

Boijmans Van Beuningen Depot Groundbreaking

17 March 2017, embargo on the new name until 4.15 p.m.

The groundbreaking ceremony of the world's first publicly accessible art storage facility took place today at 3.30 p.m. A festive event, during which Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen will reveal the depot's new name.

'There's nothing like it in the world' says director Sjarel Ex about the depot being added to the Museumpark, right next door to Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen. 'I'm delighted that construction can now begin following years of preparation.' Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen is the first museum to dare to work so transparently.

Dynamic

The Boijmans Van Beuningen Depot, the new official name for the Public Art Depot, is the world's first art storage facility that offers public access to the entire collection without the accompaniment of a curator. The almost-40-metre-high building has been designed by world-renowned Rotterdam based architects, MVRDV. The depot building will have a totally different dynamic to that of the museum: there will be no exhibitions, but visitors will be able to browse among 70,000 artworks, independently or with a guide. They will also be able to observe members of staff conducting research, conservation and restoration work. The depot is expected to attract approx. 90,000 visitors per year, in addition to the 300,000 people who already visit the museum, ranging from local residents and day-trippers to international art professionals and tourists. The new building will give people yet another reason to travel to Rotterdam.

Future generations

The public route zigzags through the building, from the lobby to the sculpture garden to the roof terrace. The depot will feature four professional restoration studios, two projection rooms, an education space and an auditorium. Part of the building (approx. 1900 m²) is intended for rental to private collectors. There will be free access to the brasserie on the roof terrace via a transparent express lift, giving visitors a glimpse of the activities in the depot before they experience the spectacular view from the roof. 'The arrival of the Boijmans Van Beuningen Depot will bring the collection to the next generation: art in the museum is a permanent source of education,' says Sjarel Ex. Councillor Adriaan Visser: 'The arrival of the depot will strengthen the cultural character of the Museumpark and contribute to a lively city centre. No less important is the fact that the municipal art collection – the collection of all residents of Rotterdam – is made safe and publicly accessible.'

Long gestation

The driving of the first pile by BAM Bouw en Techniek, responsible for the construction of the building, brings to a close a long preparatory period. The initiative for a publicly accessible dates back to 2005, partly as a reaction to flooding in the small, outmoded depots currently used by Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen. The new depot is a unique public-private partnership between De Verre Bergen Foundation, Rotterdam City Council and the museum. Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb, who opened the ceremony on Friday: 'This extraordinary building designed by Winy Maas will be a magnificent addition to our city. I wish BAM and all the parties involved much success with the construction and look forward to the opening!'

A guaranteed future

The new building will enrich Rotterdam's skyline and will add to the popularity of the city, which features as a favourite destination on more and more international lists. 'With the depot, the museum is providing a guaranteed future for the collection, which is largely the property of the municipality,' says Sjarel Ex. 'Soon visitors will be able to see for themselves the level of care, love and attention to detail that is devoted to each individual artwork on behalf of future generations. The museum, the public and Rotterdam's residents will derive enormous pleasure from the depot.'

Note for editors

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On publication www.boijmans.nl.



Impressions of the depot by
MVRDV