



Museum Night ROTTERDAM

On Saturday, March 1st 2008 at 7:30pm in Las Palmas, Rotterdam, the official opening of the Rotterdamse Museumnacht (Rotterdam Museum Night) was held with the lighting of an artificial moon.

by Heather Tucker

Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Berlin, Paris and various cities in the UK have created the tradition, usually for one night a year, of opening the doors on museums and galleries throughout the city for an evening of art, culture and atmosphere.

Officially running from 8pm until 2am, 44 venues were open for visit and lectures, including the more famous Boijmans, National Architecture Institute (NAi) and the Kunsthal Rotterdam. Entrance to each venue is not by the typical method of showing your ticket but instead by displaying your Museumnacht badge complete with flashing light. In addition there are a number of the flashing light accessories you can pick up along the way from advertisers such as the Rabobank, making the collection of flashing light gadgets almost an art form in itself.

Tickets could be bought online prior to the event for €11 and then €15 on the night at most of the open museums and galleries and include a free map and

flashing badge. However, a word of warning, the order online button disappears somewhere around 48 hours before the event and tickets on the night are limited at each venue. So if you do want to attend next year's event, it is worth getting your ticket in advance or planning to be early through the doors of one of the bigger galleries or museums.

Most visitors seemed to enjoy walking or cycling from museum to gallery, however there was both a free (for ticket holders) Museumnacht bus and boat running throughout the night providing an alternative method for getting around.

It was amazing to see just how popular Museumnacht was, including many English speaking visitors, and with each museum goer easily identified by their flashing badge, it made for a great atmosphere. Although at times it was a bit crowded and noisy in some of the museums.

One downside of Museumnacht for Ex-pats is that everything is in Dutch, so

if you don't speak Dutch I recommend that you try and find a Dutch-speaking friend to drag along. Otherwise you may find yourself in a museum/gallery that is completely not what you were looking for. For example, we managed to avoid the schizophrenic experience being advertised at V2 but weren't able to miss out on the N.Holloway exhibit featuring a live, almost naked man laying on a table inside a room filled with very strange people and random, loud, startling noises.

Museumnacht is great if you want to check out a number of museums without having to fork out the entrance fee for each one. It is also good for just seeing museums in a new light and enjoying the almost party like atmosphere in the city.

For further information on this years events see the Rotterdamse Museumnacht website (in Dutch) at www.rotterdamsemuseumnacht.nl The next Rotterdamse Museumnacht is scheduled for March 7th 2009. ■