

PIONEERS OF CHANGE

PRESS RELEASE



GOVERNORS ISLAND NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 11-13/ SEPTEMBER 18-20

Press Release

Amsterdam, August 17, 2009

Pioneers of Change, a festival of Dutch design, fashion and architecture on New York's Governors Island to celebrate a 400-year Dutch-American friendship.

Conceived and curated by Renny Ramakers, co-founder and director of Droog, as part of the NY400 week celebrations, commemorating the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Dutch to New York.

Pioneers of Change highlights a more responsible and sustainable approach to living by celebrating the blurring of low- and high-brow, establishing new collaborations, encouraging involvement, emphasizing sustainability and valuing handcraft and the local context.

Over the course of two long weekends from September 11 through September 20, **Pioneers of Change** will showcase a modern interpretation on Dutch art and design. The exhibit will utilize several former officers' houses in Nolan Park on Governors Island, where visitors can listen and debate, watch and participate, relax and think, eat and drink, play music, be inspired, connect and, simply, enjoy. Revelers can also shop at the pop-up store, which sells affordable Dutch design ware (all under \$100).

"I am honored to share my vision of what I see as a new movement in design and architecture, a different design based on a more critical attitude toward global mass consumption and with an open eye to participation from the public," says Renny Ramakers, curator of the exhibit and co-founder and director of Droog.

Pioneers of Change does not apply the luxury tag to an ethos of riches as such but to qualities now hard to come by, including space, fresh air, respect, care, silence, slowness and time.

"This NY400 festival of Dutch design, fashion and architecture aims to bring the work of cutting-edge Dutch designers to the New York City audiences" says Renée Jones-Bos, Ambassador of the Netherlands in the United States. "This Dutch festival is one of the great events taking place on Governors Island during the NY400 week in September when we celebrate our shared history, shared values and shared future."

In **Pioneers of Change**, people will not encounter the usual design, fashion and architecture presentation. So there will be no high-style artifacts, models, drawings and catwalk shows. The three-dimensional exhibit will showcase repair vs. recycling; knitting a carpet with six-foot long needles and using wool from three species of Dutch sheep; elderly people slowly but attentively serving meals with smaller portions of foods from faraway places and larger portions of those from nearby gardens; Dutch fashion designers and New York masters specialized in beads and lace working together with students from Parsons The New School for Design; designers digging in local grounds to reveal differences in color and texture; movies about urban farming focused on New York; and left-over building materials collected in New York available for creative re-use.

"Governors Island is the perfect place for this creative and dynamic festival," said Leslie Koch, President of the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation. "**Pioneers of Change** provides a wonderful opportunity for visitors to Governors Island to experience design, fashion and architecture in the fabulous setting."

Pioneers of Change will kick-off with Open Talks, a two-part discussion moderated by Dutch- and American designers and architects, in collaboration with Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. The topics: "Toward a New Notion of Luxury" and "New Collaborations".

Pioneers of Change will include the participation of leading designers from fashion, design and architecture, such as: 2012 Architecten, Atelier NL, Maarten Baas, Franck Bragigand, Droog with Marije Vogelzang, Herman Verkerk, Rianne Makkink and Hansje van Halem, Experimental Jetset, Pascale Gatzien, Christien Meindertsma, MVRDV and The Why Factory with Work Architecture Company, Painted, Erwin Driessens and Maria Verstappen, Arthur Eisenaar & Taconis Stolck, Parsons The New School for Design, Platform 21, Marcel Schmalgemeyer, NL Architects and Michael Schoner, Richard Hutten, Atelier van Lieschout, and Chris Kabel.

Please see the **program document** for more detailed information.

Pioneers of Change was initiated by Han Bakker under the authority of NY400, the result of an initiative by the Dutch Government in close co-operation with Dutch local and provincial authorities, with New York City and New York State, and with active participation of a great number of organizations from the private, cultural and non-profit sectors.
www.ny400.org

Pioneers of Change is supported by the Dutch Design Fashion Architecture programme, which aims to strengthen the international position of these sectors through a joined-up approach.
www.dutchdfa.nl

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Governors Island, a free 7 minute ferry ride from the Battery Maritime Building (10 South Street), located adjacent to the Staten Island Ferry in Lower Manhattan. For more information and accurate ferry schedule please visit www.pioneersofchange.com.

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