

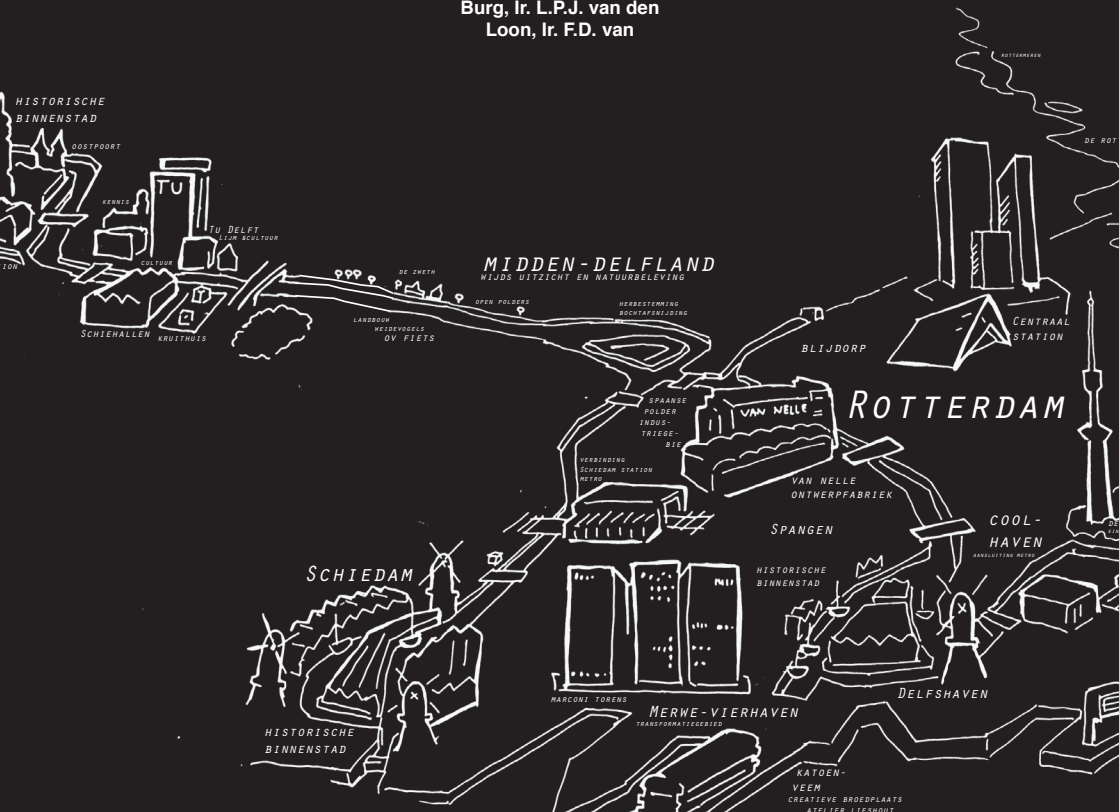
FLOWSCAPES LABORATORY

T H E B L U E L I G H T D I S T R I C T

REFLECTION REPORT
#P4 PIERRE OSKAM

To the attention of:

Geraedts, Ir. R.P.
Burg, Ir. L.P.J. van den
Loon, Ir. F.D. van



REFLECTION REPORT P4 THE BLUE LIGHT DISTRICT



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**GRADUATION LABORATORY:
FLOWSCAPES**

CHAIR OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
Februari 2015 - Februari 2016

**T H E
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REFLECTION

REPORT

P4

Pierre IJsbrand Oskam
December 9th 2015
11:15 - 11:45 Room R
Faculty of Architecture, Delft

To the attention of:

Geraedts, Ir. R.P.
Burg, Ir. L.P.J. van den
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REFLECTION

The reflection report is a targeted summary of the effects of encountered steps in the process of the Landscape Architecture graduation studio: Flowscapes. This report includes answers to the four official desired aspects that highlight the justification of research, theory, method and their interrelated context and the discipline.

Further details of the plan will be discussed in the the P4 presentation, the moment where the design decisions are communicated. Noted literature does not necessarily work to strengthen the reflection's credibility, but merely gives an indication of what kind of literature stood me by, writing the final thesis.

Aspect 1: pages 4-5

- *the relationship between research and design*

Aspect 2: pages 7-8

- *the relationship between the theme of the graduation lab and the subject/case study chosen by the student within this framework (location/object)*

Aspect 3: pages 8-10

- *the relationship between the methodical line of approach of the graduation lab and the method chosen by the student in this framework*

Aspect 4: pages 10-11

- *the relationship between the project and the wider social context*

1. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH AND DESIGN

The research of this project goes hand in hand with the design. First, the duality of research by design and v.v. design by research, gives an idea of how these two aspects are interrelated with the process. Figure 1 illustrates this duality.

Design by research: defining boundaries from outside

From this approach, I searched in literature for answers that allowed me to understand basic rules in, for example, how to make public space that invites people, or how to understand the process of participation and

DEFINING A PROBLEM FROM 'INSIDE' AND FROM 'OUTSIDE'

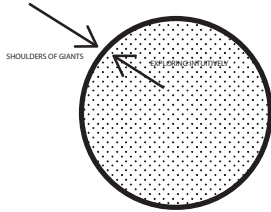


Figure 1. Defining the problem and its framework by personal experimenting and from 'shoulders of giants' (Image by Author).

what spatial elements are required due to the literature. These aspects gave me principles to hold on to, when brainstorming only made me feel lost: that gave too many options. Another example: the choice for a building material was too specific to find out with sketching. For this, I went into a research of what the general elements of the water system were. The concept together with the analysis of the water system, brought me to a simple solution: sheet piling (further explanation in the presentation).

Research by design: exploring borders from inside

In research by design, which tends to be the natural overhand in my approach, is developing a greater knowledge of for example the location by implementing design ideas in it. This does not only give an indication of how the landscape is composed, also the proposed implementation brings a greater understanding what I actually think (unconsciously) is the problem of the case. The reflection of seeing my own drawings, is as having a dialogue

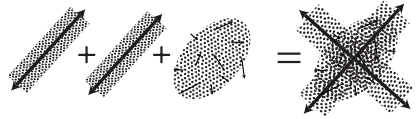


Figure 2. The flowscapes concept: infrastructure as landscape and landscape as infrastructure. The flowplace: the right circumstances where two flows that intersect create a combination of infrastructure landscapes (Image by Author).

with myself. After having drawn, I discover what I meant with the drawing. It structures my ideas, and brings me closer to the core of the problem. It makes the ideas and theories come alive for a moment, what gives the time to judge the design scientifically, practically and emotionally.

In this project, the design by research came, in most cases, second. The drawings and experimenting with small models came first, what raised a lot of questions in me. To answer these questions, I looked for approval in literature. Some I already absorbed partly in the inventory phase, others I found new, when the veil of what my topic actually was, became thinner.

The act of designing is used as a research tool, as well as research is used to help myself define the paths of designing. I think the combination of both freely experimenting and knowledge of creating restrictions are inevitable for innovation and research.

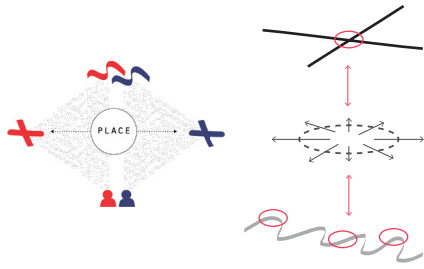


Figure 3. Different infrastructures can be linked by the creation of a 'Flowplace'. This stimulates interaction between different flows, and has impact on its nearby surroundings (Image by Author).

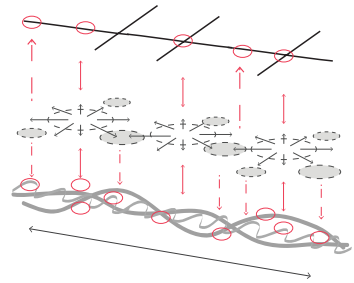


Figure 4. In axeggerate, the use of several places can provide a strengthening of the water system, and highlight (vacant) places on this system (Image by Author).

2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE THEME OF GRADUATION AND THE SUBJECT/CASE STUDY CHOSEN BY THE STUDENT WITHIN THIS FRAMEWORK

The flowscapes concept perceives infrastructures as more than a type of connection from A to B. The term does consider the infrastructure as a type of space with its own meaning. If a structure is a constellation of dots connected by lines, the infrastructure is the kind of relationships that these lines and dots form. The flowscape, can be considered as the third dimension of the structure. It considers the place of movement as a landscape on its own.

In 'Urban landscape infrastructures' S. Nijhuis and D. Jauslin¹ explore the complexity of the urban landscape infrastructure as the flowscape. 'Urban landscape infrastructures facilitate and frame flows of people, living organisms, materials and information. Urban landscape infrastructures are not only support structures that direct, facilitate and create con-

ditions for urban development, but also have spatial, ecological and socio-cultural qualities themselves'.

The flowscape is a combination of looking at infrastructures both as vital organs for its surrounding, as the way it forms an organism with its surrounding elements. The first three pictograms in Figure 2 illustrate the landscape as infrastructures and infrastructures as landscapes. Looking at infrastructures as the potential carrying bones of complex spaces, Sybrand Tjallingii² created the two networks model that considers the combination of water and traffic networks as the carrying structure for urban landscapes.

In the project, the search for an ultimate form of the flowscape was the inspiration. The bridge is a perfect example of a flowscape: this place exist because of different movements of flows in the landscape. It is a landscape as an infrastructure. A device, to make it physically possible to transport

¹ Nijhuis, S., & Jauslin, D., (2015). Urban landscape infrastructures. Designing operative landscape structures for the built environment. Research In Urbanism Series, 3(1), 13-34. doi:10.7480/rius.3.874

² Tjallingii, S., (2015). Planning with water and traffic networks. Carrying structures of the urban landscape. Research In Urbanism Series, 3(1), 57-80. doi:10.7480/rius.3.832

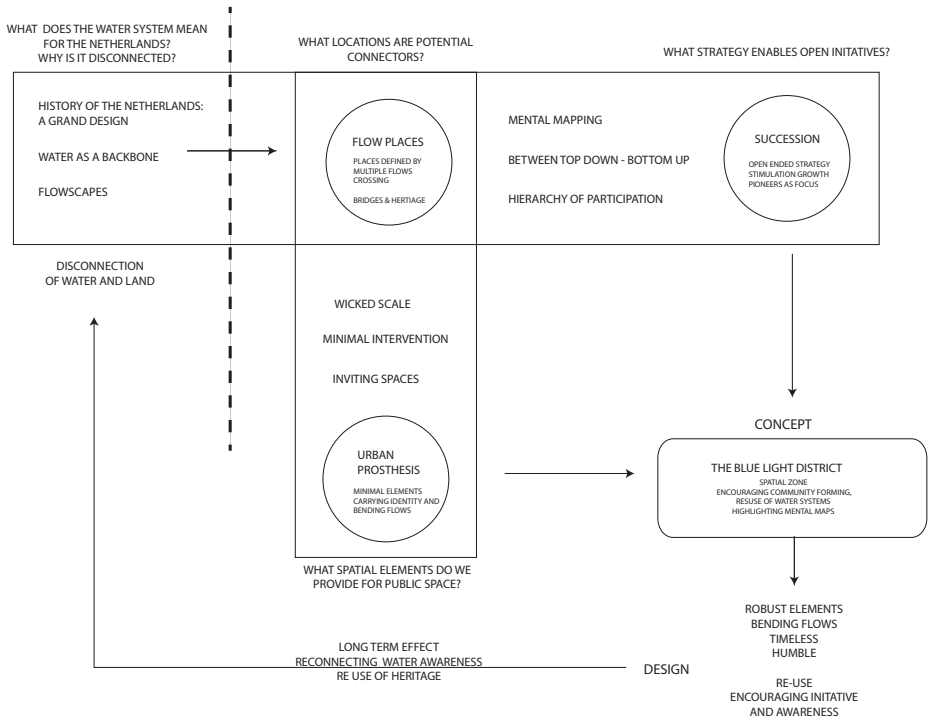


Figure 5. A diagram of used methods and theories, creating concepts ideas. The Flowplace, Succession and Urban Prosthesis were founded from existing ideas. Together, these concepts created the field where 'The Blue Light District' could find its existence (Image by Author).

cars over a water structure. The location of movement itself is also a landscape: this kind of place, the distinction it makes in the environment, would never have existed without transportation.

How to connect flows of different properties and what is needed for that to make them interact more? What can we provide for that? The place of interrelation of movement, that must be, a location of stay, can thus be called a 'flow-place' (Figure 3). The bridge should be a place where flows of both words

are conditioned to develop into each other in axeggerate (Figure 4). Social sediment (not to be confused with 'sentiment') is what is the goal: how can we encourage people to make them see there is more to see than just one element, what design should we provide to create awareness of the big system by communicating on the eye level?

The project focusses on how bridges and the vacancy of the bridge control houses, together with the interstitial

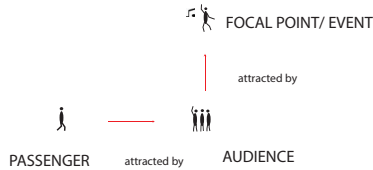


Figure 6. Triangulation. Whyte⁶. Example of design principles from literature. At last, the connection with other people is thus very important for individuals to create a gathering. First sociability: crowds attract people & encourage social interaction, and The 'shill effect' – if you stand and point at a distant object in a public place, eventually other people will join you to see what you are pointing at (Image by Author).

spaces around bridges, can be re-invented to create a stronger awareness for and sustainable re-use of the water system. To make this happen, a minimal intervention must take place: not to break down the place's identity, not to be in need of too much money and to make this intervention realistic.

The definition of Flowscapes, working as the bridge as connector of infrastructures and thus flows, is well presented in the case of bridge control houses between Rotterdam and the Hague.

3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE METHODOLOGICAL LINE OF APPROACH OF THE GRADUATION LAB AND THE METHOD CHOSEN BY THE STUDENT

The combination of 'Flowscapes' of Nijhuis with the 'Two Network Strategy' of Tjallingii, gave me the understanding that the fast lane and the slow lane are two important flows, that can help carry the urban landscape. The water system can embed the urban layer into the landscape, to 'root' the city: historically, economically and socially. The importance of

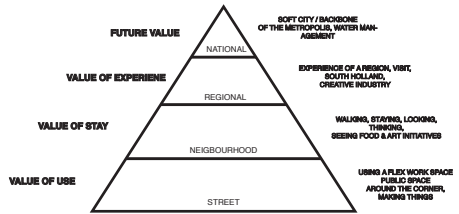


Figure 7. Value in societal context. Different scales speak to different realities and groups (Image by Author).

the intersection of these two systems and the ability to see the overlap as place of connection made me create the method of 'Flow Places'.

From this point of view, there were two ways to approach the realisation of a regional plan that is of a scale that is hard to grasp: the method of the Minimal Intervention of Lassus³, made me understand a big change can be caused by already a small subtle adaptation, that not even alters the situation. Together with this point of view and the theory of the known literature from Whyte⁴, Lynch⁵, Herzberger⁶, Gehl⁷, and others, I looked up what the minimal requirements are for public space to become inviting, and what transitional zones mean for creating spaces.

3 Lassus, B., (1998). The landscape approach. University of Pennsylvania Press. ISO 690

4 Whyte, W. (1980), The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces, Washington: The Conservation Foundation.

5 Lynch, K. (1971), Site Planning, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

6 Hertzberger, H., (2005). Lessons for students in architecture. Rotterdam: 010 Publishers.

7 Gehl, (1987/2011), Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space J Washington - Covelo - London: Island Press, ISBN: 978-1597268271

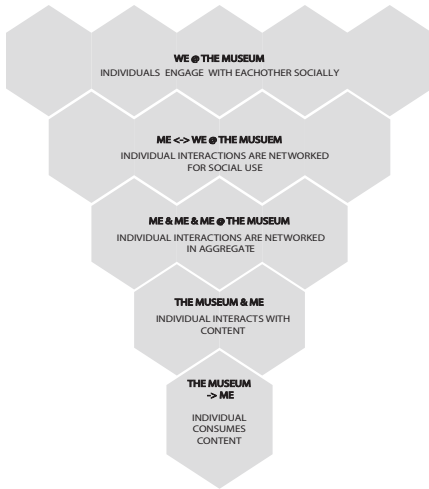


Figure 8. The Hierarchy of Participation. Based on Simon's¹⁰ method in her book 'The Participatory Museum' (Image by Author).

This brought me to the 'Urban Prosthesis': a method to create minimal interventions that bend flows of people by highlighting (flow) places on a subconscious level.

From Santos⁹ we can understand the city as a system set by objects and actions. Objects (immovable) which constitute the city are technical, intentionally conceived, produced and located for a specific purpose, constituting the material representing actions from a time, being at the same time result from that actions. The actions (flows) associate to spatial order of objects; in this sense, if they are technical or functional, and, as consequence, they tend to be formatted and materialised by the productive forces that organise

8 Santos, M. (1979). O espaço dividido. Os dois circuitos da economia urbana dos países subdesenvolvidos. Rio de Janeiro: Francisco Alves.

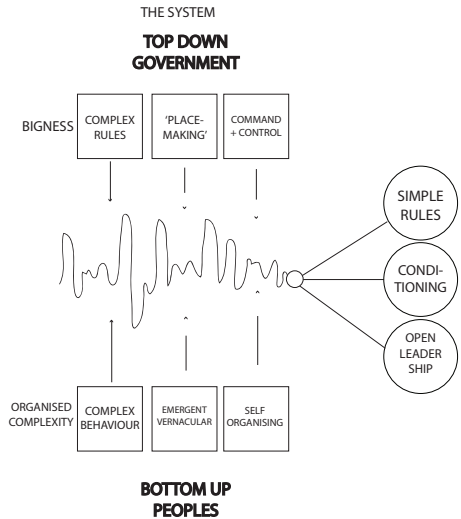


Figure 9. Kelvin Campbell's⁹ methodology of linking Top down with Bottom up: a fruitful combination can be created by the right properties: simple rules, conditioning and open leadership (Image by Author).

the space. The 'Urban Prosthesis' are subtle 'braces' that bend the flows.

Not only spatial elements are important, also time and the human psyche are parts that needs to be taken in account, especially when a project deepens in on processes on the big scale. The search of how to be in between top down and bottom up, Massive Small (Figure 9), a smart urbanism method from Kelvin Campbell⁹, where formality and specificness create a simple language to communicate. In combination with the Simon's¹⁰ Hierarchy of Participation (Figure 8), a theory that focusses on how museums can become

9 Campbell, K. (2011) Massive Small: The Operating Programme For Smart Urbanism.. ISBN: 9780956860002 (0956860001)

10 Simon, N (2010) The Participatory Museum. Santa Cruz, CA: Museum 2.0

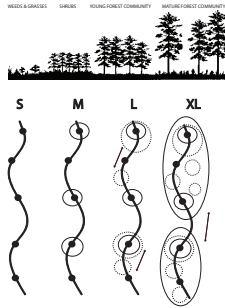


Figure 10. Gradual growth of a place, in an acupuncture way can be compared to 'succession' of a forest (Image by Author).

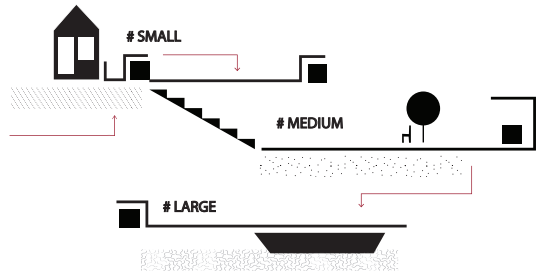


Figure 11. Different robust objects play as devices that bend flows. The urban prosthesis bends flows with a minimal intervention and finds its ground in three different scales. Small, Medium and Large (Image by Author).

planning and social sciences found in Kaplan & Kaplan¹¹, Jensen, Jacobs¹² and Alexander¹³ I came to a better understanding of how a spatial designer can make participation possible.

The social growth and community forming as the gradual growth of a forest, under the condition that it has the right aspects in its environment can be seen as 'Succession' (Figure 10). This starts from creating conditions for pioneers, to enable them to take action and lead their followers. Small 'plants' together enable bushes to root into the ground, and invite not only insects but also other animals to become a user of the place.

The 'Flowplaces', 'Urban Prosthesis' and 'Succession', three merges of different theories that were created on the shoulders of giants, created the basis of 'the Blue Light District' concept. It is the concept where small robust

elements, minimal interventions, enable and invite people to be part of something that has the possibility of regional impact. This can start right now, on the vacant location where water flows connect with urban flows. In this case the water system of South Holland, an important backbone for the city. From these frameworks the design of a formality in objects was asked, to give a top down hand to the specificness of places. Important is that there is a duality of regionalistic design that speaks to the scale of one person. The design resulted in a family of small objects that differ from doorknobs, chairs, stairs to scaffolds, all made from a material that was found in the regional approach (Figure 11).

4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PROJECT AND THE WIDER SOCIAL CONTEXT

The theme of 'wider social context' is one of the core topics that this project addresses. The philosophy of the design relates with the questions of how intentional spatial design can stimulate local people to reclaim a particular

¹¹ Kaplan, R. & Kaplan, S. (1987) *Humanscape: Environments for People*, Edition 86-89

¹² Jacobs, J. (1961) *The Death and Life of American Cities*

¹³ Alexander, C. et al. (1977), *A Pattern Language*, New York: Oxford University Press.

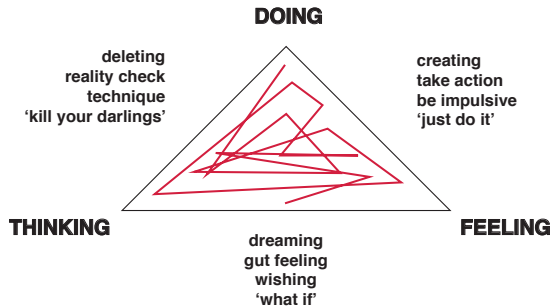


Figure 12. Personal method. The designer or everyone is always in between the triangle of doing, dealing and thinking. To position yourself and find what you need to do when stuck, place yourself in this triangle and find what direction will give you balance (Image by Author).

place in public space. How is it possible to make people realise that it is them, one by one, that make a difference, not a government deciding for them? In the course Space & Society given by dr.ir. Machiel van Dorst, the embedment of an intervention into the mental map of its society, is researched. The lectures focussed on how space can be totally perceived differently by a diversity of groups. This made the search for a design that is robust enough, to be able to stand in all situations and different perspectives. Figure 7 shows how different scales search for different values.

The search was, how regional planners can provide small elements that are site specific- small elements that on the one hand remain the constructive arguing of big-scale analysis and thinking, and on the other hand consider the genius loci of the place. The function of governance is, however, not ignored. In contrary, the importance of top down thinking is emphasised: the communication between these two are the key of a society where individuals still believe their specific

dreams can be true, and a government that trusts its people to claim responsibility. Basis rules, open leadership and providing conditions are the core principles that enable the contact between planner and user. A project and its wider social context are not two separate things that have a relation with each other: they are entangled and, merely the same. A project in public space should always considered and put in the wider social context.

0. PERSONAL METHOD

The diagram in Figure 12 shows what kind of way I approach my own way of working. As a person, you are always situated between thinking, feeling and doing. For example, when I became conscious that I was dreaming too much, I understood I had to go to doing, and start to make things and find more restrictions. When I was only making things, I needed to take a step back and find out what my real ideas were, and what their restrictions were. When I was only thinking too realistic, I had to step out of this and started to create without any restrictions.



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