

ARTSTALK

Colour Supplement

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March 2023



- **VERMEER** - everywhere
- **THE DEPOT** in Rotterdam
- **NDT1's IN THE DUTCH MOUNTAINS**
- **Opera2Day's** new **DON QUIXOTE** opera
- **PROSPECTS** at Art Rotterdam
- plus lots, lots more . . .

ARTS TALK

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It's all about Johannes Vermeer this month. The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam is showing, for the first time in its long history, surprisingly, a major exhibition by one of Holland's most celebrated sons. There are parallel exhibitions in The Hague and Delft.

Slightly more than a year since its opening we have a piece on the amazing Depot at Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam and Souwie Buis's article investigates the significance of museums in modern society.

We were at the theatre to see three excellent but very different performances, by Nederlands Dans Theater, Opera2Day and STET, The English Theatre.

We made our annual pilgrimage to Art Rotterdam and found the side exhibition of new art much more interesting than the main commercial gallery area. We also discovered an artist we hadn't seen before - Philip Akkerman who is showing at Galerie de Zaal in Delft.

Michael Hasted
Publisher and Editor



Contributors this month include:-

Astrid BURCHARDT

Spouwie BUIS

Michael HASTED

Cover shows a detail from *The Milkmaid* by Johannes Vermeer, currently on show at the Rijksmuseum Museum in Amsterdam

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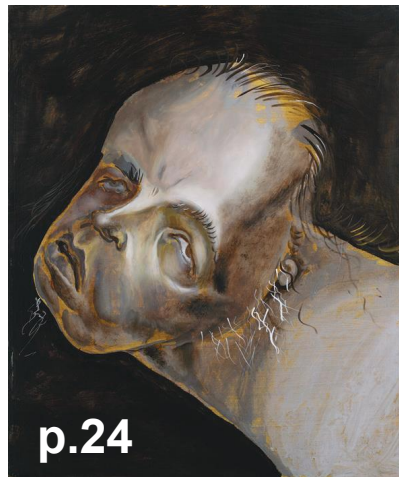
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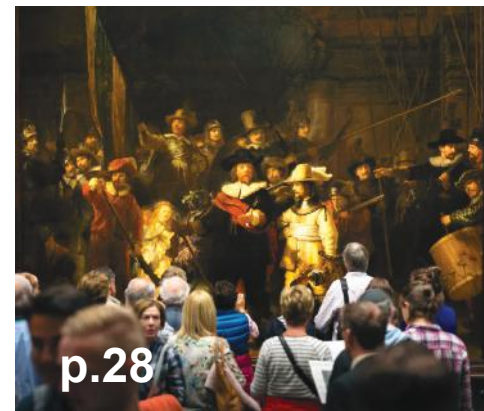
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IT'S ALL ABOUT VERMEER


Michael HASTED

The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam is currently showing, for the first time in its long history, surprisingly, a major exhibition by one of Holland's most celebrated sons – the 17th century master Johannes Vermeer. There are parallel exhibitions in The Hague and Delft.

Vermeer was baptized on 31st October 1632 in the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft. In 1641 he moved with his parents and older sister, Geertruy, from the Voldersgracht to an inn on the Markt, the town square of Delft.

On 20th April 1653 Vermeer married Catharina Bolnes in Schipluiden, a small town a few kilometres to the south west of Delft. In December that year he became a member of the Guild of Saint Luke, of which he was elected chief four times. Like his father and many colleagues, Vermeer also dealt in paintings, but he considered himself primarily a painter. Around 1660, Vermeer moved in with his mother-in-law on the Oude Langendijk, who lived in a building with eleven rooms next to a Catholic hidden church. There the artist worked in his studio on the first floor. He died in December 1675 leaving eleven children, ten of whom were minors.





There is no real agreement about the precise number of paintings by Vermeer, but it is generally agreed to be thirty-seven. Twenty-eight of them are in the Rijksmuseum exhibition, the first time such a large collection the artist's paintings have been brought together, most of them loaned by major museums in seven countries around the world.

Only about a quarter of the masterpieces live in The Netherlands. The Rijksmuseum itself has four paintings by Vermeer, including the iconic *Milkmaid* and the world famous *The Little Street*. There are three in the Mauritshuis in The Hague – *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, *Diane and her Companions* and *View of Delft*, though sadly none in Delft itself. The exhibition is a collaboration between the Rijksmuseum and the Mauritshuis where both museums conduct research into Vermeer's artistry, his artistic choices and motivations for his compositions, as well as into the actual process and techniques of his painting.

The Amsterdam exhibition will, of course, include masterpieces such as the *Girl with a Pearl Earring* along with *The Geographer*, on loan from Städel Museum in Frankfurt am Main, *Writing Woman with a Maid* from Dublin's National Gallery of Ireland and *Woman with the Scales* owned by The National Gallery of Art in Washington DC in America. In addition, works will be shown that have never been seen by the public in the Netherlands before, including the newly restored *Woman Reading a Letter at an Open Window* from the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Dresden.

Delft, although not having any original paintings of its own, is not short of other Vermeer attractions and, running in parallel to the Amsterdam exhibition, the Museum Prinsenhof is mounting *Vermeer's Delft*.

Throughout the 17th century, Delft was a city full of talent and innovation. There, Johannes Vermeer grew to be an artist of global scale. For the first time ever, the life of this world-known Delft master is the focus of an exhibition. Prime pieces of Vermeer's peers and contemporaries will be presented alongside samples of the city's famous ceramics, tapestries, archival objects and personal documents. With these pieces, a clear picture of the artistic, intellectual and social climate of 17th century Delft will be shown.

Also in Delft is the Vermeer Center which, although it has no originals, has same-size reproductions of all Vermeer's painting arranged in chronological order – a display available nowhere else. There are several rooms showing other aspects of Vermeer's work and aspects of his life. None of the houses where Vermeer

Jan Steen, *Adolf en Catharina Croeser* known as *The Mayor of Delft and his Daughter* 1655. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.



At last he came to the Vermeer which he remembered as more striking, more different from anything else he knew, but in which, thanks to the critic's article, he noticed for the first time some small figures in blue, that the sand was pink, and, finally, the precious substance of the tiny patch of yellow wall. His dizziness increased; he fixed his gaze, like a child upon a yellow butterfly that it wants to catch, on the precious little patch of wall. 'That's how I ought to have written,' he said. 'My last books are too dry, I ought to have gone over them with a few layers of colour, made my language precious in itself, like this little patch of yellow wall.'

from *The Captive* by Marcel Proust





Tile with biblical scene *The Prophet Judah Slain by a Lion* 1658, Tin glazed pottery. Museum Prinsenhof Delft.
Photo by Tom Haartsen

lived and worked still exist in Delft but the Vermeer Centre is housed in the building that was once home to Guild of Saint Luke. There is also a shop where one can buy reproductions of *Girl with a Pearl Earring* on everything from a tea-towel to a bicycle bell.

As the Mauritshuis is having to make do without its star attractions while they are at the Rijksmuseum, The Hague museum is mounting a companion exhibition showing the works of another 17th Dutch master, Jacobus Vrel, in a quest to discover this forerunner of Vermeer

Everyone knows Vermeer's quiet interiors and *The Little Street*, but few people know that artist Jacobus Vrel was already producing scenes of this kind before Delft master. In *Vrel, Forerunner of Vermeer* the Mauritshuis will tell the story of this mysterious painter, showing thirteen works from collections in the Netherlands and abroad. The famous Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna has loaned two extraordinary paintings, one of which is *Woman at the Window* (1654), the only dated work by Vrel □

The Mauritshuis show can be seen until 29th May, after which it moves to Paris at the Fondation Custodia, Frits Lugt Collection. The exhibitions at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and Museum Prinsenhof in Delft continue until 4th June.





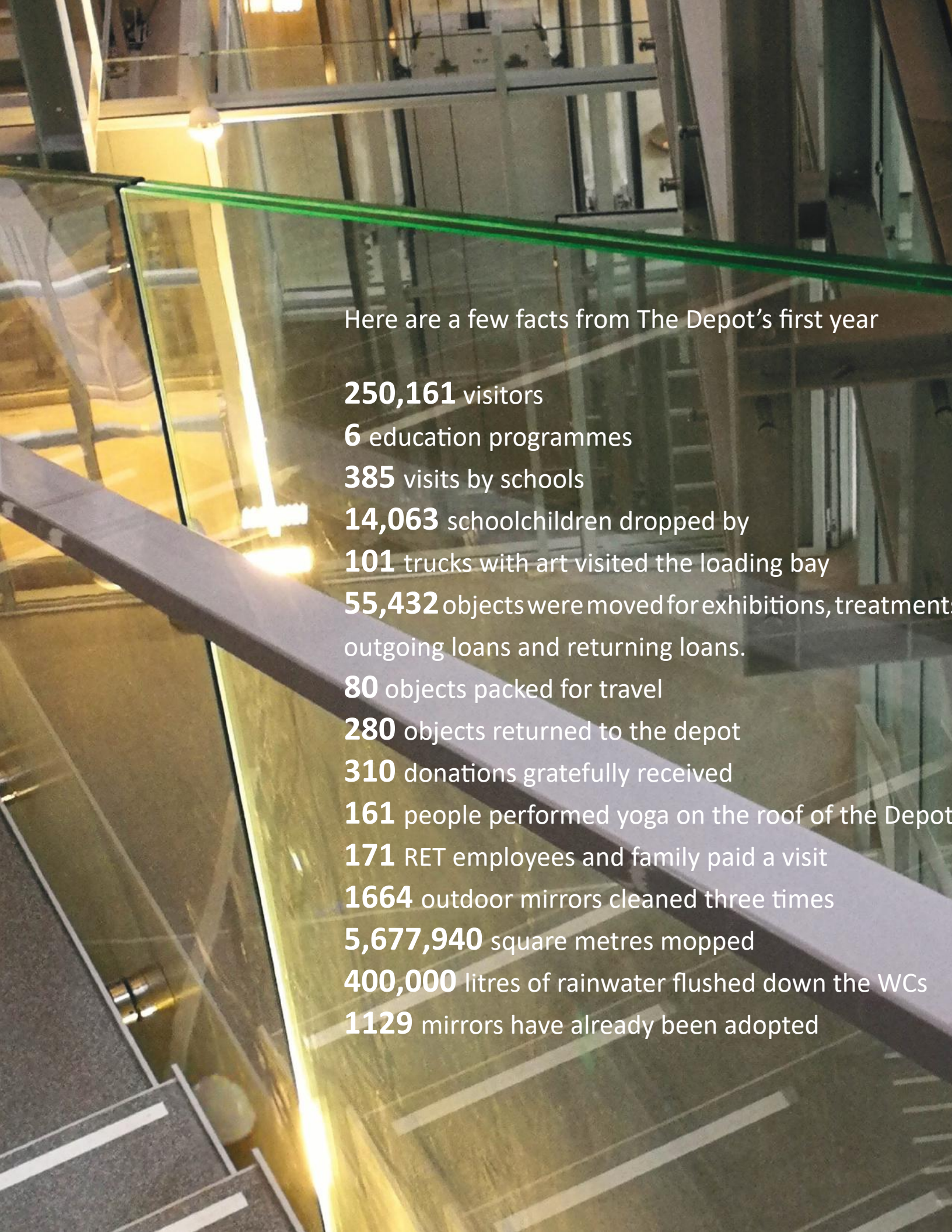
THE DEPOT

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam

Michael HASTED

In a city where architecture is king, there is a new kid on the block. The incredible Depot, the new storage facility for, and adjacent to, the Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum in Rotterdam, has been open for just over a year. Eight years in the planning and four years in the building, this destined-to-be iconic structure is unique both in its appearance and its function. It resembles a huge, bowl covered in mirrors and with a garden on top. The ever-changing kaleidoscope on its walls reflects the city in all its moods – it's certainly worth a visit just to look at the outside.





Here are a few facts from The Depot's first year

250,161 visitors

6 education programmes

385 visits by schools

14,063 schoolchildren dropped by

101 trucks with art visited the loading bay

55,432 objects were moved for exhibitions, treatment, outgoing loans and returning loans.

80 objects packed for travel

280 objects returned to the depot

310 donations gratefully received

161 people performed yoga on the roof of the Depot

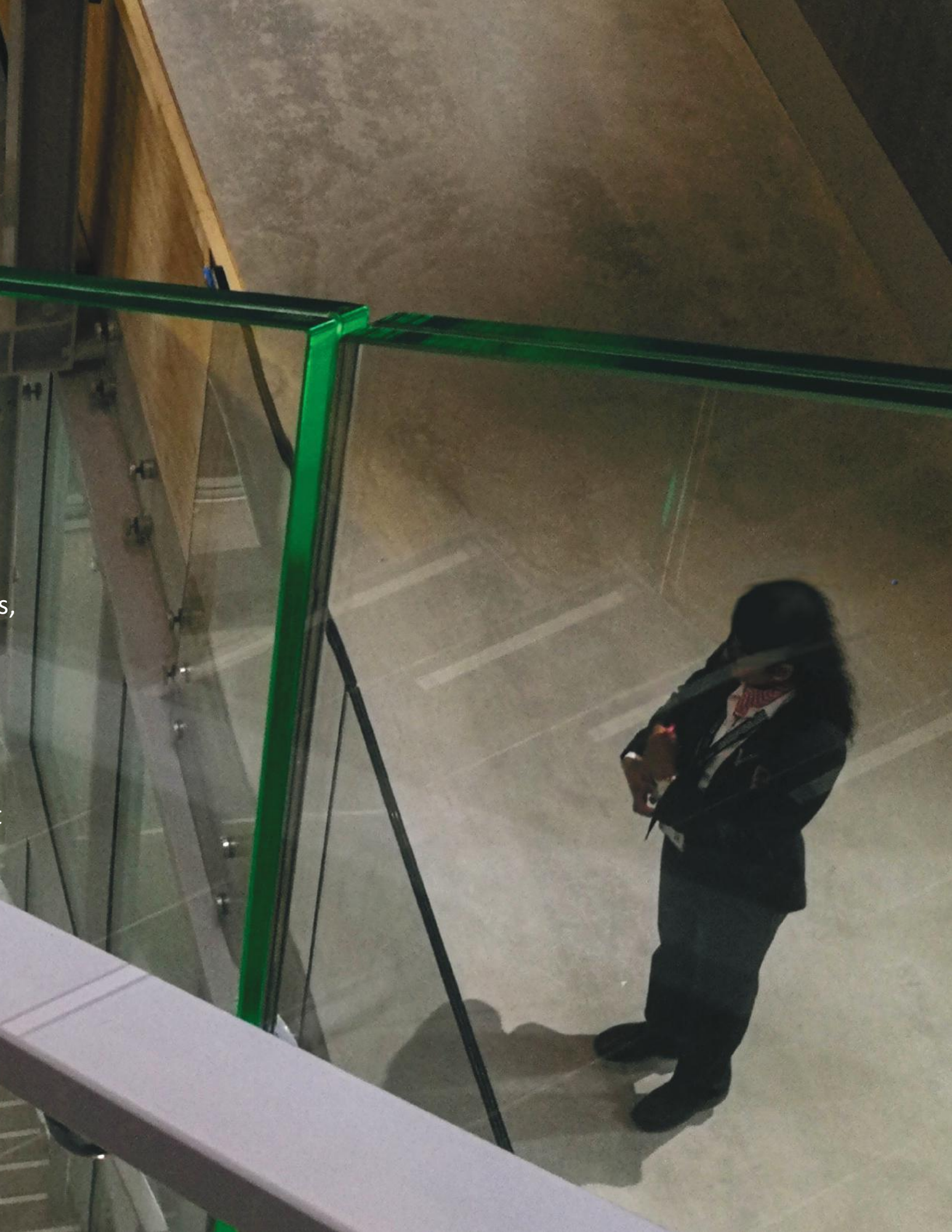
171 RET employees and family paid a visit

1664 outdoor mirrors cleaned three times

5,677,940 square metres mopped

400,000 litres of rainwater flushed down the WCs

1129 mirrors have already been adopted







But inside it is also unique. As we all know, up to ninety per cent of the stock of any museum is always hidden away in storerooms, inaccessible to the public. The uniqueness of The Depot is that it is open to the public. For twenty Euros you can buy a ticket and have access to all of the Museum's hidden treasures arranged in racks or on shelves in myriad temperature and humidity controlled rooms.

The Depot is the brainchild of former Boijmans director Sjarel Ex and Rotterdam architect Winy Maas of MVRDV and the numbers are staggering.

The thirty-five meter high building is covered with 1664 mirrors. The roof garden contains seventy-five *Betula Pubescens*, a soft silver birch tree that grows up to ten meters high and is resistant to the weather conditions on the roof. Inside are 151,000 works of art, all cosseted and pampered in their ideal environment, plus a restaurant and various other spaces.

All the rooms are off the central core which houses the stairs and lifts to the six floors. This area feels like a living Escher print or even a Piranesi drawing. Every aspect of the structure is breath-taking. But breath is also an issue. Each room is controlled for humidity and consequently can only have people in it for fifteen minutes as their breath and the heat from their bodies will tip the balance.

Even if you are not an art fan the roof garden is open, and available separately, so anybody can take the dedicated lift to the top for views over the city.

The Depot was opened officially on 6th November 2021 by King Willem-Alexander and, if not destined to become one of the wonders of the modern world, it will certainly be the star attraction for visitors and residents of Rotterdam for years to come.

Works of art have been researched, restored, revised, documented, photographed, presented – against the background of the streets of Rotterdam. Works of art have been packed and unpacked, have travelled abroad and returned home. Fashion shows have been held, but also performances, film shows and yoga on the roof. Rembrandt took the lift, Viktor&Rolf used a cherry picker. School children ran up and down the stairs and art was produced. Works of art were admired, discussed and (almost) touched. Miles of floor have been mopped and metres of glass kept sparkling. A storm raged, but the roof thicket still stands. People ate, drank and made merry. There were hellos and goodbyes. More than one year on, and Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen is a living building, now a permanent feature of the Rotterdam skyline ☐

IN THE DUTCH MO

by NDT 1 at the Amare in Th



OUNTAINS

the Hague and on tour

Astrid BURCHARDT



Once heard a German, typically schmaltsy, popular song claiming that Hamburg was a better city than Munich to visit or live in because there were no mountains to obstruct the view. The same could be said about the Netherlands of course, so the title of this work by renowned German choreographer Marco Goecke was truly intriguing. The inspiration, of course, is taken from the 1987 hit song by the rock group The Nits – possibly the best Dutch pop/rock song ever.

The NDT usually presents two or three short pieces for their shows but this was a single, full length piece which meant it was something we could really get our teeth into. It was also nice to have the Dutch Ballet Orchestra in the pit; live music makes such a difference.

The melodramatic, cinematic almost, soundtrack of the song suited the piece wonderfully and the thunderous opening sequence foretold of things to come. In the Dutch Mountains was danced on a dimly lit stage in front of a projected backcloth with stormy skies, waving grasses and crashing seas. Both the staging and choreography had strong undertones of German Expressionism, even of old black and white films by Fritz Lang, but it also felt rather like a danced opera, Wagnerian in places. This was one of the most dramatic pieces I have seen recently from NDT.

There were some twenty eight dancers who rushed on and off, executing jerky, staccato movements of a complexity which I have seldom seen. I wonder whether those who expected to become classical ballet dancers could imagine they would become capable of such performances. There were some astonishing solos as well as tight ensemble sequences.

This was the perfect meeting of choreography and sound design. The orchestra, under the baton of guest conductor Martin Georgiev, pulled out all the stops and drove the show along like an express train. The music included Bartok, Brahms, Beggars Group with The Nits' In the Dutch Mountains providing the soundtrack for the denouement.

I don't know about you, but whenever I have just seen a great performance, be it a play, opera or concert, I feel filled up, as though I have had a wonderful meal. So it was tonight. Marco Goecke's In the Dutch Mountains is as perfect a piece as I have seen in a long, long time. Go out of your way to see it, there is nothing to spoil the view ☐

Photo by Rahi Rezvani

Opera2 Don Quix

Opera2Day premiered
Vernuftige Edelman Don
Ingenious Nobleman D
the Koninklijke Schouw
prior to a nationwide to



2Day's new xote opera

its brand new opera, *De
n Quichot van La Mancha - The
Don Quixote of La Mancha*, at
wburg in The Hague in January
our

Astrid BURCHARDT





True to their raison d'être, Opera2Day has devised yet another brand new opera based on the unlikely Spanish hero . . .

Opera, ballet, musical theatre et al have been inspired by the world's second most translated book, Miguel de Cervantes' thousand page tome *Don Quixote*. Quite why a clapped-out, delusional figure on his equally clapped-out horse Rocinate should translate to pointy-toe dancing or Broadway musical was never clear to me, but with opera one can paint on a larger canvas.

In the past Don Quixote has been seen as a rather pathetic figure 'tilting at windmills'. But for me there is a parallel here, close to me. My very own Don Quixote, my youngest brother, fought for five years and won the fight against an international corporation which proposed the mass erection of 180m high wind turbines blighting the landscape of ancient fortified villages along the foothills of the French Pyrenees.

True to their *raison d'être* Opera2Day has devised yet another brand new opera based on the unlikely Spanish hero - *The Ingenious Nobleman Don Quixote of La Mancha*. Their creations of new works, using a mix of existing classical as well as new music, usually work brilliantly. For this production, the New European Ensemble was joined by La Fonte Musica, a group specialising in medieval music. Concept and libretto are by Stefano Simone Pintor.

Don Quixote's story depicts the clash between the dream of an ideal, moral world and the harsh reality. This production is certainly multi-faceted, illustrating perceived values as relevant today as in the time of Cervantes. This version has a Mr Freestone, a greedy stockbroker who loses Mr Benegeli's fortune, propelling the latter over the precipice on sanity. Pasting himself in silver foil, tipping a bucket on his head and naming scatter-brained archivist Miguel as Sancho Panza, Benegeli promotes himself to knight errant Don Quixote. Saddling up a gold tea trolley in lieu of a horse, he rides off, pursued by the anxious Miguel/Sancho, both giving a credible impression of actually riding horses. A nice touch, and fil rouge, is the reader pacing throughout the production, Cervantes' book in hand. There was a lot of paper used to good effect, especially crumpled pieces on long strings as

giant curtains, reflecting the light, at times as stars against the black background.

There was so much going on one had to concentrate hard but there were amusing moments. In a setting resembling a MacDonalds, Don Quixote wants to fight off an army of human-sized beer bottles and mustard tubes. He declares his love for Dulcinea, the cleaning lady and marvels at her yellow rubber household glove which he praises as being of pure spun gold. He battles a hail of paper plates with a foil-covered umbrella as sword. Later he fights a human centipede and, striking giant fans, reminiscent of current wind turbines, he is electrocuted and ends up unconscious in Sancho Panza's arms, pieta-like.

Throughout, the pair's relationship is fraught as well as affectionate. I especially liked Manuel Nunez-Camelino's portrayal of Sancho Panza. Unlike the traditional illustration of a paunchy, slow Sancho, Nunez-Camelino is spritely, frail even, as he repeatedly tries to reign in Mattijs van de Woerd's excellently rendered deluded Quixote.

For me the best scene came when Mr Freestone's former office had transmuted to an old people's home, with the cast in pyjama's shuffling around and fighting over a game of Monopoly. Greedy Mr Freestone was still up to his old tricks - "I'm buying everything", he says.

With a large cast it would be unjust to pick out individuals, but there were some very fine voices from La Fonte Musica which, for me, were somewhat underused, as the recitative seemed to take up so much of the proceeding.

In the stage direction the production would also have benefitted from a little more movement to underscore the recitative. In the first half there appeared to be minimal evidence of Spanish medieval music, but it came into its own in the second half with more fine singing from La Fonte Musica.

Throughout, Emlyn Stam's New European Ensemble played beautifully, but became almost side-lined by, for my taste and for an opera, too much talk, not enough singing □

Philip Akkerman

at Galerie de Zaal in Delft

Michael HASTED

I guess painters get the equivalent of writer's block - facing a blank canvas, brush in hand, waiting for inspiration. But, if every day, you know exactly what you are going to paint, no problem. And if your theme never varies, it's a win-win situation.

Philip Akkerman is such an artist. He knows his model will always be available, night or day, come rain or shine. Mr Akkerman's subject is always the same – himself. He has been painting small self-portraits on panels for the past forty years on an industrial scale. His current exhibition at Galerie de Zaal in Delft is showing one painting from each of those years in chronological order and an amazing and insightful array it makes. It is often said that we would all benefit from seeing ourselves as others see us but I don't think anyone could reveal more about this artist than he has seen for himself.

The paintings, all just heads, range in style and content from photo-realist to abstract, from neo-Dali to Francis Bacon. There is one where the face is completely obliterated by daubs of black paint and others where he looks as though he is in make-up for a horror movie. Are these deep, angst-filled explorations

into his own psyche or are they arbitrary variations on a tried and tested format? I think the former, although I suspect there is an element of the latter. Does he always stand before a mirror or do the reflections come from deep inside, the actual facial features long since memorised? It must be said that there are no happy portraits here, no smiles. There are, however, lots of grotesque, disturbed and disturbing images.

Above all, the pictures are beautifully painted. No matter what style he chooses on any particular day, the application of oils and/or tempera on small (average about 40 x 30 cms) wooden panels demonstrates the touch of an old master. His palette is often muted, often bright and garish, but always right for the right picture.

Once you have accepted that there is only one subject, there is something in this exhibition for everyone to admire, something for everyone to like and everyone to dislike. A man for all seasons □

Philip Akkerman at Galerie de Zaal in Delft continues until 19th March



Philip Akkerman *Self-portrait* 2020 No.100

Some years ago, one Christmas, I was visiting a German friend who lived by a lake in the countryside near Munich. It was a family affair, his not mine. My friend and I, and some others of our age were in a room downstairs overlooking the snow covered forest with our beers and enjoying the festive *gemütlichkeit*.

My friend's mother came in with some cake and, hiding behind her dirndl, was her grand-daughter, my friend's niece, aged about four. The little girl was looking at us all very intently and finally tugged at her grandmother's skirt and whispered, "Wo ist der Engel?" (where is the angel?) The puzzled woman turned to the child, asking what she meant. The girl said she had heard the grownups saying there was *ein Engel* downstairs and she wanted to see it. Her grandmother realised what had happened. The child had heard them saying there was *ein Engländer* - me - downstairs and had misunderstood.

An easy mistake to make. Angels are everywhere, not just atop your yuletide tree. You can buy little light-up ones to stand on your sideboard to look over you and keep you safe. We are all keen to see angels, and not just at Christmas. This is the basic premise of *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* produced by the Dublin-based Collapsing Horse company.

A young couple with a sick baby meet a very old man with . . . err . . . enormous wings and the infant immediately recovers, therefore establishing, QED, that the old man must be an angel. The villagers flock to see him in his chicken shack home and the young couple make a fortune selling angel feathers and other merchandising.

This remarkable story, true we were assured, was told to us by another young couple, both slightly nerdy – he more nerdy than her. They made a wonderful pair, she, Karen McCartney, very assertive and he, Manus Halligan, excruciatingly shy and with stooping body language denoting complete insecurity.

The two of them proceeded to tell the story aided by small model figures and a nice little painted cardboard backdrop on the table. They were neither of them really sure what they were doing and constantly whispering out of the corner of their mouths or giving each other

questioning looks. It was a bit like *The Play That Goes Wrong* but much better, much less contrived. I must say, in case you think me unkind, that this amateurishness was all part of the show, and it worked brilliantly.

Based on a short story by Gabriel Garcia Marquez and adapted and directed by Dan Colley, Ms McCartney took us through the events as they unfolded while Mr Halligan offered rather ineffectual support – except for his chicken impersonation which was worth the price of the ticket alone, but sadly he had no lines as such. Both were aided by a shelf-full of props, a large fan to blow the feathers around and, best of all, a couple of tiny video cameras which showed us the little figures close up – and often Mr Halligan's bewildered face. The images were projected onto a large screen at the back.

This was really enjoyable, intimate theatre and all the better for being Irish – if they believe in leprechauns, sure they can believe in angels, so they can. Billed as being suitable for all ages from eight to eighty *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* will, I am sure, instill in many of the younger members of the audience a love of theatre which will hopefully stay with them for ever. I hate to use the word charming, but it was. Charming, funny, endearing and very nicely done. Loved it ☐



A VERY OLD MAN WITH ENORMOUS WINGS

by Collapsing Horse presented by STET
at Koninklijke Schouwburg in The Hague

Michael HASTED



MUSEUMS

The background of the page is a blurred photograph of a museum gallery. In the foreground, the back of a person's head and shoulders is visible, looking towards the art. In the mid-ground, several other visitors are seen, some looking at a large painting on the wall. The lighting is warm and focused on the artworks, creating a sense of a busy, quiet museum environment.

Modern day mausoleums to centuries of fine art?

Souwie BUIS

Recently museums and highly valued art works have been much in the news. In the run-up to COP27, young climate activists took it upon themselves to throw paint and soup over priceless artworks displayed in some of the world's largest museums – including Vermeer's *Girl with the Pearl Earring* at the Mauritshuis in the Hague.

The Royal Museum of Fine Arts (KMSKA) recently re-opened in Antwerp, after an 11 year closure for renovation. We also heard about the largest art sale in history as dozens of art works belonging to the late Microsoft co-founder, Paul Allen, were auctioned for a record \$1.5 billion at Christie's in New York. How did art work acquire such value and what role do museums play in facilitating this modern form of secular worship?

The KMSKA was originally opened in 1890 and was modelled on an ancient Greek temple. The large neoclassical building houses 2.4 km of galleries and currently has more than 600 works on display. In ancient times, art work was largely there for the glorification of kings and rulers. It also adorned religious temples and places of worship. There was something organic in this sense, about the context in which great works of art were viewed and admired. But with the rise of science and the secular nation state, along with the spoils of colonialism, the idea of the museum was born.





There is something overwhelming about gallery works that all require our rapt attention, all within hours. In a recent interview for The Guardian, Carmen Willems admits that for many, visiting is a challenge”.



*upon gallery of art
in the space of a few
Director of KMSKA,
the museum is “a*



The original meaning of ‘museum’ was a study or library. The British Museum, for instance, was established with an antiquarian collection, bequeathed by Sir John Soane in 1753, and was the first national museum open to the public. While the Louvre in France was opened in 1793 after the Revolution, displaying paintings confiscated from the Church and royal property. The 18th century saw the nationalisation of many royal art collections throughout Europe. While in America, several large art museums were financed by donations from its many millionaires. The Metropolitan Museum of Art was set up by the New York State Legislature in 1870 as a city museum and library of art.

Each year, millions visit these hallowed spaces, a pilgrimage to culture and national pride. Yet, research shows that the average museum-goer spends under half a minute looking at a great work of art. If we’re honest, there is something overwhelming about gallery upon gallery of art works that all require our rapt attention, all within the space of a few hours. Are the great works of art, really designed to be appreciated in this manner? In a recent interview for *The Guardian*, Director of KMSKA, Carmen Willems admits that for many, visiting the museum is “a challenge”.

A focus on interaction and what Willems describes as slowing “the tempo of looking at art” are now increasingly common in large museums around the world. There is also the question of value. Works by the world’s most renowned artists now fetch eye-watering prices on the private art market. Cezanne’s *La Montagne Sainte-Victoire* recently sold for a record \$137.8m while Van Gogh’s *Verger avec cyprès* fetched a staggering \$117.3m – the highest ever for a Van Gogh painting. High value art is now seen as a hedge against inflation and more secure than the stock market or cryptocurrencies. Many of these works however, have been bought for private display, or perhaps simply safe-keeping in a state-of-the-art security facility.

What of the joy and wonder of a work of art designed to reflect, celebrate or question some aspect of human endeavour? Can one really appreciate the Elgin Marbles, carefully displayed in a sterilized corner of the British Museum, when they were clearly designed to celebrate the power and glory of an ancient King on the dusty heights of the Acropolis? Should we be re-thinking the way we view art works altogether – not as priceless treasures, kept under lock and key, but rather as creations that gain significance from the contexts in which they were first imagined? Works of wonder that should be copied and shared, not stored and sanitized for the box-tickers □

PROSPECTS

at Art Rotterdam



One of the highpoints of cultural and artistic life in Rotterdam is the undoubtedly Art Week, and one of the highlights of that is the Art fair which takes place in the iconic, and an artwork in its own right, old Van Nelle Fabriek on the north-western fringes of the city on the grassy banks of the Delfshavense Schie canal/river.

Now back in on track after three years of Covid disruption, this fair is just about the right size with plenty of space and wide passageways to visit the ninety-plus galleries from all over Europe. Of course, most of the exhibitors are from The Netherlands and I must confess, I had never heard of many of the Amsterdam galleries. With any fair of this type there is bound to be a huge variety of styles and of quality, ranging from the avant garde to the downright commercial, but it must be said that there was relatively little of the latter, bearing in mind that the dealers are here to do business.

An easy-to-miss part of the Art Rotterdam is the section hidden away in a far corner of the old factory, accessed by a sun drenched, at least it was on the day we were there, passage. *Prospects* is in a huge industrial room, almost like a mini version of the wonderful Turbine Hall in Tate Modern in London and is dedicated to the work of young artists who have received financial grants from Mondriaan Fonds, one of the most important supporters of the arts in The Netherlands.

The setting is ideally suited to the work, much of which is large sculptures or installations, all of it on the cutting edge of contemporary art. Compared to the main area, *Prospects* was relatively quiet. It is not very well promoted or sign-posted from the main fair and is consequently easy to miss, which is a pity because, for me, this is where the real interest in Art Rotterdam lies. I won't say it is wasted in this semi-hidden area of the Art fair, but I would have thought it was deserving of its own dedicated location and time □



TJ-11 Plasma Vessel 2022 by Rick van Meel
Photo by Michael Hasted

OPENING
16 MARCH AT 18H

UNTIL
9 APRIL

LOCATION
TREEHOUSE NDSM

EXHIBITION & WORKSHOPS

IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING



Ra Meyer.

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