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THE VAN GOGH MUSEUM IN AMSTERDAM UNVEILS ITS NEW ENTRANCE HALL

Text by Nick Mafi | Photography courtesy of the Van Gogh Museum | September 10, 2015



The new glass entrance to Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum.

On September 5, the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam—one of the Netherlands' most popular galleries—officially unveiled its new all-glass entrance hall. The addition, which was designed by the Dutch firm Has van Heeswijk Architects, took 18 months to complete, with many of the glass panels being fitted to the building on-site.

"We developed a unique support structure for the glass roof, one in which visitors would hardly notice the roof," says lead architect Hans van Heeswijk. "As they enter, I want them to gasp: How is this entire glass building being supported?" By mounting 20 glass columns (up to 30 feet tall) on a load-bearing steel base containing more than 65 metric tons of steel, the firm created a light-filled 8,600-square-foot space to welcome the museum's visitors. "Our desire was to capture the sun," adds Van Heeswijk. "You can see it being reflected in many of Van Gogh's paintings; now you have it in the entryway of the museum as well."

Visitors will descend from the new street-level entrance to a sunken foyer by way of a glass staircase, an illuminated escalator, or a glazed panoramic elevator. From there, they can enter various wings of the gallery or walk through the newly outfitted gift shop.



A sunflower labyrinth was constructed in celebration of the new entrance.

To celebrate the momentous occasion, the Van Gogh Museum also planted a sunflower labyrinth near the new entrance hall, in reference to Van Gogh's iconic "Sunflowers" iterations. A total of 125,000 sunflowers were used to create the 75,000-square-foot maze. What's more, sunflowers were handed out over the opening weekend to usher visitors into the new museum entrance.

Museumplein 6, Amsterdam; vangoghmuseum.nl



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