

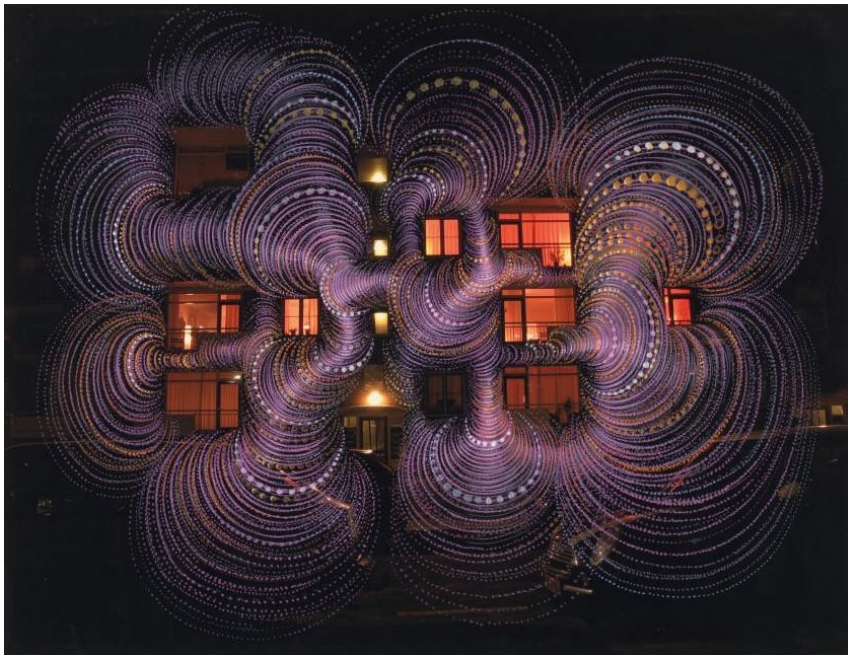
March 9 and 10, 2026 - Organized by the Women of the Rijksmuseum Team

WOMEN IN THE MUSEUM XL: THE (MUSEUM'S) FUTURE IS FEMALE

The phrase 'the future is female' has resonated across activist and academic circles since the second feminist wave (1960s-1980s), gaining renewed interest from the 2010s onward. This raises the question: what could the future of gender-thinking look like within the walls of the museum? This fifth edition of the Women in the Museum conference series offers an opportunity to reflect on what we have built together as a museum and academic community, and, most importantly, to consider how gender- and women-focused research can be sustainably anchored in a rapidly changing world.

In the spirit of looking back and moving forward, we will explore how knowledge is passed between generations, delve into the complex relationship between museums and (feminist) activism, and engage with different approaches to reframing historical narratives. One of the key questions running through the program is how museums – especially those working with historical (e.g. Early Modern) collections – can actively engage in today's gender discourses.

To mark the fifth anniversary of the Women in the Museum conference, this year's edition will offer a two-day programme combining thought-provoking plenary talks and hands-on workshops. Together, these sessions aim to equip participants with concrete tools to help drive change in their own institutions and professional practices.



Kinke Kooi, Female View, 2007.
Purchased with the support of
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DAY 1 - MONDAY MARCH 9, 2026

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT THE PATRIARCHY

The story of 'the patriarchy' is a powerful one. How do we begin to rewrite this foundational narrative? In her book *The Patriarchs: How Men Came to Rule*, Angela Saini explores how male dominance came to shape our societies and institutions, and how history itself offers alternative stories. This raises a pressing question for the museum field: how did our institutions become male-coded, and do alternatives exist? We will look at specific cases from museum professionals who are actively challenging this legacy from within the field.

- 09.00 – 09.45 Registration (& coffee/tea)
- 09.45 – 10.00 **WELCOME and INTRODUCTION**
Janneke van der Wijk, The Director of Audiences at the Rijksmuseum
Women of the Rijksmuseum Team
- 10.00 – 10.40 **KEYNOTE: *The Fragility of Patriarchy***
Angela Saini, journalist and Assistant Professor of Science Writing at
the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Autor of *The Patriarchs: How Men
Came to Rule*
- 10.40 – 11.05 **LECTURE: *Museums of Masculinity?***
Stefan Dudink, Assistant Professor Gender & Diversity Studies at
Radboud University Nijmegen
- 11.10 – 11.30 Q&A
- 11.30 – 12.15 **A DIRECTOR'S CONVERSATION: *The Past and Future of Gender Thinking***
Caroline Campbell, Director at National Gallery of Ireland (Dublin, Ireland)
Charles Esche, Former Director at Van Abbe Museum (Eindhoven, the
Netherlands)
Camille Morineau, Co-Founder and Director of AWARE: Archives of Women
Artists, Research & Exhibitions (Paris, France)
- 12.15 – 12.30 **WARMING UP WORKSHOPS**
Maggie Greyson and Hillary Spencer, Futurist and Disruptive Thinkers
- 12.30 – 14.00 Lunch break
- 14.00 – 15.30 **THEORY INTO PRACTICE: WORKSHOPS** (see p.4)
- 15.30 – 16.00 Coffee and Tea Break
- 16.00 – 16.30 **ROUNDTABLE: THE FIRST RESULTS ENVISIONED**
- 16.30 – 17.30 Drinks

DAY 2 - TUESDAY MARCH 10, 2026

LET'S CLAIM THE FUTURE

How can museums become engaging institutions ready for the future of (intersectional) gender-thinking? And what role can feminist activism – both within and beyond museum walls – play in this new phase? We will explore worldwide examples of museums and museum professionals who are actively rethinking their methods and approaches.

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| 09.00 – 09.45 | Walk in (& coffee/tea) |
| 09.45 – 10.00 | WELCOME
Women of the Rijksmuseum Team |
| 10.00 – 11.00 | KEYNOTE: <i>Interrupting Empathy and Quality</i>
Mark Miller, Artist, Cultural Producer and Former Head of Learning at Tate Britain (London, United Kingdom)
& Q&A |
| 11.00 – 11.20 | LECTURE
Fatima Bintou Rassoul Sy, Curator and the Director of Programmes at RAW Material Company (Dakar, Senegal) |
| 11.20 – 11.40 | LECTURE: <i>Seen Today, Remembered Tomorrow: From an Exhibition on Women Artists to a Long-term Change in the MSK's Gender Policy</i>
Frederica van Dam, Curator at The Museum of Fine Arts Ghent (Ghent, Belgium) |
| 11.40 – 12.00 | Q&A |
| 12.00 – 12.30 | PLEA: <i>The Fire of FemFuturism</i>
Margriet Schavemaker, the General Director at the Kunstmuseum (The Hague, the Netherlands) |
| 12.30 – 14.00 | Lunch break |
| 14.00 – 15.30 | THEORY INTO PRACTICE: WORKSHOPS (see p.4) |
| 15.30 – 16.00 | Coffee and Tea Break |
| 16.00 – 16.30 | CLOSURE REMARKS
Warda El-Kaddouri, Journalist and Assistant Professor at Open University of the Netherlands |
| 16.30 – 17.30 | Drinks |

WORKSHOPS

The Future We Build: Advisory Board on Gender and the Museum

Hosted by: Rachel Esner, Associate Professor Modern and Contemporary Art at University of Amsterdam & Alicia Cartagena García-Alcaraz, Fulbright Fellow at Brooklyn Museum (New York) and PhD Candidate at Universidad de Murcia

How do you imagine the museum of the future when it comes to gender? In this workshop, you will co-write a manifesto that brings together a set of recommendations for incorporating gender perspectives and shaping the museum of the future. Through critical thinking, we will explore museums as spaces of equality, developing both visionary ideas and pragmatic guidelines.

Disruption and Alternative Futures

Hosted by: Hillary Spencer & Maggie Greyson, Futurist and Disruptive Thinkers

In this interactive session, Hillary Spencer will use “disruption” as a warm-up to help participants surface and challenge the assumptions shaping museum practice today. Futures expert Maggie Greyson will guide a participatory futures workshop where participants envision new forms of museums.

XL Cross Stitching: Embroider Women in the Museum

Hosted by: Gerda Z. Leeffers, Textile Artist and Cultural Anthropologist by Stitchamos and Studio Koekoek

Join us for a hands-on workshop to launch the start of an XL cross-stitch artwork inspired by the women whose stories echo through the museums. Working in pairs, we'll stitch, share ideas, and let conversation guide the creative process as we connect through thread while building a *gesamtkunswerk* together. Step by step, we will transform women's histories into a bold, large-scale work of art.

Photography workshop: Capturing Gender in Architecture

Hosted by: Jonne Lucia, Photographer

During this photography workshop, the Rijksmuseum's architecture and garden form our starting point. With Polaroid cameras in hand, we explore how ideas of gender appear in the building's forms, symbols and details. After a short introduction about (documentary) photography, you will head out in small groups to observe closely, search for unexpected perspectives, and challenge the way the museum building is usually seen. The workshop encourages you to question, collaborate and push your way of seeing beyond the familiar.

Make Space for Change: Design Your Own Exhibition

Hosted by: Rosemarie van der Tol, Narrative Designer at Kossmanndejong

How to turn a concept or idea into a tangible and impactful exhibition? For the exhibition designers at Kossmanndejong story and space go hand in hand. During this workshop, narrative designer Rosemarie van der Tol will learn you how to bring gender and women stories to life in an exhibition with strong narratives and visual power. Be ready to think out of the box, experiment with collage making, and develop your strongest exhibition plan yet.

Playing from Prototiepe to Prototype: sixty-year transformation of an artwork

Hosted by: Iris de Leeuw, artist & Anouk Beckers, artist & Harm Stevens, Curator of 20th Century History at the Rijksmuseum

In 1966 the Speespak '66 ('spaze suit') challenged people to become 'Homo Ludens' ('playing humans'). This 'unisex' suit with unzippable trouser legs encouraged new forms of communication. In 2026 a new multimedia Speespak '26 will be launched as part of the publication SpeesBookLookPak ('SpazeBookLookSuit'), created by artists Anouk Beckers, Iris de Leeuw and curator Harm Stevens. Still for everyone, but now even more inclusive and consciously designed with all gender identities in mind. We invite you to join the artists in becoming one of the first to truly make this new Speespak your own, exploring intergenerational creation and activism through textile. Please note: this workshop offers "a staggering amount of komyounikayshun possibilities for everyone!"

[IN DUTCH] Maak een verhaal van geschiedenis...

Hosted by: Hendrik Spiering & Mirjam van Zuidam, journalists and podcasters of NRC

Mirjam van Zuidam en Hendrik Spiering zijn de makers van de historische NRC-podcast Wilde Eeuwen (twee seizoenen). Ze vertellen hoe je motieven en emoties van historische personages in audio tot leven kan wekken en daarin toch de onzekerheid van historische kennis kan laten doorklinken.

Let op: deze workshop is in het Nederlands / Please note: this workshop will be held in Dutch

Please note: a registration link for workshop enrollment will follow in 2026