

RESTAURATION CATALOG

LADIES' SALON

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MUSEUM WILLET-HOLTHUYSEN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE:

3	Foreword
5	Museum Willet-Holthuysen
6	Ladies' Salon
9	Wallpaper & Decorative Frames
10	Drapery
13	Mirrors
14	Armchairs
17	Straight-Backed Chairs
18	Sofa
21	Crapauds
22	Carpet
24	How to Donate
27	Tax relief on gifts to cultural institutions (ANBI)
28	Contact

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Willet-Holthuysen is a magnificent building not far from the River Amstel, at Herengracht 605. It offers a rare opportunity to experience a 17th-century house which continued to be lived in until 1896. Today, as a museum, it combines authentic historical features with reconstructed period rooms that look out over the canal and the garden, attracting around 55,000 visitors each year.

Supervision of Willet-Holthuysen has been entrusted to Amsterdam Museum and we are proud of what we have achieved here. Yet Museum Willet-Holthuysen is not always as impressive as it might be. Which is why we propose a series of improvements, returning the house to its 19th-century splendour, as it was when its last residents lived here: Abraham Willet (1825-1888), Louisa Willet-Holthuysen (1824-1895), their staff and - last but not least - madam's famous pet dogs. And along with the amazing art collection they accumulated. We plan to restore all this - the interiors, period rooms and staff premises - to its original state. And more.

This booklet provides an overview of the procedure and cost of restoring one particular period room: the ladies' salon. The museum has set aside resources to invest in the programme. But the total cost far exceeds our available funds. We would therefore like to invite you to support our project. This booklet contains more information about how you can help.

On behalf of our staff I would like to thank you for your support.

Paul Spies
Executive director






MUSEUM WILLET-HOLTHUYSEN

Herengracht 605 in Amsterdam is the location of a magnificent building: Museum Willet-Holthuysen. It was constructed on a double plot in 1685-1690 as a patrician residence. A succession of prominent Amsterdam families have lived here. Last to do so were the wealthy art collectors Abraham and Louisa Willet-Holthuysen. When the widowed Louisa died in 1895, the house and its valuable contents were bequeathed as a museum to the city. Today, it presents a selection of the couple's antique glass, silver, ceramics, sculpture and paintings in a series of unique historical interiors and period rooms.

In the intervening century and a half, sunlight, dust and neglect have taken their toll. For many years, the 19th century was considered an age of pedestrian taste. Few would defend that view today, and the museum now celebrates the life and times of Abraham and Louisa. To recreate the late 19th-century atmosphere in which they lived, the house is being restored, step by step.

LADIES' SALON

On the ground floor, overlooking the canal is the ladies' salon. During the day, this was where Louisa would receive her guests. In the evening, the door to the adjacent ballroom was opened and the salon served as an antechamber. The Willets had their house decorated in the latest French style, ordering costly furniture from leading Parisian suppliers. They filled the salon with elegant Louis XIV designs revived in Second Empire France. The interior was completed around 1865, and was something of a coup for the Willets in Amsterdam society. Yellow, purple and silver grey dominated in this colourful room. Amply appointed with upholstery and fabrics, the salon was the height of fashion. By coordinating colour, form and pattern, the designers created a wonderfully coherent interior that formed an ensemble with the ballroom beyond.

RESTORATION OF THE LADIES' SALON

A significant proportion of the original interior of the salon has survived, although little remains of its sense of grandeur. Restoration of various parts of the room is therefore needed to return this wonderful 19th-century interior to its former splendour. Earlier research into the original furnishings, decorations and colours of the salon forms the basis for our restoration plan.

Since much of the 19th-century interior has remained intact, wherever possible, our restorers have used this as a source of information and a guarantee for optimum authenticity. For example, the valance is still serviceable, the upholstery of the two crapaud chairs can be retained and it should be possible to do something with much of the surviving wallpaper. Where the deterioration is greatest, the restorers will repair what remains or in some cases reconstruct and replace. Whatever has to be remade will be carefully aligned with the authentic elements of the interior, to minimise the contrast between old and new.

Various historical sources are available to assist the restorers, such as an inventory of the house, drawn up shortly after Louisa Willet-Holthuysen passed away. A key piece of visual evidence is a photo taken in 1907.

The following elements of the salon interior are included in the restoration project.



WALLPAPER & DECORATIVE FRAMES



WALLPAPER & DECORATIVE FRAMES

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

The salon walls are decorated with velouté wallpaper in the room's theme colours: yellow, purple and silver-grey. Velouté imitates textile and is made using a method that was widely employed in the 19th century. A layer of glue is applied to the paper in a pattern - here it is a floral design. Over this, fine particles of wool are scattered, leaving a textile relief in the desired form.

Four of the five walls still have the original wallpaper. On two of these, the paper was exposed in 1996. On the other two walls, restorers plan to remove the modern covering. The tears and patches that have accumulated over the years will be treated so that the original 19th paper can be retained. None of this original covering remains on the long wall parallel to the corridor. So a reconstruction will be made to match the - somewhat faded - colours of the wallpaper that once decorated that section.

In most places, the ornamental gilt frame and rosettes bordering the wallpaper has disappeared. These are known as baguettes, and with the coiled ribbon frames they divide the walls into sections and at the same time hide the joins where the sheets of paper meet. With their shiny gilt finish, the reconstructed frames will play a key part in returning the room to its former grandeur.

DETAILS

Name:	Wallpaper and frames
Material:	Paper, gilt woodcarving
Colour:	Yellow, purple, silver-grey, gold
Condition:	Tears in wallpaper, missing frames

€ 83.500,-

DRAPERY

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Textile plays a prominent role in 19th-century interiors. Thick, heavy drapery was a particular feature of French interiors of the Second Empire period. The drapes and net curtains were intended - along with the shutters - to darken the room, to stop people looking in and to protect the interior from harmful sunlight. Yet the fabric itself was also sensitive to sunlight and therefore prone to damage.

The curtains in the salon are of yellow silk damask with a floral pattern, trimmed with a decorative band and a fringe. Sunlight, wear and dust have taken their toll on the original curtains, so that these can no longer be used. To restore the ambience created by the original drapery, new curtains will be made, based on the 19th-century example.

Since the valances suffered less exposure to sunlight, these are still perfectly useable. The salon's net curtains and blinds have not survived. Replacements are being made based on similar shades that have been preserved in other fashionable interiors of the time.

€ 22.000,-

DETAILS

Name:	Drapery and accessories
Material:	Silk damask, fringe, cords and tassels
Colour:	Yellow
Condition:	Worn, torn, faded

DRAPERY



MIRRORS

MIRRORS

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

The original mirror that stood over the fireplace in the Willets' day no longer survives. Yet the shape of the frame is known, thanks to a photo taken in 1907. Also missing is the decorative gilt woodcarving above the mirror, featuring a torch and quiver of arrows. For that too, the 1907 photo provides crucial evidence. An outline of the carving is visible on the wall, providing the appropriate dimensions. The same motif also occurs in the window pelmets and the top rails on the back of the chairs. The decoration will be carved by hand by a sculptor.

There was a second Louis XVI style mirror on the wall between the windows. This companion piece helped increase the sense of spaciousness and the dispersal of light in the room. Although no details regarding this mirror have survived, the design would clearly have matched that of the mirror above the fireplace. Both mirrors are being remade in neoclassical style, with constrained forms and symmetrical ornaments.

DETAILS

Name:	Mantelpiece mirror and companion
Material:	Woodcarving, mirror glass
Condition:	Not preserved, a replica will be made

€ 30.500,-

ARMCHAIRS

ARMCHAIRS

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

The salon had ample seating, including a sofa, two crapaud chairs, four armchairs and six straight-backed chairs. Although much has survived, some of the chairs and the sofa have disappeared. For the upholstery of these various furnishings, the designers chose the same yellow silk damask reserved for the drapery.

The two armchairs were originally part of a set of four. Neither have their original upholstery; moreover, the present fabric is rather worn. The restorers will recreate the original cloth and this will be used to upholster the chairs. The body is made of palisander with rosewood veneer and dark stained details, all of which is in good condition on both chairs.

DETAILS

Name:	Two armchairs
Material:	Palisander, yellow silk damask, rosewood veneer
Colour:	Yellow, reddish-brown
Condition:	Upholstery no longer original; worn, faded

€ 3.540,-



STRAIGHT- BACKED CHAIRS

STRAIGHT-BACKED CHAIRS

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Of the original set of six chairs that once stood in the salon, two remain. The upholstery on these chairs is no longer original either; moreover it is worn and faded. As on the armchairs, the original upholstery matched the drapery. The recreated yellow silk damask will also be used to cover these chairs. On one of them, the crest on the top rail is damaged and requires restoration.

The museum plans to have an exact copy made to replace one of the missing chairs. A start has already been made on the construction of the body of the chair, and various specialists will be asked to complete the work. It is a highly labour-intensive process. The new chair will also be upholstered in the recreated yellow silk damask. It will stand together with the 18th-century secretaire that belonged to Louisa Willet-Holthuysen in an appropriate place in the salon.

DETAILS

Name:	Two straight-backed chairs
Material:	Palisander, rosewood veneer, yellow silk damask
Colour:	Yellow, reddish brown
Condition:	Upholstery no longer original, worn, faded, broken crest

€ 6.160,-



SOFA

SOFA

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

The sofa that once stood in the salon has been lost. However, there is a sofa in the 1907 photo and there is also a sofa in a drawing of the salon made in 1914. Illustrations are also known from a contemporary French trade periodical in which the salon chairs appear along with a sofa. These visual sources will provide a basis for a replica of the coach, which will be entirely handmade. Various specialists in traditional techniques will be asked to work on the body, the carving and the upholstery.

DETAILS

Name:	Sofa
Material:	Palisander, rosewood veneer, yellow silk damask
Colour:	Yellow, reddish brown
Condition:	Not preserved, a replica will be made

€ 32.500,-



CRAPAUDS

CRAPAUDS

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Among the furniture items in the salon are two crapaud chairs. These are typically low 19th-century armchairs with a thickly padded seat, the name being derived from the French for 'toad'. In this type of chair, everything is subservient to comfort and so the body is completely covered in upholstery. Because of their shape, these chairs were soon consigned to storage when the house became a museum. As a result, the upholstered cushion padding and fabric have survived. The crapaud chairs are decorated with rosettes and handmade tassels, although this is missing on one of the chairs. Replacements will be made for the missing items.

DETAILS

Name:	Two crapaud chairs
Material:	Yellow silk damask, fringe trimmings
Colour:	Yellow
Condition:	Missing rosettes and tassels

€ 1.125,-



CARPET

CARPET

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

For the floor, the Willets commissioned a handwoven carpet from the firm of Braquenié in Paris, manufactured at a workshop in Aubusson. This part of France had been a centre of carpet and tapestry weaving for centuries. While the salon carpet has survived, it lacks the border that once framed it and was at one point removed. The modified carpet, which (as in the ballroom) originally extended from wall to wall, makes quite a different impact. Only fragments of the decorative border have survived in the depot. Its purple meandering motif resembles the wallpaper pattern, so that the designer's intention may have been to repeat both the form and colour.

Years of dust and light have left the once brightly coloured carpet extremely faded. On the reverse of the carpet the original hues are clearly visible. To conserve the carpet it will first be professionally cleaned, after which the worn patches will be repaired.

€ 13.000,-

DETAILS

Name:	Aubusson carpet
Material:	Warp, cotton; weave, wool
Colour:	Various colours
Condition:	Dirty and stained, worn, faded



HELP US RESTORE THE LADIES' SALON!

To restore the amazing 19th-century interior of the ladies' salon to its former glory we need a total of €188,725. While the museum will be investing in the restoration, it does not have sufficient resources to cover all the costs. We are therefore appealing to everyone who cares about the magnificent interior of Museum Willet-Holthuysen to support us. We invite you to contribute to the restoration project in the form of €25 shares.

HOW TO DONATE

Select one of the items in the salon that require restoration. There are eight choices available:

Decide how much you wish to contribute. You can help support the restoration by purchasing €25 sponsorship shares. The number of shares you choose is up to you; for example, if you wish to contribute €100 to the restoration then you buy for four shares.

There are two ways to contribute:

1. Online via www.willetholthuysen.nl/damessalon (follow the instructions on the website)
2. At the Museum Willet-Holthuysen reception desk

As a token of appreciation, you will receive a donation certificate specifying the item you have selected. We will also keep you informed about the progress of the salon restoration, and especially regarding the item you are supporting.



TAX RELIEF ON GIFTS TO CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS (ANBI)

On 1 January 2012, Amsterdam Museum was registered as an ANBI, which classifies the museum as an institution for general benefit. A temporary additional income tax deduction is currently available to those paying tax in the Netherlands for a gift to an ANBI listed as a cultural institution. Effectively, it means you can increase your donation to Amsterdam Museum by 25 percent. Or in other words, for tax purposes, you can deduct an additional quarter of the sum you have donated.

So on a gift of €1,000, you can increase the deductible sum by 25 percent to €1,250. Depending on your tax bracket, this will provide you with a tax reduction of between €412.50 (for bracket 1) and €650 (bracket 3).

In some cases, businesses can also take advantage of this tax scheme. To qualify for a deduction, the tax authority requires a legitimate reason for the donation. Please ask us if you wish to know more about this option.

The following conditions apply to deductions on general donations:

- Amsterdam Museum does not provide any reciprocal service for donations.
- Printed documents, such as a bank statement or receipt, are sufficient to show the tax authority that you have made a donation.
- The total amount of your donation must be above the threshold limit.
- You may not claim more than the maximum deductible sum for donations.

The above information is from the Dutch tax authority website.

For more information about donating to Amsterdam Museum, please contact the museum.

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CONTACT

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