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**April 27, 2009**

## **Dutch Prince and Princess to Open Major Exhibition of Historic Dutch Art at the Vancouver Art Gallery**

**VANCOUVER, BC** – Members of the **Dutch Royal Family** will be Guests of Honour at the **Vancouver Art Gallery** for the opening of the most significant collection of 17th century Dutch art ever presented in Canada. Their Highnesses **Princess Marilène** and **Prince Maurits van Oranje-Nassau, van Vollenhoven** have been invited to formally open the exhibition ***Vermeer, Rembrandt and the Golden Age of Dutch Art: Masterpieces from the Rijksmuseum*** at the **Dutch Masters Ball** on **May 9, 2009**. Proceeds from this opening and major fundraising event will support exhibitions and programming at the Vancouver Art Gallery, a not-for-profit organization.

**Princess Marilène** and **Prince Maurits** are part of the new generation of young Dutch Royals who pursue careers and only rarely represent the Royal House in an official capacity. Princess Marilène has a particular interest in participating in the opening of *Vermeer, Rembrandt and the Golden Age of Dutch Art* as an employee of the Rijksmuseum. The couple married in 1998 and have three children. Prince Maurits is the eldest son of Princess Margriet who was born in Canada where the Royal family found refuge during the Second World War. In 1945, Queen Juliana sent 100,000 tulip bulbs to Canada in appreciation for Canada's wartime hospitality and in gratitude for the sacrifices made by Canadian soldiers in the liberation of the Netherlands. The Netherlands continues to send tulip bulbs to Ottawa to commemorate the nation's close bonds with Canada.

The **Dutch Masters Ball** will begin with a champagne reception and official exhibition opening ceremonies. Following a special toast to the Royal Couple, guests will enjoy a formal dinner, live music by The New Dutch Academy from The Hague, a limited auction of luxury items, and dancing to the sounds of Vancouver's own Dal Richards.

Cuisine for the Ball will be envisioned and prepared under the direction of Dutch Michelin star chef **Robert Kranenborg**, who is volunteering his expertise for the Gallery fundraiser. Widely regarded as the greatest chef ever produced by The Netherlands and formerly of the internationally renowned restaurant La Rive in Amsterdam, Kranenborg will produce a Dutch-Pacific Coast fusion menu for the Ball in collaboration with Vancouver-based Culinary Capers.

*Vermeer, Rembrandt and the Golden Age of Dutch Art: Masterpieces from the Rijksmuseum* will be the largest and most significant collection of 17th century Dutch art ever presented in Canada. On view from May 10 to September 13, 2009, the exhibition of 128 works of art features some of the finest paintings by celebrated masters such as **Hals, Rembrandt** and **Vermeer**, as well as a remarkable selection of drawings and decorative arts. The exhibition is organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery in collaboration with the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

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**Vancouver Art Gallery, Media Contacts:**

Andrew Riley, Public Relations Manager, 604-662-4722

[ariley@vanartgallery.bc.ca](mailto:ariley@vanartgallery.bc.ca)

Dana Sullivant, Director of Marketing and Communications, 604-662-4721

[dsullivant@vanartgallery.bc.ca](mailto:dsullivant@vanartgallery.bc.ca)

**Royal Netherlands Embassy, Ottawa, Canada, Media Contact:**

Anna Rijk, Senior Advisor, Communications & Public Diplomacy, 613-237-5031 x231

[anna.rijk@minbuza.nl](mailto:anna.rijk@minbuza.nl)

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The Vancouver Art Gallery is a not-for-profit organization supported by: its members; individual donors; corporate funders; foundations; the City of Vancouver; the Province of British Columbia through the BC Arts Council and Gaming Revenues; the Government of Canada through the Canada Council for the Arts and the Department of Canadian Heritage. We thank everyone for their continuing generosity.