

## Press Release

Rotterdam, May 26th 2022

### **Rotterdam Rooftop Walk has opened: An orange carpet at a height of 30 metres allows the public a different experience of the city**

Today, on Ascension Day, the Rotterdam Rooftop Walk was opened to visitors, who ventured across a variety of the city's rooftops at a height of 30 metres. Designed by Rotterdam Rooftop Days and MVRDV, the highlight of this installation is a bridge spanning the Coolingsel, one of Rotterdam's most important streets. The Rooftop Walk aims to give the public a new perspective on the city. The extensive programming should increase visitors' awareness of the potential of roofs, which can become a "second layer" that makes the city more liveable, biodiverse, sustainable, and healthy.

The bright orange Rotterdam Rooftop Walk is 600 metres long and offers the public a fantastic view of the city for a month. In the rooftop exhibition artists, designers, and architects show how much is possible if we use our roofs efficiently for greenery, water storage, food production, and energy generation. On top of the installation, built by Dutch Steigers, all kinds of makers show how roofs can contribute to a sustainable, healthy and liveable city – from a virtual village to a green design for the roof of the Bijenkorf department store.

The temporary installation is an initiative of Rotterdam Rooftop Days, with the concept and design developed together with MVRDV. As an office, MVRDV has actively worked on solutions for the scarcity of space in the city for years, and hopes to prevent the continued urbanisation of rural areas. Rooftop programming can help with major issues such as climate change, the housing crisis, and the transition to renewable energy; the Rooftop Walk draws attention to these problems – making visitors more aware of the possibilities, especially in a city like Rotterdam where 18.5 km<sup>2</sup> of flat roofs remains unused.

"In 2016, for the celebration of 75 years of Rotterdam's reconstruction, we designed the Stairs to Kriterion, which attracted almost 370,000 visitors. That's when the idea arose that it would be good to make a sequel to the project," says MVRDV founding partner Winy Maas. "During the Eurovision Song Contest, the idea was to make a high stage to honour the winner, but that was cancelled due to the pandemic. I am glad that Rotterdam Rooftop Days have managed to achieve this, and I want to argue for a further sequel: we should not only occupy our roofs and make them greener but also connect them so that we can offer Rotterdammers a new rooftop park! For this, the orange carpet and the bridging of the Coolingsel are a nice initial test case."

Designing for roofs is becoming a tradition for MVRDV: in 2021, MVRDV and Rotterdam Rooftop Days, together with the Municipality of Rotterdam, presented the Rooftop Catalogue, a handbook with 130 innovative proposals for better use of existing flat roofs. This book has since inspired other municipal authorities to take concrete action. The team that designed the Stairs to Kriterion and the Rooftop Walk have also designed a third rooftop installation: The Podium, which opens on June 1. This pink podium on the roof of Het Nieuwe Instituut will be accessible to the public free of charge and can be reached via a 143-step external staircase. The Podium overlooks the MVRDV-designed Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen, and will form the heart of Rotterdam Architecture Month, which will organise various events at The Podium in June.

*Rotterdam Rooftop Walk is open from May 26 to June 24 from 10:00 to 20:00 (entrance € 3.50 for adults, children free). Tickets can be booked via [rotterdamsedakendagen.nl](https://rotterdamsedakendagen.nl) or [rooftopwalk.nl](https://rooftopwalk.nl).*