

Press release
Amsterdam Museum
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Director of the Amsterdam Museum to move to Berlin

Paul Spies will become director of the Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin from 1 February 2016

The director of the Amsterdam Museum and Museum Willet-Holthuysen, Paul Spies, has been appointed director of the Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin as of 1 February 2016. In this role, he will also oversee the establishment of a permanent exhibition about Berlin in the Humboldt-Forum, the imperial palace which is currently being rebuilt in the centre of Berlin. During his seven-year directorship of the Amsterdam Museum, Spies has brought about a modernisation of the museum and a substantial increase in visitor numbers. He has also taken concrete steps to develop partnerships between museums. The Supervisory Board aims to fill the resulting vacancy as of 1 February 2016, and the applications procedure will begin shortly.

From the Amsterdam Historical Museum to the Amsterdam Museum

When Paul Spies leaves in early 2016, he will have been director of the Amsterdam Historical Museum, known since 2010 as the Amsterdam Museum, for seven years. Under his leadership, the museum underwent a modernisation and was also unusually active in other locations. Many of the exhibitions of the Amsterdam Museum were renewed, including the permanent exhibition 'Amsterdam DNA', which is seen as a leading exhibition by both the public and other city museums in the Netherlands and abroad.

The interior of the 19th-century residence that houses the Museum Willet-Holthuysen – the Amsterdam Museum's satellite museum – was also restored to its original state. In addition, since 2013 the Amsterdam Museum has developed half of the Cromhouthuizen, where the Bijbels Museum is also established.

Furthermore, Spies instigated and directed exhibitions, such as the semi-permanent exhibition entitled 'Portrait gallery of the Golden Age', which has been on view at the Hermitage Amsterdam since the end of November last year. The Amsterdam Museum has rented half of the Hermitage Amsterdam for this project in order to display its 'crown jewels': a collection of colossal 17th-century group portraits.

The successful modernisation of the museums and the expansion of the exhibition locations have led to an exponential increase in total visitor numbers: in the year preceding Spies' appointment, the museum welcomed approximately 210,000 visitors (over two locations), whereas this year there will be nearly 500,000 visitors (over four locations).

Partnerships

Partnerships between museums have played a central role in the Amsterdam Museum's policy in recent years, both within the city, in the Netherlands as a whole, and beyond. Together with Judikje Kiers of the Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder museum and the Bijbels Museum, Spies founded Amsterdam Heritage Museums collaboration, in which the museums share a back office in many areas. The Amsterdam Museum is also a leading player in the Netherlands Museums Association and the

Informal Network of European City Museums, which meets annually and develops common projects such as the "Football Halleluja" exhibition. This network has drawn up the so-called Declaration of City Museums, which sets out the objectives of city museums. Last year, the Amsterdam Museum concluded a partnership agreement with the Museum of the City of New York. Spies is also co-chair of the Board of the Amsterdam Cultural Institutes (*Amsterdamse Culturele Instellingenoverleg*, ACI), the umbrella organisation for all of the city's cultural institutes. He will also resign this role at the beginning of 2016.

Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin and the Humboldt-Forum

As the director of the Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin, Spies will manage six museum institutions, including the Märkisches Museum, the historical museum of the Land (State) of Berlin. Far-reaching renovations and reorganisations are planned for various other locations. In addition, in the coming years, Spies will focus on the design of a floor of the Humboldt-Forum. In 2019, a permanent presentation on the history of Berlin, covering an area of no less than 4,500 m², will be opened in the striking complex of buildings of the Berlin Schloss, which is currently being rebuilt. Spies will manage the concept development and composition of this new museum in the heart of Berlin's city centre.

The Amsterdam Museum

The Amsterdam Museum tells the story of the city of Amsterdam: its past, present and future. Four core values – entrepreneurship, freedom of thought, creativity and citizenship – form the basis of the city's DNA. These concepts are used to bring history to life and to link it to the past and the future. The museum believes that it has a social responsibility to make the story of Amsterdam accessible and to present it to as wide an audience as possible. The Amsterdam Museum Foundation is supported by the City of Amsterdam, the Dutch Bankgiro Lottery and Allen & Overy.

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