

Press Release

Singer Laren Live!

14 May to 27 August

Singer Laren is fifty years old! 2006 marks half a century since the American Anna Singer-Brugh gifted her villa, *The Wild Swans* in Laren, which contains museum rooms, a concert hall and a large part of her art collection, to the *Singer Memorial Foundation*. This foundation was set up to commemorate her husband William Singer, who died in 1943. Singer Laren is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary with two special exhibitions and an extensive programme of events. The first exhibition, **Singer Laren Live!**, is a vivid evocation of everything that has made the Singer Laren theatre and museum so popular over the last fifty years.

'The dream of my heart comes true today.'

Those were the words Anna Singer used when she opened the complex on 12 May 1956. In the new museum the public could get to know the paintings by William Singer and the art collection that Anna and William built up together.

Anna herself was a gifted and enthusiastic pianist and, with her love of music, she not only founded a museum, but a concert hall as well, which together with the attractive villa and the wonderful garden became a popular place for many a lover of culture. With the art collection and the hundreds of exhibitions of Dutch and foreign art from the period 1880-1950, Singer Laren captured the hearts of countless visitors. In the theatre people enjoyed a colourful parade of performers ranging from Wim Kan to the Supremes. Singer Laren also played a unique role in the advent of television in the Netherlands, with pioneers like Willem Duys and Mies Bouwman.

'Direct from the Singer Concert Hall...' came more than a thousand well-known programmes such as the very first talk show *Voor de vuist weg*, *Mies en scène* and *This is Your Life*. Regular events like the autumn flower show *Herfstflora* and the Laren jazz festivals were great crowd pullers.

Singer Laren Live

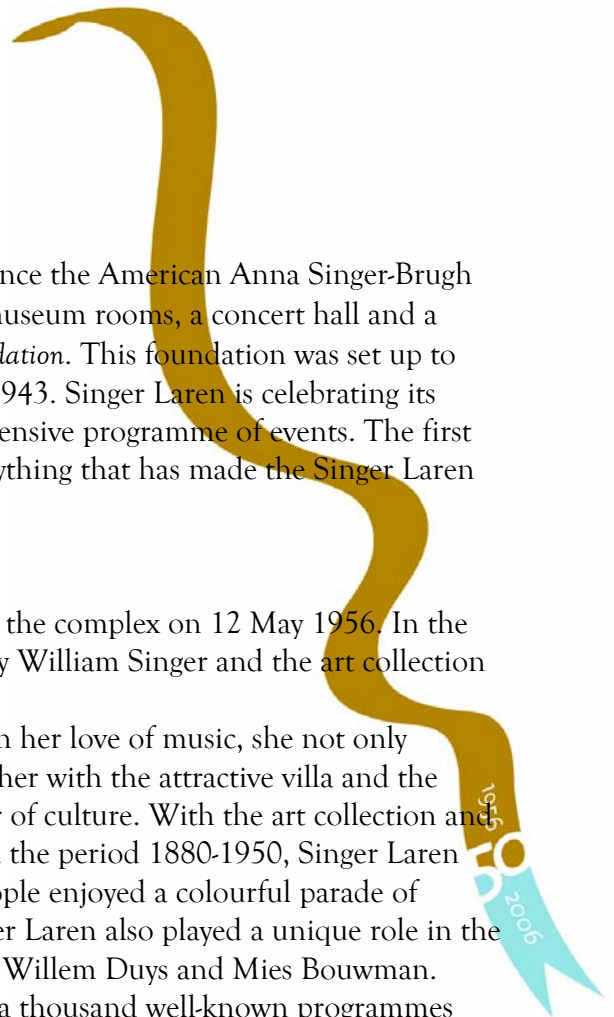
Numerous experts and celebrities are working on this lively and interactive presentation, *Singer Laren Live!*, most of them because of their personal involvement with Singer Laren. Designer Hella Jongerius, for example, with her installation *Hague Masters in a Laren Interior* is responding to the first exhibition in Singer Laren in 1957. Former Stedelijk Museum director Rudi Fuchs gives his own view of fifty years of contemporary art in Singer Laren under the title *Singer Now*. Dutch celebrities like Youp van 't Hek, Jeroen Krabbé, Louis van Dijk, Ronald de Leeuw, Monique van de Ven, Janine van den Ende and others are choosing their favourite work of art. Misjel Vermeiren and Carla Janssen Hofelt are designing a room of 50 years of Singer theatre, in which Mies Bouwman will present a special documentary about Singer as a radio and television studio. In *Laren Schools on the Laren School* students from Laren are giving their take on what an exhibition in a museum should be. And finally, in a separate room, visitors will be able to compile their own virtual exhibitions with pieces from the Singer collection.

Summer events

Singer Anniversary concerts

18 and 19 May at 8.15 p.m. in the theatre (ticket sales 0 31(0) 35 539 39 33)

Anna Singer-Brugh was a classically trained pianist and regularly organized house concerts herself.



The American soprano **Anna Singer**, a member of the family of the founder of Singer Laren, will perform on 18 May. A concert by the Hungarian pianist **Klára Würtz** is being organized for Friday 19 May.

Meet the Band

14, 21, 28 May at 3 p.m. in the garden (free to museum visitors)

In the 1960s *Meet the Band* was a radio programme broadcast from Singer Laren that gave unknown musical groups and new talent the opportunity to be discovered. During May young talent will be performing in the garden of Singer Laren: on 14 May the drum band from the American School in The Hague, the Gooi Youth Orchestra on 21 May and MCC Laren on 28 May.

Singer Summer Flower Show

2 to 5 June in the garden (free to museum visitors)

The unforgettable autumn flower show *Herfstflora* is past history, but is being revived once only in a modified form in a four-day programme of lectures, master classes, demonstrations, advice on flower arrangements, Ikebana, symbolic and ceremonial flower arranging, remakes of historical flower still lifes and a unique 'concert' by a 'scent organ'.

Singer Residence Fair

15 to 18 June in the garden (free to museum visitors)

The Singers brought with them to Laren the quality of life they were accustomed to in New England on the American east coast. In association with the magazine *Residence* Singer Laren is organizing a lifestyle show in the garden inspired by the way of life on the American east coast. One of the first famous Residence fairs took place at Singer Laren.

Fête Champêtre

30 June 7.00 p.m. (ticket sales at the theatre box office)

A unique evening in the garden of Singer Laren. During a splendid picnic you can enjoy arias sung by the Opera Trionfo.

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