

REBUILDING THE OBSERVATORIUM

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ROBERT MORRIS, FLEVOLAND 1977

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In 1977 the Observatorium by the Land Art artist Robert Morris was rebuilt in East Flevoland, with the support of the Sikkens Foundation. This was an initiative by the Sonsbeek Onbeperkt Foundation, an organization which supports art projects which are generally difficult to place in a museum environment. A temporary version of this Observatorium was located in Santpoort in 1971, as part of the Sonsbeek art event outside the limits. With the money from Sikkens, amongst others, it was now possible to build a definitive version in East Flevoland, along the road from Lelystad to Swifterbant. The project was completed in 1977 and is an artificial raised area in this flat landscape, consisting of two circular earth walls. Holes were made in the walls, which serve as visors to watch the sun rise as the seasons change, like a modern Stonehenge. The outer wall has a diameter of 91 meters; the inner wall has a diameter of 24 meters. The architect Coen de Groot designed the construction and the IJsselmeerpolders State Department carried out the project.

In the case of Morris's project, it should be noted that "the color is determined here by the vegetation [...], an aspect which obviously attracted the special interest of the Sikkens Prize". This can be seen as stimulating the experience of the subtlety of natural colors.

The American artist Robert Morris was born in Kansas City in 1931. He was one of the most diverse American artists and his work comprises abstract works, expressionist and figurative paintings, sculptures and installations which are related to Land Art and Minimal Art.