“TO THE ANTARCTIC” EXHIBITION OPENS JUNE 21ST AT MAS MUSEUM IN ANTWERP



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The International Polar Foundation has been part of creating a fascinating new exhibition on Belgium's contributions to Antarctic exploration and research, opening at the MAS Museum in Antwerp starting from Friday, June 21st.

A free special pre-opening evening open to the general public will take place on Thursday, June 20th from 9:00 pm until midnight.

The exhibition, entitled "To the Antarctic: Belgica's Polar Pioneers" focuses on Belgium’s history of polar exploration and research in Antarctica. It begins with the 1897-99 overwintering expedition of Belgian polar explorer Adrien de Gerlache and his crew on the Belgica research vessel. The exhibit then takes the visitor right up to what's happening today at Belgium’s Princess Elisabeth Antarctica, the world’s first zero-emission polar research station!

After leaving from the Port of Antwerp, De Gerlache and his international team sailed to Antarctica on the Belgica. After their ship unexpectedly became stuck in the ice, the team made the first ever overwintering in Antarctica. The team made the best of the situation to map parts of Antarctica, carry out

scientific research, and collect samples of Antarctica’s unique biota.

The International Polar Foundation has partnered with MAS for this project, assisting in the conceptualisation and creation of content for the exhibition, with a particular focus on the broad array of science fields covered in today’s Antarctic research. This is covered in a section of the exhibition called Princess Elisabeth Antarctica, which showcases some of the research carried out today at the Princess Elisabeth Antarctica, the world's first zero-emission polar research station. As the designer and designated operator of this unique station, and as a public utility foundation dedicated to educating the general public about the importance of the polar regions, Education and Outreach Coordinator Mieke Sterken and her colleagues at the International Polar Foundation drew on their extensive knowledge about Antarctica and the scientific projects taking place at the Princess Elisabeth Antarctica research station. They are grateful for the input provided by many Belgian and international scientists and institutions, who contributed by sending relevant photos and information. The general public will learn a lot from their input.

Running until November 3rd, the exhibition will be a great place to visit with family or friends who are interested in learning more about Belgium’s history in Antarctica, appreciate the wealth of knowledge polar research can offer, or simply enjoy the beauty and wonder of the planet’s southernmost continent!

For more information about the exhibit, visit the MAS Museum website.

To purchase tickets, please visit the online booking system.