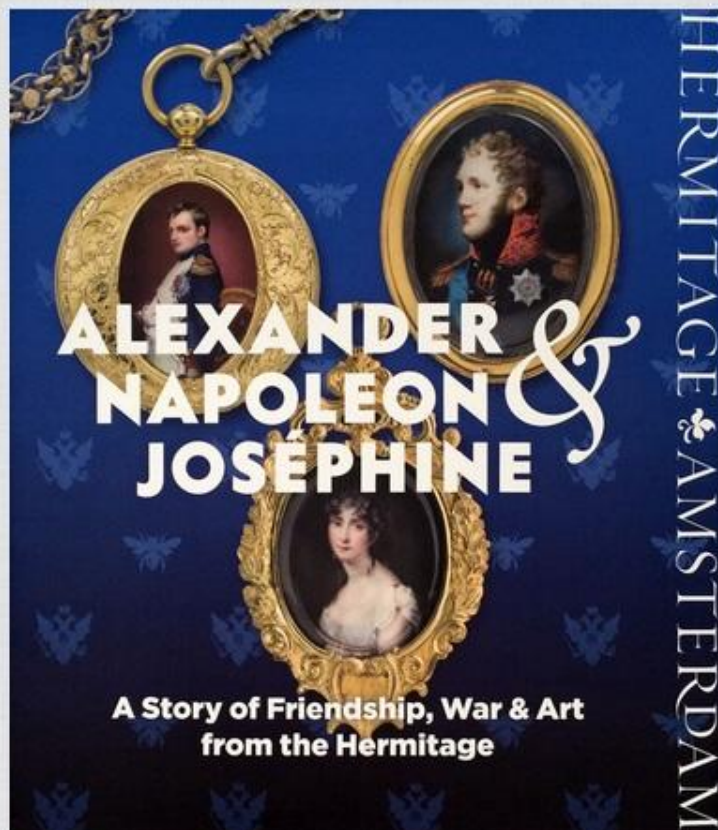


## SONICPAINTINGS NEW SOUND INSTALLATION FOR BATTLE OF BEREZINA PAINTING

We are very pleased to invite you to our next SonicPaintings installation that was developed especially for the "Napoleon, Alexander and Josephine" exhibition at the Hermitage Amsterdam.

This time you can experience a dynamic soundscape created to the painting entitled "The Battle over Berezina". The exhibit depicts how the Napoleon's army miraculously crossed the ice cold water of Berezina river escaping the Tsarist soldiers. A dramatic script developed by SonicPaintings accompanies the visual and includes historically-research dialogues played by three professional actors, and naturalistic battle sounds recreated by the contemporary Napoleonic Association in Nederlands, recorded on location.

Exhibition opens on the 28th of March and last until 8th of November 2015.



## BATTLE OVER BEREZINA – MEMOIR FROM THE (SOUND) FIELDS

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It took several talented and committed people, thoughtful planning, support of Hermitage Amsterdam and good deal of luck to recreate realistically sounding 18th century battlefield presented on the projection of Battle over Berezina. The project was devised and executed by SonicPaintings, where we create interactive soundscapes to augment the visuals on the painting.

It is a bit of a challenge, to gather at the same (quiet) place and time, 20 or 30 Dutch speaking Napoleon soldiers that would “perform” battle scene for a sound recording. After some extensive research I discovered Napoleontische Associatie der Nederlanden - a goldmine of different battalions and soldiers groups passionately re-enacting battles.

In late January I noticed that various battalions from Napoleontische Associatie will have their exercises at Slot Loevenstein preparing for re-enacting the battle of Waterloo later this year. I immediately decided to scout this location. To my surprise fields around the castle appeared to be rather quiet for a Dutch standards - no noisy highways or trains around, reasonable amount of planes, just a few birds in the evening and a lot of mud.



Two weeks later these battalions would have the final rehearsal - my only chance to record this passionate group of soldiers, in full uniforms and armor. I had to act quickly: scripts for actors had to be written, rehearsals done, all necessary recording equipment and transport booked. The one thing that was completely beyond my control was the weather.

To my dismay for two weeks before the recording there was a clear sunny day each and every day. Bad sign in my situation. I knew it won't last forever, and definitely not in the Netherlands, so I had my fingers crossed that on the crucial day there will be no rain nor strong wind as this makes sound recording impossible to make. Forecast pages were the most visited sites on my computer during the week before the recording Sunday.

On Friday and Saturday I was in a panic – there was more rain during these two days than throughout the most of the winter. Even if the rain stopped it would be a swamp out there. Additionally even participation of soldiers was doubtful due to this nasty, even for Dutch standards, weather. And then Sunday came:



Beautiful weather, no wind. It was like a dream...but not for long.

Just after the actors came on the set and start warming up, ducks and geese - equally enjoying the shining sun after two days of pouring rain – decided to sonically manifest their joy. With each minute more birds joined. And more people –

including amateur pilots of small aircrafts making a leisurely round above the castle. In consequence, it took almost 3 hours to record 2.5 minutes of sound material.

Not much easier was capturing the sounds of the long awaited soldiers – just before their arrival a herd of semi wild cattle slowly but steadily, with sort of passive aggressive attitude, took over the field where recording should take place.

Fortunately the soldiers were bit late and by then the cows left and I could finally make my recording.



Just in time before one lady demanded to immediately stop the exercise because we might be attacked by ... cows. Fifty full equipped, tough soldiers that came to exercise maneuvers had to leave the field and retreat to the castle. Thankfully I already had all necessary sound material.

So there it is. If you want to hear this unique interactive sound design, visit "Napolen, Alexnader and Josephine" exhibition at Hermitage Amsterdam, 28/03 – 8/11/2015

# Audiovisual

Idee, regie en geluidsontwerp || Idea, director and sound design

Zbigniew Wolny

Ontwikkelaar || Developer

Casper Schipper

Filmmontage || Editing

Paul Wassink | OG Filmproductions

Beeldbewerking || Image processing

Marcin Karwinski

Auteur || Writer

Rachel Visscher

Acteurs || Actors

Benjamin Gijzel

Wouter Braaf

Thijs Maas

Consultant

Marc Schaftenaar

Productieassistent || Production assistant

Przemyslaw Siemion

Met dank aan || With thanks to

Dave Westerlaken

2de Bataljon Grenadier Compagnie || 2nd Battalion

Grenadier Company

7de Bataljon Infanterie van Linie || 7th Battalion Infantry of the Line

27ste Bataljon Jagers van Linie || 27th Battalion Jaegers of the Line

5de Bataljon Infanterie Nationale Militie || 5th Battalion National

Militia Infantry

Korps Sappeurs, Mineurs en Pontonniers || Corps of Sappers,

Miners and Pontooneers

Slot Loevestein || Loevestein Castle

### EEN LEVENDE SCHOOLPLAAT

De schoolplaat *Hollandse infanterie bij de bruggen over de Berezina* van de Nederlandse schilder Jan Hoynck van Papendrecht (1858-1933) staat in het geheugen gegrift van vele generaties Nederlanders. Nu heeft SonicPaintings speciaal voor de tentoonstelling deze schoolplaat van een interactieve soundscape voorzien. U ervaart driedimensionaal geluid, waarbij uw beweging met op uw hoofd een kop-telefoon steeds voor een andere beleving zorgt. Staat u dichtbij, dan hoort u vooral details. Staat u verder af, dan hoort u een totaalgeluid.

Voor de geluiden heeft SonicPaintings opnamen gemaakt gedurende twee sessies, in de studio en tijdens een heuse exercitie van het Tweede Bataljon Grenadier Compagnie. De buitenopnamen zijn van eind januari bij Slot Loevestein, waar het bataljon aan het oefenen was voor zijn deelname aan de heropvoering van de Slag bij Waterloo op 18 juni 2015. Het terrein van Loevestein bleek een van de rustigste gebieden in Nederland: weinig luchtvaartverkeer, geen snelwegen in de wijde omtrek, ideaal voor een negentiende-eeuws aandoend geluid. Alleen de natuur gooidde soms roet in het eten.

### A SCHOOL POSTER COMES TO LIFE

The school poster *Dutch Infantry at the Bridges over the Berezina* by Dutch painter Jan Hoynck van Papendrecht (1858-1933) is engraved in the memory of many generations of Dutch people. Now, especially for the exhibition, SonicPaintings has created an interactive soundscape to accompany the poster. You will experience three-dimensional sound, with your movements, with earphones on your head, generating a changing experience. When you are standing close to the image, you will hear mainly details. Further away, you will hear a total sound.

For the sounds SonicPaintings made recordings in two sessions, in the studio and during a live exercise by the Second Battalion Grenadier Company. The live recordings date from late January at Loevestein Castle, where the battalion was practising for its part in the re-enactment of the Battle of Waterloo on 18 June 2015. The grounds of Loevestein proved to be one of the quietest places in the Netherlands, with little air traffic and no motorways in the wide vicinity, making it ideal for the recording of a nineteenth-century type of sound. Only nature proved occasionally disruptive.

