

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DAAN ROOSEGAARDE REVEALS NEW DESIGNS FOR LEGENDARY 32 KM DUTCH DIKE



Gates of Light: the 60 historical floodgates are renovated and enhanced by a retroreflective coating. Headlights of passing cars will create a spectacular entrance to the dike. (image: Studio Roosegaarde)

The Minister of Infrastructure and Environment Melanie Schultz van Haegen and Daan Roosegaarde unveiled the new designs for ‘Icoon Afsluitdijk’ during a festive kick off weekend on 2-4 September 2016. The kick-off was marked by a special edition of ‘Waterlicht’ and an exhibition of the new permanent and temporary concepts to be realised in the coming year. The Afsluitdijk, a monument of global appeal and a Dutch design icon, will be strengthened in the coming years to safeguard its future and to continue to protect the Netherlands against the force of water. Together with these plans, the Dutch government and surrounding regions have asked Dutch designer and innovator, Daan Roosegaarde and his team of designers and engineers to reinforce the iconic value of the dike in an ambitious programme entitled Icoon Afsluitdijk. With a subtle layer of light, history and interaction, Roosegaarde creates new connections between the past and the future, the practical and the poetic and between man and nature.

Roosegaarde presented the permanent and temporary works which are being developed to enhance the beauty of the dike and its position as a showcase for Dutch design, water engineering and as a prototype for the smart cities of tomorrow. Permanent works include ‘Gates of Light’, a unique retroreflective layer developed by Roosegaarde for the Afsluitdijk which will cover the concrete of the Lorentz and Stevin lock complexes. This new layer will enable the 60 renovated monuments to light up by the headlights of passing cars. When there are no cars, no light will be seen. In this way, Roosegaarde turns the locks into a cinematic experience creating a spectacular entrance to the Afsluitdijk. Furthermore, Roosegaarde will emphasise the straight line of the unique 32 km dike with ‘Line of Light’, adding a light reflective layer to the guide rail on the Afsluitdijk which will reinforce the zen feeling, bringing calmness and safety to the dike. Both permanent concepts are new additions to Roosegaarde’s oeuvre to create smart and sustainable landscapes of the future.

Other temporary designs are ‘Waterlicht’ shows the strength and fragility of living with water. A special version was on show during the start-off weekend at one of the most beautiful places in the Netherlands, Breezanddijk. By creating a virtual flood, the installation shows how high the water would reach in the Netherlands without human intervention. ‘Waterlicht’

consists of wavy lines of light made with the latest LED laser technology, software and lenses. It is an unforgettable powerful and poetic experience.

'Windvogel' is being developed in collaboration with the Delft University of Technology and follows the dream of the late Wubbo Ockels (Dutch physicist and astronaut) to realise energy- generating kites. These high floating kites generate energy from the wind ranging from 20 up to 100 kW. In addition to Ockels' dream, Roosegaarde designed luminous cables for the kites, creating a play of dancing lines whilst visualising the energy which surrounds us.

'Glowing Nature' consists of natural bioluminescent algae cultivated to give more light and to live longer. These all natural micro-organisms are one of the oldest organisms of the planet. 'Glowing Nature' will be showcased in a historical bunker, dating from 1932 on the Friesland side of the dike. Visitors can interact directly with the algae as when the algae move, they emit light. The installation is a poetic example of the future of nature and energy in our world.

Minister Schultz: '*The Afsluitdijk stands for daring, action, and innovative engineering. In this project, we are building on that tradition and, in terms of flood risk management, sustainability, and innovation, the Afsluitdijk will thus remain a living legend today, tomorrow and in the distant future.'*

Roosegaarde: '*The Dutch landscape has traditionally been a place for innovation. Our dikes symbolise the creativity power of the Netherlands when it comes to living with water. Now it is time for an update. It is an honour to work on this project.'*

ABOUT DAAN ROOSEGAARDE

Designer and innovator Daan Roosegaarde (1979) is known internationally for his social designs. With his team of designers and engineers at Studio Roosegaarde he creates designs aimed at improving the relationship between man and space. Roosegaarde has won various international design and art awards, and he has had exhibitions at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the Tate Modern in London and in public spaces across the globe. Interaction, innovation and beauty are key in what he himself describes as "techno-poetry".

PROJECT TRAILER

Icoon Afsluitdijk <https://www.studioroosegaarde.net/project/icoon-afsluitdijk/>
Waterlicht Afsluitdijk (add on website)

PARTNERS

Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, Rijkswaterstaat, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Province of Friesland, Province of North Holland, De Nieuwe Afsluitdijk, Delft University of Technology, University of Aachen and many more.

/// For more information contact Studio Roosegaarde
Public Relations/ Marie-Anne Souloumiac
T +[31 \(0\)103070909](tel:+310103070909), marieanne@studioroosegaarde.net
www.studioroosegaarde.net