

StokkerJaeger is the future home of the Stokker Jaeger Foundation. This foundation will become active after I'm gone and will manage the artworks and archives of myself and my late partner, Jack Jaeger (1937-2013).

And now, with my new partner Yvo, we're already in our 70s, we should really be slowing down, work less, and downsizing. With **De Loman** (StokkerJaeger is located at Lomanstraat 112, Amsterdam), we're doing the opposite. I suddenly have a lot more logistics to do, more organizing and worries. I can't paint, carpentry, and do everything myself like I used to; I must outsource almost everything now. But I do notice that the artists I approach are all willing to help.

Exhibitions last a long time, several months, and then a month or so a break. We are only open on Fridays and Saturdays. We first must get used to how things are going. For now, we're enjoying it. We always look forward to going to Lomanstraat. We're open to the public. And suddenly we're sitting around a table talking with all sorts of well-known and unknown artists.

I don't want to show my own work at StokkerJaeger, although I did use the space as a studio space the first summer 2024 because we had to create large canvas works for my exhibition in Los Angeles at Parker Gallery.

Creating the exhibition is like creating a work of art. I love my own work, but also the work of other artists.

Stokker Jaeger is a project space with a non-profit character. Sales are not the goal. Selling is possible but not required. If there is interest, I'll pass the information on to the artist, who can then handle the sale.

With the small basement exhibition, I wanted to make a modest, perhaps secretive, start. I did not send out a large mailing, I did not write to the press, and I did not want a large first opening. A modest start—let it be something for the artists and the Amsterdam art world to explore first—is my approach. That way, I could get used to the project myself.

The first basement exhibition was in the most unlikely location in our project space. At Lomanstraat 112, the basement is difficult to access. You can bump your head on the wooden beams because it's low, only 162 cm high and 197 cm high. We offer people protective headgear. It's not mandatory, though. For safety reasons, a maximum of two people is allowed in the basement. The electric glass door that opens with a remote control is quite spectacular.

When I knew we were moving into this space, I knew I would choose the least attractive corner of the space for my first exhibition: the basement, or the boiler room, or something. And leave the rest of the new space empty.

Art is usually hung in the middle of the white wall in the so-called "White Cube." I chose to place the artworks in unusual places. This is also because the basement is in a so-called "Amsterdam bathtub," this is a concrete tank with underground the high Amsterdam water level. There are no leaks, but I've been told you shouldn't drill into walls that are probably no more than 10-15 cm thick concrete from the 1930's.

So, I've hung or glued works, for example, in a corner at the top near the ceiling, or in clusters close together.

The next exhibition was not in the basement, but on the ground floor. It was an exhibition titled The Assistants (De Assistenten) and opened in May 2025. The artists in this show helped me create my murals for many years. They've all become friends with each other, and with me, and they're all interesting artists.

I have continued the basement exhibition over the summer with more works added. The basement was originally intended to become a storage space. But I've noticed that artists find it an attractive space. My friend Mynke Buskens said she wanted to make a pencil drawing on the walls this summer. Then the Stokker Jaeger project space became an artist residency.

What's also nice is that I'm doing this project without feeling the pressure of the commercial; I don't need sponsors or subsidies from the national or municipal government. I'm doing what I love and what I'm good at. Galleries create exhibitions to showcase the best and the newest, and they must sell to survive. I don't need that.

I choose to make the first exhibition of my friends, then my assistants, then my female friends. It is an approach to exhibition making that is different from a commercial gallery or a museum. It reminds me of a drawing I made in 1993 "If I would again organize a gallery, it would be family oriented", A tongue-in-cheek text about subject matter not allowed in the artworld. But now somewhat of this I realize in a tantalizing choice of exhibition titles.

I've wanted to buy a ground-floor house for years, because my rental house and studio close by is a walk-up. I must climb four steep flights of stairs to reach my studio. But housing in Amsterdam is expensive, and I chose a ground-floor commercial space within walking distance of my Valeriusstraat house/studio.

And of course, I also owe this venue to the good notary who said years ago that if I wanted to establish a foundation, it would be wise to find housing for it. The foundation isn't active yet.

My New York friends immediately called it a Project Space, and indeed, this was the correct title. But nevertheless, I suddenly had my own exhibition space facing the street, where I could do whatever. No stairs, and a wooden bench in front of it on the sidewalk.

People now say, things seem to have come full circle: it used to be Stokker Stikker Gallery in NYC on 6th Street (1983-1986), and now 40 years later she opened a somewhat similar project in Amsterdam.

One of the last straws was my gallery owner, Kees van Gelder, who had told me months earlier: "How boring! Don't buy a house! An artist's space is much better," when I was still debating whether to buy a house or commercial space.

I took this initiative, and see, life is full of opportunities. Jack (Jaeger) would have been impressed if he saw this. He would certainly have used all his knowledge

and contacts to create exhibitions or arrange music performances. So, I'm doing it also for him and the life we had together.

He died 12 years ago. Jack Jaeger, cinematographer, artist, curator, New Yorker, 1937-2013. You can read about how we met in New York in 1985, and how I started an (artist's) gallery in The East Village, in the book that I wrote, and was published in 2022, "How I Went to New York 1983-1992."

Yvo and I enjoy spending Fridays and Saturdays at the StokkerJaeger project space. We talk to all kinds of people. We are hospitable and friendly. We meet friends there, make tea, coffee and serve snacks. And the exhibition of beautiful art surrounds us.

I don't have assistants here, so I basically do everything myself.

Other than that, I'm happy with how my own work is going. I am asked to make exhibitions and have many commissions. I also have a dear partner, and now, a new, inspiring project. We'll see how long we can keep it going.

And if we can't do it anymore, others will eventually take over.

Lily van der Stokker, September 2025

Lily van der Stokker at Lomanstraat 112, Summer 2024



Lily van der Stokker and Jack Jaeger in front of 507 East 6street NYC 1985

