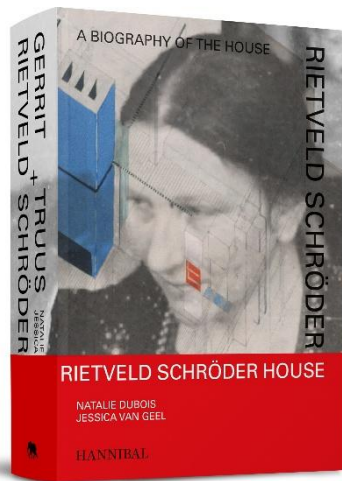


NEW BOOK 'RIETVELD SCHRÖDER HOUSE – A BIOGRAPHY OF THE HOUSE' ABOUT TRUUS SCHRÖDER, GERRIT RIETVELD AND FAMOUS DE STIJL HOUSE

International publication of 896 pages containing lots of previously unpublished images, texts and new insights

Press release – 31 October 2024

On 27 November 2024, the international release of *Rietveld Schröder House – A Biography of the House* will shed fresh light on the famed Utrecht house and its visionary creators. This monumental, 896 page volume, beautifully illustrated publication challenges long-held beliefs by revealing that Truus Schröder's influence was far more profound than previously recognized. The publication contains many newly unearthed photos and personal letters. Authored by acclaimed historian Jessica van Geel and Rietveld expert Natalie Dubois, curator at Centraal Museum Utrecht, this comprehensive work delves deep into Schröder's personal archives, presenting a richer narrative of her role in shaping the house. Designed by internationally renowned graphic designer Irma Boom, the book is a visual masterpiece. The edition is bi-lingual, in both Dutch and English and published by Hannibal Books.



Cover *Rietveld Schröder House – A Biography of the House*
Design Irma Boom Office, 2024

Truus Schröder's role

Rietveld Schröder House – A Biography of the House narrates the story of the Rietveld Schröder House and its creators, Gerrit Rietveld and Truus Schröder. The two were radical innovators in modern architecture, and romantically involved as well. Thanks to the significant bequests and loan pieces that Centraal Museum Utrecht received, Dubois and Van Geel were able to research new archive material. Their research has yielded not only a more complete picture of the life lived in and around the famous house, but also reveals that Truus Schröder's role was a lot more substantial than art historians had assumed until now. Practically all publications from the 1920s identify both Rietveld and Schröder as architects of the house; only from the 1980s on, Schröder's name began to fade from the picture. The book furthermore shows clearly how Schröder and Rietveld spent decades collaborating on numerous projects. Schröder's creative vision proves to be of great importance for their joint projects.

Jessica van Geel, writer, historian and co-author of the book: "Our research for the book shows how Schröder's name can be linked to many more of Rietveld's designs than was previously assumed, also by myself. Schröder describes in her letters how she is collaborating on projects, she corresponds with clients, and her name can often be found on the drawings. We can therefore conclude that she was much more than Rietveld's 'lover' or 'muse', as she has been portrayed so often."

Newly discovered archive images

Besides new insights regarding Schröder's role, the book contains hundreds of previously unpublished images. There are photographs of the house facade with a sign of the company name, 'Schröder & Rietveld Architect', photographs of grandchildren in the house (one grandchild was born there), pictures of parties and house conversions, photographs of a primary school class that once used the house, and images of a 'rooftop room' that temporarily stood on top of the house. The book furthermore contains copies of previously unpublished letters by Schröder to her daughter Han. The research also prompted the bequest of hundreds of family letters and photographs, further enriching the museum's archive.

Rietveld Schröder House – A Biography of the House is set up chronologically, starting with the births of Truus Schröder and Gerrit Rietveld and ending nearly 100 years later with the opening of the residence, inaugurated as a museum in 1987. Each chapter starts with a written introduction, followed by hundreds of archive images and letters and explanations, that together paint a picture of each time period. In total, the publication contains over 800 images.

About the authors

Jessica van Geel is a writer, journalist and historian. Her acclaimed biography of Truus Schröder, *I Love You, Rietveld*, was published in 2018. She spent many years working as a journalist for NRC Handelsblad newspaper and was a contributor to magazines including *Vrij Nederland*. Especially for the Rietveld Schröder House, Van Geel developed neighbourhood walks around the eastern part of Utrecht, tracing the footsteps of Gerrit Rietveld and Truus Schröder.

Natalie Dubois is the curator of the Rietveld Schröder House and curator of applied arts and design at Centraal Museum Utrecht. She has curated numerous exhibitions for the museum, including *Rietveld's Masterpiece* (2017) and *Dreams Cast in Concrete* (2019). The exhibition *Statement Chairs* (2023) was nominated for the Museumtijdschrift Exhibition Award. Dubois also curated exhibitions with works by Rietveld and Schröder in Japan (Tokyo and Oita), Germany (Herford) and Indonesia (Jakarta).

Design of the book

Rietveld Schröder House – A Biography of the House was designed by the internationally renowned graphic designer Irma Boom). Both the book cover and the 900+ pages of texts and images were designed by Boom, in close collaboration with the authors Dubois and Van Geel.

"The idea of creating the book like this essentially came from me."

– Irma Boom: freely inspired by Truus Schröder

About the Rietveld Schröder House

The Rietveld Schröder House was designed in 1924, now one century ago, by Gerrit Rietveld and Truus Schröder. The house forms an architectural pinnacle of the De Stijl art movement. Gerrit Rietveld designed the house for and with Truus Schröder as an exuberant experiment and a radical approach to utilising space. The house has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2000.

Rietveld Schröder House – A Biography of the House is released as the festive culmination of the house's centenary anniversary, celebrated extensively during the previous months.



Rietveld Schröder House with white attic room, late 1930s
Centraal Museum Utrecht / Rietveld Schröder archive / Donation Maarten Schröder

Natalie Dubois, curator of the Rietveld Schröder House and Centraal Museum Utrecht and co-author of *Rietveld Schröder House – A Biography of the House*: "It took two very progressive and independent-minded people to create the Rietveld Schröder House: Truus Schröder-Schröder and Gerrit Rietveld. They built their dwelling on Prins Hendriklaan in Utrecht, at what was then the edge of the city. It was so bold! To create a house like that, out of thin air, without an example, is an extraordinary achievement. Schröder and Rietveld found each other in the different, in the new, in the unknown."

Truus Schröder

Truus Schröder-Schröder (1889-1985) asked the Utrecht furniture maker Gerrit Rietveld to design her new family dwelling in 1924. Mother of three children, Schröder was recently widowed and wanted to make a fresh start in a house that satisfied her personal ideas. Together with Rietveld, she designed the house where she would subsequently live from 1924 her death in 1985, for more than sixty years in total.

Gerrit Rietveld

Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964) is a world-famous furniture designer and architect. He is mainly known for the chairs he designed, such as the Red and Blue Chair (1919). With the De Stijl art movement as one of his sources of inspiration, in 1924 he worked with Truus Schröder to design the Rietveld Schröder House. It was his first time to design a house. Several other houses would follow later, and also the Gerrit Rietveld Academie and Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam.

Centraal Museum

The Rietveld Schröder House is part of Stichting Centraal Museum. Centraal Museum Utrecht is the oldest municipal museum in the Netherlands. Besides design and applied arts, the collection comprises old masters, modern and contemporary art, fashion and urban history. Centraal Museum owns the world's largest Rietveld collection.

Bart Rutten, artistic director of the Rietveld Schröder House and Centraal Museum Utrecht: "This publication is a rich source full of archival pieces, beautifully designed by the acclaimed graphic designer Irma Boom. *Rietveld Schröder House – A Biography of the House* is a rock-solid piece of work. The book moreover adds something essential to the history of the house: the original name of the architectural office – Schröder & Rietveld Architect – will be restored on the facade."

Book details

Rietveld Schröder House – A Biography of the House is released in a bi-lingual publication, Dutch and English. It contains 926 pages and is published by Hannibal Books. The book costs € 79.95 and points of sale include the museum shops of the Rietveld Schröder House and Centraal Museum Utrecht, among a worldwide network of speciality book shops and museum shops. A paperback and lower-priced version will be published specifically for the Rietveld Schröder House. ISBN: 978 94 6494 143 2. This edition is available only in the museum shops of the Rietveld Schröder House and Centraal Museum Utrecht.

Press

Members of the press are invited to attend the official book launch in Centraal Museum's Tuinzaal on Wednesday 27 November, starting at 15.00. The book launch will be in Dutch. Natalie Dubois, Jessica van Geel and/or Irma Boom are available for interviews at the Rietveld Schröder House in the morning of 27 November between 12.00 and 14.00 hrs. A press invitation with more information will follow soon. To register for the book launch or interview requests, please send an email to pers@centraalmuseum.nl. Other dates for interview requests and other questions can also be sent to this email address.

Press images can be downloaded [here](#).

