

## PRESS RELEASE

### Exhibition Alessandro Mendini now open at Groninger Museum

The Groninger Museum presents *Mondo Mendini – The World of Alessandro Mendini*: the large-scale exhibition the renowned Italian designer, who 25 years ago served as the chief architect of the still remarkable Groninger Museum building, put together shortly before he passed away. Mendini chose to display not only a broad selection from his own oeuvre, he also selected works by artists with whom he felt a kinship, such as Paul Signac, Gio Ponti, and Michele De Lucchi. Comprising more than 200 objects, *Mondo Mendini* is a visually overwhelming, poetic, and humorous reflection of Mendini's career as a designer and an architect.

**“My work is like a novel in which seriousness, pain, comedy and poetry exist side by side. And my objects are the tragicomic characters.” – Alessandro Mendini**

#### **Mondo Mendini**

Because of his rejection of hierarchical divisions between architecture, autonomous art and design – between ‘high’ and ‘low’ art – Alessandro Mendini (1931-2019) became one of postmodernism's most distinctive designers. His work is often colourful, decorative and surprising in form, with imagination taking precedence over functionality. More than two years ago, the Groninger Museum invited Mendini to compile an exhibition of his work, taking whatever approach he wished. He was delighted at the chance to curate a large-scale show in ‘his’ museum. *Mondo Mendini* features a number of his most-famous creations. Among them is a giant three-metre-high version of *Poltrona di Proust*, his kitschy armchair decorated with colourful dots. Another highlight is the imposing *Petite cathédrale*, a miniature cathedral covered entirely in mosaic. Both works come from the Fondation Cartier collection. The cathedral's interior even is covered in gold mosaic, as is the sculpture *Visage archaïque*, housed inside, which the designer intended as a universal symbol of harmony.

Also on display is *Anna G.*, the dancer-shaped corkscrew that became a bestseller for Alessi. A special posthumous edition of Mendini's self-portrait corkscrew, *Alessandro M. – Groningen*, created on the occasion of the exhibition, is available in the museum shop. All in all, the exhibition showcases a diverse selection of work from Mendini's varied oeuvre, from jewellery to architectural models, household objects to large sculptures.

#### **Sources of inspiration**

Entirely in keeping with his artistic views, Mendini chose to showcase not just his own work in the exhibition but also that of great artists and designers of the past and present who had inspired him. He always generously acknowledged the influence of others. For *Mondo Mendini*, he selected works by classic-modern artists including Paul Signac, Wassily Kandinsky, Henri Matisse and Kazimir Malevich; architectural designs by Theo van Doesburg and Gerrit Rietveld; objects by Italian designers like Gio Ponti, Michele De Lucchi and Gaetano Pesce; and recent paintings by the American artist Peter Halley.

*Mondo Mendini* is open from 12 October 2019 through 5 May 2020 at the Groninger Museum.

#### **Anniversary year**

The Groninger Museum's 2019 programme celebrates the museum building's 25th anniversary. Along with *Mondo Mendini – The World of Alessandro Mendini*, the exhibitions

*P. Struycken – Exploding Colours Set to Scriabin and Boulez* and *Pronkjewails – Design from Past and Present* also honour this special occasion. October, the museum's birthday month, will be packed with festivities, including a contest, a bake-off and a series of talks. And the museum will treat visitors to a party weekend on Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 October, with free admission and an extensive schedule of activities.

For more information, see [groningermuseum.nl/en/25](http://groningermuseum.nl/en/25).

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**Note to the editor**

For more information and images, please contact the Groninger Museum's Communication, PR & Marketing department:

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