

Director Sjarel Ex to leave Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen

This autumn, director Sjarel Ex will leave the museum in Rotterdam that he has led for the past eighteen years. With the museum itself closed for renovation, the collection is more accessible than ever in the new Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen, where the preservation of and research into the collection continues apace.



Press kit: Portrait Sjarel Ex | Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Newsroom

With the successful new Depot as his crowning glory, Sjarel Ex (1957, Terwinselen) is setting a new course. The Supervisory Board of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen has granted his request to terminate his current contract with the museum. The board deeply regrets Ex's departure, but naturally respects his decision and expresses its great appreciation for what he has achieved for the museum.

Ex has overseen the museum's artistic programmes and finances since 2004, a leadership role that he has shared for the last three years with co-director Ina Klaassen. For a decade and a half, he has developed close partnerships with artists and designers, and has developed a broad range of initiatives. Ex looks back on his years in Rotterdam with great fondness. He will continue his career as an independent researcher and curator.

The Depot: a new typology

Sjarel Ex is leaving the museum while it is closed for renovation but at a time when its collection is more accessible to the public than ever before. The new Depot is internationally regarded as a new museological typology, a model of the changing vision of collections management. Never before has museum storage been accessible to the general public on this scale in combination with behind-the-scenes access. Visibility of the collection is optimised in the Depot, where each day visitors are given guided tours of the collection in storage and are shown how the collection is cared for and conserved. Each year, Boijmans loans hundreds of artworks to museums worldwide and organises exhibitions that tour the globe.

Rotterdam is a wonderful community full of great people and fantastic artists, and the city is always moving forwards. I am leaving the museum and the Depot behind with full peace of mind. Their further development and continuity are guaranteed by my co-director, Ina Klaassen. The improvements to the museum building are in the hands of the Municipality of Rotterdam – the owner and client – which has committed to the construction costs. I wish all my colleagues, who are always ready to serve the public and art with great expertise and devotion, great success in the future.

— Sjarel Ex, director of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen

Over the past eighteen years, Sjarel has brought the museum closer to artists, and art closer to the public. He is, first and foremost, a visionary with guts. His singular vision and inspired approach have fuelled and propelled the museum's growth during this period, with the Depot as the crowning glory of his achievements. We are all greatly in his debt.

— Ina Klaassen, director of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen

We deeply regret Sjarel's departure, but of course respect his decision. We are bidding farewell to an enthusiastic and successful museum director who for eighteen years has created a dynamic programme and an ever-more beautiful collection. The completion of the Depot has attracted worldwide attention and is contributing enormously to the reputation of the museum and therefore also to that of the city of Rotterdam

— Jurgen Stegmann, chairman of the Supervisory Board

A summary of Sjarel Ex's achievements

Ex initiated **Boijmans TV**, the series of scholarly publications **Boijmans Studies** and educational projects such as **Art4Kids** and **Boijmans in the Classroom**. During his tenure, the museum established a satellite venue, **Boijmans Hillevliet**, in the south of Rotterdam. He created a programme of international art exhibitions at the Submarine Wharf in Rotterdam's docklands, and during the coronavirus pandemic, he and his team curated a **drive-thru** exhibition at Ahoy Rotterdam. The museum's collection has been shown in exhibitions in all of Rotterdam's museums and elsewhere in the Netherlands, including the Rijksmuseum. The museum's **touring exhibitions** have travelled to Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, among others, and projects are planned for Mexico, the US and Italy. Ex's idea for a publicly accessible art storage facility became a reality on 5 November 2021 when the Depot was **opened by King Willem-Alexander**.

During his tenure as director of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, art historian Sjarel Ex has been involved in the organisation of more than four hundred exhibitions, **dozens of which he personally curated**. He and his team have secured more than ten thousand acquisitions – purchases, loans and gifts – spread across every aspect of the museum's diverse collections. During this time, the museum has published numerous exhibition catalogues and other publications. In addition to its annual municipal subsidy, the museum has generated more than 250 million euros for purchases, restorations, publications, education and exhibitions. The museum has attracted a great many visitors at home and abroad, with 650,000 visitors to an exhibition about the **Tower of Babel in Japan** as its greatest international success.

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ABOUT MUSEUM BOIJMANS VAN BEUNINGEN

The world-renowned art collection of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen has over the span of 170 years expanded to more than 151,000 artefacts, which includes some 63,000 paintings, photos, films, pre-industrial design and design objects, contemporary art installations and sculptures, as well as 88,000 prints and drawings.

**museum van
boijmans beuningen**

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