique underwater research facility in the Florida Keys. FIU also supports artistic and cultural engagement through its three museums: Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, The Wolfsonian–FIU, and The Jewish Museum of Florida–FIU. FIU is a member of Conference USA and more than 400 student-athletes participating in 18 sports. For more information about FIU, visit fiu.edu.