

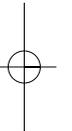
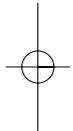
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G U I D E T O T H E

BEST MUSEUMS

I N T H E N E T H E R L A N D S

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Better Luck Next Year

Nanci Tangeman rounds up twelve museums that you must pencil in for the new year.

There's nothing like a cold December to make you reflect back on accomplishments over the year accomplishments, but few people ever seem to look back on those things they should have done — or those places they should have visited. So, at least when it comes to the arts, we've done it for you. Here's a list of 12 museums across The Netherlands that you should have, could have visited ... Maybe it's time to map out your visits — one a month — for 2007.

VERZETSMUSEUM (DUTCH RESISTANCE MUSEUM)

Some museums can suck the life out of even the most interesting stories. This is not the case at the Verzetsmuseum (Dutch Resistance Museum) in Amsterdam. The English/Dutch exhibits will engross you with false ID papers, spy gadgets, household items, photographs and videos. The museum paints a vivid picture of life in Holland during the German occupation. The stories — many of them personal, heroic and sometimes humorous — cast a light on experi-



Verzetsmuseum; exterior, interior

ences that still play a role in Dutch society. The exhibits are multi-media and interactive, but in a thoughtful and intelligent way. The museum also sells an 18-page booklet, *Persecution and Resistance* (€ 0.50), that lets you take the stories of the Resistance outside

the museum's walls. The pamphlet maps a walk to the Anne Frank House, describing where events took place. Through January 14, 2007, the Verzetsmuseum features an exhibition about the persecution of homosexuals in Germany between 1933 and 1945 and in The Netherlands during the Nazi occupation.

Plantage Kerklaan 61, Amsterdam
020 62 02 535
www.verzetsmuseum.org

ESCHER IN HET PALAIS

Water flowing uphill. Birds transmogrifying into fish. Reptiles crawling right off the page. This museum can only be dedicated to one famous Dutch artist — M.C. Escher. *Escher in Het Paleis* on The Hague's Lange Voorhout brings the drawings and prints to life almost as vividly as the artist did.

Anybody that has had a university dorm room wall will recognize many of Escher's most famous works — but the collection also includes his wrapping paper designs for major department stores, bookplates and memorabilia. If you're not afraid to mount a staircase in a building dedicated to the man who drew *Ascending and Descending*, you'll find an interactive treat on the top floor.

There the artist meets technology with computer animation that lets you step inside an Escher drawing. You can even have a photo taken in a special Escher chamber that allows children to tower over their parents (long before they do in real life).

Lange Voorhout 74, The Hague
070 – 42 77 730

www.escherinhetpaleis.nl

SIMON VAN GIJN MUSEUM AAN HUIS

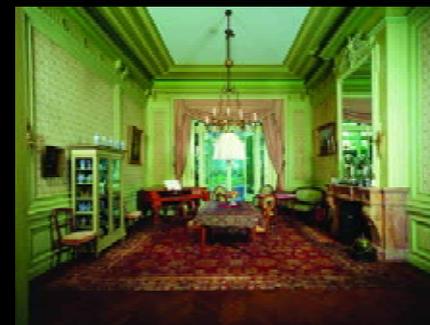
You have to wonder if Simon van Gijn used to sit around in his living room thinking, "This place would make a great museum

some day." Digging through his cupboards full of ceramics and toys, moving weapons

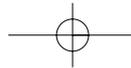


Simon van Gijn Museum aan Huis; interior

and furniture from room to room, this Dordrecht banker must have had a thought that 150 years later people would quietly "ooh" and "ahh" over his trinkets. Or maybe he just had a little shopping fetish. Here was



Simon van Gijn Museum aan Huis; exterior, interior



a man interested in everything — and the museum that bears his name, Simon van Gijn Museum aan Huis, on the harbour in Dordrecht, shows that. Maybe when he wrote out his will that stipulated his Grote Zaal never be changed, he was thinking of us craning our necks to enjoy the ornate

beneath a canopy of homes; families would thrive in the light above. And just in case a neighbourhood of houses on sticks wasn't original enough, Blom turned them all askew, so the cubes balanced on their points on top of the stairway/storage room poles, making them look even more organic.

'What NEMO is to science-loving children, the Heineken Experience is to pilsner-loving adults'

ceiling. Ironically, one of the highlights of the museum is the Goudleerkamer, a room moved here from another house in Dordrecht. It was a room Van Gijn coveted, but he didn't bring it home until he'd been dead for a century. The museum purchased, installed and renovated the room which was only opened to the public a few years ago. Until February 25, 2007 the Alles Uit de Kast exhibit throws open the banker's cupboards to show many items not usually on display.



Simon van Gijn Museum aan Huis

Nieuwe Haven 29-30, Dordrecht
078 - 63 98 200
www.simonvangijn.nl

KIJK KUBUS (SHOW CUBE)

A century after Van Gijn was stuffing his Dordrecht home full of curios, Dutch architect Piet Blom was designing a neighbourhood that was curious in its own right. Thirty-eight Cube Houses (or Pole Dwellings) form a forest of tree-shaped homes near Rotterdam's Oude Haven. Nestled into this forest is the Kijk Kubus (Show Cube), a fully-furnished Cube House, open to the public. In the late 1970s, Blom was invited to finish out a pedestrian overpass area. His idea was to plant this multi-use forest. Small businesses would operate

Surprisingly (or not) the compact homes all sold before they were built (probably not to collectors like Van Gijn).



Kijk Kubus

Overblaak 70, Rotterdam
010 - 41 42 285
www.kubuswoning.nl

JACHTHUIS ST. HUBERTUS

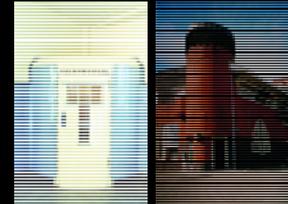
Talk all you want about museums that used to be homes and homes that look like a forest, but there's one museum house that sits in a real, live grove of trees. Nestled in the heart of the Hoge Veluwe National Park near Arnhem is the Jachthuis St. Hubertus. This hunting lodge, designed by H. P. Berlage, was built in 1920 for the Kröller-Müllers, the couple responsible for the Kröller-Müller Museum and the Hoge Veluwe National Park. The Jachthuis was the couple's retreat after they donated the surrounding 5,500 hectares, which today remains one of the largest national parks in the country. The hunting lodge is built around the legend of St. Hubertus, the patron saint of hunters. Visitors can spot many clues to the story throughout the house. This month the 75-minute Jachthuis tours (in Dutch only) focus on Anton Müller. You must book in advance on their toll line. If you visit the hunting lodge, plan to spend the entire day. The

Kröller-Müller Museum (also in the park) has one of the best collections of works by Vincent Van Gogh, as well as major French Impressionists. Weather permitting, you can grab a white bicycle at the gate and cycle through the park and the magnificent sculpture gardens.

Hoge Veluwe National Park
Apeldoornseweg 250, Hoenderloo
0900 - 46 43 835 (Calls cost 0.20 cents/m)
www.hogeveluwe.nl

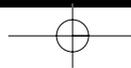
MUSEUM HET SCHIP (SHIP MUSEUM)

Walk around Amsterdam's Spaarndammerplantsoen neighbourhood and you'll feel like you're in a fantasy, but you're really in an Amsterdam School of Architecture time capsule. The neighbourhood's three housing blocks are a monumental mixture of brickwork eddies, unruly corners and organically-shaped towers sprouting into the air. Tucked into one of these dizzying corners is Museum Het Schip (The Ship). Technically a documentation centre for public housing, the strangely shaped restored post office is a Mecca for architect-



Museum Het Schip; exterior, interior

ture enthusiasts. With exhibits in Dutch, French, German, English, Italian and Spanish, the tiny space celebrates the architectural movement inspired by Michel de Klerk. Inside you can view a video tour of other Amsterdam neighbourhoods and what's being done to protect this iconic architectural style. The museum also has an excellent selection of architecture and design books in both Dutch and English. Around the corner from the post office is a fully furnished working class apartment. Spaarndammerplantsoen 140, Amsterdam
020 - 41 82 885
www.hetschip.nl



HEINEKEN EXPERIENCE

What NEMO is to science-loving children, the Heineken Experience is to pilsner-loving adults. Housed in the original Heineken brewery, interactive exhibits cater to more adult urges — like steering a wagon pulled by a team of the brand's famous Shire horses. By the time you're finished with the tour you'll believe beer could be brewed in a tea kettle. Don't bring the kids; do bring a thirst (your 10 admission buys you three beers). Stadhouderskade 78, Amsterdam
020 52 39 666
www.heinekenexperience.com

STEDELIJK MUSEUM CS

Slumming. That's what the Stedelijk Museum CS, is all about. While its permanent home on the Museumplein is being torn apart with bulldozers and backhoes, the museum has burned its bra and let the hair grow on its legs. In the middle of the south bank construction on the IJ, one of Europe's top collections of Modern Art basically squats in the old Post CS high-rise. Tromping through mud — better yet, entering the building from the back door, past very graphic graphics (the Restaurant 11 entrance) — lends an edgy, atelier feel to a visit. You just feel naughty. Although the highlights from the permanent collection are not on show at the CS location, in December the annual Municipal Art Acquisitions exhibitions present an overview of cultural activity in Amsterdam — including visual art, photography, design and applied arts.



Stedelijk Museum CS

Oosterdokskaade 5, Amsterdam
020 - 57 32 911
www.stedelijk.nl

THE SCHERINGS MUSEUM VOOR REALISME (OF REALISTIC ART)

Discovering contemporary Dutch art can be a refreshing antidote to the current frenzy of 400 years of Rembrandt. Magic Realism, which dominated Dutch art in the 1930s, can be a mesmerizing place to begin. To paraphrase Dutch artist Pyke Koch, Magic Realism uses images which are possible, but

not probable. The Scheringa Museum voor Realisme (of Realist Art) in Spanbroek houses a collection that includes all the big names in this genre (Koch, Dick Ket, Raoul Hynckes, etc.), including more than 100 paintings and drawings by Carel Willink. Through January, the museum, located in a former girls' school just outside of Hoorn, features one of today's most important Dutch painters in Dick Pieters in Detail: Paintings 1970 – 2005. Spanbroekerweg 162, Spanbroek
0226 – 35 11 11
www.scheringamuseum.nl

THE MUSEUM VOOR MODERNE KUNST (MODERN ART)

Far to the southeast is another excellent collection in a museum well worth the drive. With a beautiful sculpture garden that overlooks the Rhine, The Museum voor Moderne Kunst (Modern Art) in Arnhem features new figurative painters and applied arts and design, in addition to the Magic Realist collection it's been building since the 1920s. This month catch exhibitions by multimedia artist Cora Roorda van Eijsinga; Barend van Hoek, the first in the museum's young artist series; and sculptor John Rådecker, best known for his National Monument in Amsterdam's Dam Square, . Utrechtseweg 87, Arnhem
026 – 35 12 431
www.mmkarnhem.nl

MUSEUM DE WEEM

Take away the magic from the Magic Realists, and you have Realism — an area Dutch painters have excelled in (to put it mildly) since the 17th century. The best con-

temporary example of this, Henk Helmantel, can be viewed in the top galleries in the country, but nothing compares to a pilgrimage to where it all originates. A pilgrimage it is, to a parsonage in rural Westeremden, north of Groningen. More exposition space than museum — and open only May through September — Museum De Weem is worth a notation in your agenda for a warmer weath-

'Museums don't always mean Art or History'

er trek. Once there, perusing the 61-year-old's still-lives and church interiors (some of which feature items from Rembrandt's inventory — that's a measure of the regard this artist is held) you'll find yourself battling not to reach out and touch. Your eyes will not believe Helmantel works on a flat canvas. Realism, but magic, nonetheless. Abt Emopad 2, Westeremden
0596 - 55 14 15
www.helmantel.nl

OLYMPIC EXPERIENCE

Museums don't always mean Art or History. For sports fans in the family, the Olympic Experience in Amsterdam's Olympic Stadium (home to the 1928 Olympics) is a real winner. Watch the greatest moments in Dutch sporting history. Hockey, track and field, tennis, judo, swimming and, of course, ice skating ... they're all here. Check your pulse, climb into the starting blocks for a sprint, or even try on five time Olympic champion ice skater Eric Heiden's skates. (All displays are in Dutch.) Olympisch Stadion 2, Amsterdam
020 67 11 115
www.olympischstadion.nl