



Past:Forward

Reflect > Rethink > Remember

PAST:FORWARD CONFERENCE

9-11 SEPTEMBER 2019

EINDHOVEN AND WAALRE, THE NETHERLANDS

75 PERSONAL
LIFE CHANGING
WAR STORIES



**BRABANT
REMEMBERS**

COLOFON

About the organization

Brabant Remembers collects stories about life-changing events in the lives of people during the Second World War (1940-1945). These stories are about major turning points at places in the province of Noord-Brabant. In context, these stories tell about the events during the war and its aftermath in society. More than 500 stories have been collected. Together with the Brabant municipalities and partners, the stories are translated into a cultural program under the direction of an artistic curator with the aim of making the impact of war and peace transferable, perceptible and tangible.

Erfgoed Brabant is the knowledge center for the heritage field in the province of Noord-Brabant. In June 2018, Erfgoed Brabant organized the four-day summit *The Future is Heritage* during the European Cultural Heritage Summit of Europa Nostra in Berlin. This was a program for European young professionals, and like *Past:Forward*, they worked with a team of Dutch young professionals who prepared and executed the event. Over 50 European young heritage professionals from 16 European countries presented their work and exchanged ideas about the future of the European heritage sector. These young people are the start of a European network that they want to expand in the coming years. During the organization of *the Past:Forward Conference*, Erfgoed Brabant will use her experience with intergenerational work from *The Future is Heritage*. Erfgoed Brabant prepared the Past:Forward Conference on behalf of Brabant Remembers.

INTRODUCTION

by Paul Blokhuis, State Secretary for Health, Welfare and Sport



Dear attendees,

Most of you have grown up in peace. To most of you, war and genocide are relics from the past. Something you have seen in movies, in games or read about in books. To me, that makes it extra special that you are here, attending the conference 'Past: Forward, Reflect, Rethink, Remember' marking the celebration of 75 years of

freedom in the Netherlands. Freedom, earned in suffering, bloodshed and hardship. Freedom, at the cost of millions of lives. Freedom, we must never take for granted.

You are the bearers of the future. It is up to you to cherish our hard earned freedom, our democracy, our rule of law. And it is up to you to find your own ways of commemorating and celebrating. To honor those who lost their lives. To never forget what has happened in the darkest episode of mankind. And to educate your children.

During this conference you will meet people from different parts of Europe. All with their own personal stories, with their own historical perspective. It will be interesting to find out if Europeans attach the same level of importance to freedom. To talk about what freedom, or lack of freedom, means to your personal identities. There are many more interesting questions for you to discuss. Together you can thereby develop new ways of commemorating, fit for future generations.

I wish you the best of luck.

Paul Blokhuis
State Secretary for Health, Welfare and Sport

INTRODUCTION

by Wim van de Donk, King's Commissioner in the province of Noord-Brabant



This year is the 75th year of our freedom. We remember the war, its atrocities, the devastation and mourn the victims. The war. It seems that humankind always remembers the last war. In this case, the Second World War. In other countries, they also speak of that other war, the Great War. The Netherlands had no part in it. The Great War was such a terrible experience that it would end all wars. Or so people thought. It was not the case. In

a sense, this is foreboding: one hopes that it will be the last war ever. History, however, shows that thus far there always has been a next war. The generation that has lived the war, has fought for our freedom and is slowly fading away. For most of us, the war is something from the stories of our parents or grandparents, or something from the history books and documentaries on television. We have not felt nor seen the suffering, not heard the noises or smelled the stench of destruction.

Yet every year we remember the war and celebrate freedom. What does this mean for our, and indeed, younger people? War is the sound of a distant and horrible past, an item in a newsreel. Yet the question what the value of remembrance and freedom are is more relevant than ever. Freedom is a torch lit by courageous men and women, at great cost, often they paid the ultimate prize, passed through the generations. Freedom is not a natural situation, freedom has to be won and guarded, time and again. It is both a deeply personal and a collective responsibility.

The 75th year of our freedom is a moment to remember, to reflect on the past but also to reflect on the value of remembrance and celebration. To find new significance, new ways to inspire thinking and acting on the celebration of freedom. I find it inspiring and hopeful that young people from all corners of Europe spend their time and energy to join forces, to think and to find new ways to preserve the tradition of remembrance and celebration. Thinking and acting when it comes to guarding freedom and human dignity is a necessity, now more than ever!

Dr. Wim B.H.J. van de Donk,
King's Commissioner in the province of Noord-Brabant

THE PAST:FORWARD CONFERENCE

Celebrating 75 years of freedom

The Past:Forward Conference marks the start of the celebration of 75 years of freedom in Noord-Brabant. In 1944, most of the south of The Netherlands was liberated from the Nazi-German occupation during the Second World War. The Netherlands had been invaded in May 1940, and the whole country was finally liberated on 5 May 1945. Throughout Europe, the lives of people have been changed forever by decisions that were made at the time, which still resonate to this day.

Since the end of the war, Dutch commemorations have been organized year after year at fixed times according to a largely fixed set-up. The provincial Commemoration of Brabant's Fallen is no exception, and during the Past:Forward Conference, this commemoration will be treated as a case study. It was one of the first commemorations after the war, on 28 October 1945, just a few months after the liberation of The Netherlands. The organizing committee would later evolve into the Foundation of The Fallen of Brabant. Ever since that first commemoration in 1945, the commemoration takes place in the St. Willibrord Church in Waalre. In the old St. Willibrord Church, a provincial war memorial was installed to commemorate the soldiers and resistance fighters from the Second World War, and those who died in recent conflicts.

We take this particular year as a turning point: we weigh the established ways of commemorating and celebrating, but we will also look at possible new approaches so we can build new future forms of commemoration after 2019. Together we will investigate the relationship within a broader European context. Hereby we also consider commemorating and remembering in relation to other conflicts and genocides besides the Second World War.

During the next few days, you will get a taste of current projects and research on commemoration and remembrance in Europe and initiatives presenting new approaches. We feel very proud of the amount of people who were inspired to reply to our Call for Proposals or contacted us about their initiatives. Our participants are from 11 different countries, work in various fields and are between 18 and 70 years old. This really shows that the theme of this conference is truly carried by people from all walks of life!

We wish you all a great experience!

THE EVENT TEAM

Working together with young professionals

One of the key aims of current commemorations, both national and regional, is to educate young people about the atrocities of war. Almost always, they are instructed to guard and pass on the memory of those who gave their lives for peace. And almost always, these instructions go hand in hand with a warning: to do so, without changing the current ways and traditions.

We believe that young people should have a say in the future of commemorations and the remembrance. Therefore, the Past:Forward Conference is organized by a team of young and emerging and established professionals.



From left to right: Martijn van Kuijk, Lynn Jennissen, Joep van der Velden, Vincent Kooijman, Marieke Hendrinks (Brabant Event Bureau), Felix Zielinski, Anne-Wil Maris (Erfgoed Brabant), Naomi Ester (Brabant Event Bureau), Lara Boon, Britt Jennissen, Jelle van de Graaf, Laura Hondebrink. Missing: Ankie Petersen, Rejin Mustafa, Hadewijch Zwart, Coen Schuurmans Stekhoven, Wouter Hinrichs, Mara Grandia, Romy van Voren, Ine de Win, Jesper de Raad.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

TUESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2019

REFLECT

> Jesper de Raad

What we have learned

We have not personally experienced the Great Wars. Yet, we are confronted with them before adulthood. In the workshop we explore our personal past regarding to the way we have been introduced to the First and Second World War, and we reflect on how our past has influenced the way we commemorate in the present.

> Tena Banjeglav & Laura van der Zande

Zapamtite Vukovar: a case study on Croatia's culture of remembrance

Is remembrance always a good thing? And what is the role of remembering and forgetting in relation to processes of reconciliation after conflict? We will address these questions by reflecting on the case of Vukovar, Croatia's "hero-city", and its position in Croatian education. Twenty years after its peaceful reintegration, the town is still deeply divided and remains the most vivid illustration of the complex realities of Croatia's culture of remembrance and the status of reconciliation in the Western Balkans.

> Alexandru Mexi

Creating public parks for victories: remembrance or propaganda?

How and why were "victory" public parks designed, perceived and used in the 20th century? Moreover, how were previous (pre-20th century) public parks reshaped after the main battles and wars of the last one hundred years? Did they become mnemonics of war, as they were officially intended to become? How were monuments commemorating the victories, the human sacrifices, the heroes or the leaders of previous wars redesigned or reused in the new post World War II parks? And how were public parks designed in the memory of the ones who sacrificed their lives during different battles used for propaganda?

> Aoife Hegarty

Ethics of the Past: Teaching Remembrance to Children

While commemorating the past, it is important to teach children not to hold on to it and learn how to remember past events in a significant yet respectful way. While gaining perspective with regards to historical events, we learn to discern our opinions and become critical towards the past, without being offensive. 'Bow to the past, but do not be bound by it'. This session discusses the creative methodologies utilized by the Scéal to Stória programme and invites the

audience to reflect on prejudices and positive cultural understanding. We show how creative pedagogy can lead to positive historical remembrance and empowered heritage learning. Through this session, our goal is to showcase public history outreach workshops and the use of cultural exchange in gaining positive perspectives, critical thinking, commemorating and critiquing history in a healthy way.

> **Renée van den Kerkhof**

In Living Memory

As a professional illustrator, Renée van den Kerkhof (1991) visualizes all sorts of data. Her recent memory card game 'Vergeet de vrijheid niet' (Don't Forget the Freedom) honors the 75 years of freedom in 45 images. She talks about how she deals with historical material and the creative choices she had to make in the process. How to make tragedy and war fit for a game for children, without losing context and respect.

RETHINK

> **Romy van Voren**

Friendly Fire: the remembrance of allied bombings on the Netherlands

During the liberation of Western Europe in World War Two, multiple targets in the Netherlands were bombed by allied forces, to overthrow the Nazi war machine. How were these 'friendly fires' commemorated by the Dutch in the last 75 years? The allied bombing on Breskens (11 September 1944) will be the main focus of this analysis.

> **Mara Grandia**

Dark Heritage

What exactly is 'dark heritage', and how do we want to present it? In this discussion, introduced by a short presentation to define the concept of dark or uncomfortable heritage, the participants will be asked about their opinions on subjects like the value, the human aspect and possibilities to display and use this kind of heritage.

> **Claire Nunn**

Engaging Visitors at Commemorative Sites: Interpretive opportunities at places of remembrance

Exploring how Haley Sharpe Design (hsd) have approached presenting sensitive and engaging interpretation at commemorative sites. With specific reference to recent commissions working with the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) to develop interpretative exhibition design that honours the service and sacrifice American servicemen and women.

> **Sebastiaan Vonk**

War is Hell, but Damned Exciting

Even after 75 years, remembrance of World War II continues to hold relevance for contemporary societies by fore fronting the ideal of "never again." However, it is a misconception that our current engagement with this particular past effectively contributes to realizing this ideal. By drawing on interviews with actors in the field of remembrance and U.S. remembrance tourists, this presentation

seeks to critically discuss the underlying assumptions of this ideal, our engagement with WWII, and prevailing notions about war and freedoms.

> Eliseo Martínez Roig & Luc Rombouts
Bells: The Silence of War, The Voice of Peace

There is enough evidence that the sound of bells has had an important significance for communities throughout history. Not only for religious services but also for different civil reasons, people have been ringing these musical instruments to share their deepest feelings and shared emotions. As an acoustic and social symbol, bells had been subject to destruction, disappearance or compulsory silence. In many military conflicts, such as World War II, bells were silenced or even dropped down from the towers, wiping out their voice while people were being massacred. When wars are over, new bells and carillons are cast, often as symbols of remembrance and peace. In 1954, the Dutch people, as a thankful gesture, donated a new carillon to the people of America as an act of gratitude for the liberation and economic aid after the war. Today, the carillon broadcasts a message of gratitude in Arlington (Washington).

REMEMBER

> Kelly Krijntjes & Mieke Kirkels
The forgotten history of the Afro-American Liberators of WWII

This year is the 75th anniversary of WWII. Everybody knows about the heroes of WWII, but there is a big chance that you've never heard of Afro-American soldiers in the Liberation Army. Due to their social standing and the segregation in the American Army, they are almost never mentioned in the archives and history books. After 75 years the time is right to address this subject and to show that there is more to the remembrance and celebration of the liberation. Something that should not be forgotten.

> Emmet Lyons
Historical Soundscapes : An Ear to the Past

Representing the past in sonic terms is one way in which significant historical events can be presented to the public in a fresh and engaging manner. By gathering facts and memories through the use of sonic elicitation interview techniques, in turn leading to the construction of historical soundscapes, a multi-sensory experience of the past can be achieved.

> Lorraine Besnier
The Role of Cultural Memory in the Rise of Radical Right Populist Parties in Germany and Italy: An Interdisciplinary Approach

The presentation draws attention to the consequences of certain ways of remembering by investigating the link

between memory politics and the rise of radical right populist parties. In a dual case comparison between Germany and Italy, it will be argued that the national government portray a certain image of WWII in the present that affects the social acceptability of ideas associated with radical right populist parties, thereby influencing their success.

> Jolijn Brouwers, Jessie Burgmans & Carlijn Fransen

A creative school assignment to help young people experience the impact of war

The Death Valley De Peel project will link the liberation activities in De Peel (6 municipalities) in 2019 and 2020. This also includes the youth project "The youth of today". High school students are challenged through a crossover between the subjects Dutch and Visual Arts to appropriate their local war history (from WWII). Initiator Museum Klok & Peel tells more about this.

> Lucia Hoenselaars & Ilse Raaijmakers

Wij Herdenken

Since 2018 young members of the Second World War volunteer committees organize yearly the conference "Wij Herdenken". Our main goal is to bring young people together to have an open discussion how we can keep the memory of WW2 alive for new generations by using interactive tools.

> Rocco Verdult & Marlon van den Bergh, Studio Rocco Verdult

Stepping away from the familiar remembrance events, Rocco Verdult incorporates social design and communities to develop new ways to remember 75 years of freedom. In this workshop personal war stories are translated into unique new products, settings and experiences.

> Nienke van Schaverbeke & Aleksandra Strzelichowska, Europeana

Europeana (www.europeana.eu) is the EU's platform for digitized cultural heritage offering access to over 50 million objects from over 3500 cultural heritage institutions. Alongside the collections from Europe's cultural heritage institutions, Europeana also gathers personal stories and objects. In this workshop we will focus on the First World War. One of our flagship projects is Europeana 1914-1918, which started as a pan-European engagement project concerning WW1 focusing on the human aspect of the conflict and grew out to become one of the world's biggest resources of WW1 material featuring user generated and institutional content. In this workshop we will show you the collection, tell you all about this unique resource and its value for education and research and we will invite you to engage with the stories of WW1. We are inviting you to transcribe unpublished documents making them readable and searchable and by doing so help us uncover more and more secrets of the war hidden in the forgotten pages of hand-written text.

> Monique Zijp & Roel Kox, EELT Theatre collective

Does Past Forward trigger your curiosity and creativity? Are ideas popping up fast forward in your mind? What is more beautiful than turning these fresh ideas into more elaborated projects to take home? During the workshop Creative Thinking you create step-by-step a tailor-made project starting from your own first idea or curiosity. Join us for some fun and steaming creativity!

> Manon Henzen, Eetverleden!

It is no secret that food can bring back certain memories. But what exactly is the relationship between food and our memories, and what does that mean for the future of commemoration and remembrance?

> Frank van Doorn, Brabants Historisch Informatie Centrum

The Fallen of Brabant

In recent years, the BHIC has worked intensively on the digital monument of the Brabant Fallen. Frank van Doorn will talk about the challenges, issues and ethics surrounding the project. Also included: a visit to The Waalres Museum and the newly opened exhibition on the project.

PROGRAMME

Monday 9 September 2019 - WELCOME

Starlight Lounge at the Blue Collar Hotel, Klokgebouw 10 in Eindhoven (Strijp S)

15:00 welcome, registration, coffee & tea

15:30 official opening with a few words from the organization

Meike de Jong, host

Prof. dr. Wim van de Donk, King's Commissioner in the province of Noord-Brabant

Stichting Herdenking Brabants Gesneuvelden/Foundation The Fallen of Brabant

Femke Klein, programme director Brabant Remembers

16:00 walking the Crossroads

18:30 welcome dinner

19:30 evening programme

Theater Na de Dam

reflect / talkshow with Wouter Hinrichs

21:30 drinks

Tuesday 10 September 2019 – INSPIRATION

Keukenconfessies, Klokgebouw 127 in Eindhoven (Strijp S)

09:00 welcome, coffee & tea

09:15 welcome and introduction by Meike de Jong, host

keynote by Karwan Fatah-Black, University Lecturer at Leiden University

10:00 workshops and presentations

REFLECT

- > **Jesper de Raad** / What we have learned
- > **Tena Banjeglav & Laura van der Zande** / Zapamtite Vukovar: a case study on Croatia's culture of remembrance
- > **Alexandru Mexi** / Creating public parks for victories: remembrance or propaganda?
- > **Aoife Hegarty & Giulia Ferrati** / Ethics of the Past: Teaching Remembrance to Children
- > **Renée van den Kerkhof** / In Living Memory

RETHINK

- > **Romy van Voren** / Friendly Fire: the remembrance of allied bombings on the Netherlands
- > **Mara Grandia** / Dark Heritage
- > **Claire Nunn** / Engaging Visitors at Commemorative Sites: Interpretive opportunities at places of remembrance
- > **Sebastiaan Vonk** / War is Hell, but Damned Exciting
- > **Eliseo Martínez Roig & Luc Rombouts** / Bells: The Silence of War, The Voice of Peace

REMEMBER

- > **Kelly Krijntjes & Mieke Kirkels** / The forgotten history of the Afro-American Liberators of WWII
- > **Emmet Lyons** / Historical Soundscapes : An Ear to the Past
- > **Lorraine Besnier** / The Role of Cultural Memory in the Rise of Radical Right Populist Parties in Germany and Italy: An Interdisciplinary Approach
- > **Jolijn Brouwers, Jessie Burgmans & Carlijn Fransen** / A creative school assignment
- > **Laurie Slegtenhorst** / Wij Herdenken

13:00 lunch: the taste of remembrance

14:00 pillow talks at the Blue Collar Hotel

16:00 coffee, tea, cake

16:45 reflect / talkshow with Wouter Hinrichs

18:00 end of day 2

Wednesday 11 September – CREATION

Huis van Waalre, Koningin Julianalaan 19 in Waalre

08:00 assemble at the Blue Collar Hotel (outside) for bus transfer to Huis van Waalre

09:00 welcome, coffee & tea

09:30 introduction by Meike de Jong

keynote by Rocco Verdult, social designer & owner at Studio Rocco Verdult

10:00 creation part one: get inspired

- > Rocco Verdult on social design & communities
- > Europeana: communities & collection on remembrance
- > EELT Theatre collective on experiencing remembrance
- > Frank van Doorn, BHIC & Visit exhibition The Fallen of Brabant Het Waalres Museum
- > Eetverleden!, Manon Henzen: food & remembrance

12:30 lunch

13:15 creation part two: create!

16:30 reflect, rethink, remember: the café

presenting our results
reflect / talkshow with Wouter Hinrichs
dinner

19:00 The Commemoration of Brabants' Fallen at the Saint Willibrord Church in Waalre
livestream

20:00 assemble at Huis van Waalre (outside) for bus transfer to Blue Collar Hotel

21:00 farewell at the Blue Collar Hotel in Eindhoven

00:00 end of the conference

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Contact information

During the conference, the following contacts from Erfgoed Brabant / Brabant Event Bureau will be reachable at any time for any type of issue.

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Phone-numbers for emergency

National alarm number: 112
Police (not emergency): 0900 8844

NOTES



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