

The Rotterdam City Hall

Highlights of the
Rotterdam City Hall



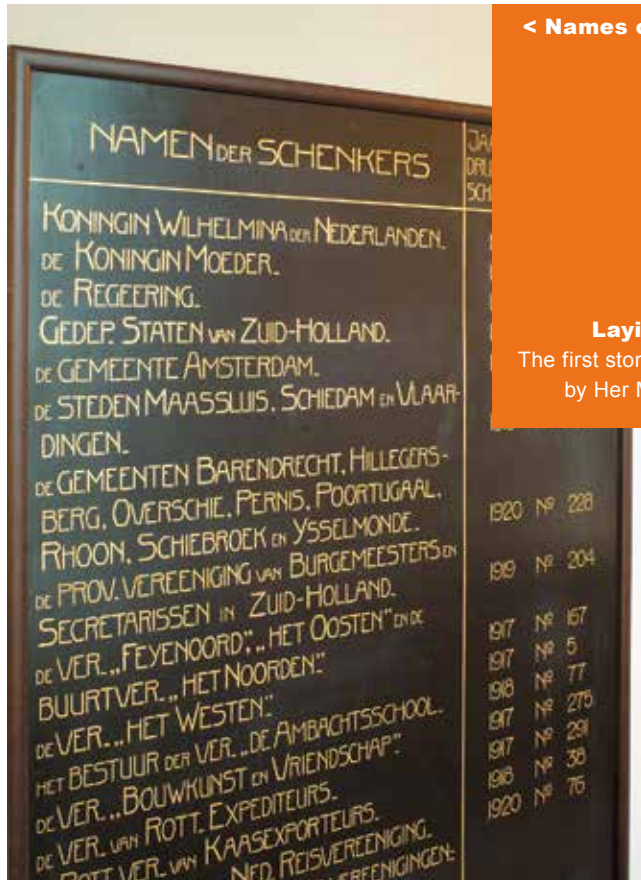


Entrance doors

The city hall entrance doors are made of wood covered with bronzen plates.

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< Names of the donors

Laying of the first stone >

The first stone was laid on 15 July 1915
 by Her Majesty Queen Wilhelmina.



History

In 1909, the then municipal council decided to build a new city hall and a new post office. A new city hall was sorely needed because the old one did not offer enough room for all civil servants, forcing many of them to work at inadequate locations throughout the city. The decision was made to build the new city hall at its current location at Coolsingel, which was then called 'the polder' because of



its 'red-light district' - a 'somewhat dark' area of the city. This entire area had to be demolished to make way for the new city hall. The municipal council hoped that this would also solve the local nuisance problem. Koos Speenhoff composed a song, the last verse of which referred to this eviction. It translates as:

'Hey Rooie, you will be shocked
When you have sailed home,
You will find and see
That you no longer recognize the polder. The
whole shebang is being demolished
The masters are having their way
The girls must vacate the premises
The mayor is moving in.'

Prof. Henri Evers

The city hall was designed by Prof. Henri Evers.

By August 1913, the demolition of this area (home to approximately 2,400 residents) was complete.

Design

The city hall was designed by Prof Henri Evers, architect and professor at the University of Delft. His design was one of the five designs in a closed competition held by the municipal council. The Rotterdam municipal council wanted the building to be 'old-fashioned'. That is why Prof Evers' design in a Beaux-Arts style was chosen over some more modern designs. The construction was headed by A.J.Th. Kok, an architect working for the Rotterdam Local Public Works Authority. The first foundation pile was put into the ground on 12 August 1914. The first stone was laid on 15 July 1915 by Her Majesty Queen Wilhelmina. On 15 June 1918, the construction of the city hall had progressed such that the first department (the Housing Service) could relocate to Coolsingel.

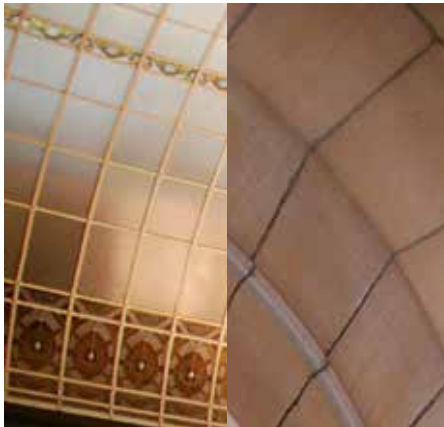
Five years later, on 10 August 1920, the city hall was completed and the first meeting of the Municipal Executive was held in the building on 17 August 1920. On 1 September 1920, Mayor Zimmerman held a speech and opened the first municipal council meeting in the new Council Chamber.

During the construction, a number of municipalities, regional and national authorities and many prominent Rotterdam companies, associations and families donated almost all elements of the interior

and internal and external decorative including rare marbles from Italy. Volume of the city hall: 168,250 cubic metres. Total costs: NLG 2,850,000. elements of the city hall (a detailed list of this is available).

The stained glass windows, banks, mosaics, façade sculptures and suchlike were incorporated during the construction and the other gifts, such as paintings, statues, candelabras, chandeliers etc. were installed immediately after completion of the building.

The following materials were used for the city hall: 1,500,000 kilograms of iron, 15,375 cubic metres of concrete, 8,336 wooden piles, 3,500 cubic metres of natural stone,



Restauratie

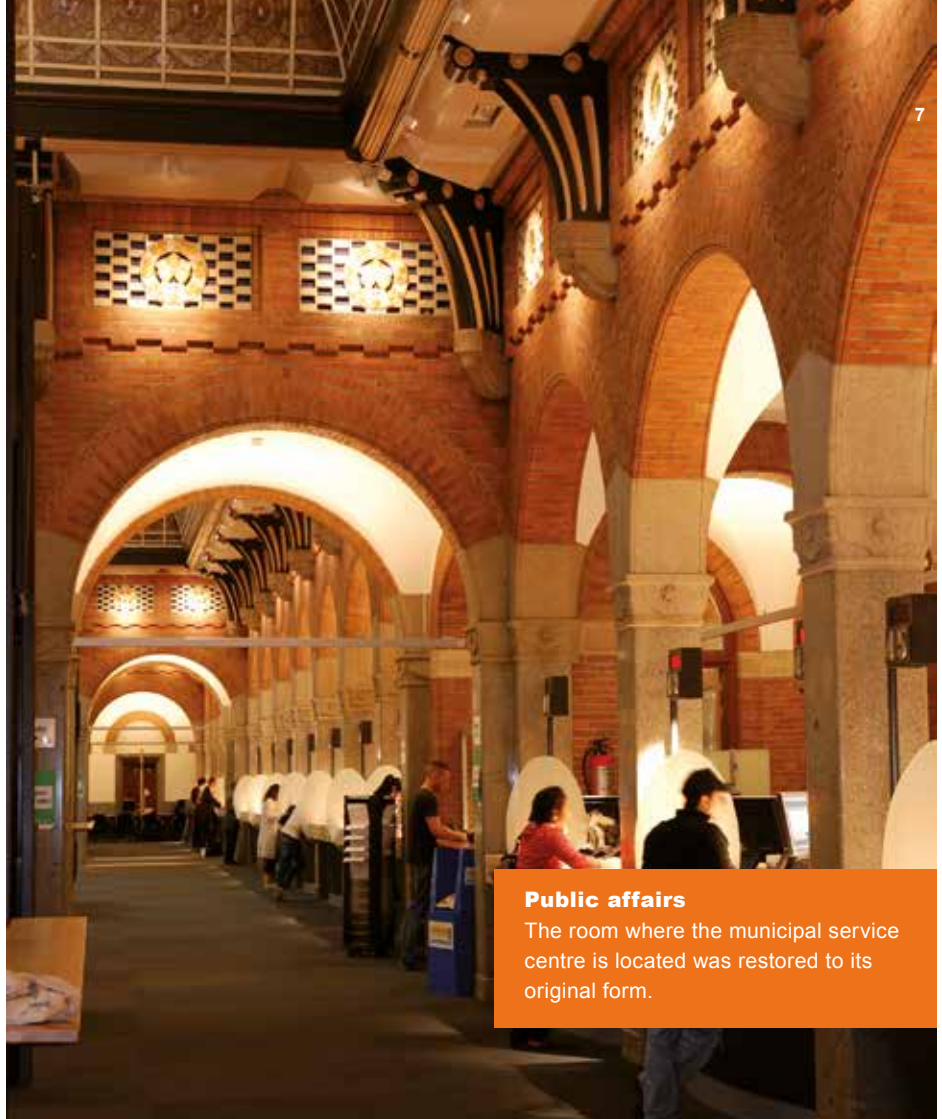
Restoration

A large project involving the restoration of the city hall started in September 2000.

The purpose of this restoration project was to preserve the historical splendour of the building for the future and to update the building to today's standards and requirements, taking its monumental status into account (the building has been a nationally listed building since April 2000).

The restoration of the exterior focused on:

- the inspection, cleaning and repair of the outside walls and tower; the war damage was not repaired in view of its historical nature;
- repair work on the roofs, glass roof covers, gutters and rainwater pipes, using original materials;
- repair work on the windows, doors, frames and fencing, all of which were painted in their original colours.
- cleaning of the outside walls, tower and courtyard (sandstone and tuff stone) using laser techniques which do not affect the natural protective layer of the sandstone and tuff stone, unlike traditional cleaning techniques.



Public affairs

The room where the municipal service centre is located was restored to its original form.

The maintenance work performed on the interior focused on:

- installation technology (heating, cooling and ventilation);
- sanitary fittings (toilet groups, sewerage);
- electrical installations (emergency power system, electrical energy supply);
- lift technology (lift for handicapped persons near the entrance of the Public Affairs department).

Improved accessibility

In 2005, two projects were launched to improve accessibility to the city hall for visitors. The first project focused on the refurbishment of the rear section, where the Public Affairs department is located. The room was made more calming and restored to its original form. Moreover, cabins were installed for privacy-sensitive matters. The room was first used in early 2006. The second project was launched to improve accessibility to the city hall for handicapped persons. For this purpose, two lifts were installed in the building, providing access to all floors within the city hall, including the top floor: a complex procedure in a historical building. The restoration of the city hall was completed at the end of 2008. The municipal



office at Rodezand was demolished, to be replaced by new premises (the 'Timmerhuis') in 2015.

That is why the staff restaurant and kitchen facilities were relocated to the front side of the city hall's top floor. The top floor on the side of Stadhuisstraat and Doelwater were transformed into a meeting room. Separate meeting units were built in the attic. Office units with flexspaces for staff are located on the second and third floors of the city hall.

Start

This visit to a portion of the city hall starts at Coolsingel, with a description of the façade. After that, all outdoor walls, the courtyard, the central hall, the wedding rooms, Citizens' Hall, the Executive Chamber and the Council Chamber are described.



Outside walls

Ground pattern

The ground pattern of the city hall is a rectangle with a front and rear section, connected by small wings. The wings have gates that give access to a courtyard.

The complex has five floors: a ground floor, a first, second and third floor and a top floor. The tower is situated above the centre of the front building and is crowned with a golden Angel of Peace. The tower including the sculpture has a height of 75 metres. The middle section of this front building includes the main entrance and, on the first floor, the Citizens' Hall, the official reception room of the municipality. The front side of the

Citizens' Hall has a balcony that offers a view of Coolsingel and Stadhuisplein.

The city hall has an 86-metre-long façade at Coolsingel, 106-metre-long side walls, a height of 32 metres and a tower height of 71.5 metres. The city hall, the former post office, the Holland Banking Union building and the former Bijenkorf department store are the only buildings at Coolsingel that withstood the bombing of 14 May 1940.

Façade

The city hall's 86-metre-long façade.

Façade

The style of the building is 'Beaux-Arts', late nineteenth-century architecture that combines styles from various periods. The functional, modern structure is covered with decorations containing references to the past, without being exact copies. The buildings have clear sections and regular floor plans. The Rotterdam city hall is, besides the Peace Palace in The Hague, one of the few Beaux-Arts buildings in the



Netherlands.

The façade has a classical composition. This is expressed by its symmetry: the left and right sections of the façade are mirror images of each other, the corner sections and middle section slightly protruding. Other Renaissance characteristics include the crow-stepped gable above the entrance section and the cupolas. The façade is made of sandstone, a type of stone that can

be modelled easily. The façade's sculpture mostly represents the city's glorious history and the virtuousness of its administration.

The original façade design included three small balconies. After a comment from Queen Wilhelmina, they were changed into one large balcony. Under the balcony, the Shipping Industry - the industry that contributed the most to the city's

< St. Lawrence Church

The reconstruction of the St Lawrence Church after the bombing of 14 May 1940. The city hall, post office and Bijenkorf department store survived the attack.

Entrance >

The entrance doors, donated by the Chabot family.



development - is highlighted by four sitting figures (sculptor A. Leefflang). They represent the development of the shipping industry: the Shipwright, the Sailmaker, the Steam Worker and the Electrician (from left to right).

A gift from the Chabot family, the entrance doors to the city hall are made of wood covered with bronze plates. Each door depicts four sea devils; the handles show the municipal arms. Left and right of the stairs, above the two ground floor windows, there are bas-reliefs: the Gatekeeper (representing vigilance) on the left and the Taxman (representing taxation) on the right. They were made by sculptor S. Miedema. The letters U.P.N.O. near the Taxman are short for: Ultra Posse Nemo Obligatur, meaning 'No one is obligated beyond what he is able to do'. Near the gatekeeper's window and further to the left, you can see many bullet holes, a reminder of the battle of Rotterdam in May 1940. The subtropical phoenix palms left and right of the city hall's entrance are only here during the summer. During the winter, they are cared for in the greenhouses

of the Municipal Nursery Garden in the Kralingen district.

The statues directly above the balcony represent 'government virtues': Enterprise, Policy, Reliability and Perseverance (from left to right, sculpted by Prof A.W.M. Odé). Above the statues, the heads of three historical persons were sculpted (by E. van der Tuuk), each of whom have been important for the development of various areas of cultural life in Rotterdam:

- Johannes van der Veeken, the director of the Dutch East India Company (around 1600) active in Trade and Shipping;
- Erasmus, a humanist and the most prominent intellectual of his age (around 1500) in Science;
- Pieter de Hooch, an artist who worked in Rotterdam for a long time (around 1650) in the Arts.



Façade

Statues above the balcony

Between these sculptures, the emblems of these cultural areas are depicted: Mercatura and Ars Scientia. Below the cornices of the façade and side walls, the building trades are shown by heads in medallions (sculpted by L.P.M. Wensing). The crow-stepped gable, above the sitting Patroness, displays the following words: S(enatus) P(opulus) Q(ue) R(oterodamus). Aedificari Coeptum A(nno) D(omini) MIMXIV. Perfectum Ao Di MIMXX. Translated: The Municipal Administration and Citizenry of Rotterdam. The construction started in AD 1914 and was completed in AD 1920.

You can see the Municipal Arms above these words (sculpted by S. Miedema). It also shows the arms of the six municipalities that were added to Rotterdam: Charlois, Delfshaven, 's-Gravesande (Hoek van Holland, which was added to Rotterdam, used to be part of this municipality) Cool, Kralingen and Katendrecht. At the bottom left is the Provincial Arms, which is held by two figures with emblems of Horticulture and Cattle Breeding; to the right is the Arms of the Kingdom, with emblems of Trade and Shipping. The gable is crowned by a bronze genius holding a torch (sculpted by Toon



Dupuis), as a symbol of progress and development. In the left part of the middle section, the tympana of the three large windows (first-class Wedding Hall) symbolize marriage. A young man, Fortitudo (Strength), is depicted above the left window, a young woman with child, Maternitas (Motherhood), is depicted above the right window, while above the window in the middle, the marriage altar with the inscription Mutua Fides (Mutual trust) shows the mutual bond.

< Angel of peace

Lightning often strikes the golden Angel of Peace, but it remains unharmed because the lightning rods are very effective.

Progress >

Bronze genius holding a torch as a symbol of progress.

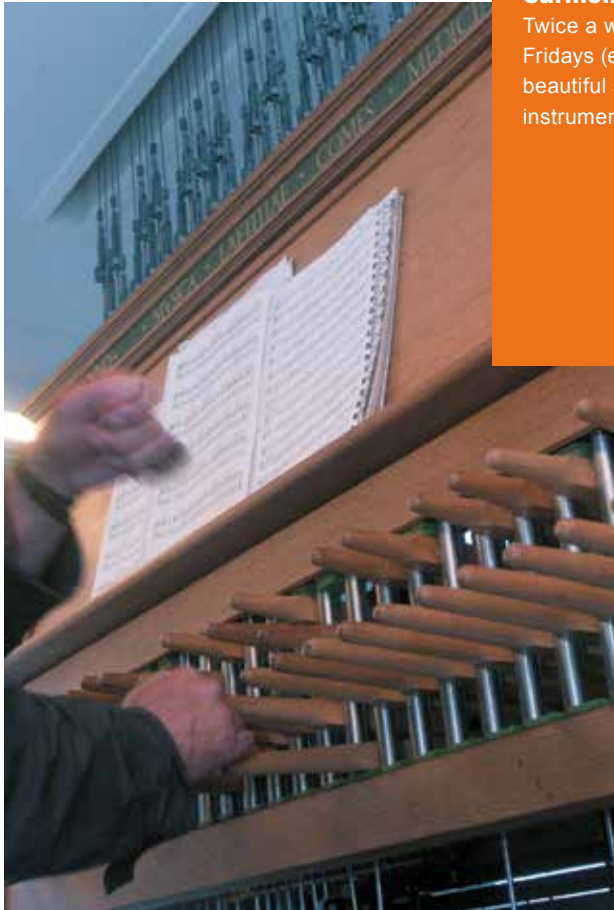


Behind the crow-stepped gable, you can see the flag tower which is covered in copper. This tower is crowned by the golden Angel of Peace (sculpted by Joh. Keller). The statue is 3.5 metres high, rising 75 metres above the ground. A 1916 municipal explanatory memorandum states the reason for choosing an angel: 'A figure of peace reminding of the peace which be kept for the Netherlands in this time of war thanks to Government policy'. A subcommittee noted that, in 1916, people were hoping that peace would be restored on earth at the opening of the city hall, 'which is why we recommend an angel'. The angel was a gift from Mr and Mrs W. Rueb. Rueb was a manufacturer who lived at Mauritsweg 65 around 1916. In 1979, the statue was dramatically restored and covered with a new layer of gold through a complicated procedure. Seventy 'double tower' gold leaf booklets (10x10 cm) were used for this purpose. Lightning often strikes the angel, but it remains unharmed because the lightning rods are very effective.



Patroness of Rotterdam

In the niche of the gable (sculpted by T. Dupuis).



Carillon

Twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays (evening opening), the beautiful sounds of this powerful instrument can be heard.

Carillon

The bell tower houses the carillon. The original carillon was donated by Mr P.J. van Ommeren and Mr Phs. van Ommeren Jr and was first played on 1 January 1921. It had forty-eight bells, with a total weight of 27,000 kilograms. In the summer of 1943, this carillon was transported by the occupiers to Germany and was never found again. The current carillon is a gift from the municipal staff and the heirs of Messrs Van Ommeren and was installed on 27 August 1948. It was founded by Petit & Fritsen bell foundry in Aarle Rixtel. The three largest bells bear the inscriptions 'Prosperity', 'Labour' and 'Peace'. The Peace bell is the heaviest bell.

The city hall's carillon is one of the largest in the Netherlands. But also in Europe, it is one of the biggest of its kind. Twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays, the beautiful sounds of this powerful instrument can be heard. The carillon is then played by city carilloneurs Geert Bierling or Richard de Waardt. In 1996, the carillon was thoroughly restored; the repair work took four months. Not only was

the carillon cleaned and tuned, two extra bells were added as well. The total number of bells is now sixty-three. The carillon also got a computerized mechanism. This mechanism allows for the carillon to be played when the city carillonneur is not playing the clavier. The carillonneur can program a certain song in order for it to be played at a later time. This is usually done on special occasions, for example at Christmas.

To the right of the balcony, above the three large windows of the meeting room of the Municipal Executive, you can see the heads of Salomon and Pericles. Salomon was the king of Israel in the tenth century BC and was renowned for his wisdom and international trade acumen. Pericles was a famous Athenian statesman from the fifth century BC, and also a famous orator and general. He wanted to turn the state into the purest possible democracy. Between the heads, there is a representation of the law, bearing the text 'Servi legis simus, which means: It is unwise to be a slave to the law.



Carillon

The Peace bell is the heaviest bell.

The following persons were city carillonneurs:

- Ferdinand Timmermans, from 1924 to 1956;
- Leen 't Hart, from 1957 to 1975;
- Cor Don, from 1975 to 1978;
- Addie de Jong, from 1978 to 1997;
- Gerard de Waardt, from 1978 to 2014;
- Geert Bierlink, from 1997 to nu;
- Richard de Waardt, from 2013 to nu.

Johan van Oldenbarnevelt

The right corner pavilion contains the bronze statue of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, made by sculptors Ch. van Wijk and Prof A.W.M. Odé. Van Oldenbarnevelt (1547-1619) was the scion of a family of regents and a statesman. He studied in Leuven, Cologne and Heidelberg and established himself as a lawyer in The Hague in 1570. After 1572 (the Capture of Brielle), he joined the revolt against the Beggars ('Geuzen'). Together with William of Orange, he tried to prevent a dictatorship of Beggars and to bring the families of regents back to power. In 1576, he was appointed councillor pensionary of Rotterdam. A pensionary was lawyer of the city, secretary at meetings and representative of the County Council.

Oldenbarnevelt exerted considerable influence due to the permanent nature of his office. He held this office until 1586, when he became councillor pensionary of Holland and West Friesland. He prevented the stadtholdership from becoming a position

held by monarchs and managed to reach the Twelve Years' Truce (against the will of Prince Maurits). After a serious church conflict in which Prince Maurits sided with Van Oldenbarnevelt's opponents, Van Oldenbarnevelt was brought before a special court, sentenced to death and beheaded. On both sides of the statue, you can see the Municipal Arms and the Van Oldenbarnevelt family coat of arms.

Below the bay window of the Mayor's Chamber (above the statue), you can see the quote '*Sera parsimonia in fundo*' (It is too late to spare when you reach the dregs of the cask). Eagles can be found on the corner pillars of this chamber. The sitting figure of 'Justice' (sculpted by Prof Odé), holding the Law (Lex), fills the niche above the roof of the

Bronze statue

Johan van Oldenbarnevelt.



bay window, containing the words *'Lex dura sed lex'* (The law is harsh but it is the law).

On the pillars of the side balcony of the Mayor's Chamber (at Stadhuisstraat), the two figures represent 'Policy and Devotion' (sculpted by E. Jacobs). The figures were inspired by the two parables in Matthew 25: 'The Wise Virgin' and 'The Loyal Servant'. Above the window, there is the saying *'Sciam ommia angusta esse mensus Deum'* (May I be aware that everything is small, measured by the standard of God). The two small figures (by A. Leeftang) below the balcony represent spiritual and material interests. Below the window of the former chamber of the Alderman Responsible for Finance, a small sculpture refers to his position. Between the city hall and the former post office, you can see the exits of the ventilation system of the nuclear fallout shelters that were built between these two buildings.

Hugo de Groot

The walk starts at the left (northern) corner pavilion, where a bronze statue of Hugo Grotius, the Latin name of Hugo de Groot (1583-1645), was placed in 1970. It was created by artist Auke Hettema. In the sixteenth century, it was common practice to translate names into Latin. Hugo Grotius was a legal scholar, statesman and diplomat. He grew up as a scientific prodigy and became a lawyer at the age of 16.

Ventilation

Between the city hall and the former Postal Office, you can see the exits of the ventilation system of the nuclear fallout shelters.



In 1607, he was appointed procurator general of the High Court of Holland, and pensionary of Rotterdam in 1613. He was the first person to have codified maritime law (laid down in a code). In doing so, he assumed 'that the high seas were not subordinate to anyone'. To this day, his view serves as a guideline for modern maritime law. He was a supporter of the Remonstrants and of Van Oldenbarnevelt. He was imprisoned in Loevestein Castle in 1618. In 1621, he escaped the castle in a book chest and took up residence in Paris, where he wrote, among other things, *De iure belli ac pacis* (On the Law of War and Peace, 1625). He acted as a Swedish envoy in France from 1634-1644. Hugo de Groot was the founder of International Law.

On the left side of the pedestal, you can read the words *'Dat men voor al de waerheyd hebbe en de behoude: want sonder de waerheyd en is het geen vrede en is het geen liefde'*. [May one forever have and keep the truth: because without the truth, there



Bronze statue
Hugo de groot.

is neither peace nor love]. The right side says 'Omnia fort Batavis coelum aut mare: quicquid in orbe est huc venit, Hollandum nomen ubique patet' (The Batavians bear everything from heaven or from the sea: whatever the world offers, it is brought here, for Holland is known all over the world. The bronze statue is a worthy counterpart of (forms a pair with) the statue of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, which is in front of the right corner pavilion. Both pensionaries served the city during a time when Rotterdam started to flourish as a port. In the corner pavilion behind Hugo de Groot, two large figures represent the virtues that should be typical of administration; Tolerance and Independence (sculpted by J. Keller). Above the window, are the words 'In legibus libertas' (Liberty in the law). The small figures below the balcony represent the development of the Police Force. Poor Relief is commemorated by a small sculpture below the ground floor window, representing 'Benevolence on the basis of the law'. voorstellende 'Weldadigheid op de grondslag van der wet'.

Northern side at Doelwater



High above the window of the northern corner pavilion are the words 'Quid leges sine moribus et fides sine operibus' (What are laws without good behaviour and trust without engagement). The two figures next to the window again represent virtues that should be typical of administration, in this case 'Vigilance' and 'Diligence' (sculpted by A. Hesselink).

< Compulsory education

Between the doors of the former entrance to the Civil Registry, a boy is depicted, who represents 'Compulsory Education'.

Pelican >

The pelican with a nest of its young refers to Poor Relief.

Below the ground floor window, there is a sculpture of a pelican with a nest of its young, a representation referring again to Poor Relief. On the side walls, the figural sculptures are limited to the entrances. Above the entrance to the courtyard, you can see the Municipal Arms. If you continue walking along the side wall and between the doors of the former entrance to the Civil Registry/Population/Education etc., you can see a boy representing 'Compulsory Education'.



The image above the boy is one of the series of building trades (sculpted by L.P.M. Wensing), with the Municipal Arms above it.

Eastern side at Raam, Rodezand

You are now rounding the corner and walking below the old footbridge connecting the city hall with the police station. This street is called Raam. On the roof above the suppliers' entrances, a cock is depicted above the Municipal Arms. Further on, the attic windows contain several figural representations relating to the (former) 'Population' and 'Civil Registry' departments, now the Rotterdam Public Affairs department.

In the bed at Raamplein, the monument will return after completion of the Timmerhuis. This monument (by M. Ficheroux) is in the shape of an LP record, in memory of Rotterdam singer and cabaret performer Louis Davids (1883-1939). Davids was born here, at Zandstraat, one of the streets of the 'red-light' district which had to make way for the construction of the city hall.



Raamplein

In memory of Louis Davids (1883-1939).



Between the doors of the former second entrance to the Rotterdam Public Affairs department, there is a statue of a boy wearing a cape and hourglass, representing 'Time' (sculpted by F.E. Jeltasma). The head above it is one of the series of building trades. Below the balcony above the entrance to the former police post, the four heads represent the development in

Southern side at Stadhuisstraat

the police system. From left to right the night watch, the police with handcuffs, the police in the twentieth century and the port police. Below the porch, you can see 'the holy Hermandad' to the right and the 'Medusa head' to the left (sculpted by A. Leeflang). Above the passageway to the courtyard, there is a figure representing 'Duty' (sculpted by J. Keller).

Courtyard

You are now entering the gate to the courtyard. On the wall immediately to the right, you can see a bronze plaquette representing Maria de la Queillerie, wife of Jan van Riebeeck (colonial pioneer, 1619-1677), in memory of the landing at Cape in South Africa on 6 April 1652. This plaquette was unveiled in April 1952. Above the entrance to the dome is a text relating to the construction of the city hall. The walls of the dome have groups of bronze sculptures, made by artist Loekie Metz. They commemorate the Holocaust during the

Second World War. Below the left group are the words '*Verberg de verdrevenen, verraad vluchtelingen niet Isaiah 15:5*' [Hide the outcasts, do not betray the fugitives, Isaiah 16:5] and, below that, '*Indachtig 10.000 joodse inwoners van Rotterdam*' [In memory of 10,000 Jewish citizens of Rotterdam]. Reliefs of the same artist, representing the terrors of the Holocaust, are affixed to the pillars. The works of art were unveiled by Her Majesty Queen Beatrix on 27 October 1981. The centre of the courtyard contains a bluestone fountain with a bronze group of children (by S. Miedema, 1920). The work of art refers to Trade, Fishery and Technology, the main sources of income for Rotterdam. The fountain was a gift from the cities of Schiedam, Vlaardingingen and Maassluis. The arms of these cities are also depicted around the basin. To the left of the fountain, there is a bronze statue of Neptune and to the right of the fountain, there is a statue of Mercury with a snake. Both statues were sculpted by B. Ingen Housz. In 1997, the city hall's

< Dome

Images by Loekie Metz commemorate the Holocaust.



courtyard was thoroughly renovated. Not only was the garden's pattern changed, new plants were planted as well. For instance, the garden now has roses, trained trees and hydrangeas. The garden is bordered by boxwood hedges, and some phoenix palms can be admired during the summer. The garden was also newly paved. Above the arch-shaped entrances to the gallery below the Council Chamber, the large terracotta frieze symbolizes the five main departments of the municipal administration of olden days: Education, Finance, Poor Relief, Public Works and Business (sculpted by J. Keller). Both stone corner figures are heralds holding the Municipal Arms.



Courtyard

The bluestone fountain.



Great hall

You are now entering the city hall. In this large centre of the city hall, in terms of architecture one of the most important parts of the interior, the designer wanted to focus on depicting the importance of Rotterdam as a port and centre of transit traffic. The dimensions of the hall are: 20.50 metres long, 20 metres wide and 18.40 metres high.

European countries are depicted in the dome. The dome and, above it, the 71.5-metre-high tower, rest on four main pillars with images (by Johan Keller) that represent the other four continents: Africa, Asia, America and Oceania. The top of the dome has a 'lid' that bears the words 'Navigare necessare est' (To sail is necessary) around the Municipal Arms. This 'lid' can be removed to provide access to the bells. This became necessary on two occasions: after extreme frost, the sound had changed such that the bells had to be 'tuned' in Aarle Rixtel. The motto 'Stronger through struggle' is absent from the municipality's motto. This motto was only added to the official Rotterdam city arms



Great hall
Centre of the city hall.

later, after Queen Wilhelmina had signed the official decree to that end on 19 January 1948. The Crown so decreed 'in order for future generations to remember the courage and strength with which the citizens of Rotterdam withstood all tribulations of the war and the important role it played in the liberation of the fatherland.' However, it was impossible to add the motto to the city arms in the dome.





Hildo Krop

Sculpture by Hildo Krop.

In the centre of the hall, you can see the statue *Stronger through struggle*, a gift from Queen Wilhelmina. It was unveiled by Queen Juliana on 30 November 1951 (the statue shows David with a defeated eagle: the eagle, representing Germany, has been crushed and defeated). The pedestal has a height of 1 metre; the figure has a height of 2.5 metres. The statue was carved from a single block of marble by Ms J.H. Hans. In order to create a contrast with the hall's floor, which is made of the same marble, the statue is unpolished. It weighs 5,000 to 6,000 kilograms. In order for the floor to carry the



statue, it had to be reinforced by a concrete pillar in the basement. The central hall has a black marble clock on a high pillar. It was a gift from Amsterdam, offered on 27 July 1921 to celebrate the opening of the City Hall (sculpted by Hildo Krop). The pillar is made of Pavonazzo marble and the clock sphere is made of bronze. It has a total height of 3 metres and a total weight of approximately 4,000 kilograms. Up along the marble pillar, there are reliefs indicating man's view of nature and the supersensible. From the base, the first relief represents a naked human figure hiding from

'Stronger through struggle'

The statue of David with a defeated eagle was carved from a single block of Carrara marble.

the disturbing heavenly light. The following figures are three Egyptian figures, then some Greek figures. The Middle Ages are depicted by kneeling human figures; the Gothic age is depicted by two figures in the shadow of a church tower, but surrounded by a variety of emblems of nature. The Renaissance is indicated by a human discovering his own heart. The spiral ends with two persons bent under a burden. This represents the present time, in which individualism grows into a pressing burden (this description dates back to 1921!). The masks at the top of the pillar have different meanings: brutal violence, psychological violence, material need, a sense of a future revealing itself.

The last-mentioned reliefs are formed by a girls' face, whose expression announces the birth of a spiritual balance; the last mask symbolizes the balance achieved between a spiritual and material existence. Behind the reception desk, the three stained-glass windows refer to the work of the fire brigade. They were created in 1918 by studio A. Lipjes in honour of the fiftieth anniversary of the Rotterdam chief firemen and donated by the Rotterdam voluntary fire brigade. The voluntary fire brigade was composed

of several fire-fighting teams, so-called 'Spuiten'. Each 'Spuit' had its own number. 'Spuit' 11 and 'Spuit' 13 never existed. At that time, the premium was paid to the first chief fireman who sprayed water on the fire, rather than to the first chief fireman to arrive at the fire!

The central hall also contains the Marshall plaque. This plaque was made by Rotterdam sculptor Willem Verbon and was unveiled on 28 May 1997 by President Clinton. The American president paid a visit to Rotterdam to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Marshall Aid. For on 5 June 1997, it was fifty years ago that Secretary of State General C. Marshall unveiled his plans for the financial support of Western Europe. He did so during the speech he held at Harvard University. His express demand was that the participating European countries had to cooperate in the implementation of the recovery programme. The Netherlands received aid amounting to \$ 1,127 million from the United States, and, like no other European city, Rotterdam benefited from the Marshall Aid (reconstruction of the city and port). At the time, all American citizens



Central hall

Winston Churchill.

contributed to the Marshall Aid: over four years, everyone paid additional tax amounting to NLG 85.00. As a thank you for this financial support, the municipal administration organized a party on 28 May 1997 to honour the Americans living in the Netherlands.

Another eye-catcher in the central hall is a Winston Churchill bust. It was unveiled on 30 November 1954, to celebrate the fact that, on 13 May 1946, this British statesman was inaugurated, on a very exceptional occasion, as honorary member of the Rotterdam municipal council. The bronze statue was also made by sculptor Willem Verbon. Churchill was prime minister of the United Kingdom during the Second World War and is depicted here as a Knight of the Order of the Garter. He wears the knight's mantle over his admiral's uniform, with the insignia of Lord Warden of the Cinq Ports. The chain is the famous 'Great George', which was granted to his great ancestor, the Duke of Marlborough. The Order of Merit is worn on the uniform collar. One of Churchill's most famous quotes was 'The world is open to you'. The V-sign (Victory), made by holding up the first two

fingers of one hand in the shape of a V, a typical gesture of Churchill's, became a famous symbol for many Dutch people during the war.

On both sides of the grand staircase, there are stained-glass windows made by Henricus, an artist, in 1920. The left window represents the beginning of the Waterway: a merchant ship in the roadstead of Hoek van Holland. There is a strong westerly wind, because the ship is chasing its own smoke. The right window represents the end of the waterway: the activities in one of the Rotterdam ports, with several inland vessels, one fishing boat and two cargo vessels. All bronze banisters and balustrades in the hall were a gift from the Holland America Line.



Waiting rooms

Air duct, covered with a hatch in the form of a sun.

Wedding rooms

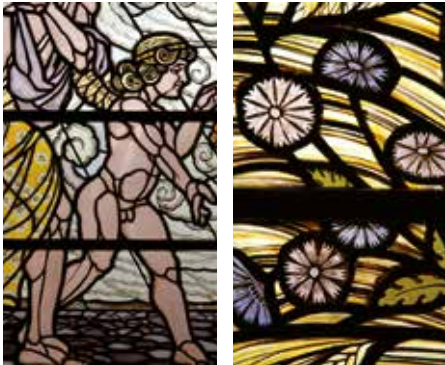
You are now entering the doors entirely to the right of the grand staircase. Through this gallery, you arrive at the wedding rooms. The jade-coloured tiles were made by earthenware factory Porcelijne Flesch in Delft. The open room to the left is the waiting room for the marriage couples and their entourage. Above the radiator to the right, you can see an open-work circle. This is an air duct, covered with a hatch in the form of a sun. These air ducts run throughout the city hall. Originally, rooms 11 through 18 were used as wedding rooms. A lot has changed over the years. Rooms 11 and 12 are still used as wedding rooms. You can visit these

rooms. Rooms 13 and 14 are ceremony rooms. And rooms 15 through 18 are now rooms where political groups meet. The monumental mantelpiece of Delft tiles in Room 11 was a gift from the Rotterdam Zaankanters. These Rotterdam timber traders left for Zaandam at the turn of the century because the timber trade increasingly concentrated on the Amsterdam shipyards, where the wood required for the seagoing vessels was imported via the Zuiderzee from Scandinavian countries, for example. The Zaandam coat of arms can be found in the top right of the mantelpiece.



Grand staircase

You now turn right through the corridor to the hall, immediately turning left to the grand staircase. The bronze candelabras on both sides of the staircase were part of a gift from the five Stokvis brothers. Proceeding up the stairs, you can see a memorial tablet built in the wall on the intermediate landing, in memory of the civil servants who died during the Second World War. The two Japanese vases are 1.80 metres high and were given to the municipality in 1919 by Mr and Mrs P. Kleykamp-Haagen Smit.



The stained-glass windows focus on ideal expressions of social life: 'Sacred and profane music' to the left, 'Sculpture and painting' in the centre and 'Poetry and dramatic arts' to the right. As you go up the stairs to the left, you will pass a bronze statue of Count Floris V (sculpted by B. Ingen Housz). Floris V became count of Holland and Zeeland in 1256 at the age of 18 months. He was the son of Count William II. In 1296, Floris, who was popular among the people, was murdered by Gijsbrecht van Aemstel and others.



Grand staircase
Count Willem III.

On the other side of the stairs, you can see a bronze statue of Count William III (1285-1337), son of John I. He was called 'William the Good' and was Count of Holland as William III and Count of Hainaut as William I. In 1328, he granted rights in administration and justice to the part of Rotterdam that belonged to him. This resulted in the granting of full town privileges for the whole of Rotterdam in 1340. These privileges offered major financial benefits to a town, as it was allowed to collect taxes and levy tolls.

First-class wedding hall

You will now turn to the right, into the Citizens' Hall (Room 111) and again to the right into the first-class wedding hall (Room 113). All decorations in this wedding hall represent love, happiness and unity. The clock (Miedema) on the marble mantelpiece is a symbolic representation of marriage.



Copper hearts are affixed at the left and right side of the fireplace screen. Hearts are carved in all the wooden doorposts. The panels are decorated with beautiful wood carvings. The carpet (also a design by Prof Henri Evers) contains interwoven rings as a symbol of eternal fidelity. Hearts are shown in the covers of the wall ventilators and in the radiator casings. Central heating was installed in the city hall when it was constructed, which was quite revolutionary at that time. All the rooms also contain fireplaces; however, these are never used.

The paintings by French painter Joseph-Marius Avy are historicizing, in the best tradition of the French Salon painting. Such ensembles, where the line between decoration and wall painting is difficult to draw, are rare in the Netherlands. Around 1925, Avy filled the large middle section of the long wall with a wedding inspired by Greek mythology, perhaps the wedding of the gods Eros and Psyche. A sculpture of the three Graces was painted in the



Room 113

First-class wedding room.

< Eros en Psyche

French Salon painting.

background. The left and right side of this large painting contain 'big' Amor figures that are typical of this style of painting, including a quiver and a ribbon stating 'Omnia vincit amor' ('love conquers all'). The other sections over the doors depict spectators sharing in the festivities. The way in which Avy suggests a connection between the paintings and the actual room would be fitting for a hall in a baroque palace. The sunny impressionist paint and use of colours seem very contemporary and have a somewhat alienating but cheerful effect. The painting of a bridal couple, doves and rings over the



doors to the Citizens' Hall is an astonishing example of trompe-l'oeil technique: it really looks like a three-dimensional sculpture affixed to a blue mosaic background. You can see a bullet hole below the left branch of the centre part. The right painting over the mantelpiece also contains a bullet hole, in the arm of the young female to the right. The bullets were fired outside during the Second World War; one bullet ricocheted off the façade and damaged the central column of the left windows. In this hall, no gold was used for ornaments and wall paintings, but a high-quality material that looks like gold. If a

marriage is solemnized in this wedding hall, the organ will be played before and after the ceremony and the bridal couple will stride through the Citizens' Hall, to be congratulated in front of the mantelpiece.





Citizens' Hall

Representative room.

Citizens' Hall Room 111

The Citizens' Hall is a representative room for official meetings, receptions, dinners, lectures, prize-giving ceremonies and suchlike. The Citizens' Hall is 32 metres long, 12.50 metres wide and 14.50 metres high.

The concert organ on the gallery was given in 1918 by Cornelis Immig. The construction of the organ was seriously delayed during the First World War. However, as organ builder Standaart from Schiedam wanted to complete the organ in time, he looked for other options: old tin utensils and decorative objects, such as pots, plates and vases, were collected and melted down. This provided him with the tin he needed for the organ pipes and the organ was finished at the same time as the Citizens' Hall. The front side of the organ has a high straight-lined central section and two round side sections, connected by two small sets of straight pipes. The organ case (9 metres high, 6 metres wide and 2.80 metres deep) is dark red and is decorated with gold piping. The pipes are made of an alloy of 63% tin and

37% Spanish lead. All wooden pipes are made of cypress. The wind chests are made of oak. The organ currently has twenty-five stops.

The regular player of the organ is Geert Bierling. He plays the concert organ during official receptions, first-class marriages, concerts and other special occasions. Incidentally, the acoustics in the Citizens' Hall are considered excellent.

Air ducts have been incorporated in a semi-circle above the gallery. Next to the entrance, you can see mahogany panelling with built-in radiators. Together with all marble works in this Citizens' Hall, this was a gift from Mr A. van Hoboken van Cortgene. All candelabras and chandeliers are made of bronze and were given by the Rotterdam branch of the Amsterdam Bank. The wall paintings were painted by Dutch painter Johan Thorn Prikker (1870-1932). They were a gift from Ms Maria Carolina Blankenheijm, dowager to Mr C.J. van Nispen tot Pannerden, Esq.



Kandelaber

Thorn Prikker was commissioned in 1925, five years after the completion of the city hall. On the long wall, he painted allegorical representations and illustrations on the history of Rotterdam, and, on the short wall, an image of the future. Exact details of the topics are unknown; there are no records. The below explanation is based on verbal communications of Thorn Prikker himself, to the press, for example, and via oral tradition.

To the left of the entrance: Rotterdam sailor Olivier van Noort (1558-1627), who was the first to sail around the world (from 1598 to 1601). The voyage took three years. Over the left door is a decoration representing 'the element of air'. The triptych depicts man's battle against the destructive elements: water (the St Elizabeth's flood of 1421) and fire (the fire of Rotterdam in 1563). The central painting depicts the reconstruction of Rotterdam through the peaceful work titled Construction and Protection, symbolized by the reinforcement of dykes. The ensemble should be seen as the expression of a general idea: the major threats to which earthly life is subject and the toiling of people who battle these threats.

Over the right door: the element of water. Both paintings to the right of this door represent the authority in its worldly and political appearance (the magistrate = the municipal administrator) and in its spiritual and moral capacity (a bishop during an altar consecration). In summary, the message of the decoration is: Rotterdam has a glorious history, and although disasters and setbacks stood in the way of growth, the city authorities were always prepared.

In the large painting over the mantelpiece, Thorn Prikker painted the future of Rotterdam through a variety of flags. He died in 1932, before completing this painting. Stained-glass artist Warffenius and painter Den Besten added the unfinished parts as best they could. Immediately after the paintings had been placed on the long wall (in 1927), opinions on the wall decorations appeared to be divided, to say the least. The Municipal Executive believed that there was no



The future

Divided opinions on Thorn Prikker's painting of 'the future'.

harmony with the other furnishings of the Citizens' Hall.

However, their proposal to the municipal council in 1929 to remove the paintings was rejected, probably because the municipality would then be obliged to refund the fee and expenses incurred by Thorn Prikker to the private individuals who had made the funds available. Eventually, a hurriedly formed committee in 1931 came up with the luminous idea to match the hall's furnishings to the paintings instead! However, the administration's opinion in 1932 on the large painting representing the future was: 'It would appear that its conception marks a new phase of the artist.' Nowadays, it is difficult to imagine that people took it upon themselves to pass judgement on the work of the artist so shortly after his death. Thorn Prikker would undoubtedly have had his reasons for depicting a future so different from the past. At the time, the painting was not hung, but stored in the attic of the city hall. Shortly after the war, people had bigger problems to worry about than the various style periods and the council as yet decided to hang the painting.

The large marble mantelpiece was a gift from Queen Wilhelmina. In the bronze relief over the mantelpiece, Neptune, the god of the sea shakes hands with the Rotte river goddess, under the watchful eye of the Meuse river goddess. The ormolu Jugendstil clock in front of it was a gift made in 1918. The letters S.P.Q.R. stand for Senatus Populus Que Roterodamus, which means 'the senate and people of Rotterdam' (derived from Senatus Populus Que Romanus = the senate and people of Rome). The painting, also by Thorn Prikker, represents the future of Rotterdam, with many flags, coats of arms and numbers. The coats of arms are from independent municipalities that were annexed by Rotterdam.



Jugendstil clock

Executive Chamber

Room 105

The Municipal Executive meets in this chamber, the Executive Chamber, every Tuesday afternoon and Friday morning. The walls are covered with black-veined marble, interspersed with blue-grey velvet. The paintings show the last four Queens and King. From right to left:

- King Willem-Alexander (2013-present) by Richard van Klooster;
- Queen Beatrix (1980-2013) by Rien Bout;
- Queen Juliana (reign 1948-1980) by Adrianus van der Plas;
- Queen Wilhelmina (1898-1948) by Herman Mees; • Queen Emma (reign 1890-1898) by Dr Jan Veth.

The mantelpiece is also made of black marble. The two bronze figures (artist D. Wolbers) represent Wisdom and Justice. The bronze clock was a gift from Mr Fr. Swarttouw.

The doors in the left corner provide access to the 'royal bathroom', specifically built for use during state visits. A calendar, which was a gift from Alderman J. van der Ploeg to the city at the end of his term in office (1967-1982), hangs between the windows. It is a representation of the Old Meuse Bridge, created by artist Ger van Iersel. The date section is a copper design of a tea crate stamp, as it was used in the port to number crates. The usher changes the date section every day. The conference table and chairs are not part of the original furniture. The original copper chandeliers and lamps were also replaced.

Justice

Two bronze figures on the black-marble mantelpiece represent Wisdom and Justice (in this photograph).



Antechamber Mayor



A copper plate in memory of the raid of Rotterdam on 10 November 1944 is affixed to the closed door of this Room 105 to the Antechamber. The wall next to this door is covered with a tile picture representing the laying of the first stone of the city hall by Queen Wilhelmina on 15 July 1915. It was designed by artist Huib Luns (father of former minister Joseph Luns). The tiles were made by De Porcelijne Flesch in Delft. The tile picture was a gift from the daughters of Mr C. Sijthoff, former newspaper director of the *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*. Mr Sijthoff and his wife are shown at the bottom right (Sijthoff wearing glasses and a bowler). His three daughters (with governess) are shown above them.

To the left, you can see the door to the Mayor's room. This room is not open to the public. At the left of the door, you can see a plaquette with the portrait of Erasmus and the words 'Plutôt moins savoir et aimer davantage', 'It is better to know less and love more'.

On the left side of the plaque, there is a gong with soundstick. In the past this was used to request the guests to enter the Citizens' Hall for diner.



Laying of the first stone

The wall next to the door of Room 105 is covered by a tile picture.

The stained-glass section of the window was a gift from a Swiss rowing club that rowed from Bern to Rotterdam in 1948. The hanging stained-glass panel was a gift from Swiss twin town Basel, from 1984.



Waiting room Mayor

Leaving the Antechamber, you enter the gallery. Immediately to the left is the waiting room for visitors of the Municipal Executive meetings and of the Mayor. During the construction, the large wooden teak bench to the left was designed especially for this location. The tile painting over the bench represents De Oude Hoofpoort [The Old Main Gate], by painter Leon Senf. The Tower of Babel can be found in the corner. It was given in 1974 by VVD Alderman Polak (1928-2014) as a thank you for the years 'in which he had enjoyed his work for the municipality,

which allowed him to grow'. He wanted to leave something other than '... a large number of initials and signatures and filling some pages of the book of Proceedings of the municipal council...' The work of art was created by artist Lily ter Kuile Nijpels and represents the notion of 'Where there is too much selfishness and too little selflessness, the story of the Tower of Babel will repeat itself'. The word 'IK' [ME] can be found all over the work of art. With this statue, Polak wanted to make clear '... that a collective work cannot be performed and certainly

not completed if everyone speaks different languages, if people no longer understand each other. As Rotterdam municipal staff, we must also keep in mind that what happened in Babylon, which was also situated on a great river in an area with several rivers, will also happen to us if the elected members and civil servants lack the fundamental willingness to listen and to understand other people's positions. Talking, working and governing together! Not only the interests of my own group, my own service, my own voters, not only ME, but also the interests of other groups, other services, other voters,



< **Waiting room**

Minus Polak, a cycling enthusiast, had his bicycle immortalized in one of the works of art.

Waiting room >

Medals of honour of L.A. Ketley.





Gallery

The gallery with stained-glass windows.

mostly also US.' Polak voluntarily resigned after having been alderman for almost eight years, because the Labour Party refused to grant his proposal to improve the then take-off and landing runway of Zestienhoven Airport. Polak refused to bear responsibility for the rickety runway any longer. Somewhere on the statue, Minus Polak, who is a real cycling enthusiast, had his bicycle immortalized.

The large painting on the back wall depicts mine horses, on their way to the abattoir, *De laatste gang* [The last walk] by A.W. van Voorden. During the crisis in the 1930s, discarded horses from the English mines arrived at Rotterdam by boat twice a week; they served as food. Only the front pair of horses was lead; the other (sometimes hundreds of) half-blind horses followed the front pair just by listening to them.

The Mayor's secretariat is located in Room 104. To the left of the door, there are the medals of honour of American air gunner/ bombardier sergeant L.A. Ketley, whose

Lancaster ED 423 was brought down near Ridderkerk on 1 or 2 March 1943. He was buried at Crooswijk cemetery. His brothers gave the medals to the city out of gratitude for the care and attention paid to the graves of all allied victims at Crooswijk cemetery. In Room 103, there is a reminder of the planting of a tree in the Rotterdam Park in Israel.

Galleries

In the gallery there is a painting of Mayor André van der Louw, painted in 1982 by artist Toni Burgering. Across from the painting, you can see one of the candle lanterns, which used to be lighted in the event of power failures.

In the gallery in front of you, you can see:

- a 1984 etching by Cezany Pankaski, a gift to Mayor Van der Louw during a visit to Gdansk;
- a marble bust of Queen Emma, from the old City Hall;
- a painting of King William III, a copy painted by Pieter de Josselin de Jong;
- a marble bust of King William III, also from the old City Hall;
- and, across from these works, a record of the offering of the second carillon in 1948, as a substitute for the chimes that were removed by the German occupiers.

Your walk through the gallery continues to the left:

- a painting of Mayor W. Thomassen (term 1965-1974). It was painted in 1990 by Flip

Gaasendam from a photograph;

- a painting of Mayor A. Peper (term 1982-1998) from 2008, painted by Clazien Immink.

Reading room 106

Room 106 is the reading room of the municipal councillors. Over the dark red marble mantelpiece hangs a painting of Hugo de Groot. The fireplace is made of bronze. At the other side of the reading room, you can see a clock with the words '*Dum loquimur ruit tempus*' (Even as we speak, time speeds swiftly away). This clock used to be in the Council Chamber.

In the back left, the left doors provide access to the antechamber of the Council Chamber. Behind the right doors, there is a closet containing the minutes (verbatim reports) of all council meetings from 1970 in book form. The minutes of the meetings held before 1970 can be inspected at the Desk of the Municipal Clerk. The space behind the small closed door contains all confidential



documents from the closed (secret) council meetings. Back in the gallery, you can see:

- a 1922 painting by Anton Molkenboer, with the words [freely translated]: 'A dark battle for dust rages under. The sower, the joyful, lives on earth. The Spirit, the Immortal, radiates above';
- above door no. 107, you can see a mosaic, again with a representation of the explorer Olivier van Noort;
- a painting of Mayor I.W. Opstelten (period 1999-2008) from 2009, painted by Dick Stapel.

After the swinging doors, to the right, you can see the entrance to the antechamber between the Council Room and the reading room. This is also the entrance to the civil servants' gallery of the Council Chamber. Next to the entrance to the Council Chamber,

< Room 106

Minutes in the Reading room

you can see a tile picture of the former city hall in the sixteenth century, seen from Hoogstraat (painted by Henricus). This tile picture was a gift from the 'Feijenoord', 'Het Noorden' and 'Het Oosten' Neighbourhood Associations. A little further, you can see a tile picture of the same city hall, seen from Kaasmarkt.

Council Chamber

Room 109

Above the door to the Council Chamber, you can see a representation of one figure holding up a staff (Authority) in the right hand, and with the left hand on the Law (Lex). The representation is made of tiles. You are entering the Council Chamber. This chamber is 18 metres long, 11 metres wide and 8.50 metres high. Here, the Municipal Council meets once every fortnight on Thursday afternoons (and often also on Thursday evenings). At the left and right side of the Council Chamber, large paintings, which were painted by Marius J. Richters in 1918, are on view. A separate jury chose him from five painters who had been asked to deliver a design. Johan Thorn Prikker was one of the five painters; he was later commissioned to create the paintings for the Citizens' Hall.

Richters portrayed sturdy workers doing their job in the port. The colourful and noisy atmosphere of the pre-war dock industry is

palpable. W.A. Mees, a wealthy Rotterdam citizen, was to donate the paintings. The only guideline for the painter was that the paintings had to be in line with the function of the Council Chamber. Other than that, the painter only had to 'follow his inspiration'.

The function of the Council Chamber was described as follows: 'All that is discussed at these meetings only serves one purpose: the well-being of the municipality. The growth and prosperity of a large trading city are based on the efforts of all forces of the mind, on the energy of the citizens (shipping, industry, etc.) and on the labour and determined policy of the administrators.'

On the short walls, Richters wanted to portray material welfare: the Grain Industry, the Coal Industry, the Shipbuilding Industry and the Transport Industry. At the left and right side of the public gallery, he wanted to portray innate refinement. He painted



< **Room 109**
Council Chamber.

the Grain Industry first. It was hung in the Council Chamber as a test. Even before the jury had made a decision, he painted the 'Coal Depot' as its counterpart. After that, he also painted 'Shipbuilding Industry' and 'Transport Industry', apparently because he wanted to finish what he started. However, the jury was unable to deliver a judgment and the commission was cancelled in 1919. According to the jury, the work was 'too big and too bustling'; it was also considered to be old-fashioned. Richters was disappointed, of course, but he nevertheless delivered the paintings to the city hall, where they were stored in the attic. Instead of the paintings, Mees donated eight golden candelabras for the Citizens' Hall.

Years later, Mayor Oud believed that the

Council Chamber's furnishings were too basic and he and Alderman De Zeeuw remembered that wall paintings had once been made. In 1938, they were hung as a test. Many objections were raised against the placement: some believed that the bright colours did not match the interior; others believed it was wrong to glorify the outdated working methods in the port. Eventually, Mayor Oud (who was replaced by Mayor Müller, a member of the National Socialist Movement, from October 1941 to 7 May 1945) had the paintings hung permanently in 1947.

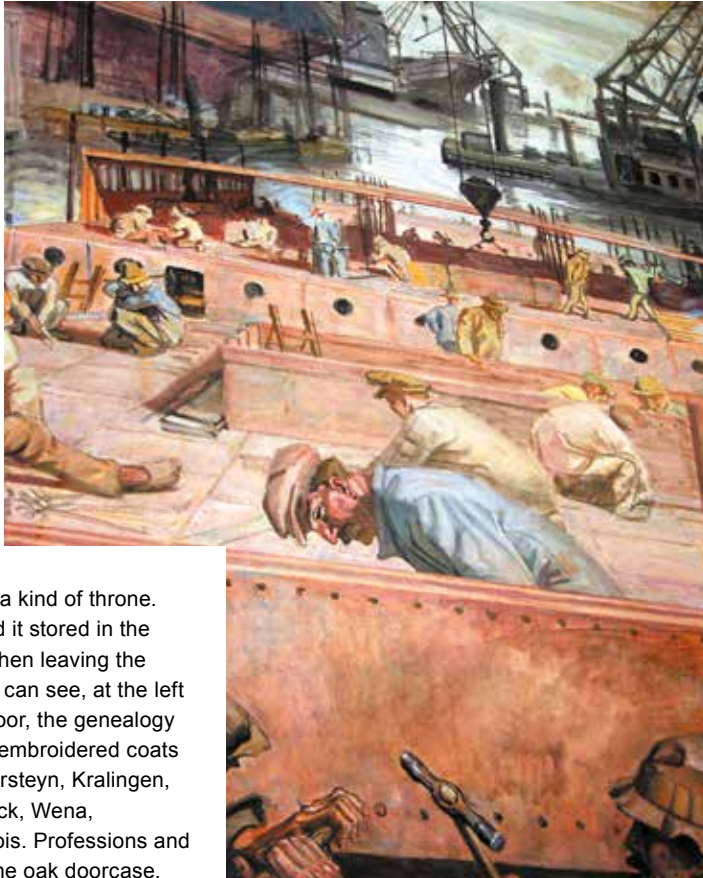
In that same year, Richters was asked to make paintings for the two remaining sections next to the public gallery. He abandoned his old idea to portray 'innate

refinement' there and, instead, he painted the Towing Industry and the Inland Shipping Industry.

To the left, you can see the press gallery; the gallery to the right offers room for the civil servants who are invited to give advice in support of the aldermen and councillors. All panelling is made of oak. The coffered ceiling is designed in oak- and rosewood.

The top of the public gallery shows the words 'Audendo atque agendo res romana crevit' (It was by daring and doing that Rome grew). The public gallery used to be for members of the press. This explains the fact that the gallery is connected to the press room on the second floor of the city hall.

Above the exit of the Council Chamber, you can read the words 'Exulet hinc studium regnet mens omnibus aequa' (A mind that is equal for all rules here. May party interests and personal preferences remain far from this seat). This text could originally be found on a baldachin hanging above the Mayor's seat. At that time, the aldermen did not sit next to the Mayor, but in the chamber among their party members. Until 1965, the Mayor was actually sitting in a chairman's chair



including a baldachin, a kind of throne. Mayor Thomassen had it stored in the attic of the city hall. When leaving the Council Chamber, you can see, at the left and right side of the door, the genealogy of Rotterdam with the embroidered coats of arms of Cool, Bolgersteyn, Kralingen, Katendrecht, Crooswijck, Wena, Delfshaven and Charlois. Professions and arts are portrayed in the oak doorcase.



Public gallery

Galleries (continued)

After the glass swing doors to your right, you will see at your right-hand side: • Mr S.A. Vening Meinesz, mayor of Overschie from 1884 to 1896, painted by P. de Josselin de Jong, in 1892;

- a painting by W. Arondeus from 1923,



Tile picture

portraying the bible text Zechariah chapter 8:16 with the words 'Waarheid en recht des vredes oordeelt in uwe poorten' [Execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates];

- Mayor J. van Vollenhoven (1866- 1881) in the uniform of the Head of Police, painted in 1872 by Jan Wendel Gerstenhauer Zimmerman;
- above the door to Room 120, the councillors' coffee room (not open to the public), you can see a mosaic portraying Erasmus (1466-1536), Rotterdam's most famous citizen. The text reads: 'Hier rees de groote zon en ging te Bazel onder' [The great sun rose here and set in Basel].

Desiderius Erasmus was a humanist and the most prominent intellectual of his time. He was born in Rotterdam in 1466. In 1487, Erasmus joined the Order of Augustinian Canons and, in 1492, he was ordained a priest (he was later released from his religious vows by Pope Leo X). From 1495-1499, he studied in Paris. After that, he

stayed in England until 1506, where, due to his friendship with Thomas More and John Colet, he became interested in the writings of the apostles and Christian antiquity; he went to Italy, back to England, to Leuven, Basel and Freiburg. He later died in Basel. Erasmus was at the cradle of the development of classical philology (the science and study of historical texts, with the aim of determining their authenticity and explaining them). His Adagia (sayings) and Colloquia familiaria (dialogues) were used as textbooks for a long time. For three centuries, his Greek edition of the New Testament remained the basis of New Testament studies. He wrote his most famous work, The Praise of Folly, in 1511.

- Mayor Pieter J. Drooglever Fortuyn (1928-1938), painted in 1932 by Cornelis C. Zwaan.

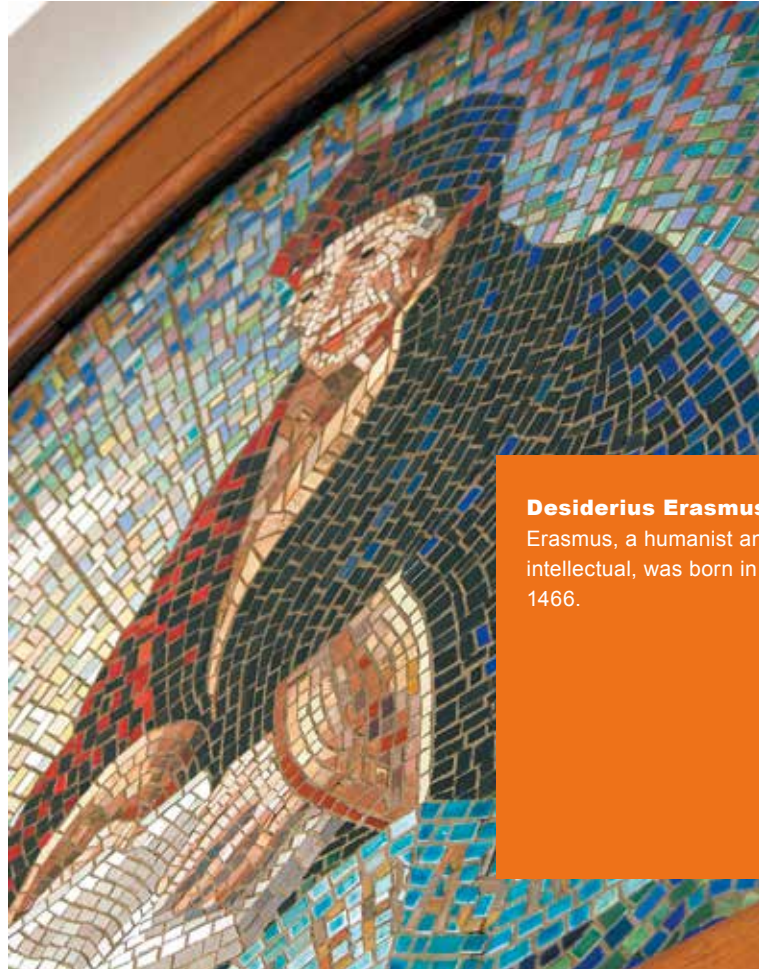
At the other side of the hallway, you can see:

- Mayor F.B. s'Jacob (term 1893-1906), painted by Jan Veth in 1907;
- a marble bust of Joost van Vollenhoven, mayor from 1866 to 1881, by J.Th. Stracké, originating from the old City Hall;
- a painting of Mayor J. Wytéma, LL.M. (1923-1928), painted by Adrianus van der Plas in 1953;

- Gregorius van Oordt, three times interim mayor between 1818 and 1824, copy by Herman Mees of a painting by Cornelis Cels.

If you turn left at the end of this hallway, you can see:

- a painting of Mayor G.E. van Walsum (term 1952-1965) from 1960, painted by Karel van Veen;
- a tile picture, which used to be a gift from the municipality of Rotterdam to the Commercial College. After this college was closed down, the tile picture was returned to the municipality. After it had been restored by Mr R. Pieterse, the tile picture was unveiled on 12 December 1995 by municipal clerk N. van Eck;
- a painting of P.J. Oud, LL.M. (term 1938-1952) painted by Karel van Veen in 1953.



Desiderius Erasmus

Erasmus, a humanist and prominent intellectual, was born in Rotterdam in 1466.

Balustrade

Standing in front of the Council Chamber, you have a beautiful view of the hall, the dome and the beeches forming the Cross Plan. In the eight small dome windows, Europe is depicted in glass paintings of the then (in 1920) most important trading partners: Great Britain, Russia, France, Spain, Sweden, Norway and Romania. The four painted window groups in the arms of the Cross Plan represent:

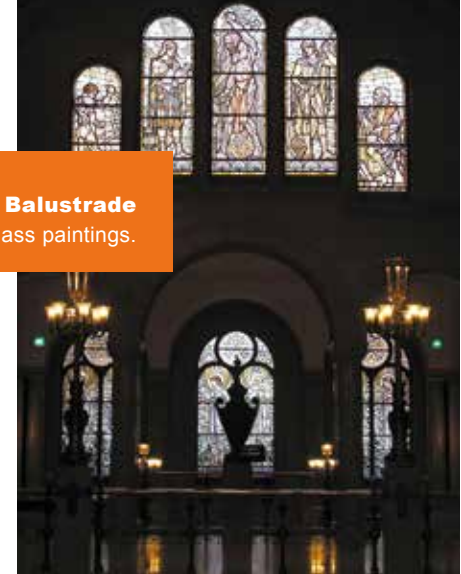
- Navigation (on the side of the Council Chamber), the protagonist being Neptune, surrounded by the Meuse and Rotte river goddesses (gift from Mr and Mrs Gilissen van der Valk);
- Craftsmanship (on the right side), with Vulcan in the middle, surrounded by a jeweller, a smith, a technician and a printer (gift from Messrs Hooykaas, Immig and Vos);
- Architecture (on the side of the Citizens' Hall), with a genius in the middle, surrounded by the two oldest master builders of Egypt and Assyria (a gift from the 'Architecture and Friendship'

association);

- Free trade (left), the protagonist being Mercury, chasing the clouds that hide the sun, surrounded by representatives of continents, offering their most important products, in the packing customary at that time (a gift from Mr A.C.Mees).

The two small top windows in the dome above you were given as a gift in 1918 from the joint German associations in Rotterdam. The three painted double windows to the left (below the Free Trade) represent the Trade in Grain: sowing, trading and reaping. You pay a short visit to the other side of the gallery, in front of the Citizens' Hall. The left tile picture represents 'The Former Delft Gate, seen from Haagsche Veer' (by painter Henricus), also manufactured by De Porcelijne Flesch in Delft. The right tile picture shows the same gate, but viewed from Coolsingel. The painting portrays Mayor Alfred Rudolf Zimmermann (term of office 1906-1923, during the construction period of the city hall), painted by F. Arntzenius.

Balustrade
Glass paintings.



The two small top windows in the arched roof above you, with the words 'Travail et progres' (Work and progress) and 'L'union fait la force' (Union is strength), were given by Belgian refugees, in memory of their temporary stay in Rotterdam during the First World War. In front of the grand staircase, there is a bronze vase, donated in 1920 by the Provincial Executive of South Holland. You are now descending the stairs to the main entrance. To the left of the main entrance, there is a bronze bust of Prof Henri Evers, the designer of this City Hall (sculpted by J. Keller).



In 1923, the statue was financed from the remaining donations for the decoration of the City Hall. Hendrik Jorden Evers, which was his official name, came from a family of architects.

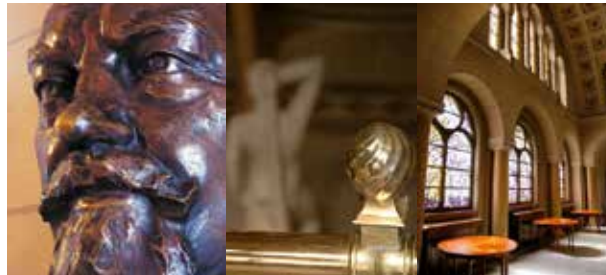
His father was a contractor/architect in Ellecom, in the province of Gelderland. Evers' career started in 1875 when he sat the entrance examination for freehand drawing at the Academy of Visual Arts in The Hague. After one year of architectural education, he left for Antwerp, where he completed his studies after another year at the academy in

Antwerp. After that, he worked in Brussels, Vienna and Budapest. He returned after ten years, having gained experience and encyclopaedic knowledge of architectural history.

In 1887, he was appointed professor at the Academy of Visual Arts and Technical Sciences in Rotterdam. At that time, he was only 31 years old, but proved himself a talented teacher, and was responsible for the blossoming of the architecture department. In 1902, Evers' career as a teacher reached its pinnacle when he was appointed professor at the Polytechnic School (the later Institute of

Technology) in Delft. During these years, he wrote the book *De architectuur in hare hoofdtijdperken* [The Architecture in its Main Periods], which became the standard work on architectural history for many students. Until he retired in 1926, Evers continued to work in Delft, although he put his educational activities on the backburner during the construction of the city hall. He died in 1929 at the age of 73. Other Rotterdam structures he designed:

- church of the Remonstrant community at Westersingel in Rotterdam (together with J.P. Stok Wzn., 1895-1897);
- the Wilhelmina Fountain at Burgemeester



prof. Henri Evers

- Hoffmanplein in Rotterdam (1896);
- the Caland monument at Veerkade in Rotterdam (1907).



Landing

At the left side of the landing, you can see a copper bust of Maarten Harpertszoon Tromp (1598-1653). This admiral fought during the First and Second Anglo-Dutch War. In August 1652, he was discharged after a defeat near Nieuwpoort. At the end of 1672, he was, however, reinstated as admiral. His famous deeds are carved to his right. At that time, 'Bestevaer' was a respectful name for a beloved leader.



Entrance hall

Just like the central hall, the entrance hall is made of several types of stone and marble. The three large bronze doors of the main entrance were a gift from the Chabot family. The niche behind the marble statue of Queen Wilhelmina (sculpted by Miss G.J.W. Rueb) has golden tiles. Above the former entrance to the wedding rooms (the official entrance is now at the other side, via Room 12), you can read the apt words of Joost van den Vondel, a famous seventeenth-century Dutch

poet: 'Waar werd oprechter trou dan tussen man en vrou ter weereld oyt gevonden; twee sielen gloende aaneengesmeed of vastgeschakelt en verbonden in lief en leed.' [Where was faith more sincere than between man and woman ever found in the world; two souls forged glowingly together or steadily linked and united in love and sorrow]. All tile works around this former entrance were a gift from the Committee of the Rotterdam Association of Cheese Exporters.

Prince Henry, also portrayed in marble (also by Miss Rueb), was married to Queen Wilhelmina from 1901 to 1934. The marble pedestal of this bust encloses the first stone of the City Hall, officially 'laid' by Queen Wilhelmina on 15 July 1915. The twelve bronze candelabras were a gift from the Rotterdam Banking Association. The wall fountain is an allegorical representation of the rivers Meuse and Rotte, with decorations in the form of scallops. The tiles of the fountain were again manufactured by the famous factory in Delft (this is mentioned at the left side). The fountain was a gift from the 'Het Westen' neighbourhood association. The round mosaic to the left (two snakes) represents the medical profession; the cogwheel to the right represents industry. As the city hall's decorations, ornaments and works of art depict or refer to trade and shipping, the following poem (from 1937) perfectly illustrates how the citizens of Rotterdam experienced this trading and shipping function. And loved it.....



Wall fountain

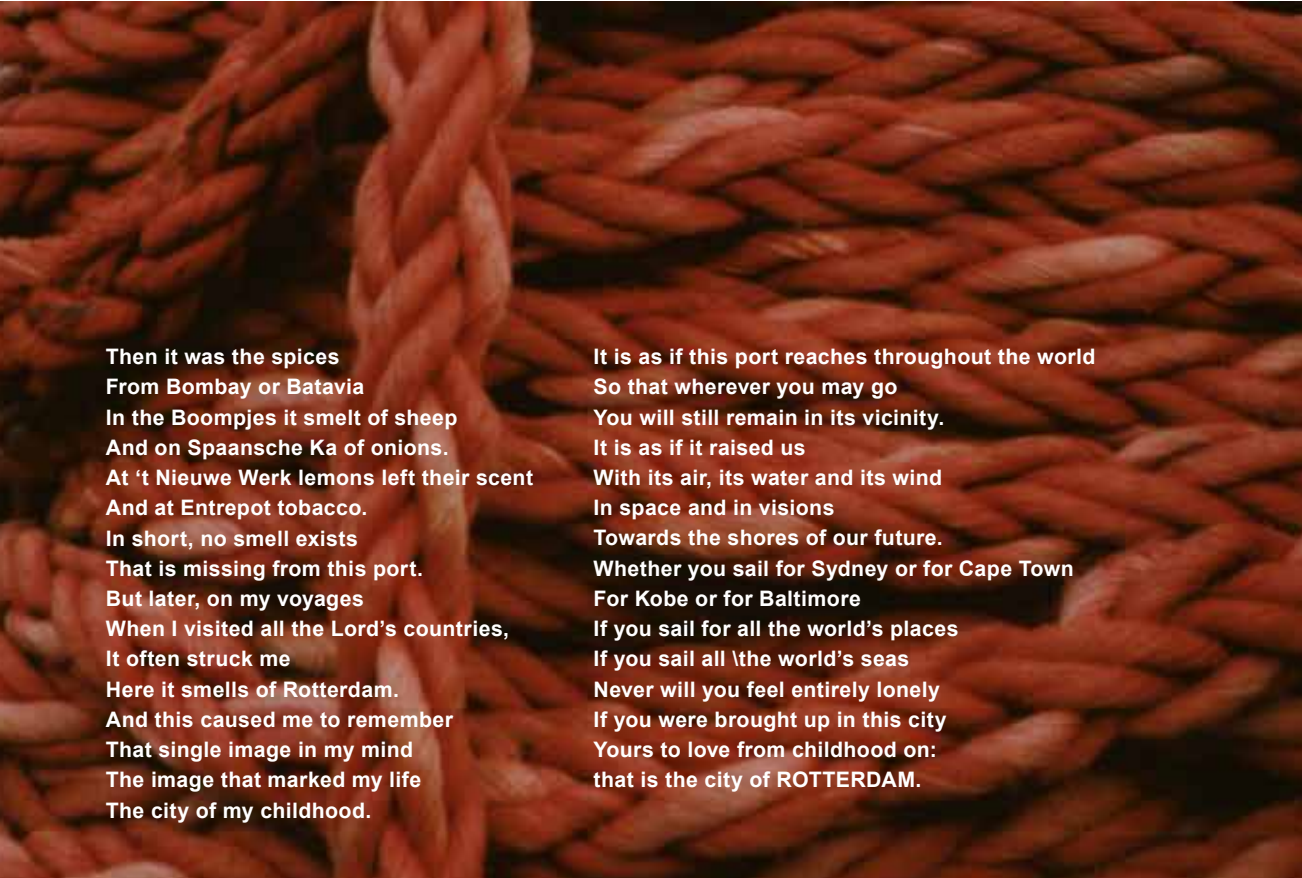
The fountain wall is an allegorical representation of the rivers Meuse.

Rotterdam of Jan Prins

Jan Prins was the pseudonym of Rotterdam marine officer and poet Christiaan Louis Schepp (1883-1948). On 19 June 1937, he recited the poem during a dinner at the annual meeting of the Dutch Writers Guild, at the 'Zalmhuis' villa in Kralingseveer. The poem was included in the collection of poems titled *Te Rotterdam ben ik geboren* [In Rotterdam I was born], published by Uitgeverij Donker in Rotterdam (second edition, 1950). The following is a translation of this poem.

**In Rotterdam I was born
Under the breath of the Meuse
And I was walking, in my own silence,
Surrounded by the street noise.
I have been a passenger
Of heavily loaded drays.
I have roamed through the whole city
But most of all along the quaysides.
The fleet from all regions was moored
The clipper and the samourens
The three-mast vessel, rigging to the sky
And the ore boat, full and wide and heavy.
The Lloyd fleet named after the provinces
All eleven if I am not mistaken.
The 'Caland' and the 'Lady Tyler'
The 'Scholten' that stayed.**

**There they were moored,
Ready, each in their own splendor
It is as if I can still hear them roaring
In farewell on a winter's night.
But this is what comes to mind
From all those years ago
That all scents from all over the world
Were mixed together there.
At Draaisteeg it smelt of coffee,
At Oude Hoofd of tar and rope,
Of copra along the Spoorweghaven,
Of lard at the Poortgebouw.
Of hides on the Terwenakker
And of cheese at Haringvliet.
At some points the smell of yeast or
Oil prevailed and at others that of jute.**



Then it was the spices
From Bombay or Batavia
In the Boompjes it smelt of sheep
And on Spaansche Ka of onions.
At 't Nieuwe Werk lemons left their scent
And at Entrepot tobacco.
In short, no smell exists
That is missing from this port.
But later, on my voyages
When I visited all the Lord's countries,
It often struck me
Here it smells of Rotterdam.
And this caused me to remember
That single image in my mind
The image that marked my life
The city of my childhood.

It is as if this port reaches throughout the world
So that wherever you may go
You will still remain in its vicinity.
It is as if it raised us
With its air, its water and its wind
In space and in visions
Towards the shores of our future.
Whether you sail for Sydney or for Cape Town
For Kobe or for Baltimore
If you sail for all the world's places
If you sail all the world's seas
Never will you feel entirely lonely
If you were brought up in this city
Yours to love from childhood on:
that is the city of ROTTERDAM.

Mayors

of Rotterdam since the construction of the city hall:

Alfred Rudolf Zimmerman

born 19-01-1869; died 02-07-1939 Mayor from 1 May 1906 to 15 March 1923.

Johannes Wytema

born 30-05-1871; died 11-07-1928 Mayor from 15 September 1923 to 11 July 1928.

Pieter J. Droogleever Fortuyn

born 28-12-1868; died 06-09-1938 Mayor from 15 October 1928 to 6 September 1938.

Pieter Jacobus Oud

born 05-12-1886; died 12-08-1968 Mayor from 15 October 1938 to 10 October 1941 (1st term). Removed from office in October 1941 under the influence of the National Socialist Movement of the Netherlands.

Frederik Ernst Müller

born 25-01-1889; died 22-12-1960 Burgemeester van 10 oktober 1941 tot 7 mei 1945.

Pieter Jacobus Oud

born 05-12-1886; died 12-08-1968 Mayor from 7 May 1945 to 1 June 1952 (2nd term).

Gerard Ewout van Walsum

born 21-02-1900; died 27-07-1980 Mayor from 1 juli 1952 to 28 februari 1965.

Willem Thomassen

born 03-10-1919, died 16-06-2001 Mayor from 16 april 1965 to 31 oktober 1974.

Arie (André) van der Louw

born 09-08-1933, died 20-10-2005 Mayor from 16 november 1974 to 11 september 1981.

Abraham (Bram) Peper

born 13-02-1940 Mayor from 18 maart 1982 to 3 augustus 1998.

Ivo Willem Opstelten

born 31-01-1944 Mayor from 16 februari 1999 to 31 december 2008.

A. (Ahmed) Aboutaleb

born 29-08-1961 Mayor from 5 januari 2009 tot present.

Colophon

Compiled for the first Heritage Day on 12 September 1987 by Gré Ploeg, Rotterdam Municipal Housing and Planning department.

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Het Rotterdamse stadhuis als representatie van Rotterdam 1912-1929, Zwolle/Rotterdam 1999.
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**The Rotterdam
City Hall**