

# CLOSED EYES

WHEN DO WE AS PEOPLE FEEL HOME ?

When the river  
comes down and  
washes home away

will it ever  
the be  
same?

YOUR SOUL MIGHT KNOW HOW THIS RIVER USED TO FLOW

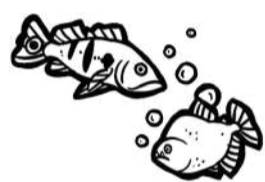
# THE BOTTOM OF BROKOPONDOMEER

## The depth of Brokopondomeer

The artwork on the front cover, a colouring picture by AMBIGOU, depicts the district of Brokopondomeer in Surinam. It shows elements from the past that are no longer visible, but still tangible, such as the treetops that stick out above the water.

## Closed Eyes

Brokopondomeer is a reservoir in the Surinam hinterland, and forms the setting for the choreographic performance *Closed Eyes*. The performance begins with one of the dancers descending into the depths of the lake, where his ancestors once lived. Alida Dors visited this lake, and Ganzee, her ancestors' village that was swallowed up by the water.



"My ancestors had dreams for their grandchildren.  
 I wanted to go back to the place where they dreamed those dreams.  
 Where they lived."



## The past

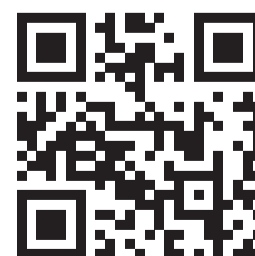
In 1964, the completion of the Afobaka dam resulted in the flooding of an area as big as the province of Utrecht. The dam was built to provide electricity for an aluminium smelting company. The objective was economic growth, but it also meant that many lost their homes. Villages, including Ganzee, disappeared under the water, making roughly 5,000 Marrons, refugees who were once enslaved people, homeless. Cruelly, these people, who had managed to free themselves and with whom peace treaties had been signed, now had no control over their own territory anymore. Much was lost when these villages were flooded. But the stories and memories still exist.



"When do we as people feel home? When the river comes down and washes home away,  
 Will it ever be the same? If you close your eyes and look inside, what will you find?  
 A world of memories, extending beyond the start of your life. You're just one drop  
 in this sea, but your soul might know how this river used to flow."

## Would you like to know more about Brokopondomeer?

- Visit the exhibition Soengoe Kondre/Verzonken Leven (Submerged Heritage) in Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam until 2 June 2024.
- Watch the documentary *Andere Tijden (Other Times): Leven in Koloniaal Suriname (Life in Colonial Suriname)*.
- Follow the Instagram account @saamakanenge\_ about Afro-Surinamese and Saramaccan culture.



[tr.nl/closedeyes](https://tr.nl/closedeyes)