

BINCKS' MUSIC FACTORY

Reflection

AR3AP100 Music Marvel: Music & Popular Culture Re-wired

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Reflection

Introduction

The project 'Bincks' Music Factory' is part of the graduation studio Public Building, a studio in which Multiplicity is researched as a characteristic of a Music Marvel. In this reflection, I account for my findings and results during my research and design in the graduation phase. In addition, the choice of method and argumentation that preceded the research will be explained and to what extent this was or was not implemented in the final design.

The study of the thesis begins with a preliminary study on music buildings and multiplicity to formulate and define its own Music Marvel. The 'new' Music Marvel as I designed it has the Binckhorst location in The Hague as its given parameter. This former industrial area has been absorbed by the city in response to the transformations of economic, cultural and socio-political dynamics, and will be transformed into an urban living and working area in the future. Currently, the industrial area can be perceived as a collection of static activities and movements, with no clear future, as evidenced by the developments that have been going on for years. Perception is absent or incomplete due to the homogeneity and obsolescence of the activities.

Goal definition

The question that immediately came up was how can a music marvel be embedded in Binckhorst and what are the characteristics of my music marvel? Nowadays, music is tangible for everyone and can no longer be ignored in our lives. However, today's music buildings cannot keep pace with the demanding condition, the multiplicity, and the ever-changing character. Architecture for music has largely been transformed into an inanimate spatial form, characterised by its pursuit of timelessness and limited to the perception of music. The architectural design of music spaces in our time is guided and often controlled, by the science of acoustics. The understanding of perception is often incomplete. The spatial requirements and design parameters of a Music Marvel must be questioned in order to meet the demanded versatility of today's music buildings.

To fulfil this demand for multiplicity, my Music Marvel is focused on facilitating a variety of music genres. Based on a personal fascination, I focus on various subcultures as a target group with the idea of offering them a place for interactions and incubation - a cultural factory where diverse components or subcultures come together to form a larger whole and refute the sense of social hierarchy. An autonomous place to stimulate (local) subcultures and thus profile its own place.

With this idea and the observations made on-site, the question arose:

How can (multisensory) architecture enhance interaction between different subcultures and contribute to the experience of music in Binckhorst?

Design Manifesto

For me, the connection between research and design is reflected in the final design of my project. From the beginning of the MSc3 studio, the research part started and continued until the last moment. In the first months until P1, the focus of the research was on the theme of the Studio, music and the typologies of music buildings. But, for me, understanding these typologies also meant understanding the Music Marvel as part of a larger network: subcultures in relation to the built environment and especially subcultures in relation to the different types of music buildings. With this in mind, it became important to understand the object in question - in this case, 'the new Music Marvel' - as a parameter in a much larger whole.

The relationships between the different parameters in the given context were further explored during the Seminar Delineation Research. This seminar was used to explore the available strategies and tactics to interpret them and, ultimately, to discover new ones; to make them my own as an autonomous means of reflection and dialogue. Ultimately, this led to the formulation of my own design manifesto;

To create an identity and dynamism for Binckhorst, the area in question needs to be injected with an autonomous zone for music activities. Pop, Rock, Jazz and Techno are the music parameters to mix and connect subcultures. Through this approach, Bincks' Music Factory profiles itself by being different in Binckhorst.

As an analogy, the hot air balloon (see illustration 1) positions the object (i.e., the Music Marvel) in Binckhorst, within the anonymity of an isotropic grid. The hot air balloon is a metaphor for taking on the role of ephemerality by guiding the entire process. The theory is to emphasise its existence by being specific in Binckhorst, an autonomous zone or being different in Binckhorst.

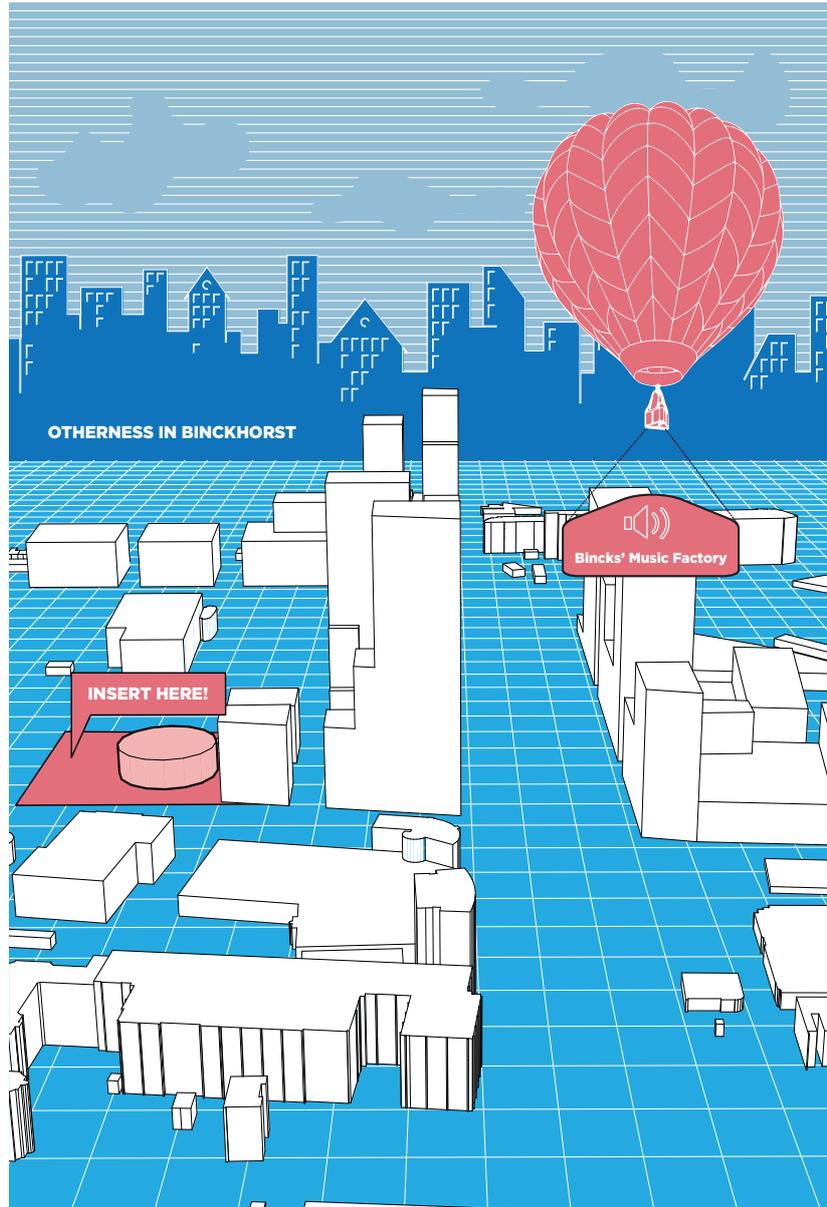


Illustration 1: Design Manifesto

Approach

At the beginning of the academic year, collective research was conducted regarding multiplicity, music buildings and music in general. Parallel to this, I immersed myself in the perception of architecture and its effect on the experience of music. And as I engaged in both collective and individual research, I began to think about the effect of subcultures on music and building. How can a building facilitate diverse subcultures and simultaneously act as a condenser for Binckhorst? The increasing diversity of cultures and subcultures

in modern society calls for a new architectural strategy. Since architects are merely the designers of the stage on which music and subcultures can unfold, the role of the architect in the representation of subcultures was something that strongly attracted my interest from the very beginning of the studio. It creates new expressions that respond to specific cultural and local wishes and customs. The speculation of creating architecture that responds to the connection of various subcultures with the corresponding perception of musical styles became the breeding ground of my graduation project.

Feedback

The feedback from the mentors on P2 and P3 was fertile for the development of the project and they pointed out to me that the schematic design should not serve only as an example of the previously defined design parameters. It is not a generic 'egg', referring to the 'perfected stereophonic form' that can be moved from site to site. On the contrary, I was asked to approach the design brief as a unique assignment to connect subcultures, at the specific location chosen in Binckhorst. In addition, it became clear during P2 that the architectural expression of the presented proposal, the perfect form does not represent the subcultures and senses that are central to me.

In response, I approached my design from a bottom-up approach. Start by defining the general principles and finish with the details. Based on this principle, I constructed the building from the inside out, with subcultures and sensory perceptions as central elements.

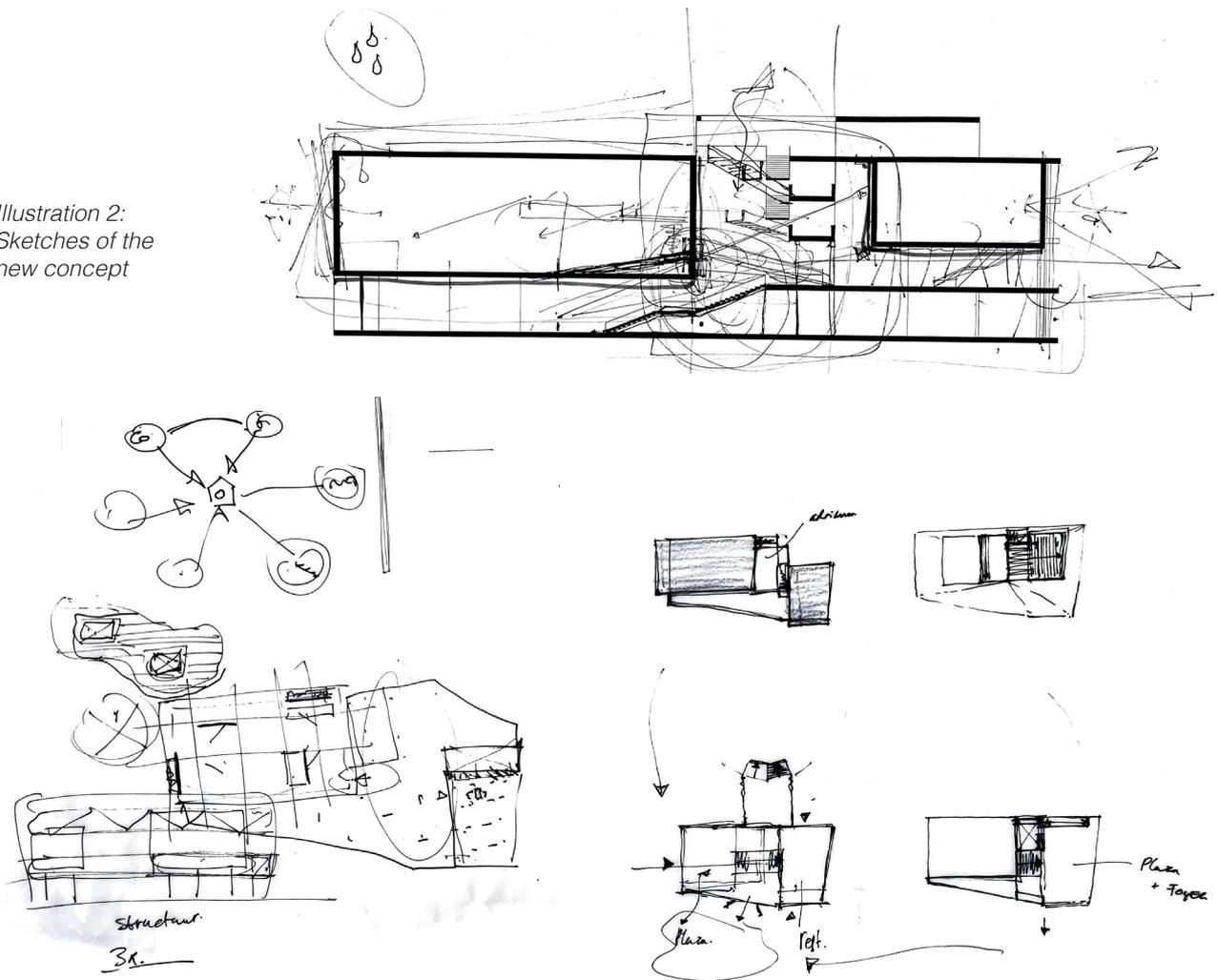
Result

As a result of the research carried out, my design 'Bincks' Music Factory' stands in a broader social, professional and scientific context. Looking at my design product, I see the result of the continuous interweaving of research and design throughout the process. The original concepts I started with are still visible in the design. And by adding layers of material, climate design and structural elements, I have anchored my concept to something tangible. During the process, I have always approached the interaction between architecture and building technology from an integral point of view. By intertwining these two disciplines, solutions are created that strengthen the design both architecturally and in terms of building technology. Contrary to what is described in my Graduation Plan, my design is not a design catalogue for the perception of architecture and its contribution to the experience of music, but a public building for subcultures anchored on a specific spot in Binckhorst.

Of course, the design process was not without its struggles. Difficulties encountered during the design process largely revolve around the fact that I find it difficult to make choices and to concretise the design. But designing is all about making choices, and P2, P3 and P4 were of great help. In the design process, I found that designing through the various layers of scale and using various design methods helped enormously in making the design tangible.

After P2, I took a few steps back to take a critical look at the design principles; this step enabled me to concretise the ideology of my architectural manifesto. This led me to further investigate, test and implement step by step - the way to update my concept and design. Especially when designing a programme that is strongly based on human interaction, encounters between different cultures and the perception of music. Finally, the project is an opportunity for me to question the tools of an architect. And now, two weeks before my P4 presentation, I can say with a good feeling that I am proud of what I have achieved in a very small period of time.

Illustration 2:
Sketches of the
new concept



Towards P5

Looking ahead to the last part of the graduation studio, I plan to fill this time by going into the different tactics of interpretation, drawing and representation techniques to better explain the integrality between architecture and building technology. In addition, I think it is important to make the design physically tangible by representing Bincks' Music Factory in scale models. This will lead to a better physical presentation of the design. Finally, I want to better explain the subject of sensory architecture and its contributions to music in the design and presentation. So until P5, I am working on the ways of representation that will make Bincks' Music factory tangible.