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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

5 Dutch Days 5 Boroughs
Exploring four centuries of Dutch Culture in New York City
November 14-18, 2007

New York City, October 19, 2007 - *5 Dutch Days 5 Boroughs*, a yearly festival of events marking Dutch-American Heritage Day (November 16th) and spotlighting the historic and continued influence of Dutch Culture in New York City, will take place from November 14 to November 18. A full list of the participating organizations appears at the end of this release.

Prepare for five days of events and activities, including art and design exhibitions, architectural tours, lectures, film, dance performances and more! *5 Dutch Days* brings together contemporary artists and art venues, historic sites, city museums and Dutch-centric professional and genealogical groups, to celebrate the cultural connections that have existed between New York and the Netherlands for almost 400 years, and present them in a new way – highlighting both the historic and contemporary elements under one umbrella.

During these five days of exciting city-wide programming there will be at least one event in each of the city's boroughs, from walking tours of the early Dutch street grid in Lower Manhattan to the screening of a contemporary narrative dance film in Staten Island. *5 Dutch Days* kicks off on Wednesday, November 14 at Pieter Stuyvesant's tomb with special appearances by characters from *New Amsterdames*, a production of the Flying Fig Theater, and a performance by the Beppie Blankert Danceconcerts company. Rennica Johnson from Danspace Project, which presents this performance, remarks, "Danspace Project is thrilled to take part in this innovative project. It's a wonderful opportunity for us to reacquaint New York audiences with this acclaimed pioneer of the Dutch modern dance movement, bringing the city's distinguished history to the forefront of contemporary culture."

5 Dutch Days organizers Susan De Vries (Dyckman Farmhouse Museum), Felicia Mayro (St. Mark's Historic Landmark Fund), and Sean Sawyer (Department of History, Columbia University), first discussed the possibility of a collaborative effort three years ago. "We started talking about how some of the smaller historic sites could work together to increase our visibility. We saw Dutch-American Heritage Day as a common link and brainstormed the idea of *5 Dutch Days* as a collaborative, city-wide event. We began with one site in each borough and took off from there," Ms. Mayro explained.

5 Dutch Days generated such an overwhelmingly positive response during the first and second years that this year's edition includes many new participants such as the Brooklyn Museum, the Bronx County Historical Society, Morgan Library, the Museum of Arts and Design, and the Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art.

Needing to substantially enhance the marketing and promotion of the event, the organizers have brought Frank Verpoorten, Director of the Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art, on board as a marketing consultant. He will work on the overall event as well as offer assistance to specific Dutch-American sites to increase the year-round press and tourism potential for each site. This type of expertise is critical to ensure the viability of the event for this year and the future, particularly as the event builds toward the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain quadricentennial in 2009.

Mr. Verpoorten explains: "New York City has always been defined by its dynamic creative life and its breathtaking scope of artists and audiences. Cultural heritage festivals like *5 Dutch Days* not only establish remarkable relations between prominent and small-scale organizations and emerging communities of artists, but also focus attention on the incredible concentration of cultural activity that takes place throughout the City on a daily basis."

Participants across the city are encouraged to plan a performance, exhibit or event during the five days. The organizers also encourage the fostering of relationships between historic sites in New York and contemporary Dutch artists, designers and

musicians. "5 *Dutch Days* is about heightening New Yorkers' awareness of Dutch influence in and around their city," notes Ms. De Vries, "and we are offering these sites an opportunity to become involved in a larger project. They have taken the idea and run with it! The diversity of events offered is a result of their creativity."

The influence of Dutch culture in New York is so persistent that for the past two years major cultural institutions in New York City have had exhibitions of Dutch art that serendipitously coincided with *5 Dutch Days*. This year, "The Age of Rembrandt: Dutch Paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art" is on view from September 18, 2007 through January 6, 2008. The exhibition celebrates Rembrandt's 400th birthday and reflects the taste for Dutch art in America. Another striking example is the Brooklyn Museum, which just reopened its refurbished Jan Martense Schenck House, one of the oldest examples of Dutch-American architecture surviving in the City.

In the previous years, many of the participants reported increased or over-subscription to their programs, and new faces to their events. Feedback indicated, as was hoped, that the approach raised the visibility of the smaller organizations. *5 Dutch Days* has also facilitated building a network and collaborative camaraderie between the participant organizations. "For an institution like the Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art for example, this is an excellent opportunity to advertise our programs among the audiences of other participants: as part of the *5 Dutch Days* network they can support each other through cross-promotion. Now that the event has become more established, we noticed that many other cultural organizations in the city are very interested in participating in next year's event; we will anticipate their request by reaching out much earlier in the year than usual, so that the organizations can develop an event in function of *5 Dutch Days*", explains Mr. Verpoorten.

Major supporters of the event include The Netherland-America Foundation, The Consulate General of the Netherlands, The Saint Nicholas Society of the City of New York, the Independence Community Foundation, ING Direct, ING Wholesale, and Grolsch. "The Dutch have an important legacy in New York City and ING is pleased to sponsor this celebration of that heritage and to promote the ongoing cultural exchange between the Netherlands and the United States that has continued for four centuries. ING is a longstanding and active supporter of New York City's arts and the vibrant community which we're proud to have been a part of for over three decades", says Elaine Clark, Head of Corporate Communications, ING Wholesale Americas.

As far as goals for the future, Mr. Sawyer says that "Our hope is to encourage New Yorkers to explore the City's often-hidden Dutch heritage, while enjoying some of the best that contemporary Dutch culture has to offer in this most international of cities." Ms. De Vries adds, "Contemporary art in a historical context: that is the goal. Every year we want to increase participation and push the envelope creatively forward as to the events we offer."

For a full calendar of this November's events, visit www.5dutchdaysnyc.org.

Participating Organizations:

The Alice Austen House Museum
The Bowne House Historical Society
Brooklyn Museum
Bronx County Historical Society/Museum of Bronx History
Columbia University, Department of History
Danspace Project
Dyckman Farmhouse Museum
Flying Fig Theater
The Frick Collection
Greater Ridgewood Historical Society/
Vander Ende-Onderdonk House
The Holland Society of New York
James Cohan Gallery
Lefferts Historic House
Metropolitan Museum of Art
The Morgan Library and Museum

Museum of Arts and Design
Museum of the City of New York
The Netherland-America Foundation
The Netherland Club of New York
New Amsterdam History Center
Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art
New York Metro Chapter, American Planning Association
Old First Reformed Church
Peter Stuyvesant's Ghost Project
The Saint Nicholas Society of the City of New York
St. Mark's Historic Landmark Fund
Society of Daughters of Holland Dames/
Mercator Society of The New York Public Library
Staten Island Historical Society
Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum