

PRESS RELEASE

SHOW YOURSELF –Benno Premsele and Yvonne Joris’ collections

Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch recently acquired two extensive, important private bequests. Last year the museum welcomed the ceramics collection of former (interior) designer Benno Premsele (1920 - 1997), which consists of 262 vases, dishes and bowls including major works by Geert Lap and Jan van der Vaart. The second bequest consists of well over 250 items of jewellery owned by former director Yvonne Joris (1950 - 2013). Together the bequests – that contain works by approximately 150 designers, ceramicists and jewellers – represent a substantial addition to the museum's collection. An exhibition featuring the two collections opens on 16 June 2018.

Benno Premsele and Yvonne Joris were leading collectors and public figures in their time. Their personal visions on design also shaped their private collections. This makes these bequests extra interesting to the museum and this is why Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch has added both collections to its own, in their entirety. Both were gifted by Premsele/Broeksma and Joris' heirs.

Passion for collecting and proselytising

Both Benno Premsele and Yvonne Joris influenced the fields of applied art and design. Though they belonged to different generations and their tastes diverged, they still had a lot in common. Both Premsele and Joris were collectors for whom the personal and the professional overlapped; neither distinguished between their work and their private lives. Benno Premsele exhibited his ceramics collection at home where he and his partner Friso Broeksma confronted their many guests with the continually changing presentation. Yvonne Joris quite literally wore her love of contemporary jewellery. Both used their collections to send a message: design and applied art should be given equal footing with other forms of art. This is still apt today.

The two collections suit the museum's policy and collection extraordinarily well. As of 1 June 2018, the change of course towards design under director Timo de Rijk has resulted in a new name: Design Museum Den Bosch. The fact that the collections originated from important figures in Dutch design (Premsele) and the museum (Joris), who were, moreover, unabashed proponents of applied art, underlines the renewed museum's mission and vision even more strongly: revealing design's impact on society.

Benno Premsele

The 262 ceramic objects from Benno Premsele's inheritance were gifted by Els and Caspar Broeksma, the heirs of Premsele's partner Friso Broeksma. As a(n) (interior) designer and a central figure in the post-war Dutch art world Benno Premsele was passionate about 'good living'. As the chairman of the COC he was also a prominent advocate of gay rights. His collections of (applied) art were part of the consistent manner in which he expressed his modern, emancipated lifestyle. An important part of this message was his argument in favour of demolishing the division between art for art's sake and applied art. Premsele's ceramics collection is a good example of this as he focused emphatically on modern (container) shapes. Premsele primarily collected (and designed) somewhat reserved products in subdued colours and shapes. In his opinion, there was already enough 'noise' in the world.

Yvonne Joris

As the director of Museum Het Kruidhuis and Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch (1987-2009), Yvonne Joris was as idiosyncratic as the accent grave in her first name suggests. With her unicity and passion for collecting she managed to enrich a relatively small museum with an exceptional, internationally appealing collection of artists' ceramics and 'author's jewellery'. From her appointment as director onwards she focused on applied art alongside an exhibition policy which revolved around innovative design. Yvonne Joris wore her personal convictions. Elegant, extravagant, millinery and jewellery bedecked, she literally stood for what she believed in. Her own jewellery collection reflects this. Alongside works by leading, international makers (including some who also feature in the museum's collection) there is also, for instance, plenty of costume jewellery.

Museum history

The bequest of Joris' collection as well as the museum's change of course occasioned us to examine our own history in more detail. Besides having organised many remarkable and sometimes ground-breaking exhibitions, and the ditto purchases from 'the Joris era', special attention was paid to the lengthy, eventful search for a suitable location for the museum's new home. Designs and models – from Gerrit Rietveld's very early plans to Bořek Šípek's almost built citadel plan – will go on show for the first time in many years. The small presentation not only wishes to highlight the museum's development and performance over the past six decades, but also aims to demonstrate that design has always been part of its institutional DNA.

Publication

The exhibition will be accompanied by a two-volume publication dedicated to the bequests. Author Titus Eliëns emphatically intertwines the history of Yvonne Joris' time at the museum with the institution's history. Curator Fredric Baas describes how Benno Premsele's opinions on art and design can be found throughout the latter's ceramics collection.

As of 1 June 2018, Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch will be called Design Museum Den Bosch

On 1 June, Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch will change its name to Design Museum Den Bosch. The museum has focused solely on design and applied art since the close of 2016. The new name is the next step in the course plotted. The change provides clarity to the public and contributes to the museum's further positioning.

Noot voor de redactie

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