It’s not every day you get to rock the world of paintings conservation. Yet that’s exactly what Operation Night Watch is all about. We’ve teamed up with Amsterdam’s Rijksmuseum to help carry out one of the most innovative restorations in the history of art.

Now almost 380 years old, Rembrandt’s monumental masterpiece has temporarily been encased in a glass chamber. It means visitors can still see The Night Watch while the research and restoration work takes place. It’s being carried out by a dedicated team of scientists, curators and conservators from the museum, who are working in close collaboration with museums and universities in the Netherlands and abroad, as well as specialists from AkzoNobel.

“We’re incredibly proud to be the main partner for this amazing project,” says AkzoNobel CEO Thierry Vanlancker. “As a company, we believe in taking our innovation beyond generations. So we’re excited to be contributing our color expertise and passion for paint to help conserve a cultural icon.”

Adds Robert van Langh, the Rijksmuseum’s Head of Conservation and Science: “We’re going to be doing things that have never been attempted before. But first, we need to find out what we’re up against. With a partner like AkzoNobel on board, we’re confident we’ll take our understanding of paint to the next level – and I don’t just mean one level, I’m talking three or four levels.”

Operation Night Watch is using a glittering array of groundbreaking tools and techniques to help determine exactly what needs doing. As well as taking thousands of ultra-high resolution photographs (courtesy of a purpose-built imaging frame), sophisticated scanners and microscopes are also being used to investigate the artwork at microscopic levels. Once the research phase is over, several terabytes of data will be carefully analyzed to determine the best way to proceed in terms of conserving The Night Watch for generations to come.

The three-year partnership continues a long association between AkzoNobel and the Rijksmuseum, with the company having supplied around 8,000 liters of paint during the museum’s decade-long renovation. And Operation Night Watch is also unfolding in full view of the watching world.

“We’re incredibly proud to be the main partner for this amazing project”

You can take a look yourself by visiting rijksmuseum.nl/en/nightwatch
Big things are expected of Hudson Yards. The massive construction project isn’t just changing the iconic skyline of New York City, it’s also creating a blueprint for the future of sustainable urban living.

The ongoing project is already attracting admiring glances, with the first phase having been awarded LEED Neighborhood Development Gold (LEED-ND) certification, making it the first neighborhood in Manhattan to receive the prestigious recognition.

Green building on this scale requires products and partners that can meet the demands of the largest private real estate development in US history. That’s where we come in. Not only did we supply coatings for two of the first towers to be completed (10 and 30 Hudson Yards), we’re also supplying products for several other new buildings in various stages of completion.

Taller than the Empire State Building, the impressive glass and steel structure of 30 Hudson Yards uses the company’s high-performance architectural powder coatings, while 10 Hudson Yards also features our products. A stand-out feature of 30 Hudson Yards is an outdoor observation deck which is the highest in the western hemisphere. Expected to open to the public in 2020, it’s 335 meters (1,100 feet) in the air and extends 20 meters (65 feet) from the building.

“We’re extremely proud to be part of this unprecedented investment in the heart of one of the world’s greatest cities,” says Simon Parker, Managing Director of AkzoNobel’s Industrial Coatings business, which provided liquid coatings for both towers. “It underlines the trust that customers have in our ability to deliver coatings technology which can provide modern buildings with extreme levels of durability and sustainability.”

Adds Daniela Vlad, Managing Director of AkzoNobel’s Powder Coatings business: “We have a long track record of supplying market-leading products for iconic buildings all over the world and are very excited to be involved in the Hudson Yards development. Customers value our unique ability to supply top quality liquid and powder coatings and meet any specification, no matter how demanding.”

Expected to contribute nearly $19 billion to New York City’s annual GDP, Hudson Yards will eventually encompass more than 20 buildings, including residential and office space, retail outlets, restaurants and a luxury hotel.

“We’re extremely proud to be part of this unprecedented investment in the heart of one of the world’s greatest cities”
LAUNCHING NEW INNOVATIONS TOGETHER

Following the knockout success of our global startup challenge in the first half of 2019, our Paint the Future ecosystem is expanding to engage suppliers, academia and customers. Working together will help us enhance our products, develop groundbreaking solutions and even safeguard our planet for future generations.

The 2019 global startup challenge exceeded expectations, attracting 160 quality submissions, from which 21 startups were selected to attend the accelerator event in May. At the finale, AkzoNobel awarded joint agreements to five startups, while partner KPMG presented one award. Since then, cross-functional venture teams have been working closely with the winners on these ongoing collaborations.

As Paint the Future grows, all programs are being designed to offer new pathways to connect with experts, accelerate ideas, bring solutions to market and deliver impact at scale.

“We want to be the launch pad for great ideas and innovations in our industry, and we see our Paint the Future ecosystem as the way to do it,” says Klaas Kruithof, AkzoNobel’s Chief Technology Officer. “As our success will depend on working with diverse partners from inside and outside the industry, we really need to look along the entire value chain. That’s why we’re extending the invitation: let’s do amazing things together.”

In November 2019, some key suppliers were invited to explore and discuss industry challenges. An online platform will eventually open for all suppliers to submit their ideas. Current and new partnerships with academia and other institutions are also joining the ecosystem.

And there’s more to come in 2020, including our first regional startup challenge in Brazil – at the very heart of South America’s entrepreneurial ecosystem.

For the latest updates and to learn about innovation at AkzoNobel, visit www.letspaintthefuture.com

Paints and coatings are primed for the next revolution. Covering almost everything you see around you, they represent an unparalleled opportunity for growth within a multitude of industries. Our Paint the Future ecosystem is where we can all come together in collaborative innovation.

The winning startups celebrate their success at the Paint the Future accelerator event held in Amsterdam in May 2019.

watch video on akzo.no/PTF2019
NEW LIFE FOR OLD PAINT

We’re always looking to push the boundaries of what paint can be and what it can do. Innovation is in our DNA – it goes hand-in-hand with our unwavering commitment to sustainability.

It’s a powerful combination, one which saw us become the first major manufacturer to launch recycled paint, thanks to a groundbreaking partnership in the UK with resource management experts Veolia.

Developed by our Dulux Trade brand, Evolve is a revolutionary matt emulsion which contains 35% recycled paint. It’s made from leftovers which would otherwise most likely be destined for landfill.

Once the unused white paint has been reclaimed, it’s sorted, filtered and refined by Veolia. It’s then re-engineered with new paint by AkzoNobel and tested extensively to make sure that every tin meets the high standards expected from Dulux Trade.

“We’re always looking for new ways to drive sustainable innovation, cut down on waste and create a circular economy for paint – while offering our customers fresh solutions that don’t compromise on quality,” explains AkzoNobel’s Chief Operating Officer, Ruud Jooosten. “By introducing Evolve, we will reduce the carbon footprint of our Dulux Trade products, and help our customers reach their own sustainability goals.”

“...and impacteful solutions”

Rinske van Heiningen
AkzoNobel Director of Sustainability

Evolve was created after years of investment, hard work and commitment to improve our sustainable offering. A particular achievement was reducing the carbon footprint of each liter of Evolve paint produced by more than 10% (compared with standard vinyl matt). It’s another example of how we’re setting the pace as the leader when it comes to sustainability in the paints and coatings industry.

Add the company’s Director of Sustainability, Rinske van Heiningen: “Sustainability is at the heart of our business. That’s why we focus on developing products and technologies with the biggest positive impact. We’re also well aware that people expect more than just a product from a brand, so we’re constantly striving to deliver the most sustainable – and impactful – solutions.”

watch video on akzo.no/Evolve2019