

# OPENING 'GROENE WEELDE' AT DE HAAR CASTLE, UTRECHT

25-05-2017



On Wednesday May 31st a new visitors program '**Groene Weelde**' at De Haar Castle in Utrecht, is officially opened. The event will celebrate the completion of the recent park restoration curated by guest conservator Mariëtte Kamphuis, West 8's Adriaan Geuze, and artist and florist Denise Collignon.

West 8's contribution includes a new design for the planting of the Roman Garden, and new park map that showcases the refined gardens of De Haar Castle as well as the entire 55ha park complete with beautiful leafy hiking trails as a way to encourage visitors to enjoy varied indoor and outdoor programs. Adults and children are welcome to explore this sleeping beauty and experience first-hand the intimate relationship between the castle and the park.

## AN INTEGRATED DESIGN

De Haar Castle and park were designed as a single entity: a Gesamtkunstwerk (literally a combination of art forms) which was established within a three decades period (1891-1919). Baron and Baroness Van Zuylen commissioned architect Pierre Cuypers to transform the existing medieval castle ruins into a historically representative and comfortable country estate. Landscape architect, Hendrik Copijn was responsible for creating an equally grand scenic entourage. Over 55 hectares in size, the park features around 7,000 large trees. Between 2006 and 2016, the park underwent a thorough restoration led by landscape architect Michael van Gessel, with support from the Netherlands VSB Fund. This involved restoring the alignment of the original park design, thereby making palpable, the interplay between light and dark and openness and enclosure. Since late 2016, West 8 has also contributed to the restoration and improvement of De Haar Castle's landscape and horticultural oeuvre.

## THE CASTLE AS BEACON IN THE LANDSCAPE

Surrounded by serpentine lakes and rolling meadows Castle de Haar is akin to a spider in an web. Visitors to the castle are treated to a series of magnificent view lines over the Castle grounds. Conversely, for those exploring the park, vistas of the Castle's striking silhouette reflected in the water, are continuously revealed and concealed. As part of the Groene Weelde program visitors are offered a unique opportunity to visit the second floor of De Haar Castle, so that they may see the magnificent view lines for themselves. In collaboration with Palace de Loo, an ode at the disappeared winter garden is presented in the Main Hall. In addition, the historic flower cellar will come to life again. For the young visitors a new quest has been developed, allowing them to explore the park through discovery.

For more information of Groene Weelde and De Haar Castle, please visit the official website [here](#).