



Folkert de Jong, *Dutch Mechanisms*, 2016  
(photo: André Kruysen, courtesy Stroom Den Haag)

## ***Stroom Den Haag unveils new sculpture for The Sculpture Gallery: Dutch Mechanisms by Folkert de Jong***

*Friday 1 July 2016*

- start program 15.30 hrs  
with Bas Heijne, Luc Panhuysen, Folkert de Jong
- unveiling of the sculpture: 17.00 hrs

Since 1990 The Hague has a sculpture gallery in the centre of the city: 40 pedestals for 40 sculptures by Dutch artists. Friday 1 July, Stroom Den Haag will add a new sculpture: *Dutch Mechanisms* by Folkert de Jong. Starting point for the sculpture is the murder of the De Witt brothers in 1672; the outcome of a controversy about power and leadership between the republicans and the Orange royalists. It marked the end of the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands. By imagining this black page from history Folkert de Jong also draws a link to the present: battles of power and populism are of all times.

*The Sculpture Gallery* consists of work by:

Karel Appel  
Gijs Assmann  
Atelier van Lieshout  
David Bade  
Hans van Bentem  
Rob Birza  
Sjoerd Buisman  
Tom Claassen  
Adam Colton  
Anno Dijkstra  
Alfred Eikelenboom  
Gert Germeraad  
Sigurdur Gudmundsson  
Ernst Hazenbroek  
Berry Holslag  
Michael Jacklin  
Folkert de Jong  
Jos Kruit  
André Kruysen  
Ingrid Mol  
Rien Monshouwer  
Peter Otto  
Sonja Oudendijk  
Jan van de Pavert  
Lon Pennock  
Pearl Perlmutter  
Thom Puckey  
Christien Rijnsdorp  
Maria Roosen  
Marc Ruygrok  
Eja Siepman van den Berg  
Jan Snoeck  
Arjanne van der Spek  
Joost van den Toorn  
Emo Verkerk  
Carel Visser

Folkert de Jong is fascinated by the way history can be traced to a collective (sub)conscious. For him the meaning of the dramatic murder of the De Witt brothers is linked directly to our present day: "Today as well, there is no morality. Political, economic and social unrest, war and power struggles have been of increasing influence on The Netherlands. Linking the morals of these days to the murder of the brothers De Witt – what do we actually know about these events? – is just as difficult as forming an opinion about the atrocities in our present time. The facts presented by the media are in effect complex and confusing. Then again, it does make sense to ponder upon one's own position. Would you be capable of condemning somebody to death or to join in a lynch mob? How far do we ourselves participate in these mechanisms of populism?"

De Jong became fascinated by a finger and tongue belonging to the De Witt brothers, now located in the Hague Historical Museum. According to tradition the brothers were shot, stabbed, butchered and partly eaten in front of the Prison Gate in The Hague, before they were hung. Parts of the bodies of the murdered brothers were taken as trophies and sold, as were the finger and tongue which eventually ended up in the museum. For the sculpture the artist converted two lifelike synthetic skeletons to bronze: symbols of transience, an important theme in 17th century art. The skeletons seem to merge into one figure. De Jong wants to transcend the literalness of these atrocious events.

De Jong made a 3d scan and print of the finger and tongue of the brothers, and had them cast in bronze. They are the physical link to the historical events, and represent speaking (with the tongue) and pointing (with the finger). De Jong: "It makes me suspicious that exactly these two items have survived – it is almost too good to be true. It makes me doubt their authenticity. Are they really of the brothers De Witt, or part of the myth surrounding the event? Some people see the brothers as martyrs of the 'True Freedom', but what is the need for this martyrdom? They seem to have been killed by protagonists of the Orangists, but how can we rely on this 'knowledge' to make a proper judgment? And what is the relevance for our present time and the power structure in which we live?"

### **Program unveiling *Dutch Mechanisms*, Friday 1 July:**

- 15.30 hrs reception in Studio Dudok, Hofweg 1a, The Hague
- 15.45 hrs welcome and introduction by Arno van Roosmalen, director Stroom Den Haag
- 15.50 hrs spoken column by Bas Heijne (columnist for the daily NRC)

Tony van de Vorst  
Auke de Vries  
Leo Vroegindeweij  
André van de Wijdeven  
Famke van Wijk

More information on *The Sculpture Gallery*: [www.stroom.nl](http://www.stroom.nl)

Handelsblad)

16.00 hrs start debate with Luc Panhuysen (author of *De ware vrijheid: De levens van Johan en Cornelis de Witt*) and Folkert de Jong, moderator is Marco van Baalen, director Hague Historical Museum

16.45 hrs end of debate

17.00 hrs unveiling of the sculpture *Dutch Mechanisms*, corner Spui / Lange Poten (across from the Dutch Parliament and close to the Prison Gate Museum)

**Folkert de Jong** (1972, Egmond aan Zee) is well-known for his theatrical, narrative imagery that pursue themes like war, greed and power. His sculptures are often made of synthetic materials like styrofoam. Since 2012 he also works with bronze, and used it to make his first work in public space: *The Player* for the Koningsplein in The Hague. De Jong's work is part of the collection of the Municipal Museum The Hague, the Saatchi Collection in London and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. At this moment Carin Goeijers is making a documentary about the work of De Jong. Folkert De Jong is one of the participants of the international exhibition *SONSBEEK '16: transACTION*, on view from 4 June until 18 September 2016.

**The Sculpture Gallery** in The Hague is a concept and design by P. Struycken. Through its permanent character and yearly commissions it offers a unique format for art in public space and offers a cross section of Dutch sculpture since 1990. Curator of the Sculpture Gallery is André Kruysen, projectleader is Vincent de Boer, advisor/supervisor art in public space at Stroom. In the Fall of 2016 Stroom will unveil another sculpture, this time made by Femmy Otten.

The sculpture of Karel Appel was a gift to the City of The Hague in 2001 by the Foundation 750 years The Hague. We thank the Hague Historical Museum for their cooperation in the production of the art work and the program of 1 July.

**Note for the press:**

You are cordially invited to the program and the unveiling of the sculpture on 1 July. For registrations, more information and images: **Stroom Den Haag**, Hildegard Beijersbergen-Blom, [pers@stroom.nl](mailto:pers@stroom.nl), tel. 070-3658985, 06-24255772

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