

PRESS RELEASE

104,000 stones light Rotterdam up: Holocaust monument LEVENSLICHT presented



LEVENSLICHT, Eva Cohen-Hartogkade in Rotterdam, NL Image by Studio Roosegaarde - Ruben Hamelink.

The temporary Holocaust monument LEVENSLICHT was presented in Rotterdam today. The purpose of the light monument is to raise awareness that Jews, Roma and Sinti lived throughout the Netherlands and that the people who were persecuted, deported and murdered during the Second World War were locals or neighbors. The monument, consisting of 104,000 luminescent memorial stones to represent the 104,000 victims, was designed by Studio Roosegaarde, commissioned by the National Committee 4 and 5 May.

On January 27, 2020, it is seventy-five years ago that Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp, the international symbol of the Holocaust, was liberated. This temporary light monument is dedicated to the Dutch Holocaust victims in the municipality they were deported from.

In Rotterdam the monument can be seen once in its total size, with 104,000 luminescent memorial stones lit up on the banks of the Maas where the victims of Rotterdam were collected and deported at the time. The monument LEVENSLICHT was presented by artist Daan Roosegaarde, in the presence of secretary of Loods 24 and Jewish children's monument Frank van Gelderen, State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport Paul Blokhuis, mayor of Rotterdam Ahmed Aboutaleb and chairman of the National Committee 4 and 5 May Gerdi Verbeet.

The monument can be visited from January 22 to February 2 in 170 Dutch municipalities with a Holocaust past. Never before has the Holocaust been commemorated in so many places at the same time.



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Light monument

Stones are important in both the Jewish memorial tradition and in Roma and Sinti culture. Daan Roosegaarde and his team have used this tradition as inspiration. The luminescent memorial stones are absorbed with fluorescent pigments and light up under the influence of invisible ultraviolet light. Every few seconds you see the stones radiate a blue color which extinguishes again: like a breath in light.

Daan Roosegaarde: *"It is an honor to be asked for this project and to be able to make a public light monument to remember the Holocaust. LEVENSLICHT is a place for everyone where we remember the past, but also think about what the future may look like."*

75 years of freedom

The monument complements existing commemorations in the context of 75 years of freedom.

Gerdi Verbeet, chairman of the National Committee: *"75 years of freedom cannot be celebrated without looking back at the most black page of the Second World War: the Holocaust. This unique project lets people in their own neighborhood reflect on the horrors of the past, in a local and personal way. It is special to see how municipalities present and supplement this in their own way, with a speaker or with reading names."*

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High-res images and interviews with Daan Roosegaarde are available on request.