

# THE FUTURE OF THE MUSEUM

The new **Collections Depot** for Rotterdam's Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam is under construction.

I visited a couple of weeks ago and had a chat with Sjarel Ex, Director of Boijmans.

This is opening the doors of the museum and gallery in a new way – all 150,000 items in the collection will be available to everyone in this great treasure bowl, reflecting the city, a singing bowl, as Connie Svabo sees it, resonating, re-sounding, punctuating a city mindful of itself. A project in [Archive 3.0](#), or more – as Gabriella (Giannachi) would have it [\[Link\]](#).

There are more comments about this game-changing project, this daring cultural innovation on my Vimeo site – [\[Link\]](#)

Boijmans has an extraordinary record for addressing key questions about the future of museums and art galleries – for example, I was proud to be part of curator Annemartine Van Kesteren's extraordinary "design Column" – a series of "critical design" exhibitions commenting on current events through the works of design studios – [\[Link\]](#)

Director Sjarel Ex and architect Winy Maas of [MVRDV](#) are coming to Stanford in December to share their ideas. Watch out for the events – a conversation and a workshop December 4,5,6.

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Here is what we are saying:

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam is one of the top art and design museums of Europe – [\[Link\]](#)

Under construction is a new extension that will change the way we think of art galleries and museums. We are calling it a Collections Depot.

Art is one of the greatest catalysts for change; it has the rare capacity to move us, to forge new connections, to inspire and provoke new ideas. Yet people rarely associate art museums with innovation. In Rotterdam we aim to change this by creating a new kind of building with the highest density of art works on earth, with 100% of our collection available to visitors through rich user-centered experiences, facilitated by the latest tech, where we can all connect our diverse interests in art, culture and design with our different hopes and visions for the future.

We invite you to join us in designing this museum of the future.

## Why art matters

What truly moves people? A great painting, a singular sculpture or piece of music, a remarkable piece of design. Art has the rare capacity to speak to all of us about what really matters. Art reminds us of what it is

to be human, what makes us who we are, and what propels us forward. Museums are laboratories of ideas and hubs of marvelous experience where creative effort from all periods and places can help us understand better our own place in the world.

## Democratizing art

Museums worldwide show only 8% of their art to the public. The rest is locked away. At Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, when the time came to upgrade our storage, we let our imagination run free. We imagined a place where 100% of the collection is available to everyone, where people will be free to explore on their own, making their way through a buzzing beehive of activity where art works packed and unpacked, restored and studied in dazzling quantities.

We imagined how we might open up the museum to complete democratic access, with everyone as a curator.

Rotterdam architect Winy Maas, co-founder of MVRDV, one of the world's great architecture studios, has designed an extraordinary forty-meter high silvered bowl – the world's first public art Collections Depot that breaks

with museum standards and gives unlimited access to 150,000 treasures.

In 2018 the building will stand tall. We are now addressing the challenge to make the museum experience completely transformative for everyone.

## Let your imagination run free

For this dream, there are no templates, no rules, no precedents. In true Rotterdam spirit, we are free to be pioneers – to do things differently. How might we navigate through a warehouse filled with more art than any other place on earth, and without a curator?

We invite you to push our ideas forward, to strengthen, challenge and question them. To make us reach higher so that we can connect with more people in more profound, moving and enduring ways.

Let your imagination run free. What kind of experience do you dream of?

## More about the collections of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen

Located in the heart of the city of Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen is one of the oldest museums in the Netherlands, built from the passions of private collectors. It is the only art museum in The Netherlands where visitors can travel through time, exploring art from the 14th century to the 21st; from Bosch, Rembrandt and Cézanne to Dalí and contemporary Dutch Design. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen is international in focus, including works by American artists such as Warhol, Rothko, Basquiat and Serra and is widely known for its design collection, surrealist art, for its prints and drawings, and for its daring experiments in exhibition design. [\[Link\]](#)

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