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Het Wilhelmus (Dutch National Anthem, to be sung at Dam Square Memorial ceremony)

1. Wilhelmus van Nassouwe

Ben ik van Duitschen bloet

Mijn Vaderland getrouwe

Blijf ik tot in den doet

Een Prince van Oranje

Ben ik vrij onverveerd

Den Koninck van Hispanje

Heb ik altijd ge-eerd

2. Mijn schild ende betrouwen

Zijt Gij o God mijn Heer

Op U zo wil ik bouwen

Verlaat mij nimmermeer

Dat ik toch vroom mag blijven

Uw dienaar t'aller stond

Den tirannie verdrijven

Die mij mijn hert doorwondt

Canvas presents...

Meeting the Ghosts

Amsterdam in WW2

an original documentary with live music

Emma Breedveld, viool

Janfie van Strien, klarinet

Ellen van Vliet, accordeon

Lynn Hutchinson, piano en componeren

David Sheldon, video and sound design

Dodenherdenking Dag

4 Mei 2008

17.30

Herengracht 75 huis

Amsterdam's history branches out over eight centuries. She has known kings and queens of all shapes and sizes...been a model for city planners the world over...and was at one point the leading financial center of the world.

But it's her history from only sixty years ago that brings us together tonight.

My quest to know more about Amsterdam during the war began with the discovery that our home - *this* home - was, at one point, a place of resistance activity. Several Jewish people were hidden in the attic four floors above the living room. And for a time, resistance weapons were stored in what is now our basement.

Mr. Bontekoe, the owner of the house, was interrogated by the Nazi police several times. He denied accusations and was able to avoid fatal penalty.

Soon after hearing about this, there were moments when I could hear the sound of Gestapo boots pounding through our hallway. I would put my hand on the doorknob and feel my heartbeat quicken, as though I were afraid to walk outside and betray my secrets.

And as I continued to dig into the past, I would find myself standing in front of buildings and landmarks, transplanted to another time. I've now seen many pictures and films from the war years, and aside from the clothing and hairstyles, everything looks the same. It isn't difficult for my imagination to place me there, in the middle of fear and confusion.

As I've worked on this project, I have pondered the value of a gathering like this. To offer just a snapshot of such an important chapter of Amsterdam and Holland's history. There are countless books and museums that can say the same and more.

This project is an individual effort to engage others in a topic that previously may have been left to an occasional museum visit or inside unread chapters of a history book. Many of us here have only called Amsterdam "home" for a number of years. Perhaps there will be new insight gathered tonight.

It is my sincere desire to honor the victims of the war by re-telling their stories.

Holland's conflict during the war was not just with the Germans, it was also with each other. At first, Germany's tactics in Holland were not thoroughly evil, so there was confusion over who to believe, who to side with, and how to respond. Should I collaborate? Or should I resist?

So, when I say "honor the victims," I don't just mean those murdered, or those who starved to death in the five years of occupation. I also honor the survivors and the generation that followed. It is easier to count dead bodies than to accurately identify the amount of hurt, fear, and distrust that resided in Dutch families and communities in the years that followed.

My second desire is to be able to participate in the act of remembering. To put faces and names and context into the observance of Dodenherdenking Dag.

Amsterdam is a city that inherently recognizes the value of the past within the context of living in the now. Significant historic landmarks are the places we live, shop, and visit on a daily basis. History isn't contained to one section of town. It IS the town.

Countless acts of bravery - big and small - took place in Amsterdam during the war. On the way to the market, you could unknowingly pass a place where a Jewish family was hidden, an underground newspaper was printed, or fake id's were forged.

Local people committing acts of bravery.

There were also countless numbers of victims. People targeted for their religious beliefs or heritage, who had no safe place to go. People executed for attempting to stop the persecutors. People brainwashed and manipulated into committing acts of hate against their neighbors.

And there were villains. People who knowingly chose to create or follow evil.

These are the ghosts of this city.

To attempt an unabridged account in one evening of what happened in Amsterdam during World War 2 would be an exercise in futility. But I offer now an introduction to some of the key events and players, so that you may also get to know her better.

The live music you will hear is what I have written along this journey of discovery. The notes and phrases accompany the patterns of my reflection.

Thank you for being here.

- Lynn Hutchinson

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Emma Breedveld, Janfie van Strien, Ellen van Vliet.

Liesbeth Bontekoe and Jan Eurlings.

Mackie Meijer.

Agnes van de Beek.

The next *Canvas* is 20 July at 18.00. More details to follow.