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OFF THE SHELF

PROJECTS SURROUNDING
THE CHAIR COLLECTION AT
THE FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE

COLOPHON

Off The Shelf:
Projects Surrounding the Chair Collection at the Faculty of Architecture

Issue 1 / 2016-2017

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This publication consists of the work of several studios at the faculty of Architecture and the built environment. These studios focus on the use of the chair collection currently present at said faculty. With this publication we hope to give insight in the different projects surrounding the chair collection and the work of the program. The different sections are accompanied by short introductions by the respectable teachers or coordinators.

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CHAIRS & SETS

Jurjen Zijnstra

Chairs seem to fascinate many architects and designers. They are amongst the most essential pieces of furniture, and directly correspond to the human body. In addition, chairs are also objects with a long and interesting tradition. A great number of architects and designers have explored the material, tectonic or sculptural possibilities of these pieces of furniture.

In our Msc2 project 'Chairs & Sets' we have investigated a number of chairs with a deliberate disregard of the chairs as iconic objects. Instead, we have attempted to approach them as part of a domestic environment. Students were asked to explore ideas of domesticity through the design of a 'set', a fragment of an imaginary interior, in which the chair would be one of the players. Sets are temporal, three dimensional constructions that are created for displaying objects or scenes. They appear in museums, exhibitions, fairs, departments stores, as well as in photographs for magazines, on TV, in videos and in movies. Sets create an environment that is experienced from a particular point of view, either in real life or in a photographic or cinematographic setting. In that sense, sets are strongly related to the world of staging and scenography, to the typical 19th century phenomena of diorama, panorama and period rooms, and to the related fields of photography- and film-staging. Today, with the ever-expanding possibilities to create virtual realities, sets remain as relevant as before. Despite the fact that sets have, by nature, both a temporary and a fragmented character, set design is able to raise important issues related to architecture and interior design.

In order to focus on the domestic environment, we began this project by putting the chairs aside and investigating the idea of domesticity in a very wide sense. We organised, in cooperation with the Design Academy Eindhoven, a one-day symposium entitled 'Domus Communis: Strategies of Intimacy', in which a variety of views and ideas on the notion of domesticity were presented and discussed. In the following week we asked each student to reflect on the theme of the symposium in the form of a model, rather than in written form or through an oral presentation. The result was a great variety of models, ranging from the very abstract to the most figurative doll's house. Each week the students were required to build a new model, the requirements becoming progressively more specific in theme, scale and size. The students were asked to choose a chair from the TU Delft chair collection, from which they built a 1:10 model, which was introduced to their models to question the idea of domesticity.

Students:
Geertje Bakens
Nienke Borgman
Stephanie Cijntje
Thomas Hayat
Jochem Hols
Felicia Hompus
Alexis Ierides
Liza de Jong
Simone van der Linden
Niek de Rond
Danique van de Sanden
Erik Stigter
Dominique Wolniewicz

From the thirteen individual models presented in December, the group selected four to be built at 1:1 scale by the groups in January. For most students, this was their first experience with building something 'real', exploring the possibilities and limitations of various materials and techniques. The students experienced the fascinating excitement of constructing something at human scale. Finally, the students were asked to photograph their sets, thereby defining the way to literally frame the chair in its set and picture the illusion of domesticity.

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Below: Some of the models created as part of 'Chairs and Sets' by students Liza de Jong, Simone van der Linden, Alexis Ierides and Jochem Hols

