

ROTTERDAM XPANDED

Rotterdam, 23 September 2016

Last summer, leading Rotterdam arts institutions International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR), Kunsthal Rotterdam and Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen presented a multidisciplinary programme featuring exceptional films and exhibitions by internationally renowned artists in and around Rotterdam's Museumpark. With a total of almost 125,000 visits the forecasts were more than exceeded, meaning that this pilot edition of Rotterdam Xpanded can justly be called a success.

From 18 June to 18 September IFFR, Kunsthal Rotterdam and Museum Van Beuningen presented a strong programme with international allure in the Museumpark in Rotterdam. This included the impressive installation *Notion motion* (2005) by Danish-Icelandic maker Olafur Eliasson (1967) in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, for which the museum's Bodonzaal was modified and 20,562 litres of water was used. Kunsthal Rotterdam presented almost one hundred paintings, drawings and pastels by world-famous Colombian artist Fernando Botero (1932) in the exhibition *Botero: Celebrate Life!*, and during *IFFR White Nights* IFFR used short films to highlight the talent entering Europe through the flow of refugees.

The aim of the pilot edition was to motivate more Dutch and international visitors to visit Rotterdam: the target was 20,000 more visits than last summer, distributed across the three institutions. With a total of almost 125,000 visits as compared to 70,000 visits in the same period in 2015, this goal was more than achieved. The number of Dutch visitors from outside of Rotterdam increased both as a percentage and in absolute terms. In addition, the event drew a more diverse audience, both in terms of origin and age.

These great results have strengthened even further the resolve of the initiators to continue. Culture is an essential factor in maintaining the quality of life in a city; it also works as a magnet for tourists and creates a favourable climate for businesses and start-ups. The success of this pilot proves that, with a shared vision and the strength and effectiveness that come from the combination of culture-city council-business community, Rotterdam Xpanded has huge potential and can act as a catalyst for tourism in the city. However, partners are needed in order to lift the initiative to a higher level (also internationally). Finding these partners will be the next step on the road to a successful, longer-term cultural programme that has an economic impact on both the city and its businesses going forward.

– End of press release –

Rotterdam Xpanded is a unique, long-term cooperation between the city of Rotterdam, the business community and prominent cultural bodies, aimed at strengthening the cultural identity of Rotterdam. The initiators aim to attract more visitors to the city, both from the Netherlands and abroad.

The pilot edition took place from 18 June through 18 September 2016. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen presented *Olafur Eliasson: Notion motion* (18 June to 18 September). In Kunsthal Rotterdam, *Botero: Celebrate Life!* was on show from 2 July to 11 September. The *IFFR White Nights* programme (13 July to 17 July) focused attention on contemporary, artistic cinema.

The partners of this first edition of Rotterdam Xpanded were PWC, NautaDutilh and Rotterdam City Council, with support from Rotterdam Partners. IFFR White Nights was supported by Rotterdam Festivals.

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