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## EXHIBITION 'THE GOLDEN COACH: A GIFT FROM AMSTERDAM'

THE AMSTERDAM MUSEUM PRESENTS A DIVERSITY OF PERSPECTIVES ON A HOT TOPIC IN CULTURAL HERITAGE

From June to November 2021 the Amsterdam Museum will host an exhibition featuring the Golden Coach. The carriage is currently undergoing a thorough restoration, which is expected to be completed in the first half of 2021. The exhibition *The Golden Coach: a gift from Amsterdam* will give visitors of the Amsterdam Museum a unique opportunity to take a closer look at the restored carriage in the museum's large courtyard. They will learn everything about the craftsmanship, history, use, restoration and symbolism of the Golden Coach, and the artists who created it. Furthermore, they will be introduced to the divergent perspectives on a heritage item that has unleashed considerable public debate.



**Presentation of the Golden Coach, photo: Amsterdam Municipal Archives** Queen Wilhelmina accepts the Golden Coach, a gift from the Amsterdam bourgeoisie on the occasion of her inauguration in the Palace of Popular Diligence on 7 September 1898 at one o'clock in the afternoon.

*We are proud that His Majesty the King has given our museum the Golden Coach on loan for this temporary exhibition. An exhibition where we will take a closer look at the significance of the Golden Coach, examining its rich history, its use and the current discussion about this carriage. At a time when the debate about the future of this emotionally charged item of cultural heritage is more topical than ever. As a museum, it is our duty to play a role in current social issues. We can serve as a builder of bridges between history and our current times, the present. We consciously choose to provide in-depth information about the Golden Coach from divergent perspectives, to*



*open our visitors' eyes and to broaden our understanding and insight. Judikje Kiers, Director of the Amsterdam Museum.*

The Golden Coach will be on display in a special glass enclosure in the courtyard of the Amsterdam Museum. The six galleries surrounding the courtyard – all of which have a view of the Golden Coach – will shed light on various facets of the carriage, ranging from its history to its current function. Presenting it from a diversity of perspectives enables the viewer to better place the different facets in their various contexts. Space has also been reserved to accommodate the many different views on the future of the coach. The Golden Coach is an item of cultural heritage with a rich yet emotionally charged history: the painted panels on one of the sides of the coach refer to the Netherlands' colonial past. In the supplementary public programme that is due to be launched this autumn, the museum will enter into a dialogue with people about this iconic object.

### **A gift from Amsterdam returns to Amsterdam**

The Golden Coach was presented to Queen Wilhelmina by the citizens of Amsterdam in 1898, on the occasion of her investiture at the age of 18. A gift for the first female monarch on the Dutch throne, to which many of Amsterdam's citizens voluntarily contributed. More than 1,200 craftsmen worked on the coach, many of whom came from Amsterdam. The embroidery for the carriage's cushions, for example, was stitched by the orphan girls from the Burgerweeshuis, the former orphanage which is the current location of the Amsterdam Museum.

### **Versatile curatorial team**

The Amsterdam Museum has many years of experience in the participatory, multifaceted programming and presentation of historical subjects from different perspectives. The exhibition programme was developed by a team of researchers from myriad backgrounds and specialist areas under the leadership of artistic director Margriet Schavemaker. A sounding board group composed of external experts will be advising the team and providing it with the necessary support.

*Artistic Director Margriet Schavemaker: 'The exhibition will provide an extensive and meticulously researched interpretation of the various subjects and themes. It will be our wonderful task to accommodate the diversity of people and voices. We want to persuade people to come and take a look, to form their own opinion and discuss it with one another.'*

### **Preparatory research**

In the run-up to the exhibition, a reading room will be set up in the museum from October 2020, where a multifaceted public programme will be organised under the leadership of the research team. This will give the general public and specialists the opportunity to discuss the diverse themes associated with the Golden Coach. The results of this study will be presented via AM Live – the new fortnightly online programme of the Amsterdam Museum – and via podcasts and publications on the museum website. There will also be room for a broad debate about the painting *Homage of the Colonies* which can be seen on one of the coach's side panels, and its significance in Dutch colonial history. In addition to this, the Amsterdam Museum will travel to all the Netherlands' major cities with a mobile installation starting this October to learn more about what the Golden Coach means to the general populace.

*The exhibition 'The Golden Coach: a gift from Amsterdam' opens in June 2021 and can be visited until November 2021 in the Amsterdam Museum. The research and public programme will be launched this autumn.*



*Details of the Golden Coach*

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Note for the editors (not for publication): If you have any questions, please contact the press office of the Amsterdam Museum), [pr@amsterdammuseum.nl](mailto:pr@amsterdammuseum.nl) or on +31 (0)6 - 22 92 77 29 or the Netherlands Government Information Service at [Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst](https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/rijksvoorlichtingsdienst) (RVD).