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PORTRAIT GALLERY OF THE GOLDEN AGE
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Press release and invitation
Amsterdam Museum
21 November 2014



Mayor van der Laan opens the Amsterdam Light Festival and *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* exhibition

On Thursday 27th of November Mayor Eberhard van der Laan will give the starting signal for the third edition of the Amsterdam Light Festival which will simultaneously and officially open the *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* exhibition. Van der Laan will switch on the very first light installation, 'The Gatekeepers', in reference to the *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* exhibition. The exhibition which includes 30 giant group portraits from the Amsterdam Museum and the Rijksmuseum will be available to view from the 29th of November up to the end of 2016 in the Hermitage Amsterdam. The lighting of *The Gatekeepers* will take place in front of the main entrance to the Hermitage Amsterdam which any interested parties will be able to view from the quayside or from the water. The Amsterdam Light Festival runs until the 18th of January 2015 and will show no fewer than 40 works of art which can be seen from the water on the 'Water Colors' route and along the 'Illuminade' route on foot.



Artist impression *The Gatekeepers*

The Gatekeepers

The entrance to the Hermitage Amsterdam will be guarded by two, six-meter tall gatekeepers from the 27th of November onwards. They depict Pieter Pietersz Hasselaer (1582-1651), one of the four major figures of the *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* exhibition. Hasselaer is a good example of how it was possible through these group relationships to climb up to some of the most powerful social circles in the city. The giant, light-emitting gatekeepers will protect the exhibition, so to speak. The visual artist, Irma de Vries (1980, The Netherlands) designed the two figures, which resemble holograms. She built them so that their plastic bodies are convex on one side and hollowed out on the other. The light projection has been made to fit them precisely using *video mapping*.

Amsterdam Light Festival

Amsterdam Light Festival is the winter light festival for young and old. For a period of 50 days this winter, the historic centre of Amsterdam will become the atmospheric backdrop for the light and water festival. The festival is an open air exhibition of light sculptures and projections by contemporary (international) artists. Amsterdam Light Festival brings light to the darkest period of the year and it's colourful works of art will 'lighten the mood' of anyone who sees it. The festival offers a water route (Water Colors, from Thursday 27th of November 2014 up to Sunday 18th of January 2015) and a walking route (Illuminade, Thursday 11th of December until Sunday 4th of January 2015).

www.amsterdamlightfestival.com

Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age

The exhibition *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* will open in Hermitage Amsterdam from 29 November 2014. The presentation features over thirty group portraits dating from the 17th century. These "brothers and sisters" of *The Night Watch* are unique in the world and rarely seen due to their size. They originate from the Amsterdam Museum and Rijksmuseum and are accompanied by other paintings and objects. Together they illustrate the story of collective citizenship that typifies the Netherlands. The question of who these civic guards, regents and regentesses were and their achievements within 17th century urban culture forms the thread of the story. While the power in the rest of Europe lay in the hands of rulers and church officials, the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands was ruled by the bourgeoisie. By governing city and country, trading, taking on the city's defence, stimulating scientific developments and setting up and managing the social safety net, the citizens ensured that the Republic became one of the most powerful and prosperous nations in Europe. The exhibition literally and figuratively gives a face to these influential men and women, particularly those from the city of Amsterdam, and makes it clear how the 17th century mentality led to manners and standards that can still be recognized in contemporary society.

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Editorial note and invitation

Members of the press are invited to attend the official opening of the Amsterdam Light Festival and *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* on Thursday 27th of November at 6.00 pm. If you would like to attend, please contact Marion Wolff via m.wolff@amsterdammuseum.nl or M +31 (0)6 245 10 808. From 3.45 pm there will be a procession through the city, by the civic guards of the *Bastion RA Naarden*, the *Sint Matthiasgilde* of Oploo and the *Schutterij van Amsterdam*. From 16.45 onwards they will be the guard of honour at the entrance to the Hermitage Amsterdam and will attend the opening ceremony by the Mayor.

For further information and images please contact:

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