

RIJKS MUSEUM PRESS

www.rijksmuseum.nl/press

WELCOME TO THE RIJKSMUSEUM!

The Rijksmuseum is the iconic museum of the Netherlands. After ten years of rebuilding, refurbishing and renovating, the Rijksmuseum once again opened its doors to the public in full splendour on 13 April 2013. Both the building and the presentation of the collection underwent a total transformation. This revamping resulted in surprising furnishings, beautiful exhibitions, dazzling events and numerous facilities for young and old.

The Rijksmuseum's world-famous collection is being presented in an entirely new way. Visitors go on a journey through the ages and experience a sense of beauty and of time. In 80 galleries, 8,000 objects tell the story of 800 years of Dutch art and history, from the Middle Ages to Mondrian.

The Rijksmuseum is made possible by Founder Philips and main sponsors BankGiro Loterij, ING and KPN.



Photo: John Lewis Marshall

THE RIJKSMUSEUM

A journey through time. From the Middle Ages to Mondrian

The presentation of the Rijksmuseum collection is a journey through Dutch art and history from the Middle Ages up to and including the 20th century. The story of the Netherlands is placed in an international context and, spread over four floors, is told in chronological order. Paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, silver, porcelain, delftware, furniture, jewellery, costumes and objects from Dutch history together tell the story.

More than 30 galleries are dedicated to the glory of the Golden Age, when the young mercantile republic led the world in trade, science, shipping and the arts. The Gallery of Honour forms the heart of the museum, displaying world-famous masterpieces by Vermeer, Rembrandt, Frans Hals and Jan Steen. The Gallery of Honour leads visitors to the lavishly decorated space that the architect Cuypers created for Rembrandt van Rijn's *The Night Watch* in the late 19th century, and where this magnificent masterpiece can be admired.

New in the Rijksmuseum's presentation is the 20th century collection. Paintings, furniture, photography, films and historical objects tell the story of cultural history of the Netherlands in the previous century.

The outdoor gallery

Based on a 1901 plan by Pierre Cuypers, the Rijksmuseum gardens were designed by the Dutch garden and landscape architecture firm Copijn. The gardens are home to some of the original garden styles, as well as fragments and ornaments from historical buildings and classical statues. A fountain, a water artwork designed by Jeppe Hein, a 19th-century greenhouse with 'forgotten' vegetables and a children's garden with playground equipment by Aldo van Eyck will soon be added to this "outdoor museum".

And finally

The Rijksmuseum is open to the public 365 days a year, with free admission to everyone 18 years of age and under.



Photo: Rijksmuseum

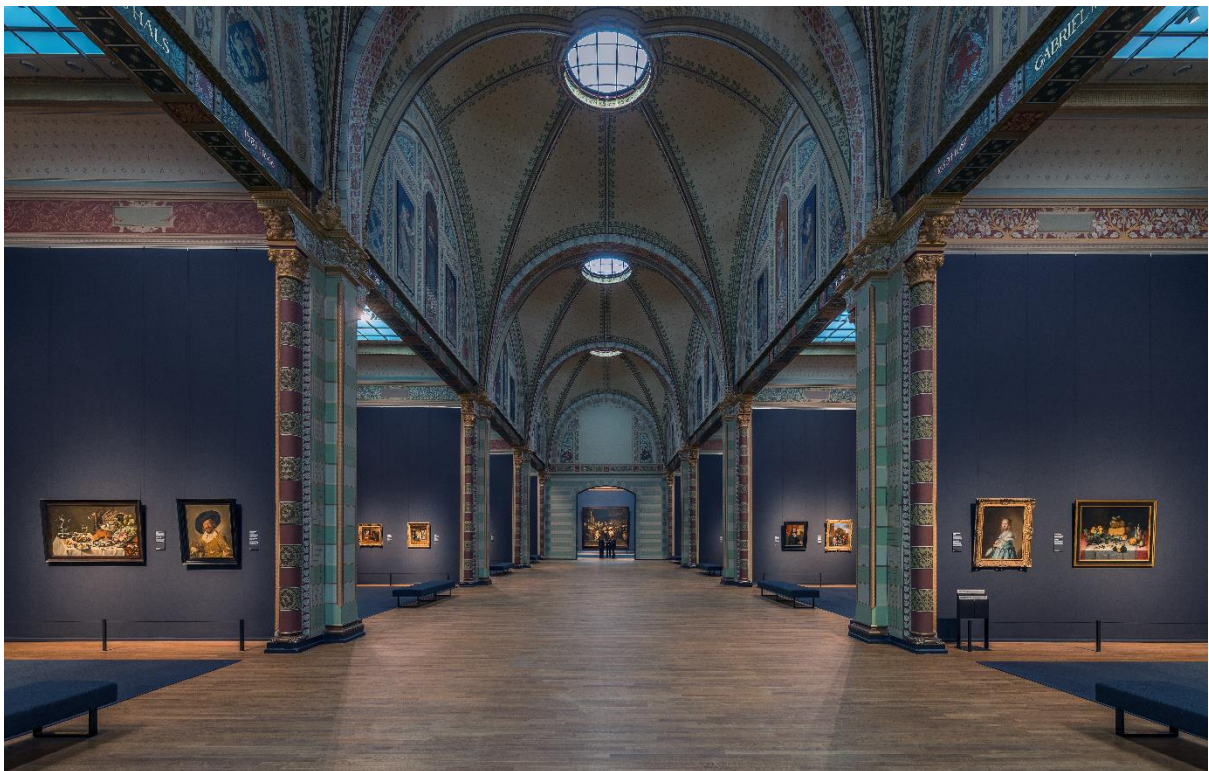


Photo: John Lewis Marshall

THE RENOVATION

CUYPERS IN THE 21st CENTURY

The project

The Rijksmuseum has been housed in the current building, designed by Dutch architect Pierre Cuypers (1827-1921), since 1885. The monumental building enjoyed more than 125 years of intensive use and was really due a thorough overhaul. To that end, it was officially closed in 2000 by the then cabinet. In 2001, Spanish architecture firm Cruz y Ortiz in Seville was commissioned to ready the museum for the 21st century. Maintaining respect for Cuypers, they added modern spaces and up-to-date facilities to the neo-Gothic building. Parisian architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte designed the furnishings of the galleries, combining 19th-century grandeur with modern design. Under the guidance of architecture firm Van Hoogevest Architecten, Cuypers' original decorations were reconstructed in various places in the building.

Design overview

In 2001, following a European tendering procedure, a committee chaired by Government Architect Jo Coenen commissioned Spanish architects Cruz and Ortiz from Seville to draft a new design for the Rijksmuseum. A separate European tender saw Van Hoogevest Architecten selected for the restoration.

Modern elements

Architects Cruz and Ortiz have turned the 19th-century building into a light and open museum for the 21st century. All later additions to the building, such as the lowered ceilings and half-storeys, were removed. Cruz and Ortiz also created a spectacular new entrance to the Rijksmuseum called the Atrium, as well as a new Asian Pavilion and a new building that acts as a service entrance. Visitors can enjoy modern facilities, including a café, a shop, an auditorium and, for the first time, the restored library. The architects also designed the Atelier Building, which was opened in 2007. This is where the Rijksmuseum's restoration studios are housed. The building satisfies the latest requirements in terms of preservation of the collection and climate control measures.

Cuypers' design

The original monumental ornaments that decorated the walls and ceilings have been returned to prominent rooms, such as the Gallery of Honour, the Grand Hall, the Night Watch Gallery and the stairwells. The faded terrazzo floor in the Front Hall was also fully restored as part of the Van Hoogevest Architecten commission. Cuypers' hallmark has been restored to the library, where the original design and ornaments have been beautifully maintained and renovated.

Five shades of grey

French interior architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte, whose work for the Louvre has earned him international acclaim, was invited to devise the interior design for the Rijksmuseum. He has created all display elements for the galleries that complement the restored 19th-century museum, including the elegant display cases, plinths, lighting and furniture. Wilmotte & Associés also designed the colour scheme for the interior, comprising five shades of grey.

The Atrium

Architects Cruz and Ortiz have turned the former inner courtyards into an impressive new entrance area, called the Atrium. The Atrium features large glass-covered roofs and pale polished Portuguese stone floors that reflect the natural light, making the Atrium feel airy and bright. Flanking the courtyards are the warm brick façades of the surrounding museum buildings, interspersed with windows and niches.

Below water level

The Atrium was created by opening up the museum's two inner courtyards and removing the galleries that were added in the 1950s and 60s. This yielded a room with a surface area of 2,330 square metres. This was also made possible by sinking the floor of the two courtyards below water level and completely renewing the foundations beneath the original passageway, a very complex technical intervention.

The Passage

The Atrium is made up of two spaces that are connected by way of a tunnel underneath the Passage. The Atrium has its entrance in the Passage. The solid walls of the Passage have been replaced with large expanses of glass, allowing passers-by to admire the interior courtyards.

Chandeliers

Both sides of the Atrium are adorned by two white sculptural 'chandeliers' which break up the enormous scale of the space and fulfil a dual role: they can illuminate the space and the slats ensure better acoustics.

The new, light entrance square is open to all visitors, including those without an admission ticket. This area includes the café, the shop, the information desks, ticket sales and the cloakroom.

The Asian Pavilion

Designed by Cruz y Ortiz, the free-standing Asian Pavilion is surrounded by water and is situated in the garden to the south of the Rijksmuseum. The irregularly shaped, two-storey structure stands out against the red brick walls of the Rijksmuseum, with its walls faced in pale Portuguese stone and glass. It is characterised by oblique walls and unusual sightlines.

The Pavilion is linked to the main building via an aboveground passageway and has been created to showcase objects and works of art from China, Japan, Indonesia, India, Vietnam and Thailand, dating from 2000 BC to 2000 AD. The museum's ample Asian art collection is presented on a floor area of 485 square metres, and includes approx. 365 objects on display.

The Atelier Building

The Atelier Building has been designed by Spanish architects Cruz and Ortiz and was opened in 2007 as the first structure that Cruz y Ortiz completed as part of the Rijksmuseum renovation.

It is a venue for the preservation and management of Dutch cultural heritage, and houses a state-of-the-art centre for restoration and conservation, scientific practice, research and education. It accommodates all restoration departments of the Rijksmuseum, the University of Amsterdam and the Netherlands Cultural Heritage Agency.

Covering a surface area of more than 9,000 square metres, the Atelier Building is linked to an existing building designed by Pierre Cuypers, known as the Safety Institute, that has always been part of the Rijksmuseum.

Functionality was the main consideration in the new design. The unusual 'zigzagging' roof structure, the glazed northern elevation, and the protruding, triangular windows of the side-wall ensure that only northern light is admitted. All the studios, hallways, doors and lifts are higher and wider than usual, facilitating easy passage for large works of art.

The Drawing School

The Rijksmuseum's multidisciplinary educational centre is situated in the historical Teekenschool (Drawing School). The renovation has restored the former school building from 1892 to its original function: a place for people to develop their talents. The restored building is the most comprehensive museum education centre in the Netherlands. A wide range of activities is organised in the three modern studios.

The Teekenschool owes its name to its original function as a drawing school, a forerunner of the Gerrit Rietveld Academy. The concept and design of the building were developed by architect Pierre Cuypers, who envisioned it as a place that would help to improve national art education.

The Philips Wing, new exhibition wing

Also renovated was the Philips Wing, the Rijksmuseum's new exhibition wing. As the main building, the Philips Wing was designed by Cruz and Ortiz, while Van Hoogevest Architecten was responsible for the restoration. The Philips Wing will be opened on 1 November 2014, completing the ten-year renovation and transformation project of the Rijksmuseum.

The new, renovated museum boasts thirteen exhibition galleries, including a separate gallery for changing photo exhibits, and a large restaurant called the New-Style Brasserie, with a sun terrace. A new culinary concept has been developed for the restaurant, with chefs changing like guest curators.

The opening of the final section of the new gardens around the Philips Wing marked the completion of the Rijksmuseum's 'green lung'. In the new garden around the Philips Wing is an 18th-century gazebo, with in front of it a centrally located black-and-white tiled floor, where, at specified times, visitors can play chess with large chess pieces. The collection of building fragments and architecture has been enriched with one of the icons of New Objectivity: The telephone booth by Brinkman & Van der Vlugt from 1931-32.

HISTORY

From 1800 to the end of the 20th century

The Rijksmuseum opened its doors for the first time in 1800, when it was still called the National Gallery of Art. It was located in the Huis ten Bosch in The Hague. The collection mainly comprised paintings and historical objects. In 1808, the museum moved to the new capital Amsterdam, where it was housed in the Palace on Dam square.

After King William I's inauguration, the paintings and the national print collection ended up in the Trippenhuys at Kloveniersburgwal, while the other objects were moved back to The Hague. The current building was occupied in 1885. It also housed the Netherlands Museum of History and Art from The Hague, which would form the basis for the later departments of Dutch History and Sculpture & Applied Art.

The beginning

On 19 November 1798, more than three years after the birth of the Batavian Republic during the French occupation of the Netherlands, the government, at the suggestion of Minister for Finance Isaac Gogel, decided to set up a national museum (after French example). The museum initially housed the remains of the former viceregal collections and a variety of objects originating from state institutions. On 31 May 1800, the National Art Gallery opened its doors for the first time. There were over 200 paintings and historical objects on view. Together with the first director, C.S. Roos, Gogel made numerous acquisitions in the years that followed. Their first purchase, *The Threatened Swan* by Jan Asselijn, cost 100 Dutch guilders and is still regarded as one of the Rijksmuseum's top pieces.

Move to Amsterdam

In 1808, the new king Louis Napoleon, brother of emperor Napoleon, ordered that the collections be moved to Amsterdam, which was to become the capital of the Kingdom of Holland. The works of art and objects were taken to the Royal Palace on Dam square, the former city hall of Amsterdam, where they were united with the city's foremost paintings, including Rembrandt's *Night Watch*. In 1809, the Royal Museum opened its doors on the top floor of the palace.

A few years after William I returned to the Netherlands as the new king in 1813, the "Rijks Museum" and the national print collection from The Hague relocated to the Trippenhuys, a 17th-century town palace on Kloveniersburgwal, home to what would later become the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. Much to the regret of director Cornelis Apostool, in 1820 the historical objects and other works were assigned to the Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden (Cabinet of Rarities), which had recently been established in The Hague. In 1838, Haarlem set up its own museum for modern, 19th-century art in Paviljoen Welgelegen. Contrary to the days of Louis Napoleon's rule, very few large acquisitions were made during this period.

Cuypers' Cathedral

The Trippenhuis proved unsuitable as a museum. Furthermore, many people thought it time to establish a dedicated national museum building in the Netherlands. However, work on a new building did not commence until 1876, after many years of debate. The architect, Pierre Cuypers (1827-1921), had drawn up a design for the Rijksmuseum, which combined the Gothic and the Renaissance styles. The museum building was opened officially on 13 July 1885.

Nearly all the older paintings belonging to the City of Amsterdam were hung in the Rijksmuseum, alongside paintings and prints from the Trippenhuis, including paintings such as Rembrandt's Jewish Bride, which had been bequeathed to the city by the banker A. van der Hoop. The collection of 19th-century art from Haarlem was also added to the museum's collection. Finally, a significant part of the Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, which had by then been incorporated into the new Netherlands Museum for History and Art, was returned to Amsterdam.

Renovations

Over the years, the collections continued to grow and museum insights continued to change, and so the Rijksmuseum building underwent many changes. Rooms were added to the south-west side of the building between 1904 and 1916 (now the Philips Wing) to house the collection of 19th-century paintings donated to the museum by Mr and Mrs Drucker-Fraser. In the 1950s and 60s, the two original courtyards were covered with buildings to create more rooms.

In 1927, while Schmidt-Degener was general director, the Netherlands Museum was split to form the departments of Dutch History and Sculpture & Applied Art. These departments were moved to separate parts of the building after 1945. The arrival of a collection donated by the Association of Friends of Asian Art in the 50s resulted in the creation of the Asian Art department.

The 1970s saw record numbers of visitors of almost one-and-a-half million per year, and the building gradually started to fall short of modern requirements for museums. In the 1990s, the Rijksmuseum's need to renovate became ever more pressing.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Address

Rijksmuseum
Museumstraat 1
Postbus 74888
1070 DN Amsterdam

[Rijksmuseum.nl](http://rijksmuseum.nl)

Opening hours

365 days a year, from 9:00 to 17:00.

You can visit the Rijksmuseum garden, Rijks Shop and Café without an admission ticket from 9:00 to 18:00.

Prices

€17.50	From 19 years of age (from 1 November)
€7.50	ING cardholders CJP Stadspas
Free	18 years of age and under Museumkaart Friends of the Rijksmuseum ICOM The Rembrandt Association KOG VVAK

Admission tickets

At the cash desks in the museum.

Online at rijksmuseum.nl/etickets.

Library and Rijksmuseum Print Room

The Rijksmuseum Research Library and the Rijksmuseum Print Room share a reading room. For appointments and contact: studiezaal@rijksmuseum.nl

Go to rijksmuseum.nl/onderzoek-en-bibliotheek to consult the library online.