

# ROOM'S DIY - STREET ART TOUR

< 90 minutes

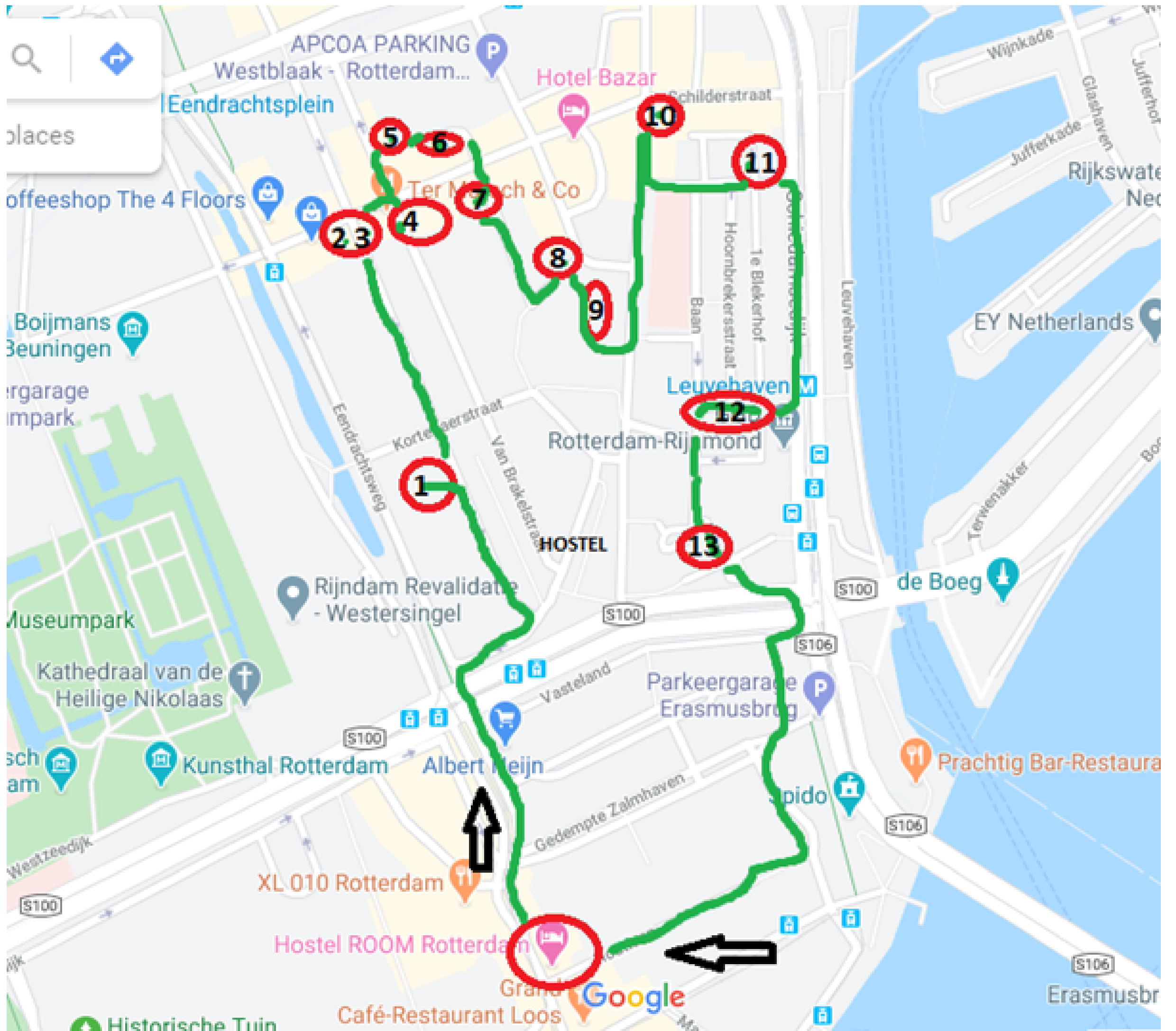
**This tour will take you through a close-by neighbourhood and the many pieces of street art that can be found there.**

**Learn about street art find yourself in some unexpected, off the beaten path, corners of Rotterdam!**





# ROOM'S DIY - STREET ART TOUR



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## Introduction

Street Art has its roots in illegal graffiti art in Brooklyn, New York, and is also known as guerilla art. It started out as graffiti artists using stencils to quickly make more elaborate art pieces. Quickly, artists started taking more risks, working in groups and organizing themselves to make larger and more impressive pieces. Banksy has given street art a reputation for having political messages but it is often nothing more than decorative. Nowadays, many cities embrace, rather than fight, street art. Rotterdam is one of those cities. All the pieces that you will see today are legal and created in cooperation with the owners of the properties on which the art is made.



## 1, TelmoMiel – Don't Say Nothing

ROUTE: Starting at the hostel, take a right straight out the door and continue walking down this street until you hit a big crossing with traffic lights. Cross the street straight ahead. On the other side, go down the stairs and immediately go right. Walk down the street for one block and then take a left and go into the neighbourhood. Keep walking until, on your left, you see a steel fence. Go through the entrance onto the children's playground. Look right behind you on the wall.

This piece was created by two friends, Telmo and Miel, who work as a duo. One of their overarching themes is that of how the modern world is corrupting the youngest generation. The box represents the sheltered world of the 'screens'. A child is quiet and seemingly happy with his phone, therefore the smile on the box. The bird is the outside world, which indeed sometimes takes a shit on you, but taking that risk is a part of growing up. The location is not a coincidence, like most street art never is.



## 2, Tymon – Señor Merida

ROUTE: Go back to the street, and continue your way straight ahead. Just keep walking straight until you get to piece 2 and 3, just before you enter the busy 'Witte de Withstraat'.



This is one of 2 similar paintings that can be found in Rotterdam, the other one being in the industrial Keile district. It's based on the artists travels through South-America and an old picture that he made which was shot in 'Merida' in Mexico. South-America has a bright history in street art, with Sao Paolo being the most important city for this, and the street art there is often colourful and bright. The artist wanted to bring this style to Rotterdam.

## 3, Mark Goss & OX-Alien – Witte Aap

ROUTE: Right behind you!

The creators of this piece were invited by the owner of the bar 'De Witte Aap' (English: The White Ape) to create something special. The two artists have very different styles and don't usually work together, but they've created something that works out surprisingly well. Mark Goss is Responsible for the white ape with a simple palette of black and white and lots of detail. OX-Alien is instantly recognizable and his work can be found all over the city, usually as a part of the Lastplak Collective. His figures always have an O and an X for eyes (therefore OX-Alien). His colourful, hyperactive work contrasts nicely with the calm of the Ape.



## 4, Robert Rost – Love Birds

ROUTE: Take a direct right onto the 'Witte de Withstraat', and continue one block past the busy cafés and terraces. After one block, on your right, on the wall behind you, you will find piece number 4.



**SHE SAID YES!**

Robert Rost is showing himself from his most romantic side in this piece. There's some beautiful contrast here in a piece that was made for Robert to propose to his girlfriend. We see a bright and clear 'love bird' on the right, with an engagement ring in its beak with the words 'Sam, will you marry me?' above it. This represents the part that was definite, Robert knew for sure that he would propose. However, what would come after was unsure. Would she say yes or no? That's why the other half of this piece is, quite amazingly, painted in such a way that it could be perceived as both a beautiful dream (yes!), or a dark, melancholic nightmare (no!).



### 5, Daan Botlek – The Principles of Organization

ROUTE: Go back and cross the ‘Witte de Withstraat’ to the other side and enter the side street, that leads along a bar called ‘Wunderbar’ and a cultural centre called ‘Worm’. Going down this street, take a right as soon as you can. You will find yourself on small parking lot. Now look behind you!

This gigantic piece was designed just for this crazy wall. It’s a contemporary piece on an unusual surface, made by Daan Botlek, who’s pieces you can recognize by his use of a white figure. Seeing this piece from up-close will give you a very different experience compared to viewing it from a distance. Is it a dream? Is the figure in the clouds? Is that a whale? What you see here is completely open to interpretation, but maybe the title will give you some hints!



### 6, Ramon Martins – No Title

ROUTE: Keep walking down the parking lot (with a larger parking garage to the left of you), you’re going the right away. You will quickly see a very colourful piece towering over everything else. This piece has to be viewed separately from the art work that surrounds it on the ground level directly to the right from it.

Ramon is a famous artist from Brazil who has made a name for himself around the globe. Highly trained, super imaginative and wonderfully colourful, this is a true Brazilian street artist! The longer you look at it, the more you see. Do you recognize characters from a famous children’s story? The cat, the rabbit, the girl? It’s psychedelic Alice in Wonderland! This decorative piece is easily missed in this location, but a true highlight of this neighbourhood.



### 7, Jorge Kata Nunez – Trotamundo

ROUTE: Continue your walk back to the ‘Witte de Withstraat’, but directly cross it and go into the side street on the other side, the ‘Zwarte Paardenstraat’.

Jorge Kata Nunez is a Chilean artist who fled the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile in the 70s. After a long journey, he found a new home in The Netherlands. This piece is a very personal piece, but also has strong parallels to the story of Rotterdam. The horse, as a representation of a strong traveller, with birds (symbolizing freedom) in his manes, the world map on his skin and the colours of the Chilean (and Dutch) flag on his face, is determined and moving forward. His name is Trotamundo. The sun is the only thing that will follow him everywhere, shining its light on Trotamundo, but also on all the other people in this world. Below we see faces of many colours, all unique yet all the same. It’s a story of leaving your home behind and finding a new one. Connecting with people of other cultures and backgrounds. Rotterdam, as a city of emigration and immigration, houses thousands of similar stories.



**Rotterdam houses  
no less than 174  
nationalities!**



### 8, Icy & Sot – No Title

ROUTE: Keep walking down the 'Zwarte Paardenstraat' until the end, and then take a left. About 20 meters further there is a sticker that looks like stencil art, but of which you might not see much left. Hopefully you can still enjoy it!



#### Tip:

If you pay attention to the style, the location, the makers and the materials, you can learn a lot about the story of a piece of Street Art!

### 9, Scots International Church – Garden Wall

ROUTE: Cross the street towards the large playground and go onto that square where there is a drinking fountain, not far from piece 8. You will notice a colourful mosaic on the stone wall.



You probably didn't expect this to be included in a street art tour, but why not?! This mosaic has many features to it, did you notice the butterfly mirrors? The fence? This wall was decorated with the help of over a 100 volunteers in the neighbourhood. This big square used to be a centre of typical inner-city problems, but now it's safe, clean and pleasant. This wall was decorated with community effort, in order to uplift this little garden of the Scottish International Church.

### 10, Daan Botlek – Make It Happen

ROUTE: Walk around the church, following the mosaic, cross the street 'Schiedamse Vest' and follow it to your left. Walk past the 'Oogziekenhuis', until you get to the corner of the 'Witte de Withstraat' & the 'Schilderstraat'. You can't miss the big green piece.

This is the second piece by Daan Botlek on our tour, do you recognize his signature white figure? This piece was commissioned by the local government to promote the city's campaign 'Make it Happen'. This is a campaign that was launched to change the image of Rotterdam (from Ugly Duck and Underdog to Hip & Happening). There are several 'Make it Happen' pieces in the city, and they are always interactive. Try to climb into this wall and become a part of this mural! It's supposed to show the typical Rotterdam mindset: Work hard, work together, and you can achieve anything.





## 11, Ces53 – Painting in the Global Tradition, Slight Return

ROUTE: Now go back to where you came from for just one block, and then take a left into the 'Blekerstraat'. Around here are many post-war buildings that will soon be demolished, so it will look a little bit rough. If you go all the way to the end, you will see several pieces of street art, but the one I want to talk about is just on a corner to your left, at the end of the road for cars.



The 'Make It Happen' campaign opened up the city to a lot of things, and one of these things is street art. There is no piece in this city that, for us, is more evident of that, then this one. Ces53 was for a long time an illegal, underground artist, notorious for spray painting trains in The Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. His crew was the nightmare of each local government. Ces53 had a very good reputation though, he regularly changed his style and he mastered many different art forms. And now the city even gave him a wall to showcase his skill! The piece is quite interesting, the artist seems to have been influenced by ancient art forms from Egypt (the way the figures are positioned) and Buddhist cultures (the figures look like the guards of Buddhist temples), but sprinkled with pop art references, and hidden away, the Anarchy Symbol on the bowler hat, a 'slight return' to his past.

## 12, Bier & Brood – The Final Experiment

To find this piece, you can take two simple routes. Where piece 11 was on the left from the road, go in the opposite direction, to the right, following the road called 'le Blekerhof', between the old buildings, all the way until the end. Another option is to go up the steps, where only pedestrians can go. Then go to the right, follow the sidewalk for one bloc, and go to the right again, down the steps.



This very large mural goes all the way around this building. The design of this mural is a direct reference to the building's former function. It was the main building of the Inspection Service of Goods of Rotterdam. It's a dystopian and surrealistic/futuristic view of the laboratories and experiments that the Inspection Service conducted throughout its time. There is a certain cynicism and fear for the increasingly automated world ingrained in this artwork. It can be seen as both a warning and a piece of criticism. Bier & Brood love to integrate Pop Art references in their murals, how many do you recognize? Don't forget to circle all the way around this building!

The Inspection Service of Goods became the 'victim' of conspiracy theories about doing unethical and dark experiments that jeopardized the public health of Rotterdammers. As a result it had to close.

## 13, Lastplak Collective – No Title

ROUTE: When you walk around this building, you start on the 'Ketelaarstraat', straight ahead of you, you will see a church. The route continues to the right, following a street called 'Baan'. After about 50 meters, the road forks, take the left road that goes a little bit up. Here you will see a large mural.



Sadly, this is the final piece of the tour. This mural showcases all the typical highlights of Rotterdam. It's made by the Lastplak Collective, a famous Rotterdam art collective that exists of 12 artists. Usually, they come up with a single theme, and then each artist will take a specific piece of the wall, and make their own addition to a collective art piece. This colourful and playful mural gives you a summary of Rotterdam, through different creative perspectives.

# THE END

To go back to the hostel, the easiest way is to just take a right, follow the road, and later the sidewalk parallel to the busy road until you get to the big crossing with the traffic lights and cross the street towards the Albert Heijn supermarket. From here, you continue straight until you reach the hostel again.