

## PRESS RELEASE

Rotterdam, 1 February 2012

*Water. The Dutch only think about it when they're inconvenienced by it*

**The Netherlands and water: a story of conflict and concord, calamity and prosperity. For centuries the Dutch have been masters at controlling the water. They have wrested land from the water and turned Dutch waterworks into a global export product. The knowledge and technology with which the 'Low Lands' deal with water are an inspiration to many countries. Climate change is increasing the threat of both flooding and drought, and the consequences of a potential disaster are incalculable. It is no accident that dealing with water is one of the greatest global challenges of the twenty-first century. In the project *Sweet&Salt* (book and exhibition) author and journalist Tracy Metz and curator Maartje van den Heuvel demonstrate, in text and images, how the Netherlands shapes its evolving relationship with water.**

### Sweet&Salt

*Water and the Dutch*

*Tracy Metz, Maartje van den Heuvel*

English edition | ISBN 978-90-5662-848-2 | Recommended Retail Price € 35.00 | **Available 14 February 2012**

Paperback | Illustrated (colour) | 296 pages | 23 x 28 cm | Design: Opera Graphic Design

NAI Publishers in association with Kunsthal Rotterdam and Leiden University

Exhibition Kunsthal Rotterdam from 14 February to 10 June 2012

In *Sweet&Salt: Water and the Dutch*, American-born journalist and author Tracy Metz describes the metamorphosis the landscape of the Netherlands is currently undergoing and how the Dutch are searching for new ways of living with the water. She also reports on various places around the world, such as New Orleans, Hamburg, Vietnam, New York and China, that are working with the Dutch on a new approach to the water landscape.

As the most iconic element of the Netherlands, water has been represented in countless images over the centuries. In this publication, art historian Maartje van den Heuvel reveals, in more than 125 works of art, the rich diversity of meanings the Dutch have attached to water and their waterways. These works of art represent the Netherlands' history with water in an evocative way and can serve to inspire the shaping of a changing world.

- > Richly illustrated: from paintings from the Dutch Golden Age to illustrations of solutions for the future
- > Relevant to a broad international audience
- > Large exhibition at Kunsthal Rotterdam

#### **Exhibition Kunsthal Rotterdam from 14 February to 10 June 2012**

On Monday 13 February his Royal Highness the Prince of Orange opens the exhibition *Sweet&Salt*. By exhibiting 120 works of art, the Kunsthal Rotterdam illustrates our connection to the water. Famous historic paintings by old Dutch masters like Willem Maris and Salomon van Ruysdael are combined with remarkable works by modern artists like Theo van Doesburg and Edgar Fernhout, and with contemporary artists such as Marijke van Warmerdam and Daniëlle Kwaaitaal. The variation within the selected works of art provide insight into the essential role that art plays in our perception of water.

The dual project of *Sweet&Salt* is made possible with the support of the Province of Zuid-Holland, Evides Waterbedrijf, Rijkswaterstaat, The Netherlands Architecture Fund, Vitens, DeltaPORT Donation Fund, WWF, Rotterdam Climate Initiative, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, Delft University of Technology, province of Gelderland, NWB Bank, Knowledge for Climate, Rebel, City of Dordrecht, Hoogheemraadschap De Stichtse Rijnlanden, DHV Consultancy and Engineering, Waterschap Amstel, Gooi en Vecht, Association of Regional Water Authorities, District Water Board Hollandse Delta, Royal Haskoning, Fund for Special Journalistic Projects and Hoogheemraadschap van Schieland en de Krimpenerwaard.

#### **Press information**

To request a review copy or high-resolution images, please contact Esmeralda Eggen, +31 (0)10 201 0132, or e-mail [press@naipublishers.nl](mailto:press@naipublishers.nl). *We would appreciate a copy of your review.*

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### About the Authors

**Tracy Metz**, of American origin, is a journalist and author on art, architecture, urban planning and the landscape. She is an art editor with *NRC Handelsblad* newspaper and an international correspondent for the American magazine *Architectural Record*. In 2006-2007 she was awarded the mid-career Loeb Fellowship at Harvard Graduate School of Design. Subsequently she published a selection of her columns and essays on American planning and use of space, *On The Ground: Observations from Harvard*. She also initiated a two-year collaboration between Harvard and the Dutch government on water and the climate. She is a visiting fellow at Harvard. In 2007-2008 she was a member of the Delta Commission, appointed by the Dutch cabinet to advise the government on long-term water safety. Prior to this she was a visiting researcher at the Netherlands Institute for Spatial Research and a member of the Rural Area Council, the independent advisory board of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. Metz is the author of a number of books, including *Fun! Leisure and Landscape*, on the impact of the leisure industry on our environment (2002). In 2008 she published, with Maartje van den Heuvel, *Nature as Artifice*, on contemporary landscape photography, and in 2010 *Huis in Frankrijk. Nederlanders en hun maison de campagne* (House in France: The Dutch and their Holiday Homes).

**Maartje van den Heuvel** is an art historian and curator of photography at the Special Collections of Leiden University and also serves as a guest curator for various museums. She has curated such exhibitions as 'Documentary Now! Contemporary Strategies in Photography, Film and the Visual Arts' (Rotterdam, 2005) and 'Photography! A Special Collection at Leiden University' (The Hague Museum of Photography, 2010). In 2008 she produced 'Nature as Artifice: New Dutch Landscape in Photography and Video Art' for the Kröller-Müller Museum. This exhibition was held at Aperture Gallery in New York as well as at the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich as a counterpart to 'Der weite Blick', an exhibition by the Rijksmuseum on nineteenth century Dutch landscape painting, and in 2009 by the George Eastman House in Rochester (NY) as a counterpart to 'New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape'. In 2011 she was curator for the commission 'Leidens Beleg en Ontzet (1574)' awarded to photographer Erwin Olaf by Leiden University and Museum De Lakenhal.

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