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Wendingen: Dutch Design, 1918 – 1932

June 15 – July 27, 2001

Reception: Thursday, June 14th, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

H. Th. Wijdeveld's publication, *Wendingen*, first appeared in Amsterdam in January 1918, just three months after the first issue of Theo van Doesburg's more formalist and abstract *de Stijl*. Founded as a monthly devoted to architecture and ornamentation by *Architectura et Amicitia*, a group of architects and designers loosely referred to as the "Amsterdam School," it grew to become one of the most significant arts publications in Europe. It established itself as a central forum for contemporary issues relating to many aspects of the arts beyond architecture. Wijdeveld was the editor, as well as the designer, of every issue. He introduced a page format of 33 square centimeters –when opened, the double-square format of spreads reflected the Japanese tatami mat proportion. With rice paper used frequently and the binding sewn in the block book-style using raffia, there was a decidedly Japanese "feel" to the publication.

The first issue of the magazine was issued in a limited edition of 650 copies. From 1918 until the end of 1932, 116 numbers were issued, all in Dutch, with several also appearing in deluxe, hardbound formats in English, French and German. The first few numbers were general in nature, commenting on many different aspects of the visual arts, but soon issues were being devoted to single themes. Over the course of the life of the magazine, 31 issues were devoted to Dutch architecture (many, of course, to the Amsterdam School), 10 to sculpture, 8 to theater and dance, 6 to the graphic arts, 5 to interiors, 3 to poster design, 3 to stained glass, and 3 to glass and ceramics, among other topics.

There were also issues devoted entirely to the work of individual artists and architects, among them Jan Toorop, Johan Thorn Prikker, Lyonel Feininger, Eileen Gray and Diego Rivera. Most importantly, there was the extraordinary series of seven issues devoted to the life work of Frank Lloyd Wright. The magnificent lithograph and woodcut covers by El Lissitzky, Toorop, Vilmos Huszar, R.N. Roland Holst and others are among the finest works of ornamental and typographic design of the 1920s.

Perhaps the most lasting impact of this great journal was its contribution to the international development of typography. Modern typography relates to publishing and design in a fashion similar to the way modern architecture relates to the construction and ornamentation of buildings. Wijdeveld's contribution, along with that of the German Jan Tschichold, to the radical development of modern typography cannot be overstated.

The exhibition at **Ubu Gallery**, which coincides with the publication of *Wendingen: A Journal For The Arts* (Martijn F. Le Coultre, Princeton Architectural Press, 2001), will feature an entire run of the magazine. In addition, there will be several examples of unique proofs for the covers, as well as vintage photographs of buildings featured in the magazine, glass works by Chris Lebeau, a Rietveld chair, Ako children's toys and original posters by Wijdeveld, Lebeau, Rietveld, Huszar, Roland Holst and other designers affiliated with the Amsterdam School.