

## **Spotlight award, 31 May 2016, by Gerrit van Meer**

I would like to conclude these presentations with the awarding of the Spotlight.

It is crucial that we as researchers show, explain and tell the world how exciting it is what we are doing and how our fundamental sciences contribute to society. Outreach comes in many forms and different opportunities for each researcher. With the Spotlight the Faculty Board wants to recognise researchers and students who take their responsibility and put in extra time and effort get the most out of their outreach opportunities.

Earlier this spring, Bert Weckhuysen performed in a night club in Amsterdam, which is in itself a rare achievement for a professor. Bert gave five mini-lectures of fifteen minutes each, to an audience ranging from school children to colleagues, organised by Universiteit van Nederland. Bert used captivating stories and experiments to explain different subjects in the field of catalysis, such as: how can we make plastics from organic materials? Why is it increasingly difficult to make fuel from crude oil? And why are exhaust fumes nevertheless getting cleaner and cleaner?

The lectures were recorded on video and are available via the Universiteit van Nederland YouTube channel. The biggest success was the lecture with the tantalising title "Why should you not eat the chocolate in the tip of your ice-cream cone?" The YouTube video of this lecture has been viewed nearly 35,000 times, and the Volkskrant.nl article about this lecture was number one in the list of most read articles.

For reaching a large audience with his fundamental research, we would like to award the Spotlight to Bert.