

Het leven door het Gemeenschaps Gezondheidshuis

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Explore Lab

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Healthcare and the human body and mind is always one of my main interests overall. In particular the way how our brain works. The creativity though was the aspect why I chose to study Architecture. Or as the official name of our faculty is; Architecture and the built environment. The influence of architecture on our brain is what fascinates me the most; how you can be astonished, surprised or get emotional by the building you are in at that moment. That is the main reason why I chose to focus on Architecture & Healthcare in the Explore Lab Studio. I will reflect in this essay on my graduation in social context, the relation between my research and design and the use of my research in practice.

Social context and the design of "Het Gemeenschaps Gezondheidshuis"

During all of my design projects and internships, the focus was especially on the user of the building. About how they would experience the building. In this graduation project the main focus is on experience. The building will give the users the opportunity to choose in what way they want to use the building; only by grabbing a coffee or to do a sport course, to be with all of the other users or to be on your own, somewhere in the building.

In society nowadays is the main focus on well being and self care. That is the biggest change in Healthcare as well; people know better how to take care for themselves. Another thing that is changing is not looking at someone's diseases to decide what's best for him or her, but to meet their needs and requirements. The healthcare is really patient centred. This is one of the bases for my research in the Explore Lab Studio.

The needs of the patient are also based in architecture. As architects it is our responsibility to meet the needs of the users as well give the users opportunities to discover their needs. To know what is most important in the design process and most important in the inclusive healthcare of nowadays, I have made a toolbox for architects.

Architecture is in Healthcare the aspect what stays behind. There are still a lot of big hospitals with large hallways and a clinic white surface. In this way it is possible for different designers to know where to focus on by designing an inclusive healthcare situation.

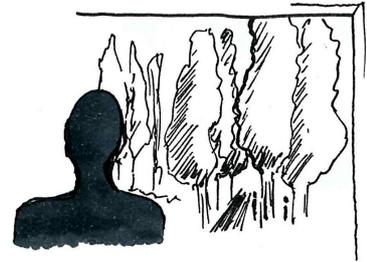
I think it is important to know as a designer how people think and react on their environment and which spatial element can contribute to a better well-being.

A logical continuation is that this toolbox also contributes by designing other functions in buildings. In every situation it is important people need to feel secure, safe and stable.

The research and the design of "Het Gemeenschaps Gezondheidshuis"

The inclusive healthcare situation the final result of my research; Het Gemeenschaps Gezondheidshuis" (In english: Community Health House").

In the research I found out there are a lot of aspects in our physical environment which have a big influence on our well-being. The first thing what is really researched is the view on a garden in comparison to the view on a brick wall. During the research I found out the social interaction between people is almost more important than all of the evidence based design aspects. To clarify this: these Evidence Based Design aspects are important in every building, either it is an office building or a healthcare building. When people are in recovery and away from home for a long time, it is as much or even more important there is the possibility to meet other people. This can mean nurses, other people in recovery or totally different people who only will come by the building to have a lunch break and not because it is a healthcare facility.



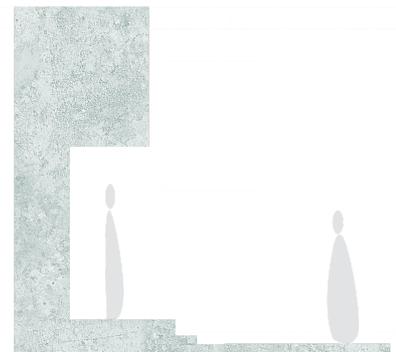
In my design this is the main theme; choose whether you are alone in your room or in the common kitchen, choose if you want to drink your coffee in the public coffeebar on the first floor of the building or on the rooftop. But also tiny things in the room, choose either you have your sunscreen down and the temperature high or the other way around.

The research showed all these levels of interaction, on urban level and interiors.

On urban level the research says the location should be in an urban environment to attract random passengers into the building. It should be meaningful to other people than people in recovery to go into the building. That is why the design is placed in the city centre of Rotterdam.

The research clarifies the use of threshold, literally *and* figuratively, to meet people. On the architecture scale it means there are more public functions in the building. In the design are functions like a coffee bar and a yoga class included.

As well for the living area, there are different levels of privacy, therefor different ways of meeting people.



What I have learned especially, as architect, I need to use the research more during the design process. I have to remind myself more what I did in previous weeks to come faster to the right conclusions.

"Het Gemeenschap Gezondheidshuis" in practice

An important aspect in the proposal for the research was to take into account there are people of different cultures with different needs. One of the results of the research says we don't need to make special adjustments for other cultures but for everyone. In this way you won't exclude

people as users of the building. As future architect I think it is important to see everyone who is using your building.

In architecture way I think this design could be a real good example of making use of the toolbox in existing buildings in the cities in The Netherlands. I make use of a 'Wederopbouw' building, after World War II. Even with a difficult grid and a complete different previous function, it is possible to create a health facility. It might be a good manner to investigate if we, as a society, can make use of other buildings instead of breaking down our real estate.

Thinking about our future is a change in society, as well the focus on our health. In the building this is coming together in circular building as '*Het Gemeenschap Gezondheidshuis*' is.