



PUBLIC OPENING
JUNE 21 2019, 12 PM (NOON)
PRESS VIEWING
JUNE 19 2019, 11 AM

Announcement
Zaandam, March 25 2019

A NEW CONTEMPORARY ART CENTRE IN AMSTERDAM

Real culture happens in communities

June 21 will mark the opening of Het HEM, a new art institute on the fringes of Amsterdam. Housed within an almost 10,000m² former ammunitions factory, Het HEM will combine the presentation of highly relevant visual art with a strong programming in music, performance and dance, the organization of socially critical public programs and participatory, educational activities.

Kim Tuin, Director of Het HEM: "We want our audience to feel at home, to be inspired and to open their minds to new experiences, intuitions and creative ideas. Using art to raise important questions concerning contemporary society, we hope to give people a more active and inclusive understanding of our world."

Het HEM aims primarily to bring art closer to a multitude of communities, to champion diversity and a radical and multiple means of presentation; it aims to be a soundboard for society. Repacking the usual format of thematic group or solo-exhibitions, Het HEM's programme will be divided into seasonal chapters. Each chapter will be developed in conversation with a guest, someone whom through their personal story, professional expertise or perspective can act as an essential interlocutor and help us to look beyond our own blind spots. Het HEM will ask each guest to tell a unique story based on their own philosophy, stimulating the audience to employ new directions of thought. By doing so, Het HEM will offer a stage to disciplines such as visual arts, dance, music, light and sound art, theatre and film as well as science, politics and life philosophy. Each chapter will attract different audiences and groups of people, and this will be an ongoing ambition of Het HEM: to be defined by the people populating it and not by the organisation itself.

For its inaugural Chapter 1, Het HEM has invited two guests who are strongly rooted in Amsterdam whilst whom also open up an artistic view which spans the world. Deeply rooted in the hip hop scene, Edson Sabajo and Guillaume Schmidt are social entrepreneurs, prominent facilitators for art and music in Amsterdam and founders of the streetwear brand Patta. Sabajo and Schmidt have become essential role models for a generation of young creatives who are rapidly changing the artistic landscape of Amsterdam and beyond. The opening exhibition not only confirms Het HEM's commitment to local communities but also presents Sabajo and Schmidt's achievements and vision in a wider international context where narratives from cultural minorities are gradually taking on the platforms of the old establishment.

In addition to its large-scale exhibition programme, Het HEM will host a restaurant, a library, a hi-fi bar, a garden, artist studios, and a newly commissioned site-specific art installation by RAAAF; later on there will also be a hotel. Het HEM is located within the Hembrug site, a former ammunitions, firearms and artillery factory built at the end of the 19th century located on the border of Amsterdam and Zaandam - an area currently in a state of transition as the city of Amsterdam steadily expands beyond its borders.

Note to editor

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