

PRESS RELEASE

Groninger Museum presents Daan Roosegaarde's first major museum solo show: *Presence*

From 22 June 2019, the Groninger Museum presents *Daan Roosegaarde – Presence*: the artist and innovator's first major museum solo project. Roosegaarde has developed this groundbreaking new interactive artwork specially for the Groninger Museum. Where he previously displayed his work in the external public domain, the artist now adopts the internal museum space for the first time, with a large-scale, phosphorescent landscape which changes colour and shape because of the presence of visitors. Unlike most exhibitions, which demand that art should be viewed from a distance, this installation encourages physical interaction. Roosegaarde is known for *Icoon Afsluitdijk* and international projects like *Waterlicht* and *Smog Free Tower*. As a pioneer of the landscape of the future, he investigates the concept of the Dutch word 'schoonheid' in its dual meaning – beautiful and clean – which takes shape in new social core values like clean air, clean water and clean energy. *Presence* envisions this theme by using new materials and principles of physics, evoking visitors to become aware of their own presence in a unique manner.

Living lab

Presence is an 800 m² living lab. Although the installation is the result of innovative material-technical research, it comes across as highly intuitive. Different areas allow visitors to experience various changes in perspective – from large and solid to small and mobile, from dark to bright. In one gallery, futuristic spheres draw lines on the floor. Another seems filled with luminous stardust, calling to mind a vast city seen from an airplane. Other rooms appear to scan visitors by recording their presence in silhouettes and patterns. The interaction between visitor and work creates constantly changing visual impressions. Not only looking and observing but, most of all, touching, feeling and moving are essential.

Inspiration

Climate change and a desire to improve the landscape inspired Roosegaarde to make *Presence*. In the work, visitors' traces, which eventually disappear to make room for new ones, symbolise the impact of humans' presence on earth. Roosegaarde: "You make the work and the work makes you. The effect of your presence makes you aware of your relationship with the environment and how we can influence it." Another source of inspiration was the landscape and environment art of the 1960s and '70s in which interactivity and awareness of the earth's vulnerability played an important role too. These artists made outdoor landscapes an integral part of their art; Roosegaarde however, takes a new step by taking his landscape inside of the museum walls.

Daan Roosegaarde

Daan Roosegaarde (1979, Nieuwkoop) is known for his innovative designs for public space, which bring together social design, art and (bio-)technology. He characterises his work as 'techno-poetry': a blend of technology and creativity that blurs the boundaries between the humanities and the sciences and is, according to the artist, the engine that drives social change. Working with a team of designers, engineers and project managers, he investigates subjects such as the relationship between humans and technology, between the digital and the physical, and between living and nonliving matter. Natural phenomena such as luminous jellyfish and fireflies fascinate him and the element of light frequently plays a key role in his

work, as we see in projects like *Waterlicht*, *Smog Free Tower*, *Icoon Afsluitdijk*, and in *Presence*.

Groninger Museum

Presence is a pioneering project not only for Roosegaarde but also for the Groninger Museum, with visitors actively influencing the look of the installation. It experiments with art and design and spurs us to rethink the concept of 'the exhibition'. This innovative hybrid show builds on the Groninger Museum's ambition of focusing on the boundaries where art, design, fashion and technology meet. *Presence* was developed with the curators Sue-an van der Zijpp and Mark Wilson.

Book

In conjunction with the exhibition, the renowned art book publisher Phaidon will launch the English-language monograph *Daan Roosegaarde*. Lecturis will simultaneously publish a Dutch translation. The book features contributions by Nico Daswani of the World Economic Forum, Fumio Nanjo of Mori Arts Museum in Tokyo, Carol Becker of Columbia University in New York, and Daan Roosegaarde.

Daan Roosegaarde – Presence takes place from 22 June 2019 through 12 January 2020 at the Groninger Museum.

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Note to the editor

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