

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Marcel Wanders: Portraits
February 25 – April 9, 2016

Opening Reception Thursday, February 25, 6:00-8:00pm



Tempter, Bronze, 2015

New York, NY [January 7, 2016] – Friedman Benda will present *Portraits*, Dutch designer Marcel Wanders' first-ever solo gallery exhibition, February 25 through April 9, 2016.

Marcel Wanders' design practice has become synonymous with an outspoken optimism and uplifting spirit. With this exhibition, he explores a more intimate side of his personality through a staging of imaginary characters interacting within a distorted fairytale. A depth of personal emotions rarely expressed in his designs arises in these new works to reveal an intense and layered narrative.

Marcel Wanders' total environment will include several bodies of work: large abstract figural mirrors, such as *Dysmorphophobia 1, 2 and 3*, with carved details and cutouts, create an illusion of a character or ghostly figure; *Self 2* is a steel cabinet and kinetic piece, balancing a sculptural ovoid form that abstracts a human head and physically rocks on the top surface; *Tempter*, an over-sized adult rocking unicorn is cast in bronze with metal chain stirrups; *Shiqule Nuhai*, two ceramic vases, monumental in height, reference Marcel Wanders' Delft Blue collection with a darker sensibility, using black glaze. In addition, Wanders' *Phoebe* video art and hybrid lighting fixtures previously featured at the Stedelijk Museum, will be on view.

With this exhibition an unseen side of Marcel Wanders unfolds: "My design work has always been about positivity, respect, love and trust. However, this output doesn't fully represent me as a person. For me, it is also important to produce work that explores a different sensitivity and addresses other aspects of my life and character, otherwise it would feel incomplete," Marcel Wanders says.

About Marcel Wanders

Marcel Wanders (Boxtel, Netherlands, 1963) lives and works in Amsterdam. He graduated *cum laude* from the Hogeschool voor de Kunsten (ArtEZ Institute of the Arts) in Arnhem in 1988 after being expelled from Eindhoven Design Academy. In 2014 he successfully completed an Executive MBA from INSEAD. In 1995 Marcel Wanders opened his studio in Amsterdam, quickly coming to worldwide attention in 1996 for his iconic *Knotted Chair*, which paired 'high tech' materials with 'low tech' production methods.

Marcel Wanders has been the subject of three major solo museum exhibitions. In January 2014, the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, one of Europe's premiere contemporary art and design museums, held his first major museum retrospective *Marcel Wanders: Pinned Up 25 Years of Design*. This exhibition, covering Marcel Wanders' celebrated 25-year career, saw an extraordinary record attendance and featured more than 400 pieces in a wide range of media. In 2012, his *Capsule* collection was exhibited at Beijing's Capital Museum; and in 2009, the Philadelphia Museum of Art presented *Daydreams*.

Marcel Wanders' work is included in museum collections internationally, including: Brooklyn Museum of Art, NY; Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, NY; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; Indianapolis Museum of Art, IN; Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Museum of Modern Art, NY; Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Oita Prefectural Art Museum, Japan.

Today Marcel Wanders' studio numbers around 50 international design specialists. He is a prolific product and interior designer and art director, ubiquitous with over 1700+ projects to his name for private clients and premium brands such as Alessi, Bisazza, Flos, KLM, Swarovski, Puma, among scores of others. In 2001 Marcel co-founded the successful design label Moooi, of which he is also Art Director.

About Friedman Benda

Friedman Benda is a gallery dedicated to presenting established and emerging designers who create historically significant work and are at the forefront of their practice. Founded in 2007, the gallery's exhibitions and publications have played a vital role in the rise of the design market and education, and take a comprehensive approach to work that intersects the fields of design, craft and art. Friedman Benda represents an international roster of designers spanning five continents and multiple generations.

For further information please visit www.friedmanbenda.com

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