

zero women at museum van Bommel van Dam: groundbreaking post-war period in art now presented in a more complete picture

12 December 2026 to 23 May 2027



Nanda Vigo
Cronotopo, 1963
ZERO foundation, Düsseldorf
Photo ZERO foundation



Maria van Elk
Soft Living Room, 2013
Collection Stedelijk Museum Schiedam
Photo Aad Hoogendoorn

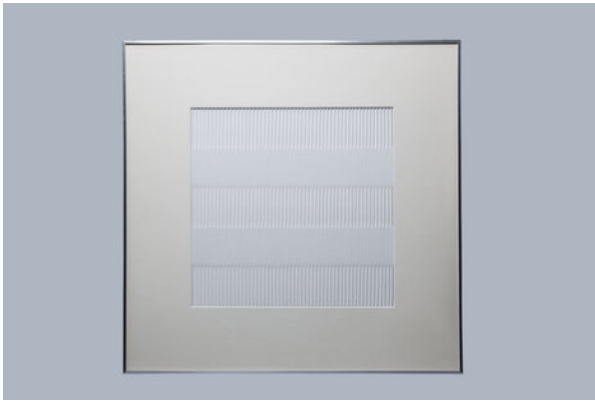


Frans and Marja de Boer Lichtveld
Spiegelkolom, ca. 1972
On loan from the artist
Photo Adriaan van Dam

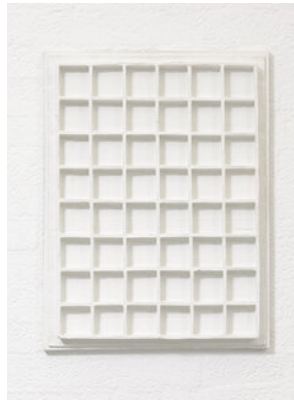
From 12 December 2026 to 23 May 2027, museum van Bommel van Dam presents *zero women*. This is the first exhibition devoted to women artists of the 1960s and 1970s working within and beyond Nul and ZERO. This radically innovative movement is primarily associated in art history with male artists. The Dutch Nul group had no female members. And the canon of the international ZERO movement features only men - with the exception of the global phenomenon Yayoi Kusama.

Yet women played an important role in this groundbreaking period in art. Until now, their role has remained underexposed. *zero women* shows that there were indeed women artists - both within and outside the official networks - who experimented with simplicity, monochrome, new materials and interaction with the public. In doing so, their work closely aligned with the principles of Nul and ZERO.

The exhibition presents work by Yayoi Kusama, Nanda Vigo, Maria van Elk, Ferdi, Loes van der Horst, Dadamaino, Corrie de Boer, Marja de Boer Lichtveld, Marianne Aue, Wil Fruytier and Ria van Eyk. Work by various male artists associated with the Nul group and ZERO movement is also on display, including Lucio Fontana, Jan Schoonhoven, Heinz Mack and Henk Peeters.



Corrie de Boer
Relief 55, 1976
Collection TextielMuseum, Tilburg
c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2026
Photo Tommy de Lange



Jan Schoonhoven
R 62 - 13, 1962
Collection museum van Bommel van
Dam, Venlo
c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2026
Photo Peter Cox



Corrie de Boer
Vertical, 1973, private
collection
c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2026
Photo Erik en Petra Hesmerg



Heinz Mack
Faltrelief, 1958
ZERO foundation,
Düsseldorf
Donation Ute Mack
c/o Pictoright Amsterdam
2026
Photo Weiss-Henseler

A new, experimental visual language

The ZERO movement emerged at the end of the 1950s from a desire for a new, experimental visual language. Centred around the German artists Heinz Mack and Otto Piene, an international network developed from Düsseldorf. This network rejected the personal, expressive art of the previous generation. Its members focused on simplicity, repetition, rhythm, monochrome, light and new, often industrial materials. The relationship with the public was also redefined: through performances, happenings and spatial installations, art was no longer simply viewed, but directly experienced. The movement soon gained a foothold in the Netherlands, where artists Armando, Jan Henderikse, Henk Peeters and Jan Schoonhoven founded the Nul group.

The major innovative influence of both movements is primarily attributed to male artists. There is now a growing awareness that this picture is incomplete. Women made important and innovative contributions. The fact remains, however, that they did not always receive the recognition they deserved. *zero women* brings these artists into view and contributes to a broader and more nuanced understanding of art history.



Corrie de Boer
Photo Rob Bogaerts
Nationaal Archief / Anefo



Ferdi in the *Wombtomb*,
1968
Photo Shinkichi Tajiri



Nanda Vigo
Trigger of the Space, 1974
Galleria Vinciana
Photo Aldo Ballo
courtesy Archivio Nanda
Vigo



Frans and Marja de Boer Lichtveld in the studio, 1976
Photographer unknown

Women innovators

zero women presents work by international artists associated with ZERO who exhibited in the Netherlands. Among them were Marianne Aue, Dadamaino, Yayoi Kusama and Nanda Vigo. Vigo was also active as an exhibition organiser for the movement. She played an important role in presenting the work of ZERO artists throughout Italy. The exhibition also features Dutch innovators who were not part of Nul or ZERO, but whose work was based on comparable principles.



Loes van der Horst with an artwork
in the studio, 1983
Photo: Rob Croes
Nationaal Archief / Anefo



Loes van der Horst
Dubbelbed, 1974
Collection Rijksdienst voor het
Cultureel Erfgoed
on long-term loan to the
TextielMuseum
Photo Tommy de Lange



Loes van der Horst
Zonder titel, ca. 1974
Collection Centraal Museum Utrecht
Photo Edgar van Riessen



Ria van Eyk
Photographer unknown

Wil Fruytier elevated weaving into a spatial medium, Corrie de Boer combined rhythm and linear patterns with the tactility of textiles, and Ferdi gave the female body and sexual emancipation a place within the same experimental tradition. In doing so, they not only built on Nul and ZERO's transgressions of boundaries, but also added new dimensions of their own.



Wil Fruytier
Photographer unknown



Wil Fruytier
Spletenkleeid, 1973
Collection Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed
c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2026



Lucio Fontana
Concetto spaziale, attesa, 1960
Collection Museum Morsbroich
c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2026
Photo Denis Bury



Ferdi
Penis Vulgaris, 1966
Collection Rijksdienst voor
het Cultureel Erfgoed
c/o Pictoright Amsterdam
2026
Photo Rene den Engelsman

Soft Living Room

A special place in the exhibition is reserved for Maria van Elk's black-and-white *Soft Living Room* (1968/2013). This work is not a sculpture simply to be looked at, but a concept of shelter and comfort that visitors can enter. They can take a seat among soft mounds of faux fur, foam and artificial silk, transforming from spectator into participant. An important source of inspiration for the artist was Yayoi Kusama; Van Elk attended several of her performances. The iconic *Soft Living Room* was recreated in 2013 at the request of Stedelijk Museum Schiedam and can now be experienced by a new generation.



Kusama in Holland

During the run of *zero women*, the documentary *Kusama in Holland* (2026) will be screened in the Auditorium at museum van Bommel van Dam. This film by Memphis Features explores the period Yayoi Kusama spent in the Netherlands in the 1960s, where she connected with the Nul group. Using unique archive material, anecdotes from eyewitnesses and insights from art historians, the documentary brings this important period in Kusama's artistic career to life.



Yayoi Kusama and Jef van Leeuwen during a happening in Delft, 1967
Photo Theo van Houts
Nationaal Archief / Spaarnestad

Greater attention to women and underrepresented artists

The collection of museum van Bommel van Dam includes work by Nul artists Armando, Jan Schoonhoven and Herman de Vries. In this respect, it reflects the male perspective that for many years shaped the narrative of experimental art in the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s. Since 2023, the museum has been actively pursuing a more inclusive policy, with greater attention to women and underrepresented artists. *zero women* and recent long-term loans of work by Corrie de Boer are testament to this commitment.

Publication and loans

The exhibition is accompanied by a richly illustrated publication from the 0-INSTITUTE, featuring in-depth background articles and artists' biographies by Tim Ackermann, Antoon Melissen, Catrien Schreuder and Tijs Visser.

zero women was created in collaboration with the 0-INSTITUTE. The exhibition would not have been possible without the generous loans from the BPD Art Collection, Centraal Museum, Foundation Nanda Vigo, Museum Morsbroich, Museum Voorlinden, Rueb Modern & Contemporary Art, De Rijk Fine Art, the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE), Stedelijk Museum Schiedam, TextielMuseum, Von der Heydt Museum, ZERO foundation, 0-INSTITUTE and several private collectors. The museum is deeply grateful for their support.

Made possible with the support of:

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About [museum van Bommel van Dam](#)

Museum van Bommel van Dam, housed in the beautifully renovated former main post office on Keulsepoort in Venlo, is the museum for modern and contemporary art in North Limburg. The collection is rooted in the art collection of Maarten and Reina van Bommel-van Dam. The museum holds a broad collection of post-war and contemporary art and presents a vibrant programme of exhibitions and public programmes.

[museum van Bommel van Dam](#)

Keulsepoort 1 | 5911 BX | Venlo

12 December 2026 to 23 May 2027

Opening hours: Tuesday to Sunday, 11.00 am-5.00 pm

tickets: www.vanbommelvandam.nl



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