

# PARC DES JAUNES borders within the brussels football sphere



AR3A010: Research Thesis Professors: Leeke Reinders

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Photonews. (December 23, 2023). Author on the right on Bloq Nord.

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#### **Chapter I** A letter: from supporter to architect.

matchday **16.30** 

I pick up an old newspaper 'Everybody in power, no one in charge'. Last week we made headlines; heavy riots led a fierce field of destruction behind. I think about The Heysel Stadium disaster from 1985, where 39 people lost their lives in our city. It's clear. Brussels breathes the football atmosphere, and simultaneously deals with issues of tension. It forms this socially relevant debacle about the coming together of a force of relief (supporter groups) and a force to contain it (law enforcement and the public opinion).

And this is when I encountered Jara, an aspirant architect from our neighboring country. Initially met with suspicion, later in conversation asking the right questions. And I suppose 'die lange' made a point.

It became clear, as of today, we, communities of football fans, are encountering difficulties to place ourselves in the city. As we exist in large groups expressing our group identity with lots of energy we find value; it's a necessity. We need a place in the city but do require certain borders. The sport and its energy generated by these large groups supporting it, made him wonder how we can contain it in the city.

His fascination, as he explained lays with a very specific phenomenon. Creating for a specific kind of people. From the start, intrigued to see how this action of people in urban space shapes something spatially, has connotations and has an effect. To understand what kind of spatial quality these tangible and intangible borders have, to be able to start experimenting with the border as a space.

It was important for him to first find out what makes the tension. What makes the atmosphere. To understand which borders are present in Brussels football spheres. To understand systems of behaviour in order to examine *how large supporter groups interact with the concept of the border within Brussels' football networks*.

First it was important to understand what those networks are that service the football structure and form the football culture of Brussels. This student decided to dive into the football scene of a specific Brussel based club: that of RSC Anderlecht. He consulted newspapers, books and followed our groups on online platforms such as Instagram and Facebook.

In December last year, he walked his way from the appropriated trespasses and calm parks into the crowds. Twice. From our so called Aperos, the pre match gatherings, he witnessed how the supporters built up their atmosphere from point A in the city to point B, the tribune.

Through photography and film, he has shown this infrastructure as a series. From the main stage of the Christmas market apero, along the back to the metro station. And from the metro, marching through the streets. Arriving in the football territory, the set out stage by bodies, busses and fences where last pre-match consumptions are consumed and the last songs are sang. And where privacy is demanded he wrote, and extracted the border moments he witnessed.

"It's about 10 past 8. Time to make the move inside. Quietly awaiting the right moment. Trying to behave as normal as possible, but this can't other than look suspicious. Guard moves away for a moment and action. Pushed through the gate. Full height turnstile. Nervously I look up the stairs, where the guards stand in line and await me for the search, trying to figure out if we got caught. The guards on both

sides didn't see it or don't want to see it. Made it, we are clear.

Jaws clenched from adrenaline. I am in. I enter a new world. Underground. Raw. I
am at the very front, front row from the 'gutter', roped off for passage of only flag
wavers, leaders and the plateau where they perform."

90 + 1' And then the last minute winner. Supporters fly down, feet in the racks, the crowd seems to grow by a meter, while clenched fists and cries of victory dominate. The Capo walks down. I give him a pat on the shoulder. He looks at me briefly, mildly friendly, walks on. Jet besotted. This one doesn't recognize me anymore. That's okay. You get that. What an experience."

We provided insight analytical opportunities when he met the leaders of the group and moved around club supporters, barkeepers, caterers, merchandisers and neighbours.

The visits documented in a map, that traces back his journey with the supporter groups through the several spaces. It shows how the network goes beyond the stadium itself. The technique outlays the connected program, mobility and physical borders and sorts several actions by the different actors.

At first a stranger, later drained in camaraderie. he went into the crowds, writing, capturing observing without intervening.

Altogether the result now laying in front of me. An Atlas. A handbook, glossary or catalogue of Border moments in the football sphere categorised through time. Like a sequence. While I move through its pages I oversee our culture.

"When urban territory is demarked, the trains have been stormed, the walls watered, the colors presented and the fights have been fought. The barriers are set out now.

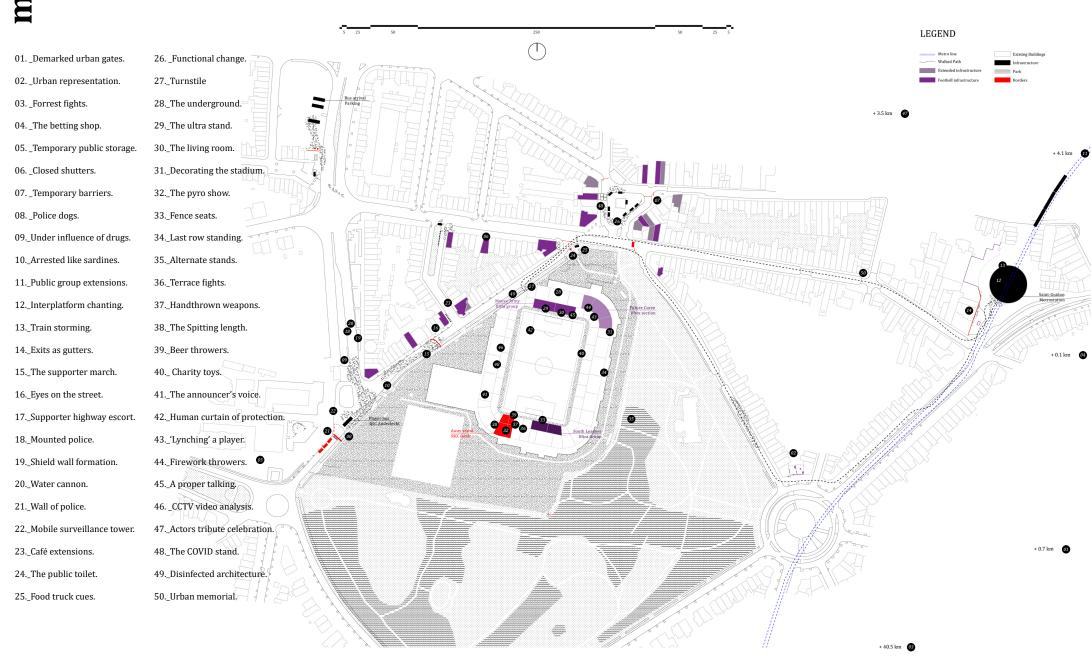
Where the stage is set, we execute the play. Or not. But when the play is performed, we will be watched.

We create that multifunctionality of space and elements. We reevaluate the physical limitations of architecture. And find height to surpass, risk to work our way around these borders. We violate them, or give them meaning and load. We create them intangible, in chemicals and color, or in bodies and sound.

The stand is a habitat, the hallways our living rooms. Some risk their lives to express our colors. This is our stage, our way. We disinfect our architectures in protest and expression of our values. We pick our enemies in hostility. But stand together when needed. We decide the rhythm of the game, stop... and give a proper talking when demanded. To finally thrive again and celebrate with thousands. And when history is made, we honor and pass on the legacies that have been left."

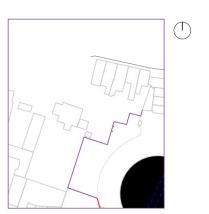
A repeating element is that of the reinvented use of space, where extensions are made, functions are changed and unique performances are displayed. The time based approach then used to form the narrative of his project.

about 17.35 I lost track of time. Antwerp on the menu. Today we get those scumbacks. Bolle arranged a meeting at the clubhouse behind the bridge.



+ 10.0 km

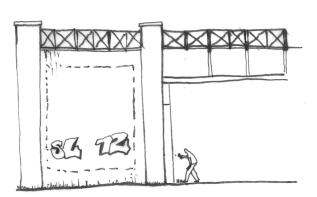




intangible BORDER of atmosphere

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

till clean up **Time** 



#### Demarked urban gates.

*01.* 

The train tracks and the canal and their strong powerful underpasses, and bridges work as the gate to an appropriated neighbourhood. On the side walls and sides of and around these important infrastructural nodes tags are placed, referring to the club and its hard-core fan scenes. The demarcation of territory.



Author. (December 7, 2023). Tagged bridge, appropriated passage.



thor. (December 7,



uthor. (December 7, 023). Tagged bridge, ppropriated passage.



thor. (December 7, 23). Appropriated

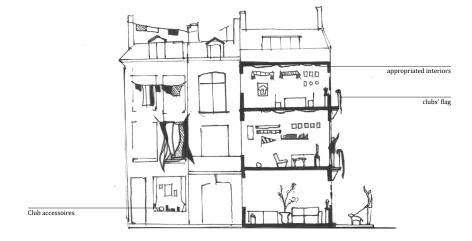


Author. (December 7, 2023). Tagged square, metro station Saint -Guidon.

intangible BORDER of atmosphere

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

infinite **Time** 



#### Urban representation.

*02.* 

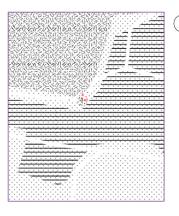
Club flags hanging over the balconies or placed behind the windows. Interiors completely appropriated to the club.



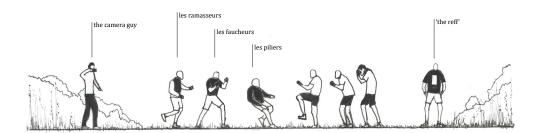
tangible BORDER of hostility

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

two days and a bit before 15:00



5 25 50



Forrest fights.

*03.* 

Mainly bouncers, gym fanatics, and martial artists who come together in the forest to conduct in arranged fights with other hooligan firms. Often bare-knuckled, solely a mouth guard and something for the crotch. On the front line, les piliers "the pillars": the strongest fighters, allow the group to remain united. In the second line, les faucheurs, the "reapers" are responsible for distributing blows and knockouts. Then, as the last blade, les ramasseurs, the "pickers" finish the work.

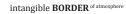


Hooligans TV. (Unknown).

Arranged for rest fight.

19

18





elements: - accesible, constructed, relieving.

four hours before closing



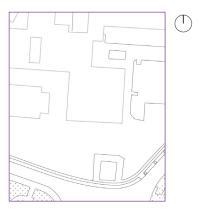
The betting shop.

*04.* 

The official side of gambling where a dedicated shop, away from the fields, allows customers to legally place bets in person with a licensed bookmaker.



Stanleybet. (Unknown). Front of the Stanleybet betting shop in Anderlecht.



**elements:** - inaccesible, cosntructed, containing.

four hours before kickoff



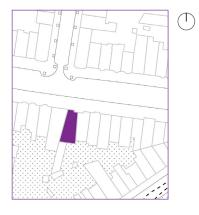
Temporary public storage.

*05.* 

No-man's pieces of public space created through its infrastructure. Used for temporary storage of elements to set out the borders later in the evening.

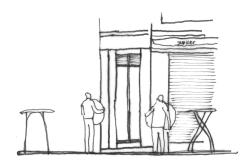


Author. (December 7, 2023). Storage of fences.



**elements:** - inaccesible, constructed, containing.

four hours before kickoff



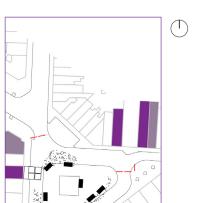
Closed shutters.

*06.* 

A pre-game environment of closed café shutter of what may become or not become a functioning café. A world about to be unfolded, you get clues but what belongs and what not, and especially to what extends remains untold.

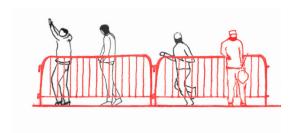


Author. (December 7, 2023). *The closed shutter.* 



**elements:** - inaccesible, constructed, containing.

three hours and a bit before kickoff



Temporary barriers.

*07.* 

Temporary barriers. Used to provide a physical and psychological way to limit movement outside dedicated areas. They interlock to prevent being moved or tipped (Deutinger, 2018).



Author. (December 7, 2023). Barriers in Anderlecht.

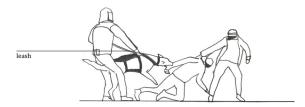
26 27

5 25 50

tangible BORDER of control

elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

full matchday 17:30



Police dogs.

08.

Dogs are used to assist with the dispersal of crowds and often to support police cordons (Deutinger, 2018).



intangible BORDER of atmosphere

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

three hours and a bit before kickoff 17:37

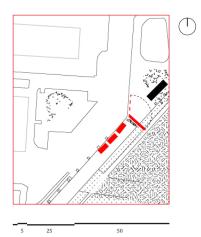


## Under influence of drugs.

*09.* 

Excessive use of alcohol and sometimes other drugs like cocaine and weed. It's not underground.





elements: - accesible, created, containing.

three hours before kickoff 17.45



zip tie hand cuffs

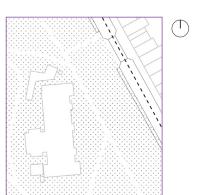
### Arrested like sardines.

*10.* 

Arrested fans put on the ground packed very neatly. On the belly, face down, hands tied up behind the back.



Reddit. (2017). Arrest hooligans.



tangible BORDER of atmosphere

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

six before 15:45



## Public group extensions.

*11.* 

As the group gathers pre-match in the city, it appropriates public elements along the group is growing. From the bar table, around the canopy with terrace tables, to the platform. An extension of their grounds.



thor. (December 23, 23). Roundabout poe officers.



hor. (December 2023). Final pernance before the rch to the stadium, h visiters watching



Author. (December 23, 2023). Walking to-wards the metro, along the back of the market.



Author. (December 23, 1923). First members rouped around the bar able, apero Christmas



Author. (December 23, 2023). Women looks over her shoulder to the chanting group.

Saint Metr

intangible **BORDER** of atmosphere **elements:** - accesible, created, relieving.

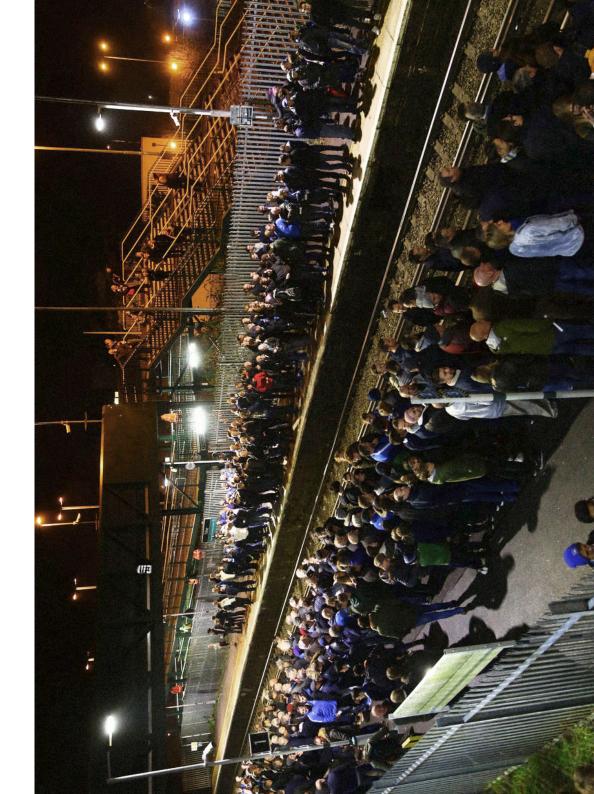
time to move 6 o'clock

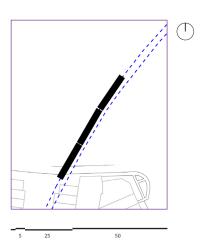


### Interplatform chanting.

*12.* 

While waiting, singing songs over the two train platforms facing each other as stages.

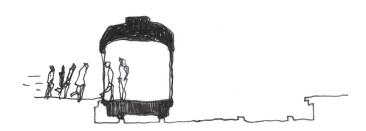




tangible BORDER of hostility

elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

time to move 6 o'clock



Train storming.

*13.* 

While we normally let arriving passengers out first by creating lines on both sides of the door, we rush the train immediately to either be sure of a seat or a standing spot.



ithor. (December 23, 23). Masses exiting estation.



Author. (December 23, 2023). Sardines packed



Author. (December 23, 2023). Commuters bewilderedly overlooking the crowds.



tthor. (December 23, 23). Masses passing

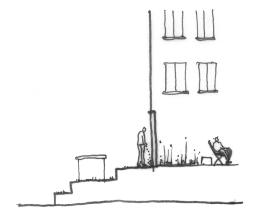


Author (December 23,

tangible BORDER of hostility

elements: - inaccesible, constructed, relieving.

right on time 18:25



Exits as gutters.

*14.* 

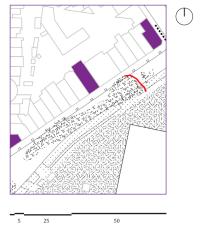
Around the metro station, the walls surrounding the squares become urinals with  $10\ to\ 30$  men standing in line watering the area.

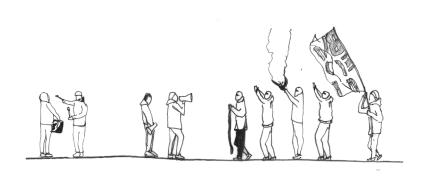


#### intangible BORDER of atmosphere

**elements:** - accesible, created, relieving.

about 18:55





## The supporter march.

*15.* 

Drummer plus drum holder in front of the march, two men with megaphones leading the way, the hard-core behind a representative banner. The bigger crowd follows right after. People on the side pavement filming and spectating.



Author. (December 7, 2023). Apero group performance, a march through the street.



Author. (December 23, 2023). Last stop while entering the stadium entering



uthor. (December 7, 023). Collective per-



Author. (December 7, 2023). Collective performance player bus



Author. (December 23, 2023). Performance through the street nearing the stadium grounds.

elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

about 18:55















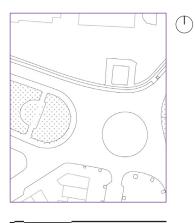
## Eyes on the street.

*16.* 

Residents watching the apero performed in front of their house from their windows and visitors from the pavement.

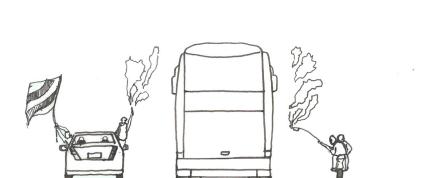
44





elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

two and a half 18:15



Supporter highway escort.

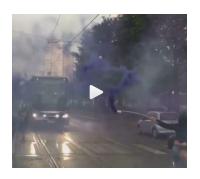
*17.* 

As they wait in line at a car park along the highway, they start following the player bus to the stadium. Hanging out of the windows with flags and flares.



Mauves Army. (n.d.). Highway escort, Brussels.





elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

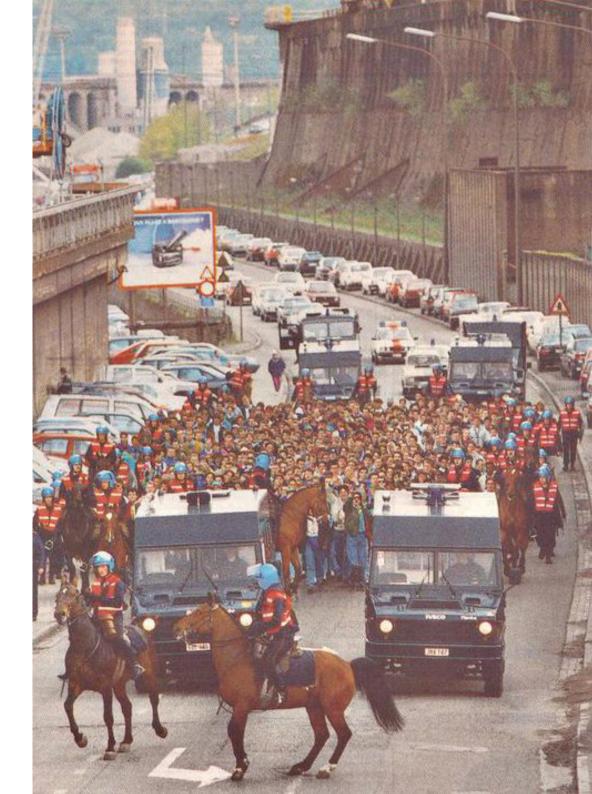
two hours up front 18:45



Mounted police.

*18.* 

Horse-mounted police use height and a strong presence to control crowds. They may also charge at crowds to clear a path through them or to disperse the groups (Deutinger, 2018).



elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

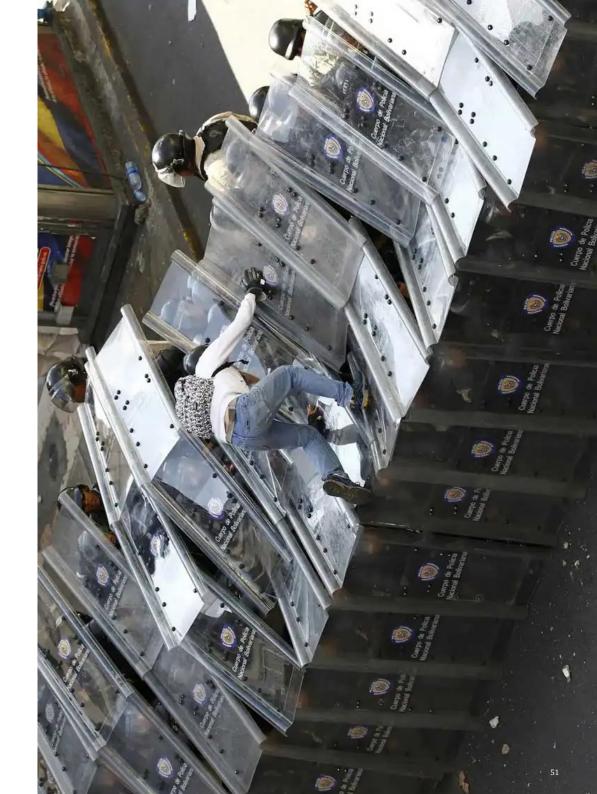
two hours up front 18:45



Shield wall formation.

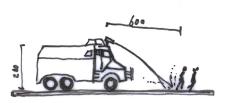
*19.* 

Based on ancient Roman techniques, a tight formation allows a compact unit of officers to find protection behind shields (Deutinger, 2018).



elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

full matchday 18:45

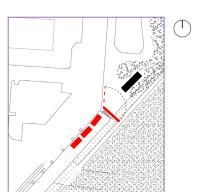


Water cannon.

*20.* 

A high-pressure pump jets out thousands of liters per minute. The vehicle is armored to resist attack from projectiles and generally has a 9000-liter water reservoir (Deutinger, 2018).





elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

full matchday 18:45



Wall of police.

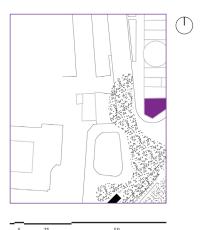
*21.* 

To create maximum division between home and away supporters, a line of policemen stands together with a rotatable fence as a shield to block off a street and prevent potential outbreaks.



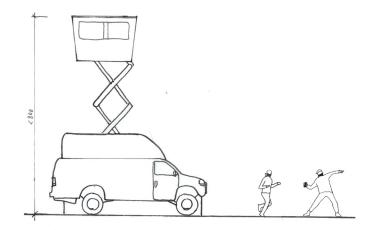
Derbies & Rivalries. (Unknown). Napoli vs Dortmund.

 $tangible \, \textbf{BORDER}^{\, \text{of control}}$ 



elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

full matchday 19:15



#### Mobile surveillance tower.

*22.* 

Vehicle-mounted system which uses automatic hydraulic stabilisation to elevate a temporary tower up to 8 meter in order to monitor crowd activity from height (Deutinger, 2018).



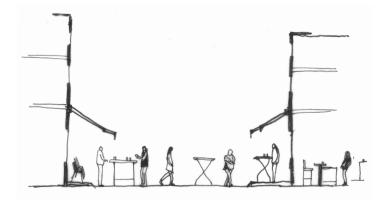
TerraHawk. (December 16, 2016). Stadium control.



tangible BORDER of bodies

**elements:** - accesible, created, relieving.

approximately 19.50



Café extensions.

*23.* 

The café extends its ground through its canopy and standing tables, from the pavement on to the street.

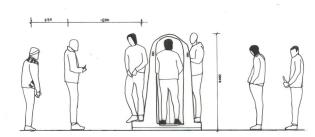




tangible BORDER of bodies

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

approximately 19.55



The public toilet.

*24.* 

Can be used by 4 people at the same time, with a capacity of  $1500\ urinals$ . Cue formation in all four directions.

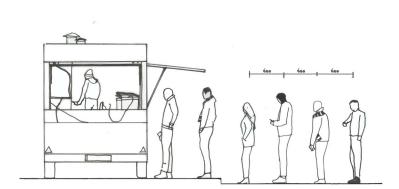


BROTZE. (n.d.). Public toilets.

tangible BORDER of bodies

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

precicely 19:58



## Food truck cues.

*25.* 

Human borders of cues in front of the food stand, waiting in line for their pre- or postmatch snack.



uthor. (December 7, 023). Foodstand with



Author. (December 7, 2023). Men selling re-



thor. (December , 2023). New Snack



uthor. (December 23, 023). Moving through

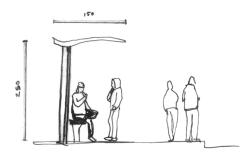


Author (December 7.



elements: - accesible, constructed, relieving.

against time 20:05



Functional change.

*26.* 

The bus stop waiting shelters become eating areas with their benches fully in use.

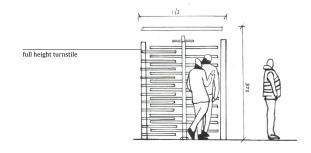


Author. (December 23, 2023). Snack in the bus stop.

Mative Army Ultra group tangible BORDER of hostility

**elements:** - inaccesible, constructed, containing.

half an hour before kickoff 20.15

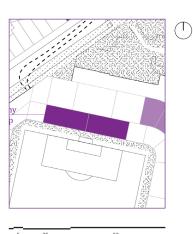


Turnstile.

*27.* 

Used at entrances and exits to limit entry and restrict flow, preventing overcrowding inside the stadium. Two person illegal sneak ins are common.





elements: - accesible, constructed, containing.

precicely 20:25









Author. (December 23, 2023). The hallway.



Author. (December 23, 2023). Blog Nord toilets.



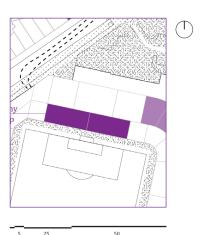


The underground.

*28.* 

Narrow hallways hidden behind the tribunes, where artificial light aligns a passage to catering and toilets.

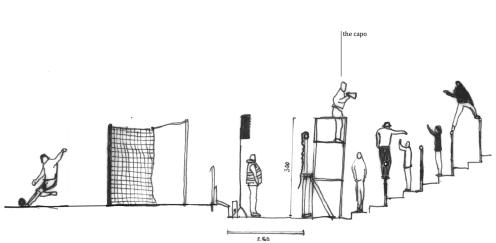
280



tangible BORDER of atmosphere

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

90 minutes long Till Death



The ultra stand.

*29.* 

Here phones are not allowed, forming a camera-free zone behind the goal. In this zone of anonymity the capo leads the group, speaking through a megaphone from a small elevated tableau. On the terraces, the rail seats consist out of a metal seat incorporated within a robust metal frame that forms a waist-high rail for the spectators in the row behind. In practice, these standings offer the opportunity to raise yourself as an individual or rise by a meter as a collective.











tthor. (December 23, 023). Interperforman-



hor. (December 2023). Underneath flags.



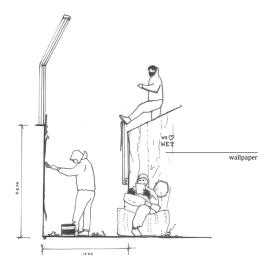
Author. (December 23, 2023). Television shot Blog Nord Ultras.

stand.

tangible BORDER of hostility

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

90 minutes long Till Death

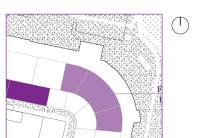


The living room.

*30.* 

Wallpapered walls, curtains at the entrance and tables and furniture to inflate. Appropriation of space in the guest block till forms of household living, when the underground becomes liveable.

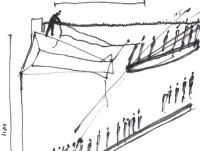


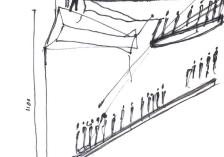


intangible BORDER of transcendence

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

90 minutes long Till Death





Decorating the stadium.

*31.* 

 $\label{eq:Kidhanging a flag, 10 meters above the ground, climbing the walls of the stadium.}$ 



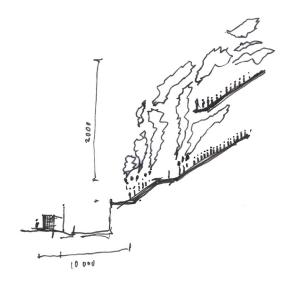
Author. (April 15, 2023). Boca home, Buenos Aires.

ay stand.

intangible BORDER of atmosphere

elements: - inaccesible, created, relieving.

ten minutes before 20:35



The pyro show.

*32.* 

Pre-match, atmospheric event where between  $10\ \mathrm{and}\ 100\ \mathrm{supporters}$  lit their flares and smoke bombs.

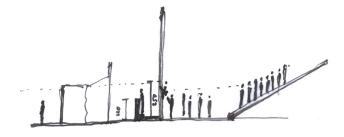


Sou

tangible BORDER of transcendence

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

ten minutes before 20:35

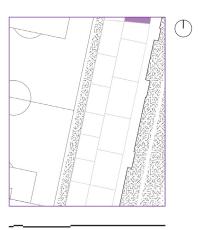


Fence seats.

*33.* 

Kids hang in the fence to enhance their vision on the field, parents' jackets attached with their sleeves to the fence, with the body part of the textile used as the children's seat.

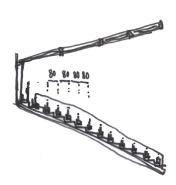




tangible BORDER of transcendence

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

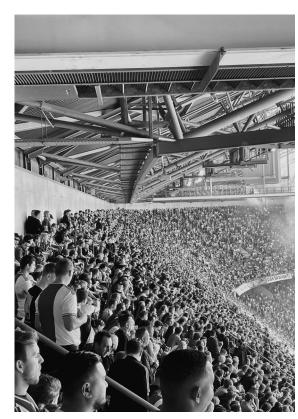
ten minutes before 20:35



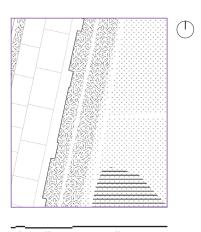
Last row standing.

*34.* 

The top row seats of the higher stadium sections are often not used, this line of people watch their match standing.

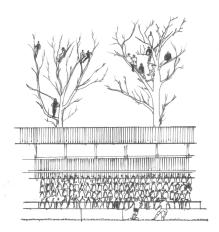


Author. (November 9, 2023). *The Spitter.* 



elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

ten minutes before 20:35



### Alternate stands.

*35.* 

Supporters are watching the match from the top of a tall tree, or hillside after a sold-out match or being thrown out of the stadium. Height is found in different ways, and the notion of the stand is ambiguous.



DPA. (February 15, 1959). Climbing into the trees to watch the match, Nuremberg.



Unknown. (n.d.). Scenes in Senegal after winning the Africa Cup.



Toth / BPI. (August, 2013). Angry Coventry supporters watch the game from outside the



Unknown. (n.d.). Supporters clibing the



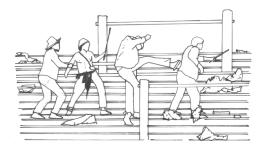
FBA. (n.d.). The away

5 25 50

tangible BORDER of hostility

 ${\bf elements:} \ - \ accesible, created, relieving.$ 

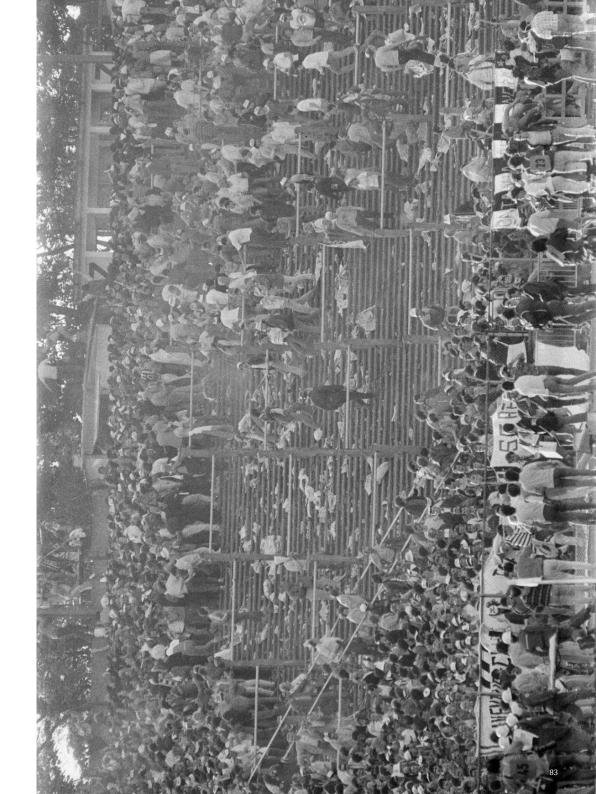
memorized in eternity



Terrace fights.

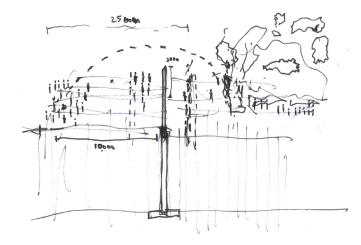
*36.* 

The march from one curve to another as a territorial game to belittle the rival supporters.



elements: - inaccesible, created, relieving.

about to start 20:39

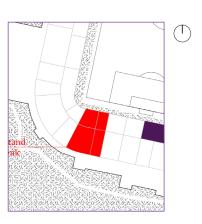


# Handthrown weapons.

*37.* 

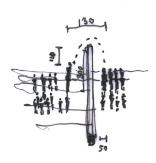
A Molotov cocktail is typically a glass bottle filled with flammable liquids sealed with a cloth wick. In use, the fuse attached to the container is lit and the weapon is thrown, shattering on impact. This ignites the flammable substances and spreads flames as the fuel burns.





elements: - inaccesible, created, relieving.

about to start 20:39



The Spitting length.

38.

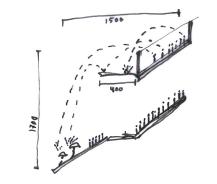
A guest who spits over the fence, because Ajax fans didn't sing enough. The fence is not high enough.



Author. (November 9, 2023). *The Spitter.* 

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

five minutes in 05'



Beer throwers.

*39.* 

Necessity for a net inside the stadium, home supporters sitting below with raincoats.

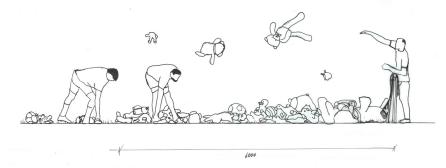


South Leafe
Ultra Gre

intangible **BORDER** of atmosphere

elements: - inaccesible, created, relieving.

ten minutes in 10'



Charity toys.

*40.* 

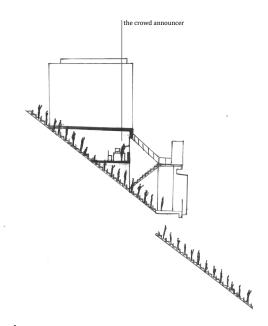
In solidarity with the kids in need. The field is being cleared of thousands of toys.





elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

five minutes in 05'



## The announcer's voice.

*41.* 

The announcer's voice. In a separate room, invisible to the public, a voice chants the name of the goal scorer; 50,000 people follow. Screams the name 20 times.



Unknown. (n.d.). Fenerbahçe Stadium, Istanbul.

Lauve Army
Htta group

tangible BORDER of solidarity

elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

time stands still 20'



## Human curtain of protection.

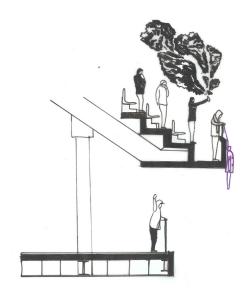
*42.* 

Wall of players to protect the patient from being filmed during reanimation on the field.



elements: - inaccesible, created, relieving.

never forgiven Infinite



'Lynching' a player.

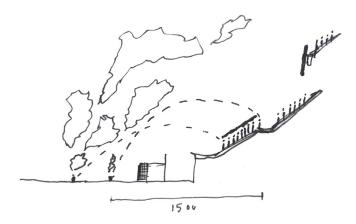
*43.* 

Fan hangs a doll from a noose over the balustrade of their block. As a death threat to the player for making the move to a rival club.



elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

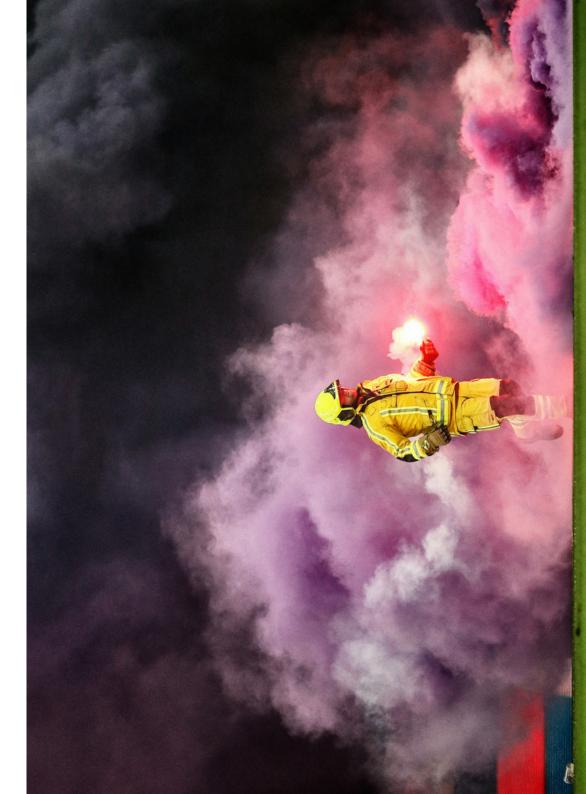
half an hour in 21:15



Firework throwers.

*44.* 

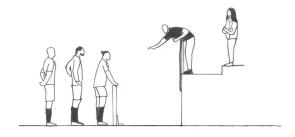
Tifos to hide behind in the crowds, ideal for throwing fireworks on the field without being identified.



intangible BORDER of solidarity

elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

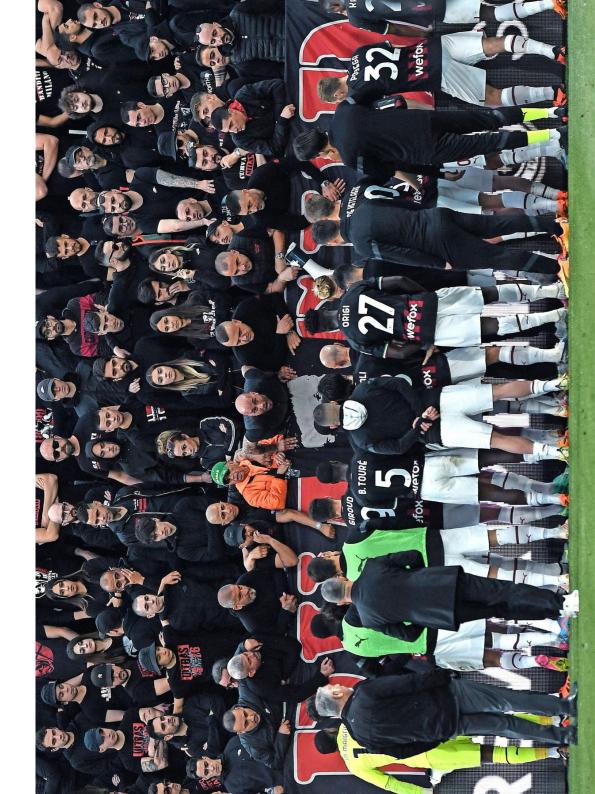
five minutes after 22:45

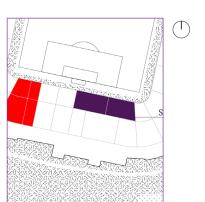


A proper talking.

*45.* 

The players are getting a proper talking to after a bad performance, given by the leader of the ultra group.

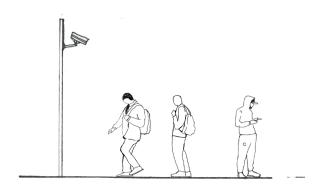




intangible BORDER of transcendence

elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

full matchday On



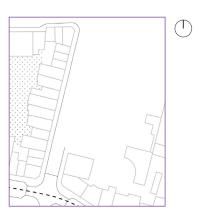
CCTV video analysis.

46.

These systems monitor crowds, counting objects and detecting humans in order to quickly spot threats. Often disabled by supporters for privacy within the stadium grounds.



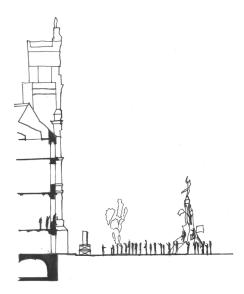
Author. (December 23, 2023). Sticker on camera.



tangible BORDER of atmosphere

elements: - accesible, created, relieving.

three weeks later 2'o clock



Actors tribute celebration.

*47.* 

The city's town hall becomes the stage for a tribute, where the players and the clubs' victory is celebrated from the balcony to the Grand Place square where thousands of fans gather.

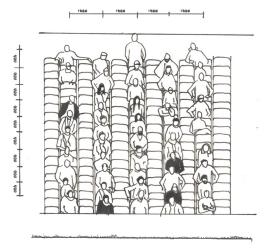


ANP. (Unknown). Antwerp celebrations.

intangible BORDER of solidarity

elements: - inaccesible, created, containing.

a year later endless



The COVID stand.

48.

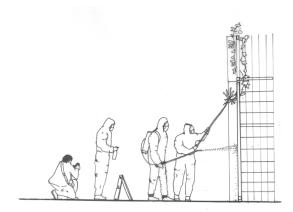
Minimised stadium capacity due to the CO-VID-19 regulations. Stands with every other row filled, within that row every other seat provides a place. A quarter of the normal capacity as a consequence.



Mauye Army Ultra group intangible BORDER of solidarity

 ${\bf elements:} \ \hbox{-} \ in accesible, created, relieving.$ 

political preferences **infinite** 



### Disinfected architecture.

49.

Supporters in protective suits scrub down their stadium after a visit from far-right political party figures. Decontaminating in protest.

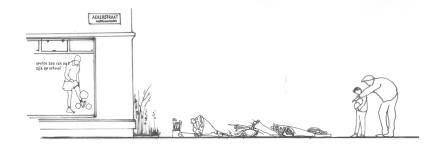


5 25 50

intangible **BORDER** of solidarity

elements: - inaccesible, created, relieving.

fourty years later 1995-2063



Urban memorial.

*50.* 

Honouring a legend who passed away, through a procession from the person's neighbourhood of origin.

