

deSter honors life of Joost Ruben Ritman



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[deSter](#) is expressing its deep respect and gratitude for the life and legacy of Joost Ruben Ritman, who died on June 5, 2026. Ritman was a visionary entrepreneur, cultural advocate and one of the founding figures behind the international deSter Group.

In a June 10 statement, deSter said that Ritman dedicated his life to building meaningful connections. As a businessman, he helped shape the foundations of what deSter represents today. As a cultural pioneer, he created spaces where ideas, people and traditions could meet and evolve.

Ritman joined the family business at an early age and assumed leadership responsibilities together with his brothers. They transformed Chemische Industrie De Ster into a growing international

company. In 1973, Ritman played a defining role in establishing the Belgian entity that marked the beginning of the deSter Group. Driven by this vision, the company expanded and evolved into a trusted partner for the aviation and food service industries worldwide.

The name deSter and the star symbol have remained central to the brand ever since. For Ritman, the star represented human potential and connection. This belief continues to resonate in deSter's purpose of creating sustainable food and travel experiences that bring people together around the world.

Beyond business, Ritman devoted decades to cultural and intellectual work. His lifelong passion led to the creation of the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, a unique collection that has been included in UNESCO's Dutch Memory of the World Register. Through the Embassy of the Free Mind, he established a platform that continues to inspire openness, dialogue and free thinking across generations.

Ritman's contributions to society have been widely recognized. He was appointed Knight of the Order of the Netherlands Lion and received several distinguished honors from academic and cultural institutions.

"At deSter, we recognize that our heritage is shaped by the vision and values of people like Joost. His belief in connection, responsibility and human potential continues to inspire how we design our solutions, collaborate with partners and contribute to the future of our industry," the supplier said in its press release.

deSter said it extends its sincere condolences to his family and to all those who were inspired by his life and work.

"Joost Ruben Ritman was a visionary who believed deeply in the power of connection and human potential. His role in shaping the early foundations of deSter continues to influence who we are today. The values he stood for remain embedded in our purpose and in the way we serve our customers and partners around the world. We are grateful for his legacy and for the inspiration it provides to future generations," said Stef Van de Perre, President and Managing Director, deSter.

Ritman's legacy lives on through his family, through his cultural contributions and through the continued evolution of deSter.