



**For Immediate Release**



Lily van der Stokker, *Thank You Darling*, 2023. Photo by Andrew Frasz.

## **ONE OF THE NETHERLANDS' MOST CELEBRATED ARTISTS BRINGS AN EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE TO THE HIGH LINE**

### **Lily van der Stokker Champions the Value of Playful Femininity with her Mural *Thank You Darling***

**New York, NY (December 11, 2023)** — The High Line today announced the installation of Lily van der Stokker's mural *Thank You Darling* on a wall adjacent to the High Line at 22nd Street. The Dutch artist's new work on the High Line offers the public an intimate expression of gratitude in her well-honed visual language at a bold, broad scale. Splitting her time between Amsterdam and New York for the past 40 years, with public installations in locations around the world, van der Stokker has been a pioneer in giving reverence to feminine conventions that have historically been derided by a patriarchal culture as lacking substance or value.

"What a pleasure to lift Lily van der Stokker's cheerful message to the New York City skyline," said Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen Director and Chief Curator of High Line Art. "We hope her work brings visitors and New Yorkers alike a feeling of joy and appreciation."

*Thank You Darling* is painted on the side of a building, turning architecture into a frame for the artist's pastel and fluorescent-hued work. The light blue background is dotted all-over with multi-colored, simple flowers that appear to float across the facade—some just coming into view from the edges of the frame. Superimposed over this decorative pattern are the words "THANK YOU DARLING," spelled out in a juvenile, arbitrary blend of lower and uppercase lettering.



Van der Stokker's puffy bubble letters are redolent of playful adolescent penmanship, as if lifted right out of a teenager's diary. At this location on 22nd street, *Thank You Darling* actively engages with its audience, expressing gratitude to all those who pass, while reclaiming at massive scale intimate language that is often disparaged as being feminine and unserious.

For over 30 years, van der Stokker's drawings and monumental wall paintings have subverted artistic convention and aesthetic expectations, employing an Easter candy color palette to depict clouds, flowers, swirls, and other traditionally feminine or decorative motifs. Van der Stokker annotates these compositions with handwritten text, spelling out intimate thoughts, personal musings, notes-to-self, and social niceties.

Nostalgic and comforting, her playful squiggly patterns are more likely at home in the margins of a student's notebook as they mindlessly doodle or test out their first name with the surname of a crush than they are within the white walls of a gallery. In fact, van der Stokker's practice is in some ways defined by this incongruity. She notes, "if I make an artwork about family problems, administrative tasks, or the common flu...I'm bringing in a whole spectrum of new subject matter that is normally absent in art." By placing on a pedestal what has traditionally been viewed as feminine or domestic, and thus superfluous and inconsequential within the realm of "serious" visual art, van der Stokker reclaims what has long been disregarded and overlooked.

Van der Stokker's work, which she has referred to as "feminist conceptual pop art," is undeniably joyful and positive. However, it often simultaneously speaks to weighty themes—aging, health, and, more generally, the lived experience of being a woman within patriarchal structures. Hidden in plain sight, disguised by the veneer of her composition's cute and charming appearances, is reality. Occasionally mundane, sometimes cheery, and at other moments, cynical or intimate: "a baby, another baby...all my no baby friends live in N.Y.," a past mural reads. One divulges: "whoopy doo...I am...really ugly...sorry" in cartoonish thought bubbles. "My mother will loan me €80,000 to help me buy the house," another reveals. Van der Stokker considers the texts to be the primary component of her work, and with each work she lays bare a vulnerable inner-world for all to see—if they're willing to look beyond the candy-coated facade.

Van der Stokker's *Thank You Darling* will overlook the park at West 22nd Street through November 2024. The artwork is courtesy of the artist and Kaufmann Repetto.

## **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Lily van der Stokker (b. 1954, 's-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands) lives and works in Amsterdam. She has exhibited internationally, with solo exhibitions including those at Camden Art Centre, London, England; The Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich, Switzerland; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands; SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, Georgia; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, California; Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands; Tate St Ives, St Ives, England; Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; and Le Consortium, Dijon, France; among others. Her work has also been included in group exhibitions at the Kunstmuseum Basel, Basel, Switzerland; Frac Normandie, Caen, France; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota; The Art Club of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; New Museum, New York, New York; Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado; and Villa Arson, Nice, France; among many others. Van der Stokker has completed numerous monumental public art projects such as *Celestial Teapot*, Hoog Catharijne, Utrecht, Netherlands (2013), and *Pink Building* during the World Expo in Hannover,



Germany (2000). Van der Stokker's work is in many permanent collections, including those of Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Museum of Modern Art, Arnhem, Netherlands; Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands; Jumex Collection, Mexico City, Mexico; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois; Centre National des Arts Plastiques, Paris, France; Le Consortium, Dijon, France; Musée des Beaux Arts de Nancy, Nancy, France; Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, Netherlands; Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts.

### **ABOUT HIGH LINE ART**

Founded in 2009, High Line Art commissions and produces a wide array of artworks on the High Line, including site-specific commissions, exhibitions, performances, video programs, and a series of billboard interventions. Led by Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, and presented by the High Line, the art program invites artists to think of creative ways to engage with the unique architecture, history, and design of the park, and to foster a productive dialogue with the surrounding neighborhood and urban landscape.

For further information on High Line Art, please visit [thehighline.org/art](https://thehighline.org/art).

### **ABOUT THE HIGH LINE**

The High Line is both a nonprofit organization and a public park on the West Side of Manhattan. Through our work with communities on and off the High Line, we're devoted to reimagining public spaces to create connected, healthy neighborhoods and cities.

Built on a historic, elevated rail line, the High Line was always intended to be more than a park. You can walk through the gardens, view art, experience a performance, enjoy food or beverage, or connect with friends and neighbors—all while enjoying a unique perspective of New York City.

Nearly 100% of our annual budget comes through donations. The High Line is owned by the City of New York and we operate under a license agreement with NYC Parks.

For more information, visit [thehighline.org](https://thehighline.org) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#).

### **SUPPORT**

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**@HighLineArtNYC @lilyvanderstokker**

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