

DIPLOMAT AFFAIRS

IN TOUCH WITH THE DUTCH



TEFAF
ART SPECIAL

ROYAL CONSERVATORY THE HAGUE
& THE HAGUE PHILHARMONIC
A NEW CULTURE PALACE

DIPLOMAT CLUB WASSENAAR
WELCOMES NEW AMBASSADORS: INDIA, LATVIA, RUSSIA,
SLOVAKIA, SRI LANKA, TANZANIA, VATICAN CITY

SPRING / SUMMER 2016




KASTEEL DE
WITTENBURG
AUDACIA AMICITIA FIDES



Diplomat Club Wassenaar
The Netherlands

Landgoed De Wittenburg 1, 2244 BV Wassenaar

CONNECTING THE DOTS

THE CORPS DIPLOMATIQUE, BUSINESS, ART, MUSIC AND CHARITY

TEXT
Shida Blik

With great pleasure the team and I present to you, Your Excellencies and dear readers, the magazine of Diplomat Club Wassenaar: Diplomat Affairs Magazine Spring/Summer 2016 – TEFAF Art special. Your participation in Dutch society and at Diplomat Club Wassenaar as honorary members inspires us to write and highlight the way you are in touch with the Dutch while representing your country. The collaboration over the years with your Embassies and staff, always wonderfully friendly and willing to assist, motivates and drives us to organize special events, such as our New Year reception. The amount of guests this year surpassed all expectations. We also rejoice at our traditional welcoming of new Ambassadors, together with our patron the mayor of Wassenaar: Jan Hoeke- ma, and at organising events to enhance connections with captains of industry, heads of Ministry and the world of Dutch art. Other club members are also highlighted in our club magazine, such as this time top businessman Bastiaan van der Knaap, CEO of First Dutch.

The alumni component of the Diplomatic Club is active too. One of the supporters of founding Diplomat Club Wassenaar, my former neighbour and French Ambassador, Pierre Ménat, will launch his book at DCW, on March the 16th.

Reaching out to charity is always close to our

heart and through your presence at our charity events; you support our mission, as you can read for example in our article on the Wiener Ball, featuring SOS Kinderdorpen/ Children's villages.

We also support the students from the Royal Conservatory the Hague and are proud of our exclusive interview with Director Henk van der Meulen who elaborates on the spectacular plans of the Royal Conservatory The Hague and The Hague Philharmonic Orchestra. Looking to the future, we are already looking forward to the Table Ronde that will be held on March 10th at the Peace Palace for the "Cocktail Francophone," fruit of the wonderful cooperation between the Alliance Française and many Embassies.

As passionate art lover and ambassador of the Shinkichi Tajiri Art Collection, an amazing COBRA artist, I make a point of always attending TEFAF, regarded as the most spectacular art fair in the world, held in the Netherlands. It is a real pleasure to announce that to celebrate TEFAF, this is a special edition of our magazine, compiled together with the English version of the Royal Association of Fine Art dealers in the Netherlands magazine: VERNIS. For this we give thanks to the wonderful collaboration with the Chairman Mr Robert Aronson. It is an absolute honour to bring the outstanding articles of the TEFAF edition of Vernis magazine and the special Dutch art which is represented in it, closer to home. Diplomat Affairs Magazine Spring/Summer 2016 is an issue rich in thought, colour and variety, I hope you will enjoy reading it.

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Ms. Nezhin Efendiyeva

A FABULOUS START TO THE YEAR 2016 AT DIPLOMAT CLUB WASSENAAR

2016 was launched at Diplomat Club Wassenaar with a splendid New Year's reception, under the sign of warmth, generosity and good spirit. The Embassy of Azerbaijan as co-host with Diplomat Club Wassenaar, provided not only the sumptuous buffet and wine-tasting but His Excellency Mir-Hamza Efendiyev also greatly contributed to the exquisite, intimate setting with his charming spouse, Prof. Sevil Amirova and highly gifted pianist daughter Nezhin Efendiyeva, who performed some of her own compositions and those of her famous grandfather, the great composer: Fikret Amirov.



Egypt: H.E. Taher Farahat, Mrs. Nadine Rushdy



Spain: H.E. Fernando Arias, Mrs. Patricia van Oordt De Arias



Mr. Omar Efendiyev, Mrs. Shida Blik, H.E. Mir-Hamza Efendiyev, Mrs. Sevil Amirova Efendiyev, Ms. Nezhin Efendiyeva, Mr. Peter Blik.



Morocco: Mrs. Najat Bellouki, H.E. Mr. Abdelouahab Bellouki



Mayor Jan Hoekema, H.E. Mir-Hamza Efendiyev, Mrs. Sevil Amirova Efendiyev



Malta: H.E. Joseph Cole, Mrs. Bernardina Cole

After listening spell-bound to the beautiful piano recital, guests were invited to dine. Azerbaijani wines were on full display and good use was made of the tasting opportunity of this delicious wine from the Savalan valley. Personally I found the deep bodied Merlot a surprise and a delight.

The sumptuous buffet provided by the Embassy of Azerbaijan caused quite a queue as guests stood mesmerised by the divine smells, and variety of dishes, char-

mingly served by a young man in local attire. My mouth still waters at the recollection of the aubergines and H.E. kindly explained how Azerbaijani cuisine offers two sorts of baklava, denser and less syrupy than some other varieties. A piece of which was enclosed to enjoy in peace at home, together with the latest Edition of "Diplomat Affairs – in touch with the Dutch" magazine and 'Baku' the beautiful magazine from Azerbaijan in the "goody bag" offered to the guests on their departure.

It was wonderful to witness all the appre-

ciative and grateful comments extended to DCW for organising these unique gatherings. The Ambassadors, all honorary members, expressed how at home they felt.

TEXT

Julie Kennedy

IMAGES

Anton van der Riet/Sharon Reyes/

Sylvia Alonso



Vatican City: H.E. Mgr. Aldo Cavalli



Mexico: H.E. Eduardo Ibarrola, Ms. Fabiola Soto-Midena, Mrs. Eva Mennes, Mr. Loet Mennes



Uruguay: H.E. Dr. Alvaro Moerzinger

Mr. Alexander Beelaerts, Mrs. Mafalda Weerts, Mrs. Ida van den Herik



Belarus: H.E. Mikalai Barysevich, Mrs. Tatsiana Barysevich, H.E. Mir-Hamza Efendiyev



Sri Lanka: H.E. Adam Sadiq



Chile: H.E. Prof. María Teresa Infante



OPCW Director-General: H.E. Ahmet Üzümcü



Panama: H.E. Willys Delvalle, Mrs. Tatiana Zarak Arias de Delvalle

Director Castle: Mr. Ralf Meppelder



Estonia: H.E. Peep Jahilo, Mrs. Marika Jahilo



Ms. Barbara Plugge, Mr. Patrick Testa, Mrs. van Duijker, Mr. Jan van Rossem



President The Hague Institute for Global Justice: Dr. Abi Williams



Israel: H.E. Haim Divon. Mrs. Linda Divon



RC Director, Henk van der Meulen

Cuba: H.E. Fermín Gabriel Quiñones Sánchez, Mrs. Aimara Quiñones



Moldova: H.E. Emilian Brenici



Bosnia and Herzegovina: H.E. Ahmet Halilovic, Mrs. Lajla Halilovic



Kazakhstan: H.E. Mainyura Murzamadiyeva



Chief of Proctocol MFA: Roelof van Ees



Georgia: H.E. Konstantine Surguladze

H.E. Mir-Hamza Efendiyev, H.E. Eduardo Ibarrola



“Azerbaijani national sweets pakhlava and shakarbura”



Ukraine: Mrs. Natalia Tymoshenko, H.E. Alexander Horin

LISTEN TO THE MUSIC

As future residents of a new culture centre that will be built in the seat of government of The Netherlands, the Royal Conservatoire The Hague and The Hague Philharmonic already work together regularly. “Both parties profit from the experience and can learn from one another. I’m convinced that the new setting will provoke an ecological, cultural development where artistic interactions can blossom.”

If everything goes according to plan, in 2019 a new educational and culture complex will be opened in the heart of the city. The building, located at Het Spui, is especially designed for the leading music and dance organizations based in The Hague. Until that time the sounds of the Hague Philharmonic can be heard just a few steps from sea at the premises of Het Zuiderstrandtheater, a temporary building that replaces the demolished Anton Philipszaal, the primary venue of the orchestra. Het Zuiderstrandtheater has everything going for it and attracts crowds. The contemporary industrial look and feel are certainly great assets, but the real bonus is the location

on the secluded site with its breathtaking views, overlooking the sea and the Scheveningen harbour. It is close to the city but at the same time miles away from the hustle and bustle. The ideal place to meet with Henk van der Meulen, principal of the Royal Conservatoire and Roland Kieft, artistic director of The Hague Philharmonic, to talk about their joint future and plans, and the added value for both parties. Needless to say, they aim high: “It’s a perpetual quest for the perfect performance of music. Good enough isn’t good enough; there is always a next level”, says Kieft.

Top Talent

Henk van der Meulen: “Teaming up also benefits our educational program-



02



03

me, which is a big plus, bearing in mind that the programme largely determines the attractiveness of the course. Therefore, we try to distinguish ourselves as conservatoire for example with the practical component of our unique Orchestra Master, where students train on the job by participating full-time in five productions performed by The Hague Philharmonic. Our program is highly regarded internationally, and we are considered to be one of the world's leading conservatoires but the prolongation of that position is by no means certain. To have and to hold that ranking you have to keep on top of quality and improve it wherever possible. We have to compete increasingly with other (foreign) conservatoires. Among students there is also more of a quality culture and healthy competition than there used to be. Today the students who are admitted acce-

We not only train students to become musicians, they are also educated in entrepreneurship. This is a must'

02

"The future house of culture will become a hotspot for the performing arts."

03

Kieft and Van der Meulen heading towards the dunes

lerate right from the start. If they are admitted they already have the graduate level of the students who finished their studies say twenty years ago. The current generation of musicians is also more self-aware and globally oriented; they don't stick to one place but are often auditioning in several different countries. You have to make sure that you get the best ones in, but that's not as easy as it may sound, since there is litterarly a whole world out there. Unfortunately, sometimes money can be an issue and a real killjoy when it comes to attracting highly talented foreign students. In the Netherlands, non-EU and overseas students are not funded by the Dutch government, whereas in Leipizig and Berlin for example, students can study for free at the conservatoire, whilst in America they often work with scholarships to support and attract upcoming musicians. I think it is important for the future of our conservatoire to create a fund to enable students in such situations to choose to study in the Netherlands, without being hampered by fees that may affect their future. This way we can avoid a talent drain and thus maintain our position in the ranking of the best conservatoires. It is an interaction: top talent attracts top teachers and vice versa."

Entrepreneurship

"We not only train students to become musicians, they are also educated in entrepreneurship. This is a must. They have to be self-sufficient after their graduation since there are not that many jobs around and they will most likely become self-employed. Therefore, there is also a strong emphasis on building a network. In these times of cultural austerity we strive to give our students a podium and a connection with other parties who fit in with the international character of our conservatoire. More than fifty procent of our seven hundred and fifty students is from abroad. Considering that there are over sixty embassies established in The Hague, and that we have students from many of these

04

Henk van der Meulen, principal of the Royal Conservatoire

"We have to compete increasingly with other (foreign) conservatoires."

countries, the connection is easily made. The international language of music is a wonderful incentive for third parties to use, for example as part of a function at the embassy. If there is a student who is trained in the Netherlands, and who can perform for guests from his home country it's a wonderful promotion for our students and conservatoire at the same time. Because most graduates will have an international career, we also place great value on exchange programmes with foreign conservatoires. But we are also faithful to our origins and the Dutch touch that unmistakably characterizes our education. After all, we have a great music scene in the Netherlands, especially since the late sixties when a renewal in the landscape of classical and modern music took place thanks to the Nutcracker Movement, resulting in the typical Dutch ensemble culture. We are the only country in the world that has this many ensembles. It is part of our heritage and fits in perfectly with our national character: members of an ensemble are much more independent than those in a symphonic orchestra."

Cultural hotspot

Both Kieft and Van der Meulen are convinced that the future house of culture will become a hot spot for the performing arts. Kieft: "It's bound to happen, thanks to the cross-fertilization between the partner companies and its central location."

But before this can take place a lot of work needs to be done at the building site. The demolition of the old buildings only started last autumn; for now, the Spui-kwartier is closed off and lies forlorn as it awaits its transformation into an architectural masterpiece of urban renewal. Van der Meulen and Kieft see a world of opportunities awaiting them.

Kieft: "We can become a focal point for cultural activities where people can hop in and out as they pass by. We are on the right side of the track: the central location is surrounded by businesses, government departments and shops. Why not offer the



04

ROYAL CONSERVATOIRE THE HAGUE

Higher education in music and dance



The Royal Conservatoire (Koninklijk Conservatorium Den Haag) provides higher education in music and dance. The conservatoire was founded

by King William I in 1826, making it the oldest conservatoire in the Netherlands. For decades the music and dance institute has stood for the highest quality of education,

where internationally renowned musicians are employed as teachers, and where tradition and craft are woven into the same fabric as experiment and innovation.

audience an à la carte menu with lunch concerts or guest speakers for example? Listening to music doesn't necessarily have to be time consuming. The threshold for going to a concert is often too high, also because many people consider classical music to be intimidating. In my opinion everyone deserves the overwhelming

acoustic experience of hearing live performances. Music is for all humanity and should not be a privilege for the elite. Music is a sincere form of sharing and connecting. It's sad to observe that so many people did not grow up with classical music, because too often it's still regarded as high culture. It's our job to remove barri-

05

Roland Kieft,
artistic director
of The Hague
Philharmonic

ers. Music is a time traveller and a universal language that crosses borders. When you consider that after centuries for example Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons' is able to provoke the same strong emotions as when the audience listened to it in the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the young Venetian composed the piece, it's nothing less than a miracle."

Communicating with the audience

Prior to his official appointment as artistic director of The Hague Philharmonic in 2012, Kieft was already making plans for joint projects with Van der Meulen, director of the Royal Conservatoire since 2008. It is no coincidence that the men connected so quickly; they already knew each other and have remarkable similarities in their resumes: both classically trained musicians worked in broadcasting before they were appointed to their respective current positions. They used to work together for the TV production of the 'Edison Gala'. The musician and composer Van der Meulen was head of music and dance in public broadcasting before he became director of the Royal Conservatoire; Kieft was an internationally renowned conductor who became successful in the nineties as a presenter and producer for radio and television. Kieft conceived several formats to give classical musical a broader platform.

Kieft: "When you work in broadcasting, you get more skilled in communicating with large groups. The interaction with the audience differs a lot from that in the concert hall. To reach the public with our music we have to think differently. You need to entice people and pamper them instead of waiting for them to come to you. An orchestra has to be innovative to receive attention. We have to look over borders and cross them now and again. Our future home base will enable us to do so. Why just classical music? An orchestra can play all sorts of music. And wouldn't it be fun to have guest speakers



05

THE HAGUE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

A new home base in the city centre



The Hague Philharmonic Orchestra (Het Residentie Orkest) was founded in 1904 by Dr Henri Viotta, who was also the first conductor. Its early home was the *Gebouw*

voor *Kunsten en Wetenschappen* until it was destroyed in a fire in 1964. The construction of the Dr. Anton Philipszaal in 1987 the orchestra played in various venues around the

city without a permanent home. Since 2014 the orchestra is temporarily based at Het Zuiderstrand-theater. In 2019, it will move to a new home base in the city centre.

who comment on the piece that is performed? Kieft has countless ideas that can be put into practice, some of which have already proven to be successful. Under his leadership The Hague Philharmonic flourishes again and has regained its place in The Hague's cultural life. Time to move on for Kieft, who will become managing director of the music broadcasting foun-

dation Stichting Omroep Muziek in Hilversum as of 1 April 1st, 2016. But his departure will not affect the joint activities by any means: there is more to come.

TEXT
Aya Langeveld
IMAGES
Peter Boer



01

THE HAGUE AND THE DUTCH EU PRESIDENCY IN 2016

From January 1st 2016, and for half a year, The Netherlands will be holding the Presidency of the EU. Although the 'Scheepvaartmuseum', in Amsterdam - being the formal capital of this country- will be the location of the meetings of EU ministers, the city of The Hague will of course also play an important role.

As far as Europe is concerned, The Hague is not only the home town of the embassies of all other 27 EU countries, but is a city (with some smaller towns around The Hague) which also, and since many years, hosts many important EU organizations such as the European Patent Office (EPO), the European Space Research and Techno-

logy Centre (EAS/ESTEC), Eurojust, Europol, the European Cybercrime Centre (ECC), the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the OSCE (HCNM/OSCE) and the bureaux of the representatives in the Netherlands of the European Commission and the European Parliament, as well as a great number of European NGO's. In fact The Hague stood as early as 1948 at the cradle of what

01
Jhr. Mr. Alexander
W. Beelaerts van
Blokland

is now the EU, with a European Congress in the well-known 'Ridderzaal' (Hall of Knights). In 1956 the government in The Hague was one of the six *Founding Fathers* of the predecessor of the EU: the European Common Market.

During the Dutch presidency there will be three priorities: we want (1) an innovative EU, (2) an EU that limits itself to *essentials* and (3) an EU that *connects*. Key words will be: serve, saving expenses and economization.

On the occasion of the Dutch presidency, the President of the European Parliament and the European Commission visited The Hague in January 2016. The Dutch Parliament will organize during its presidency inter-parliamentary conferences in The Hague on European affairs and on the common policy on foreign affairs and defence matters. Two international conferences on energy and innovation, as well as on human trafficking from Africa, the Middle East and Asia will also be held. The city of The Hague will also be organizing many other European activities during the Dutch presidency.

As you can see, The Hague is not only the well-known world capital of peace and justice, but also and going way back, an important European city with many permanently based European institutions also organising important temporary activities during the Dutch presidency in the first half of 2016.

TEXT
Jhr. Mr. Alexander W. Beelaerts van Blokland LL.M., Justice (Judge) in the (Dutch) Court of Appeal and honorary Special Adviser International Affairs, appointed by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of The Hague.
IMAGES
Anton van der Riet



First row from left to right: H.E. Adam M.J. Sadiq, H.E. Mgr Aldo Cavalli, H.E. Irene Florence Mkwawa Kasyanju and daughter Pamela
Middle row from left to right: Mrs. Shida Bliet, Mrs. Livia Bužek, Mrs. M. Mukul, H.E. Ilze Rüse, Alexander Vasilievich Shulgin
Back row: H.E. Roman Bužek, Mayor Jan Hoekema, H.E. Mr. J.S. Mukul, Mr. Ralf Meppelder

‘WELCOME TO THE NETHERLANDS YOUR EXCELLENCIES’



Mayor of Wassenaar: Jan Hoekema



Ambassador of India: H.E. J. S. Mukul, Mrs. M. Mukul, Mrs. Shida Bliet



Mr. Peter Bliet, Ms. Wenci Li, Ambassador of China: H.E. Chen Xu



Mr. Bastiaan van der Knaap: CEO First Dutch, Mrs Inge van der Knaap, Mr. Peter Goedvolk: President Count



H.E.Mgr. Aldo Cavalli, H.E. Alexander Shulgin, Mrs. Nadia van Gaalen



Mrs. Lisette Goedvolk, Ambassador of Thorax Foundation



Mrs. Bonnie Klap: Honorary Adviser Diplomat Affairs Magazine



Ambassador of Georgia: H.E. Konstantine Surguladze, Ambassador of Belgium: H.E. Chris Hoornaert



Ambassador of South Korea: H.E. Jonghyun Choe, Ambassador of Kazakhstan: H.E. Mainyura Murzamadiyeva

Seven new ambassadors to the Netherlands welcomed by Diplomat Club Wassenaar: Apostolic Nuncio: H.E. Mgr. Aldo Cavalli; Ambassador of the Republic of India: H.E. Mr. J.S. Mukul; Ambassador of the Republic of Latvia: H.E. Ms. Ilze Rüse; Ambassador of the Slovak Republic: H.E. Roman Bužek; Ambassador of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka: H.E. Adam Maznavée Jauffer Sadiq; Ambassador of the Russian Federation: H.E. Alexander Vasilievich Shulgin; Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania: H.E. Irene Florence Mkwawa Kasyanju.

Mrs. Shida Bliet, founder of the Diplomat Club Wassenaar, presented each Ambassador with a symbolic Dutch decoration and in his speech Mayor Jan Hoekema expressed the hope that the newly appointed ambassadors would be able to take time from their busy schedules to enjoy the culture, countryside and cuisine of the Netherlands. He also wished them success in their professional duties and trusted they would enjoy their stay in this country. They were then whisked away to receive their welcome certificates and



Mr. Shin Sihan (violin) from the Royal Conservatory The Hague and Ms Anne Brakman (piano) from the Royal Conservatory Amsterdam

pose for a group photo, but returned in time to join the superb buffet dinner and the excellent Georgian wines so generously provided by the Ambassador of Georgia, Mr. Konstantine Surguladze.

Diplomat Club Wassenaar aspires to bring members of the diplomatic corps and the Dutch Business Community together through art, music and charity and help make their stay in the Netherlands a memorable one. We are delighted to note that spouses and family members are quickly becoming familiar faces at the club. DWC is also a staunch supporter of The Royal Conservatory and avid promoter of young musical talent as was evident when the musical intermezzo was announced. Two very gifted young musicians: Mr.

Shin Sihan (violin) from the Royal Conservatory The Hague and Ms Anne Brakman (piano) a third year student of Royal Conservatory Amsterdam held the guests spellbound with their invigorating interpretations of works by the famous Hungarian composer Béla Bartók. The audience also enjoyed a spectacular virtuoso piece for both instruments in the third part of the first sonata, followed by the equally captivating second sonata by Ravel.

One of the highlights of this delightful winter evening was undoubtedly the presentation of the splendid Autumn and Winter edition 2015/2016 of Diplomat Affairs – In Touch with the Dutch, the Club Magazine of DCW that had come out just in time for this event. The cover of this



Mrs. Eva Mennes: EVA Art Productions



Mr. Bastiaan van der Knaap: H.E. Jonghyun Choe, H.E. Mr. J.S. Mukul



Jazz Trio Sue Moreno band & DJ Monte Carlo

newest edition featured a delightful photo of the Argentine Ambassador Horacio H. Salvador and Mrs. Jane Berger de Salvador. Mrs. Blik gracefully thanked all the volunteers involved in running the Club and writing for the magazine.

As dinner came to an end, good-byes were said by some, however the majority chose to stay on and enjoy the lively music of the Sue Moreno Band.

TEXT
Elizabeth van der Wind-Hamill
IMAGES
Anton van der Riet



Mr. Harmen Moonen: Spouse of Mayor of Amstelveen, H.E. José de Bouza Serrano: Ambassador of Portugal, Mayor Mirjam van 't Veld, H.E. Mr. J.S. Mukul: Ambassador of India

AMSTELVEEN 'MEETS' INDIA AT DIPLOMAT CLUB WASSENAAR

Among the guests at the New Year reception, was Mrs Mirjam van 't Veld, the vibrant Mayor of Amstelveen, a surprisingly international city with an Indian population of over 2200, followed by 1600 Japanese and a population of Korean and Chinese clearly on the rise.

She explains the city's success as a combination of its ideal location close to Schiphol, its high safety rate, greenness and amazing international facilities such as a Japanese dentist and Kindergarten.

I wondered how these large international groups interacted with the locals and that seems to be another success story,

partly due to the city's celebrations of certain national days such as Diwali which this year attracted 16.000 Indians from all over Europe. The Amstelveners join in the celebration in the heart of the city, and so the link is forged.

October 23rd this year there will be a large Japanese festival too.

Asked on how she was enjoying the re-

ception, Mrs van 't Veld mentioned how wonderful and ideal it was to renew with so many contacts in such an informal atmosphere and meet new ones. She was surprised and delighted that everyone seemed to know where Amstelveen was, mentioning in particular the Cobra museum.

The Indian Ambassador H.E. Mr J.S. Mukul, recently welcomed at DCW, was delighted to meet The Mayor again here and commented on his enjoyment of Diwali with Mrs van 't Veld in a beautiful red Sari and on their joint, highly-successful trade delegation to Delhi and Mumbai last year, with a joint plan to open a campus of the Amaty University in Amstelveen, and for an Indian carrier to provide direct flights from Amsterdam.

How wonderful to hear of this strong "keeping in touch with the Dutch".

TEXT
Julie Kennedy
IMAGES
Sharon Reyes

BASTIAAN VAN DER KNAAP: OPERATING INTERNATIONALLY FOR THE NETHERLANDS

Bastiaan van der Knaap regularly attends the charity dinners of the Diplomat Club Wassenaar. He is invited as an ambassador for First Dutch, a financial-strategic consultancy which focuses on the port and city of Rotterdam, and support the activities of Cure for Cancer. Van der Knaap is a strong supporter of the concept of connecting business with charity activities. During his posting to South Africa for ING, he was confronted with the devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS there and has since become a fund raiser in the fight against AIDS.

First Dutch

Van der Knaap took up the directorship of First Dutch last year. Previously he was on the other side of the table with players in the port, as the director of ING Rotterdam. Last year, First Dutch moved to a dream location for the consultancy's core business: a corner building with views over both the Veerhaven and the Maas and the busy marine traf-

fic. This the gateway to Europe and the waterways are crowded 24/7.

Expo 2025

First Dutch is currently also one of the parties working on getting World Expo 2025 to Rotterdam. "It fits with our focus at First Dutch, because it attracts innovative companies from around the world, but also because of the positive economic impact it will have on the city and on the Netherlands."

Networks

At the entrance of the building, the nameplates beside the row of doorbells reads like a list of the key players in the port of Rotterdam; it is an influential but accessible network. If you want to do business in the port, you are at the right address here. "We want people to be able to find us and to know about our existence," says Van der Knaap. "As our network is so diverse, it brings us steady growth. The international character of First Dutch means that contacts in the diplomatic corps are of added value to us.

01, 02 and 03

Bastiaan van der Knaap in his office.



02

And they in turn can use our knowledge to find their way around the port of Rotterdam.”

Private equity

Van der Knaap made a conscious choice when he was looking for his next career move and joined First Dutch. “At ING Rotterdam, I was the banker for the entrepreneur and investor Goedvolk and that collaboration always went smoothly. After exploring new challenges within ING Netherlands, I decided I didn’t want to leave Rotterdam, and when Peter Goedvolk wanted to start something new after leaving Argos Oil in 2013, we decided to start

working together. Among other things, we wanted to launch a new investment fund for companies in the maritime and logistics sector in the port of Rotterdam. We provide capital to innovative companies that promote sustainability.

More or less by chance, we came across the Amsterdam-based corporate finance firm First Dutch that was established in 2000 by Michel van Bremen. It proved to be an excellent vehicle for our ambitions. After we took over the shares and integrated First Dutch into Peter Goedvolk’s new initiatives, we moved the office to Rotterdam. We also added an investment fund: the First Dutch Port Fund that I am joint-

ly responsible for and that is funded by the Goedvolk family office, Jan Willem Doeksen of the eponymous shipping company and the Port of Rotterdam Authority. Van Bremen stayed on board as a non-executive director, which means that the basis of First Dutch as a financial-strategic consultancy has remained strong.”

Love for Africa

Upon entering Van der Knaap’s office one is immediately struck by the African art that is displayed on the dark walls. “I love South Africa,” says Van der Knaap. “I lived there from 2001 to 2004 with my wife and our sons Max and David when I

worked for ING. I immediately fell in love with the country, the people, the culture – everything really. It changed my life and gave me a purpose. The inequality I saw there had a great impact on my life and that of my family. It made us realize that it makes quite a difference whether you’re born in Soweto Johannesburg or Hilligersberg Rotterdam – to put it mildly.”

Fighting AIDS

“In our home we have a huge painting by a South African artist, which I bought in a gallery there. Every day when I look at it, I am reminded of the wonderful time we had in that country. We also got to know

the artist personally and she introduced us to her friends, which meant that we didn’t get stuck in the expat world and got to know a completely different side of life in South Africa.

I saw how important it is to give people equal opportunities and a chance to participate; it creates a better balance in society. That doesn’t solve all the problems, but it does make life easier for many people. If I can help advance that cause, even if it’s only a little bit, I will do that. Every stepping stone counts and is a step forward.

That’s also why I started actively raising funds to contribute to the fight against AIDS when I saw the devastating impact

the disease has on people. I was first a goodwill ambassador for the South African NGO Cotlands, and later for dance4life, an international organization that mobilizes and unites young people to push back the spread of the HIV virus. In Africa it is a problem that affects everyone, directly or indirectly, but most people can’t afford treatment, and many don’t even have access to HIV tests, even though that is crucial if you want to prevent the spread of HIV. At ING, we were also confronted with this reality and that suddenly brought things very close to home. I decided to organize a number of charity concerts. We got the Dutch singer Harry Muskee and his blues band Cuby and the Blizzards to South Africa. The mention of the name of the now-deceased Harry Muskee sounds almost like a guilty pleasure in this office where the conversation usually revolves around seed capital and funding. “Yes, I’ll immediately admit: I am a lifelong fan, but it really was a huge success.”

Lessons learned

“After we returned to the Netherlands, I was shocked to find on one of my business trips to South Africa that our former nanny Olinah had full-blown AIDS. Through Hugo Tempelman, a doctor in South Africa, she was able to receive treatment at the clinic he founded two hours from Johannesburg. When he asked me whether her husband shouldn’t also be treated, I first grew angry as he was the one who had infected her. The doctor’s answer taught me an important lesson. He said: “Bastiaan, don’t play God. You have to prevent the spread of the disease without judging.” In that sense, I believe everyone should have their own Olinah to give their life meaning and purpose.”

TEXT
Aya Langeveld
IMAGES
Peter Boer



03



HH Sandor Habsburg Lothringen, Mr. Hans van Eenennaam, HH Herta Margarete Habsburg-Lothringen, H.E. Dr. Werner Druml, Mrs. Pia van Eenennaam-Beck

48TH VIENNESE BALL: THE SPLENDOUR AND ELEGANCE OF THE AUSTRIAN COURT IN HUIS TER DUIN

Entering Grand Hotel Huis ter Duin in Noordwijk on February 6th was like entering another world. A kaleidoscope of ball gowns shimmering against bare skin with elegantly draped shawls; the Gentlemen stunning in their tails and white ties. Champagne was sipped; guests were greeted before taking place for a candlelit dinner enhanced by the beautiful sound of the Johann Strauss ensemble flown in from Vienna.



a regal serpentine of debutants



Mrs. Willemijn van Benthem, Mr. Hans van Eenennaam, Mrs. Jeanine Kröner-Van den Berkhof, Mr. Ralph Kröner, Jonkheer Pieter de Savornin Lohman, Mrs. Renée de Savornin Lohman



Mrs. Ursi Erd, Mr. Christiaan Erd

Excitement rose as the opening of the Ball approached. Solemnly they entered: the 64 debutants of 2016, dazzling us with their pristine white ball gowns and tiaras, the young men in white tie and uniform, re-enacting with charm and elegance the values and traditions of a long lost era, and it left none of us unmoved.

The chairman of the Foundation Austrian Culture in the Netherlands, Mr Christian Erd greeted the numerous guests and H.E the Ambassador of Austria: Dr Johannes Werner Druml opened the ball in the name of the Mayor of Vienna.

The famous choreographer Heinz



from left to right Mr. Peter Bliet, Prof. Sevil Amirova Efendiyef, H.E. Mir-Hamza Efendiyef, H.E. Dr Johannes Werner Druml, Patricia van Oordt De Arias, H.E. Fernando Arias, H.E. Mainyura Murzamadiyeva, Mr. Bakhytzhan Murzamadiyeva



Baroness Claudia van Harinxma Thoe Slooten Mrs. Lauren Kaars Sypesteijn Mrs. Shida Bliet

Heidenrich was congratulated on the debutants dance, as all gazed spellbound by the beauty and perfection of the moment.

Guests mingled, the evening flowed, between waltzing in the ballroom, twisting with the Van Hoytema jazz band, or relaxing to the delicate playing of pianist Vivienne ChuLiao, a student at the Royal Conservatory The Hague.

Austrian sweets, Wurst, oyster bar, the abundance of pleasures reflected in the general atmosphere of relaxed happiness and utter enjoyment.

At the sponsor table of Diplomat Club Wassenaar to the benefit of SOS Kinderdorp, one of the guests, the Ambassador of Azerbaijan: Mir-Hamza Efendiyev even won dinner for two at Breakers Beach

House at Huis ter Duin.

And what nicer way could there possibly be to spend an evening than connecting with others in such a setting, knowing all the funds raised will be providing a safe and loving home to children around the world thanks to SOS Kinderdorp and reassured with the knowledge that even in our fast-paced society, there are youth happy to invest time and effort in maintaining values, culture and tradition.

With a big thank you to the organising members of the event, in particular: Mr Christian Erd, Hans van Eenennaam, Claudia barones van Harinxma thoe Slooten, and of course Marianne van den Berg from the Balbureau.

TEXT

Julie Kennedy

IMAGES

Anton van der Riet

01
Announcement
raffle ticket
winners



01

OMAN’S MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE AND ASSET: ITS YOUTH

November 19th the Sultanate of Oman celebrated its 45th National Day Anniversary and the country’s ruler, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said’s 75th birthday at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in The Hague.

His Excellency, the charming Sayyid Muhammed Harub Al Said, the Sultanate’s Ambassador to the Netherlands, and the Omani diplomats received their guests at the Hotel banquet entrance. Many ambassadors and Dutch officials were present; however the majority of attendees were from the business community including CEOs from Petrogas, Oceanco and Pathfinder.

The core theme of the event this year was the Oman Youth, represented in this case in the Netherlands by the ever increasing number of Omani students.

The Ambassador opened his speech expressing his concerns about the recent tragic loss of lives in Paris. He mentioned that terrorists were targeting innocent vic-

02
Mr. Usama
Mohammed Al-
Barwani (CEO of
Petrogas), Mr.
Azhar Al Kindi,
Petrogas Chief
Operating Officer,
H.E. Sayyid
Muhammed Harub
Al Said,
Ambassador of
Oman
H.E. Abdalla
Hamdan Alnaqbi,
Ambassador of UAE

03
Mr. Usama
Mohammed Al
Barwani, CEO of
Petrogas
04
Majid Al-Lawati,
studying in the
Netherlands



02



03

04

tims in the Middle East region too and suggested the only way to defeat them was to ensure that the “spirit of unity would prevail among the peace loving nations and civilisations”.

The Embassy’s National Day sponsors were thanked, in particular the Sultanate of Oman’s Ministry of Tourism, Petrogas, Royal Dutch Shell, Oceanco, Damen Shipyards, AA Architects, Oman Air and

Discover Oman.
In recent years the Oman Embassy has greatly benefited from Omani and Dutch companies’ sponsorship and from the Sultanate of Oman’s Ministry of Tou- >>

05	Her Highness Sayyida Shuruq Seif Al Said (the Ambassador's mother), Ms. Hajer Al Saadi, Ms. Mazoun Al Zaabi,	06	H.E. Sayyid Muhammed Harub Al Said, Ambassador of Oman, H.E. Khalid Fahad F. Al-Khater, Ambassador of Qatar	07	H.E.Odette Melono, Chairman TenRande Foundation	08	Sayyida Mahbuba Abdullah Al Said (Oman Ambassador's cousin), Her Highness Sayyida Shuruq Seif Al Said
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ism. Oman is keen to be seen as a politically stable, moderate and peaceful Arab state that offers its visitors unrivalled hospitality, unique cultural assets, countless archaeological treasures, diverse geologi-

cal heritage and rich history.

The Guest of Honour a young Omani entrepreneur Mr. Usama Mohammed Al Barwani, CEO of Petrogas which has its offices in Muscat and The Hague, was in-

vited by the Ambassador to speak on the challenges and opportunities in the oil and gas industry under the current economic climate. Mr Al Barwani who is in his early 30's (educated in the USA and UK)

(the Ambassador's mother), H.E. Sayyid Muhammed Harub Al Said, Ambassador of Oman, Sayyida Zahra Harub Al	Said (Oman Ambassador's sister)	09	H.E. Sayyid Muhammed Harub Al Said, Ambassador of Oman, H.E. Adia Sakiqi, Ambassador of Albania	10	H.E. Sayyid Muhammed Harub Al Said, Ambassador of Oman, Mrs. Shida Bliiek, Ambassador of the Shinkichi Tajiri art Collection	11	Ms. Souad Sassi, the secretary of the Ambassador of Oman is invited to assist at raffle	12	Mr. Salim Masoud Al Rahbi: Oman's Second Secretary, H.E. Karim Ben Becher, Ambassador of Tunisia, H.E. Mr Breik Swessi Ambassador of Lybia
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enthralled the audience with his riveting speech.

Next an Omani student Majid Al-Lawati, studying in the Netherlands, took the floor to speak about the achievements of the Sultanate since the beginning of the Omani Renaissance in 1970. During the reception some Omani students, mostly adorned in their national dress, greeted the guests in the banquet hall, offering them Omani coffee and dates whilst explaining who they were, what studies they were doing here and interesting facts on their villages, cities, districts and regions.

His Excellency then proceeded to invite his Secretary, Mrs Sassi and the secretaries of the ambassadors of Iraq, Sudan and the Palestine Mission to pick from a glass bowl 4 raffle ticket winners for a trip to the Sultanate, courtesy of Oman Air which re-

cently opened its office at Schiphol Airport. Before the announcement of the ticket winners however, the Ambassador made a wonderful gesture complimenting the ambassadors' secretaries in a most delightful way, describing them as "the unsung heroes of the foreign missions".

Finally, the Ambassador invited all the guests to enjoy the food prepared by De Witte Raaf restaurant, specialists in Persian cuisine. The restaurant staff were at hand to explain the various dishes including those that were suitable for vegans and vegetarians. After the reception a private dinner was hosted by the Ambassador in the Hotel for close friends and colleagues of the Omani diplomats.

13
Mr. Ahmed Al-Lawati: Omani student, Mr. Salim

Masoud Al Rahbi: Oman's Second Secretary.

TEXT
Julie Kennedy
IMAGES
Anton van der Riet and Sharon Reyes

01
Prime Minister
Mark Rutte and
President
Nursultan
Nazarbayev



01

02
Prime Minister of
the Netherlands Mr.
M.Rutte meets with
the President of
Kazakhstan
N.Nazarbayev



02

03
Prime Minister of
the Netherlands
Mark Rutte with
Kazakh Prime-
Minister Karim
Massimov



03

04
Opening Ceremony
of Astanaplein in
Rotterdam with
Mayor A.
Aboutaleb, First
Deputy FM R.
Zhoshibayev and



04

05
Ambassador of
Kazakhstan to the
Netherlands H.E.
Mrs. Mainura
Murzamadiyeva



05

KAZAKH-DUTCH RELATIONS - BROAD OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION

The Netherlands is a leading European investor in the economy of Kazakhstan with, according to the latest official data of the National Bank of Kazakhstan, an inflow of direct investment since Kazakhstan independence, amounting to about 59 billion US dollars.

Cooperation between Kazakhstan and the Netherlands is maintained on a high political and trade-economical level through regular mutual visits of high level officials, and good inter-parliamentary cooperation. Lately the Prime Minister of the Netherlands Mr Mark Rutte arrived in Astana Dec. 2 for an official visit strengthening diplomatic and economic ties between the two countries.

During the visit, the Leaders of State discussed the status of bilateral economic relations, issues in the oil and gas industry, agriculture, transport, space development and exchanged views on other international issues.

The President of Kazakhstan, Mr N. Nazarbayev stressed the importance of the

Netherlands as partner for Kazakhstan. "This is our fourth meeting" he said, "my visit to your country last year was very fruitful and its results were important. The Netherlands is one of the largest investors in the economy of Kazakhstan and one of our most important trade partners. We see your visit as an indication of your will to bring our bilateral relations to a new level". Mr. Nazarbayev also stressed the importance of the business delegation accompanying the Dutch Prime-Minister, which represented seven major Dutch companies working successfully in Kazakhstan.

In turn, Mr Rutte noted the broad opportunities for cooperation, in particular in light of Kazakhstan's ongoing process of economic diversification.

The Head of the Dutch Government

07

**H.E. Mrs. Mainura
Murzamadiyeva, Ms.
Daphne Bergsma
(Director of Europe
Department of the
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs)**

08

Mr. Peter van Leeuwen (Former Ambassador to Kazakhstan), Mr. Rene van der Linden (Former Member of the

Senate of the
Parliament), H.E.
Mrs. Mainura
Murzamadiyeva, ,
Mr. Jochum
Haakma (President
of TMF Group),

Mrs. Shida Bliet
(Publisher
Diplomatic Affairs
Magazine)



06



07



08

In her speech, H.E. the Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mrs. Mainura Murzamadiyeva, congratulated the guests on the occasion and stressed the priorities for further political and economic development.

032 — DIPLOMAT AFFAIRS

LA FRANCOPHONIE, VECTEUR DE DIVERSITÉ DANS LES INSTITUTIONS INTERNATIONALES À LA HAYE

TABLE RONDE en langue française en présence
d'experts de la coopération internationale suivie d'un
COCKTAIL FRANCOPHONE

JEUDI 10 MARS 2016 à 17h30
au **PALAIS DE LA PAIX,**
Carnegieplein 2, 2517 KJ La Haye

Informations & réservations : info@aflahaye.nl / 070 362 1523



01

From left to right:
Mrs. Ansje van
Aelst, Mr. Marcel
van Aelst, Mrs.
Sanae Tsuji, H.E.
Masaru Tsuji
Ambassador of

Japan



01

JAPAN HONOURS HOTEL OKURA PRESIDENT AND SIEBOLDHUIS FOUNDATION

Among the foreign recipients of the 2015 Autumn Decorations were Hotel Okura President Marcel P.R.C. van Aelst and the SieboldHuis Foundation.

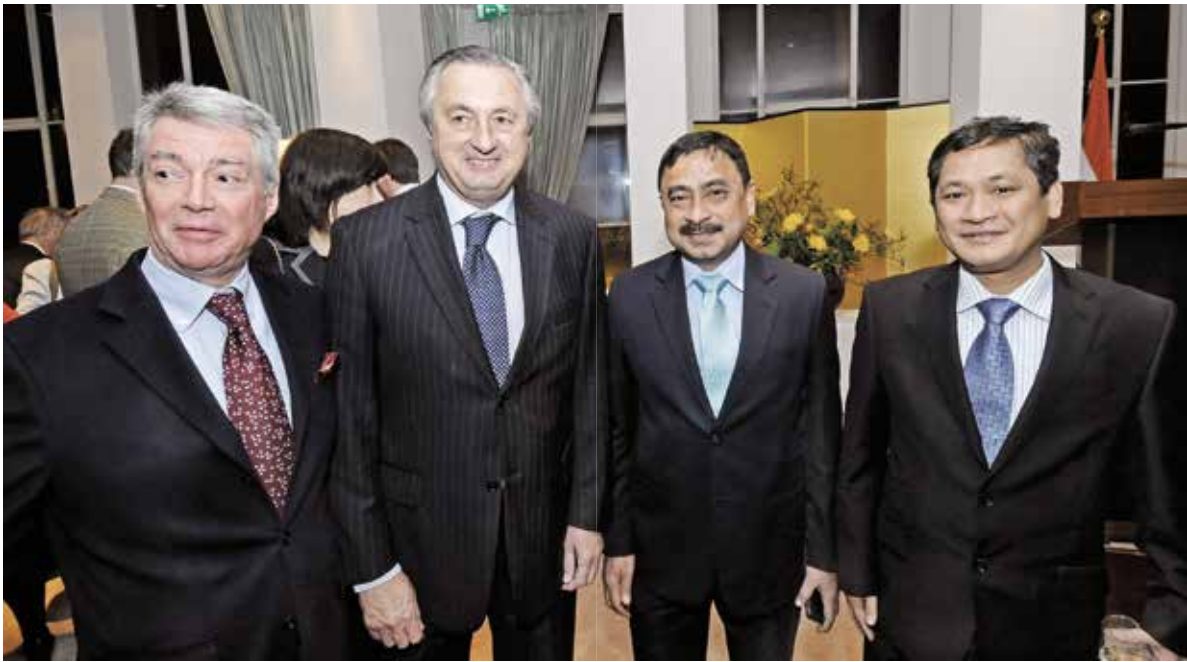
In an intimate setting at the residence of Japanese ambassador Masaru Tsuji, close friends, business relations and prominent members of Dutch society gathered to witness the conferment of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon upon Mr. Marcel van Aelst.

02

From left to right:
H.E. Urs Breiter,
Ambassador of the
Swiss
confederation, H.E.
Dr. Alvaro
Moerzinger

Ambassador of
Uruguay, H.E.
Sheikh Mohammed
Belal, Ambassador
of Bangladesh, H.E.
Jaime Victor B.
Ledda,

Ambassador of the
Philippines



02

Recently at the 44th anniversary celebrations of the opening of Hotel Okura, Van Aelst who had been at the helm of this internationally acclaimed 5 star hotel since 1993, stepped down as its president.

In recognition of his significant contributions to the promotion of mutual understanding, cultural and economic relations between Japan and the Netherlands, Mr van Aelst was awarded one of Japan's highest civil decorations. In his congratulatory speech, Ambassador Tsuji praised Van Aelst for his pioneer spirit and dedication to hospitality.

Later that evening, at the National Day reception to celebrate the birthday of the Emperor of Japan, the SieboldHuis Foundation was presented with the Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation. This distinction is awarded to individuals and groups with outstanding achievements in international fields and acknowledges their contributions to the promotion of friendship between Japan and other countries and areas. The commendation is also aimed at stimulating understanding and support of the Japanese public towards the activities of the recipients. The Siebold-

03

From left to right:
row 1: Mr. Dick
Raatgever, Ms.
Barbara Komor,
Mrs. Kris
Schiermeier,
Ms.Kuniko Numata,

H.E. Masaru Tsuji
row 2: Mrs.
Elizabeth van der
Wind-Hamill, Ms.
Marjolijn Goos



04

From left to right:
Mr. Hans van
Eenennaam, Mrs.
Pia van
Eenennaam, Mrs.
Nan Monod de
Froideville-

Reigersman, Mr.
Gilbert Monod de
Froideville, Mrs.
Elizabeth van der
Wind-Hamill



03

05

From left to right:
Mr. Kees van
Gelder, Ms.Linda
Hanssen, Brigade
General O. van der
Wind



05

Huis Foundation or Japan Museum SieboldHuis as it is commonly known, was established in 1999, on the eve of the historically significant State Visit to the Netherlands in May 2000 by Their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Japan. The museum houses the unique and impressive collection physician Von Siebold amassed between 1823 and 1830 while stationed on the island of Deshima off the coast of Nagasaki. In addition to its

historical significance, Japan Museum SieboldHuis plays an important role in the ongoing relationship between Japan and the Netherlands and was the venue for the Japan-Netherlands summit meeting when Prime Minister Koizumi visited the Netherlands in 2005. Museum director Kris Schiermeier was quoted as saying that to receive this prestigious award was the crowning glory in this year's 10th anniversary celebrations. She also recalled the

words of the Japanese Emperor who said recently that *"the SieboldHuis plays a key role as a new symbol of Japanese-Dutch exchange"*.

TEXT
Elizabeth van der Wind-Hamill
IMAGES
Anton van der Riet



01

MEET SABINE NÖLKE, CANADA’S AMBASSADOR TO THE NETHERLANDS “WE STAND SIDE BY SIDE WITH OUR DUTCH FRIENDS”

In her tastefully decorated office in the Hague, the Canadian Ambassador to the Netherlands, Sabine Nölke, spoke to Diplomat Affairs Magazine about the historic ties between Canada and the Netherlands and her roles as both Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; as well as economic affairs, trade, science and technology, Canadian art, the Liberation scholarships, Canadian wine and the Red Maple Soirée.

“Canada and the Netherlands: two countries with a shared history, common values and an endless stream of people to people exchanges”, says Ambassador Nölke in her message. “Over one million Canadians trace their roots back to the Netherlands and thousands of Canadians have made the Netherlands their home.

Last year Canada and the Netherlands celebrated 75 years of bilateral diplomacy and the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII. Canada’s role in the liberation of the Netherlands remains one of the binding forces between the two nations. To commemorate Canada’s role in liberating the Netherlands in the Second World War, seventy “Liberation Scholarships’ are being awarded to Canadian students to study in the Netherlands. This program, already in place, was launched by Their Majesties the King and Queen of the Netherlands, during their visit to Canada last year.

Canada and the Netherlands enjoy strong economic ties and when asked about the bilateral trade relations, Ambassador Nölke was quick to reply that there are over

01

Sabine Nölke
Ambassador of
Canada to the
Kingdom of the
Netherlands
Permanent

Representative of
Canada to the
Organization for the
Prohibition of
Chemical Weapons

Painting: Sonmor,
Kevin A. Live
Vanity: 1, oil on
linen.

02

Dutch Ministry of
Foreign Affairs
band, The dance
department

03

Participants at the
Red Maple Soiree
awaiting the Raffle
draw



02

‘Canada and the Netherlands: two countries with a shared history, common values and an endless stream of people to people exchanges’



03

150 Canadian companies in the Netherlands and that the Netherlands ranks as the second largest source of foreign direct investment in Canada. She went on to add that the Netherlands was Canada’s 6th largest merchandise export market. The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), a recently negotiated EU-Canada treaty was used to illustrate the forward looking position being taken by

parties involved and, once applied, how it will enhance and support commercial endeavours and job opportunities in Europe. Another exciting new initiative is the Canada-Netherlands Cyber and Securities Technologies Soft Landing Platform, in force as of January this year. Ambassador Nölke explained that in effect it offers Canadian and Dutch enterprises a unique opportunity to ‘soft land’ in the respective

Canadian and Dutch markets with the added advantage of tailored support.

A staunch supporter of Canadian culture, Ambassador Nölke hopes to welcome more talented Canadian (performing) artists while in the Netherlands. Last autumn ballet lovers in Rotterdam were treated to dazzling performances by Canada’s Royal Winnipeg Ballet while people in Groningen are still talking about the magnificent exhibition a few years ago by the renowned Canadian landscape artists the ‘Group of Seven’. Still fresh in the minds of those fortunate enough to have attended, is the increasingly popular charity dinner with the very Canadian name – *Red Maple Soirée*. This annual event at the official residence in Wassenaar, raises money for the Royal Canadian Legion and a number of very deserving charities. In addition to offering typical Canadian delicacies prepared by an “amazing chef”, Ambassador Nölke told us she only serves Canada’s best wines from the famous Prince Edward County.

TEXT
Elizabeth van der Wind-Hamill
IMAGES
Courtesy Embassy

01
Hotel Des Indes

02
Mr. Patrick
Mikkelsen:
Executive Director
AmCham, H.E.
Timothy
Broas: Ambassador
USA, Wouter
Paardekooper:
AmCham President

03
Mr. Joop Wijn:
Board Member
ABN AMRO, Mr.
Patrick Mikkelsen:
Executive Director
AmCham, Mr.
Stephan Swinkels:
L&E Global, Mr.
Cor van Zadelhoff:
real estate Magnate

04
Mr. Adam Sterling:
Deputy Chief of
Mission Embassy
USA, Mr. Hans van
der Louw: Chief of
the military House
of the King General-
Major & Spouse, Mr.
Jochum Haakma:
Vice President
AmCham



01

35TH WINE AND CHEESE AT HOTEL DES INDES: AMCHAM IS THRIVING

December 9th 2015 saw AmCham's guests stepping out of a grey drizzly evening and into the luxuriant Hotel des Indes, splendid in all its Xmas glory for a warm welcome by AmCham President Wouter Paardekooper and His Excellency the Ambassador of the United States of America, Mr Timothy Broas.

Established in 1961, with deeply rooted links with companies in the Netherlands, AmCham is the voice of US business in the Netherlands.

What a wonderful turn out of Diplomats, Dignitaries, Business people covering the whole spectrum of industries, companies and associations, mingling enthusiastically, glass in hand, over the full expanse of the gallery. The atmosphere was vibrant and festive, and though the amount of space available was vast, it rapidly became hard work fraying one's way to the Ballroom where throned a table decked with a mouth-watering collection of cheeses and breads amongst the nuts, dates and fresh figs.

AmCham Netherlands President Mr Wouter Paardekooper started his public address by greeting his many guests, the



02

American ambassador and other ambassadors present; Grand Master of His Majesty the King Jan Versteeg; Mistress of the Robes of the Royal Household Her Excellency Bibi baroness van Zuylen van Nijvel-veld-den Beer; Chief of the military House of the King General-Major Hans van der Louw, and thanked their sponsor the Rabobank.

"AmCham is in great shape" he said, with membership on the increase, new offices in the heart of Amsterdam and 2015 having been a dynamic year with hosted debates, Lunch with Minister President



03



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Mr Rutte, a visit of Neelie Kroes, a better website / video, the Young professional awards and a lot more.

Developments planned for 2016 include moving on with the social media and website strategy, the Presidential elections and the 55th Anniversary.

And last but not least: hot news as executive Director Patrick Mikkelsen has just been elected President of the European Council of American Chambers of Commerce, the first time a Dutchman holds this position overseeing 42 countries covering 20 million people.

As Mr Paardekooper said: "AmCham is thriving, thank you for being part of it"

TEXT
Julie Kennedy
IMAGES
Anton van der Riet/ Frederik
Jacobovits



01

THAILAND: ADVOCATING A FAIR WORLD

Tuesday 20th October 2015 saw an inspiring day spearheaded by the Royal Thai Embassy around the visit of Dr Surin Pitsuwan: a lecture organised with the Hague Institute for Global Justice on “the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy: in Pursuit of Sustainable Development and Global Justice”, followed by: “An evening with Dr. Surin Pitsuwan: Sharing experiences on sustainable development.

Dr. Abi Williams, President of The Hague Institute for Global Justice, expressed his delight in welcoming such an esteemed academic and statesman as Dr Pitsuwan and commented on the actuality of the topic, with the UN General Assembly agenda 2030, and the Paris climate conference. Dr Pitsuwan he said “brought a fascinating fresh perspective to the Institute”.
H.E. Mr. Ittiporn Boonpracong, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand, went on to introduce Dr Surin Pitsuwan so eloquently it would be a shame not to use his words: “I am extremely thankful to Dr. Surin Pitsuwan for accepting to be here to share his wisdom, knowledge and experience with us. He is probably known by most of you as a former Secretary-General, one of the most remembered in the history of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN. His portfolio includes Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand as well as extensive experiences at



03

international organizations on issues such as development, globalization and human security.”
In the lecture, Dr Pitsuwan elaborated on the need for a sufficiency economy for our planet heading for 9 billion inhabitants and running out of some resources. All current 7 Billion inhabitants of

planet Earth have different needs regarding sustainability and Global Justice, the priorities need to be set depending on the needs and stage of development of each individual country, with one overriding common factor, and that is equity, fair distribution, and as common objective: a fair world.



02

These points were then discussed with enthusiasm during the reception H.E. the Ambassador held in the evening at his residence where, as the ambassador pointed out: “the strong core of an international network, came together in the shared pursuit of making sustainable development a reality”.
He concluded saying: “this evening is intended to be a pleasant opportunity to exchange and share experiences, ideas and viewpoints on sustainable development and related issues, while enjoying good food with good company. I very much hope that we will benefit from this valuable gathering through learning and sharing with each other.”
Needless to say the conversations were vibrant and thought-provoking, stimulated by the refined yet informal setting and the buffet of Thai Cuisine, as always, a delight to the eye and the palate.

TEXT
Julie Kennedy
IMAGES
Anton van der Riet

01

From left to right:
Mr Gustavo
Leignadier Castillo,
Consul General of
Panama in
Rotterdam,
Ms Zanya López de

Leignadier, Spouse
Consul General,
Mr Mark Wilson,
Panama Embassy
Staff,
Ms Edna Castañeda
de Vergeer, Panama
Embassy Staff,

Ms Paulina Gómez,
Panama Embassy
Staff,
Ms Tatiana Zarak
de Delvalle, Spouse
Ambassador of
Panama,
Willy Delvalle,

Ambassador of
Panama,
Ms Olga Sinclair,
Panamanian
Cultural
Ambassador and
Artist,
Ms Armonia Chang

de Belchieur,
Attaché Embassy of
Panama,
Mr Chales Belchier,
Spouse Attaché,

02

From left to right:
Mrs. Patricia van
Oordt de Arias,
spouse Ambassador
of Spain
Mrs Aimara de
Armas, spouse

Ambassador of
Cuba
Ms Olga Sinclair,
Artist
Mrs. Tatiana Zarak
de Delvalle, spouse
Ambassador of
Panama

Mrs. Rym Ben
Becher, spouse
Ambassador of
Tunisia
Mrs. Jane Berger de
Salvador, spouse
Ambassador of
Argentina

Mrs. Véronique
Miclea, spouse
Ambassador of
Peru
Ms. Fabiola Soto-
Midena, Partner of
Ambassador of
Mexico



01

02

A PANAMANIAN EVENING IN ROTTERDAM UNDER THE CHARM AND VIBRANCY OF ARTIST OLGA SINCLAIR

T

By a beautiful autumnal evening, with the moon illuminating the Dock Gallery in Rotterdam, the 112th Anniversary of the National Day of the Republic of Panama was celebrated with a private exhibition of the renowned Panamanian artist and Cultural Ambassador: Olga Sinclair.

his magical evening in the brand-new, inspiring art gallery was highlighted by the special speech held by His Excellency Willys Delvalle the Ambassador of Panama. He emphasised the unique talent of Olga Sinclair, as well as the special role she plays as representative of Panama. With over 50 individual exhibitions and 200 collective ones in various cities of Asia, Europe and America, she recently showcased her ex-

position "Retrospective" at the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi in Florence, Italy before moving on to the national gallery of Arts in Jordan and reaching the Casa de America in Madrid in time for Hispanic Heritage day.

The ambassador expressed his pleasure at having his very dear friend and artist Olga Sinclair with us, emphasising not only her immense talent, but also the sensitivity of a lovely woman he described as "The expression of the spirit of a brilliant artist that shines by herself, always with a positive attitude, spreading to everyone

around her a happy atmosphere with a radiant smile".

In 2010 she created a Foundation to facilitate the access to different forms of artistic expression for young people in Panama and this year brought 10 young, talented Panamanian artists, winners of the Foundation's competition to Europe to attend the first Rome art workshop at the Vatican school, dedicated to the memory of her Father El Maestro Alfredo Sinclair.

In 2014, for the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Panama Canal, the Olga Sinclair Foundation broke the World Guinness record for the most people painting simultaneously (5,084).

He concluded by reminding us that the excellent diplomatic relations between Panama and the Netherlands reach back to the early days of the Republic in 1904 and there has been a General Consulate in Rotterdam since 1908: "making it only natural that this city was the ideal location for both this amazing exhibition and the celebration of our national day" he said.

Mrs Sinclair's sparking personality and special works of art, bursting with colour, shape and creativity were a joy to behold, as was the warm speech she gave, in Dutch, the country where she studied and where one of her daughters lives and studies.

It was wonderful for us to meet and admire, in the words of the ambassador: "this sample of the artistic passion of our people, the colors, the joy, and the vibrant and elegant paintings of a very talented Panamanian."

TEXT
Julie Kennedy
IMAGES
Walter Buonomassa

*The expression
of the spirit
of a brilliant
artist that shines
by herself*

01

From left to right:
Ambassador of
Mexico: Eduardo
Ibarrola & Ms.
Fabiola de Soto-
Midena,

Ambassador of
Spain: Fernando
Arias & Mrs. Patricia
van Oordt de Arias,
Assistant Managing
Director Hermitage:

Mr. Paul Mosterd,
Ambassador of
Portugal: José De
Bouza Serrano

HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM PRESENTS A RARE RETROSPECTIVE OF SPANISH MASTERS: EL GRECO, RIBERA, ZURBARÁN, VELÁZQUEZ, MURILLO & GOYA IN THE NETHERLANDS

The long-awaited art exhibition “Spanish Masters from the Hermitage, the World of El Greco, Ribera, Zurbarán, Velázquez, Murillo & Goya” opened at the Hermitage Amsterdam on November 27th 2015 in the presence of HRH Princess Beatrix, the newly arrived Russian Ambassador to the Netherlands, Alexander Shulgin, the Spanish Ambassador Fernando Arias, the Portuguese Ambassador, Jose Bouza De Serrano and the Mexican Ambassador, Eduardo Ibarrola. From the country of the latter, three art pieces were shown in the exposition of the Spanish Masters.

The exhibition includes more than sixty superior paintings and a rich collection of graphic works and applied arts masterpieces. Never before has the Netherlands hosted such a comprehensive survey of Spanish art, with work that is hardly ever represented in Dutch museum collections. The exhibition features masterpieces such as “The Apostles Peter and Paul (1587–92)” by El Greco, Velázquez’s “Portrait of the Count Duke of Olivares” (c. 1638), Murillo’s “Immaculate Conception” (c. 1680) and Goya’s Portrait of the Actress Antonia Zárate (1810–11), in addition to paintings by their pupils and later painters, including Picasso. Together they tell the story of the rise and glory of Spanish art in the Golden Age, which would continue to influence art into modern times.

Spain’s Golden Age

The Golden Age of Spanish painting began in the late sixteenth century and flourished throughout the seventeenth century, coinciding with the Dutch Golden Age. While the Netherlands was revolting against Spanish rule, Spain was developing its own artistic signature. Philip II, an absolute monarch in a society dominated by the Catholic Church, commissioned the construction of El Escorial in 1563. The enormous palace and monastery complex near Madrid was decorated by great Spanish and Italian masters. Spain’s unimaginable wealth, amassed largely during the country’s period of colonial gold fever – Spain called itself ‘the Empire on which the sun never sets’ – brought painters abundant commissions for the King, churches and private collectors. Spanish art flourished.

The works of the great Spanish painters are exceptional for their exquisite convergence of the spiritual and the theatrical. Influenced by the Italians, painters like El Greco, Ribera and Zurbarán developed a singular Spanish style marked by strong contrasts of light and dark. Their works exude the temperament and pride of the Iberian Peninsula. Murillo and in particular Velázquez, a trendsetter, added their own signature to that style and reached new heights. Goya, an equally awe-inspiring talent, followed in their footsteps with his confrontational realism. Goya is also famous for his penetrating graphic cycles and a number of his dramatic etchings are featured in the exhibition, including pieces from “Los Desastres de la Guerra”, depicting the horrors of the Napoleonic occupation of Spain. The artists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries continued the tradition, rendering the strong contrasts in society in works that reflect both the sun-drenched Spanish culture and the dark sides of history.

Ambassador Fernando Arias had the personal satisfaction during the opening of TEFAF 2015, to see TEFAF Museum Restoration Fund grant 50.000 Euros towards two projects around the restoration of two masterpieces of the Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbarán (1598–1664). The paintings concerned were “Saint Francis of Assisi in Meditation” (Museum Kunstpalast of Düsseldorf) and “Saint Serapion” (Wadsworth Museum of Art in Hartford, USA).

“Spanish art is a unique chapter in art history. From 28th of November 2015 to 29th of May 2016, this compelling story will be illuminated by over a hundred superior works from the Hermitage in St Petersburg, which has the largest and most diverse collection of Spanish art outside Spain”.

Never before has the Netherlands hosted such a comprehensive survey of Spanish art, with work that is hardly ever represented in Dutch museum collections

THE HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM A private initiative

 The Hermitage Amsterdam is a private initiative. Cultural entrepreneurship is very important and the sponsors help make it possible. (For a full list of the sponsors see hermitage.nl/en/sponsors/index.htm)

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TEXT
Eva Mennes
IMAGES
Janiek Bodron-Dam





01

TOWARDS A GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR THE EU: THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMON GLOBAL RULES AND INSTITUTIONS

On 8 December 2015, The Hague Institute welcomed the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini and Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bert Koenders for a discussion on the EU's forthcoming Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy.

The first President of the Commission of the European Economic Community, Walter Hallstein, wrote that "the majesty of law is to achieve what centuries of blood and iron could not accomplish." His words remind us of the importance of a rules-based international system and effective multilateral institutions in confronting contemporary challenges.

How the EU can help consolidate such a system and improve the effectiveness of multilateralism was the focus of the high-level discussion convened by The Hague Institute and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. Organized in the framework of the EU's Strategic Review Process, the high-level discussion and subsequent expert consultations sought to provide input into the EU's forthcoming Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy. This document, which is to be adopted in the Summer of 2016 during the Dutch tenure of the EU's rotating Council Presidency, will succeed

01	H.E. Federica Mogherini (High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy), Dr. Abi Williams (President of The Hague Institute), H.E. Bert Koenders (Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands)	02	H.E. Bert Koenders, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands	03	Mr. Jozias van Aartsen, Mayor of The Hague	04	H.E. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
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02

03



04

the seminal European Security Strategy of 2003 and determine the direction of EU foreign policy for years to come.

Addressing an audience of Ambassadors, senior policymakers, scholars and

practitioners, Foreign Minister Koenders called attention to the tremendous pressure under which the current multilateral system labors, noting that "the drafting of the global strategy comes not a moment too soon." High Representative Mogherini echoed this sentiment in her keynote address, underlining the importance of a bold vision and coherent strategy for Europe's international engagement. High Representative Mogherini also highlighted the need for global partnerships and argued that the EU must act as a driving force for progress with the ability to think "mega-regional and mini-lateral at the same time."

Closed-door expert consultations followed the public high-level discussion. These consultations focused on the EU's role in developing the international legal order, promoting effective multilateral institutions, and engaging non-state actors in tackling the most pressing global challenges. Leading experts in EU foreign policy, global governance, European and international law, and diplomacy partici-

pated in these deliberations. Their insights will inform the Netherlands' input statement concerning the EU's Strategic Review Process. The input statement aims to ensure that the themes of the consultations at the Hague Institute—which represent hallmarks of Dutch foreign policy—are reflected adequately in the EU's new Global Strategy. I am delighted that the Hague Institute, in close partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had this valuable opportunity to contribute to a critical national and regional policy process, and look forward to the launch this Summer of a Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy that embodies a bold and progressive vision for Europe's engagement with the world.

TEXT
Dr. Abi Williams, President of The Hague Institute for Global Justice
IMAGES
Harmen de Jong

01

From left to right:
Mr. Wim Weijland,
Director RMO H.E.
Teresa Angelatou,
Ambassador of
Greece Mr. Ruud
Halbertsma,
Conservator RMO
H.E. Francesco
Azzarello,
Ambassador of Italy

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES REOPENED

The National Museum of Antiquities (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden) reopened on Tuesday December 15th, after seven months of renovation. Three totally refurbished galleries on the Classical World offer visitors the renewed and fascinating culture of the ancient Greeks, Etruscans and Romans.

A

central theme is the Greek world in the context of neighbouring cultures, with each gallery viewing this world from a different perspective. The Roman gallery has

undergone a substantial metamorphosis.

H.E. Ambassador of Italy Francesco Azzarello and H.E. Teresa Angelatou from Greece, opened the exposition together with the energetic director of the newly restored museum, Mr. Wim Weijland. In her speech, Mrs. Angelatou stressed that 'The Greek thought that humans are the measure of all things, and the emphasis on the individual is one major cornerstone of Western Civilization. The glorification of the human form and of human accomplishment defined ancient Greek art, philosophy, literature, and religion'. After mentioning varied Greek philosophers and thinkers, the Ambassador continued: "Ancient Greeks were the first in the West to experiment with the

concept of democratic government." To end her speech Mrs. Angelatou repeated the words of the Greek General Pericles: "It is true that we (Athenians) are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not the few, with equal justice to all alike in their private disputes." Of all the great works of philosophy and art Ancient Greece gave the modern world, the birth of democracy could be considered its most important achievement. After the opening with live music and other speeches by H.E. the Ambassador of Italy Francesco Azzarello and director Wim Weijland, it was a delight for all the visitors to attend the different expositions, each one on its own floor of the building.

A central theme is the Greek world in the context of neighbouring cultures, with each gallery viewing this world from a different perspective

The National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden is in its sort very important internationally and is implementing a phased plan to update all its displays, for completion before its 200th anniversary in 2018. In 2015 it was the turn of the Classical World: the Greek, the Etruscans and the Romans. The Egyptian department will reopen in November 2016. We are looking forward to this!

TEXT
Eva Mennes
IMAGES
Courtesy RMO



01

32e Concours de la Chanson Alliance Française



Théâtre Diligentia
Den Haag / La Haye
Dimanche 20 mars 2016
14.30 heures

www.alliance-francaise.nl
concoursdelachanson.nl

Présentation
Frederik Steenbrink

Le Jury
Tonny Eyk
(musicien)

Bart Van Loo
(auteur-conférencier)
Frances Gramende
(éditrice de musique)

Mise-en-scène
Nico Knapper

Organisation
La French Music &
Alliance Française
des Pays-Bas

