

Queer Encounters in the Archive
Misplaced Love Letters and Autobiographical Homes

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Queer encounters in the archive

Misplaced love letters and autobiographical homes

*Dirk van den Heuvel and
Martin van Wijk*

Introduction

This chapter contains a report-cum-reflection of the ongoing research into queer voices and architecture at Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam. In general terms, our inquiry concerns the question of how to articulate a queer reading of the archive, which in our case is the Dutch National Collection of Architecture and Urban Planning. It is quite a challenge to push a collection that is organized and protected by the financial and institutional frameworks of Dutch heritage law beyond its stringent disciplinary logics, let alone to aim for forms of cross-pollination between the propositions of queer theory and the established curatorial practices of a collection of architecture and urban planning.

Our multi-vocal authorship reflects queer studies' understanding of queerness and queer identities as performative and relational, in line with the pioneering work of Judith Butler. We are two authors who self-identify as gay and queer, but who are of different generations and come from different fields and practices, namely architecture and archival research, on the one hand, and art history and gender studies, on the other hand. One author

is also the supervisor of the other: the former is more reflective and aims to unpack and historicize the subject material, whereas the latter seeks an activist approach situated in the latest queer theoretical scholarship. In line with such different positions, which we'd like to think of as generative and transformative to the ways in which we produce and situate our knowledge, we choose not to settle for a single definition of queer. After all, almost as a note of warning to ourselves, not only are queerness and queering contested terms and transitional, ever-shifting concepts themselves, they are currently also being mainstreamed, mostly in Western countries, by multinational industries and straight media, and within academia and cultural institutions. Our own position working from within a national institute reflects this mainstreaming, too.

Hence, in the context of this chapter, our understanding of queering in relation to the national architecture collection and its archival dossiers oscillates between unlocking hidden LGBTQ+ histories, identifying historic cases previously overlooked or suppressed and writing their stories on the one hand and the more political act of resisting the heterosexist logics of the archive and the discipline of architecture on the other hand. What we present is a brief discussion of the current state of our research, including a selection of related materials and actors.

Queering the collection

We started our current research by simply asking what sort of archives in the collection can be directly linked to a queering of the collection. Could we identify archives or materials that have been produced by queer actors, or involve queer subjects, which have been overlooked until now, misrepresented, even straightwashed or erased from the archive? And – bearing upon the important question of visibility – who is included in the archive, what sort of traces are there and what sort of untold stories?

Before diving into these questions, however, let us first briefly address the place from which we are writing, the institute that maintains the Dutch National Collection of Architecture and Urban Planning. Het Nieuwe Instituut is a heritage institution for architecture, design and digital culture that was created in 2013 from a merger between three separate cultural institutions, each of which was dedicated to one of the aforementioned three fields. The institute aspires to stage thought-provoking exhibitions in its four gallery spaces, to instigate explorative research projects and to entertain a lively discursive programme of events, lectures, (de)tours, seminars and summer schools. Under the leadership of its foundational director Guus Beumer, Het Nieuwe Instituut embraced an ambitious and broad range of questions, which impacts the future of the creative industries and knowledge production: from eco-feminism in relation to the built environment to more-than-human knowledge, from material investigations into the status

of the digital and its infrastructures to working with copies and copying technologies in the creative world of design.¹

In contrast with the institute's quest for innovation, or even disruption of established categories and practices, the National Collection of Architecture and Urban Planning can be regarded as a heavy-weight, conservative agent of continuity, the sediment of more than a century of design practice and its professional disciplines. The collection consists of over 800 separate archives, sometimes quite small yet precious, such as the one of avant-garde artist and architect Theo van Doesburg, sometimes very large, documenting the complete professional history of ground-breaking architectural firms, as in the case of the Rotterdam office of Van den Broek and Bakema. It holds a vast array of all sorts of drawings, models, photos, slides, audio-visual materials, correspondence and book collections, as well as recently acquired born-digital archives. As a collection of archives, it has its own history, which goes back to the late nineteenth century. Initially established as a grassroots, profession-driven amateur collection, it was elevated to the status of a national collection in the 1970s, which brought new income, resources, special care and responsibilities, but most of all, institutionalization: it became part of the institutional apparatus or *dispositif*, to use Michel Foucault's term. The collection of architecture archives was now fully integrated into the bigger system of knowledge production and power distribution, a system through which architectural discourse is articulated and, crucially, human agency, subjectivity and identity are produced.²

The collection can therefore be viewed as an index of this dynamic of power and knowledge and how it intersects with sociocultural privilege and aspiration: typically, the dominant authors that populate the Dutch national collection are male, white and heterosexual. To queer such a collection, in search of dissenting positions outside the established heteronormative canon, seems almost an impossibility, since the collection and its caretakers embody the very institution. Obviously, the system of access and acquisition, with its numerous filters, thresholds, gates and gatekeepers, has resulted in the privileging of certain voices while marginalizing others. Hence, to queer the national collection and its archives raises profound questions, not only about the various holdings and their histories but also about our own institutional practices within Het Nieuwe Instituut. At stake is the crucial issue of who and what is represented by the national collection, and for whom and to what end it exists, especially so in relation to notions of democracy, an open society and the associated legitimacy of cultural politics and institutions in a country like the Netherlands.

Our own investment in identifying, recovering and (re)writing the experiences of gay architects is motivated by our desire to redress the erasure of a queer past from the archive. The Cuban American theorist José Muñoz wrote about this absence of recorded queer experience as follows:

Queerness has an especially vexed relationship to evidence. Historically, evidence of queerness has been used to penalize and discipline queer desires, connections, and acts. When the historian of queer experience attempts to document a queer past, there is often a gatekeeper, representing a straight present, who will labor to invalidate the historical fact of queer lives – present, past, and future. (Muñoz 2019: 65)

We see this difficult relationship between queerness and historical evidence immediately reflected in the national collection of Dutch architecture. Conventionally, the sexual identities of the subjects included in the archive have always been left unmentioned. Established as a professional archive by and for architects, the main focus of the archives at Het Nieuwe Instituut was and still is geared towards monographic documentation of the architectural works and the design process. As a rule, biographical data is only sparsely present, and hence, what one could call circumstantial evidence that points to queer lives and desires is quite rare. Naturally, this omission of personal data does not affect queer subjects exclusively, yet the erasure of queer lives is related to a heteronormativity that still dominates architectural practice and discipline and is especially effective since it remains implicit and mostly uncontested. At least one case can also be described as a form of self-erasure, which we will highlight in the next section.

A first exploration of possible LGBTQ+ presence in the collection of Het Nieuwe Instituut brings out promising beginnings of new stories. At the same time, however, these are also problematic, since they reconfirm practices of marginalization. Especially in terms of intersectionality, the archive shows itself as, indeed, an index of power dynamics. It is possible to identify a set of architects who are cis-male gay men, yet, lesbian women seem absent. They are doubly invisible, twice outsiders, so to speak. Women are already heavily underrepresented in the collection, let alone lesbian women.³ An internal inventory from January 2022 counts 642 male authors against 30 female ones.⁴ But even this figure can be regarded as too positive a conclusion, since most of the included women are there because they are part of a married couple or an office collective. Regarding the heteronormative binary of male-female, it must be mentioned here that nonbinary or transgender people are missing from the archive altogether.⁵ In the case of the identified gay men who are included in the collection – albeit covertly – it appears as if we are looking at the curious and difficult position of outsiders who are insiders at the same time.

Our report builds on a number of earlier initiatives that have explored LGBTQ+ representation in the collection of Het Nieuwe Instituut, starting in 2015 with the institution's participation in the meetings of the national 'Queering the Collections' network.⁶ These relatively informal meetings inspired the first queering architecture event at Het Nieuwe Instituut in 2016,⁷ and two evening programmes organized as part of the *Dwars door het Archief* series, which combined archival research with public conversations.⁸

More recently, the series has been followed up by the Collecting Otherwise initiative, which focuses on developing alternative methods for acquisition, classification and distribution of cultural heritage to ameliorate the historical gaps in the collection.⁹ Another collaborative research project that runs parallel to our current research is ‘The Critical Visitor’, a five-year research project which brings together academic partners and twelve Dutch cultural institutions, among them Het Nieuwe Instituut.¹⁰ The project aims to develop intersectional approaches for rethinking and retooling accessibility and inclusivity in heritage institutions, combining two PhD projects in archival studies and museology with three work packages of field labs, archival interactions and a public event series called ‘The Queer Salon’.¹¹ All these initiatives are bound together by a shared commitment to contest and transform institutionalized practices by exploring alternative avenues, something which we see as a collaborative work in progress. It is therefore important for us to acknowledge that the knowledge shared through these activities informs our own ongoing effort to generate institutional transformation.

Queer encounters

In the following part we offer a selection from the Dutch national collection of three cases of gay architects: Onno Greiner, Dick van Woerkom and Wim den Boon. All three were active practitioners in the post-Second World War period and designed in the modernist tradition. Identifying these architects has been a process of triangulation, of reading and re-reading the archive. In a way, our queer reading of these archives is also an inquiry into the ways in which identity, sexuality and queer affection have been codified or reproduced through the archive. The double coding of the material, its implicit dimensions and connotations, requires what we have coined a ‘special agent’, someone who has both access to the archive and is familiar with the codes of queer and gay culture. In our case, senior archivist Alfred Marks has played a key role in flagging certain archival material in the collection as ‘queer’ or ‘gay’ through his own earlier queer explorations of the national collection. We have supplemented this archival research with oral histories and personal testimonies, such as a radio interview and conversations with surviving partners, family members and contemporaries.

In their personal lives and each in their own way, Onno Greiner, Dick van Woerkom and Wim den Boon resisted expectations around gender and sexuality of their time, engaging in same-sex relationships in various degrees of openness. Amidst the archival material that documents buildings and design processes, we found traces of these queer desires and lifestyles, such as misplaced love letters, or juridical correspondence, newspaper clippings, personal photo albums with intimate and nude self-portraits and snapshots of unknown young men. Some of these materials and objects seem to have entered the archive by accident and feel somehow misplaced or unintendedly included, their contents

hinting at incomplete records of queer histories that inevitably elude us. This ephemeral quality is what Muñoz drives at with his notion of queer evidence, which can be thought of as ‘trace, the remains [of queer acts], the things that are left, hanging in the air like a rumour’ (Muñoz 2019: 65). Muñoz’s notion of queer evidence provides one of the possible keys for reading queerness which may help us to locate queer desire and intimacy in the archives and lives of Onno Greiner, Dick van Woerkom and Wim den Boon.

To further triangulate the lack of personal data and evidence, we have chosen to focus on the design of their own homes as a form of autobiography. It helps us to imagine the way these three architects navigated their world and times and succeeded in creating a place for themselves. At this point, we’d like to stress this research is still unfinished, and we present the following as incomplete evidence, as a form of approximation that acknowledges the ‘unknowability’ of queer futures and queer history writing.¹²

Onno Greiner

Onno Greiner (1924–2010) followed in the footsteps of his father, the Amsterdam School architect Dick Greiner (1891–1964). In a 1993 interview on national radio Greiner talks about his difficult relationship with this dominant family figure, being conflicted between wanting to distance himself from him while at the same time seeking his recognition. His long-suppressed homosexuality is an obstacle in this father-son relationship, according to Greiner himself. The interview does not cover the possible impact of his sexuality on his work; being gay and coming out are only discussed in terms of private life, not professional activities. Architect and researcher Andrea Prins, who authored a monograph on Greiner, argues that Greiner might have sublimated these profound personal insecurities into a kind of reassuring architecture, buildings in which one can always find direction, where one doesn’t get lost. She summed this up with the word ‘orientation’ (Prins 2016: 15), thus suggesting how sexual orientation might be inscribed by and in spatial experience, how human bodies are situated in and move through space, as well as time.

Greiner is best known for his theatres and cultural centres, yet he also built himself a beautiful, restrained modernist patio house in the Amsterdam suburb of Amstelveen, which is hardly known (Figures 2.1 and 2.2). The interior of the patio home is generously spacious and has a certain monastic quality because of the use of bare and raw materials – natural slate, spruce wood and white plaster. If these materials and the lack of ornament codify a space as ‘ruggedly masculine’, as argued by Joel Sanders (1996: 14), the patio home invites us to reflect on the ways in which gender identities, in particular masculinity, is constructed through architectural codes and conventions. Greiner’s partner, who still lives there, talks of lively parties with friends and how the house is also a very private space, so that you can walk naked



FIGURE 2.1 *Patio garden of the private home of Onno Greiner, which he built for himself. Greiner sits on the right. The garden design is by Mien Ruys. (Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut, GREO_61018f1-54a.)*

without fear of any of the neighbours looking in.¹³ Indeed, the house is hidden from the street rather than facing it, which is quite uncommon in the Netherlands. The spatial layout of this private home enables multiple ways of moving through the different spaces. Much like Eileen Gray's E.1027, analysed by Katarina Bonnevier, Greiner's patio dwelling with its hidden cupboards and closets is a 'house filled with secrets . . . [which] hides and reveals simultaneously' (Bonnevier 2005: 162), and thus creates both a certain specificity and ambiguity in terms of the spatial relationships.

Dick van Woerkom

Speaking of an insider, Dick van Woerkom (1924–87) was one of the co-founders of the current national collection. He was the chief curator of the precursor institution, the Amsterdam-based *Documentatiecentrum voor de Bouwkunst* (Documentation Centre for Architecture). Although the archive contains scarce personal material, there is a tragic tale with orientalist undertones to be discovered in small clues that hint at his unhappy relationships with two young North African men (Boone 1995). A reused envelope previously sent to his lover in Algeria and a wandering note about a

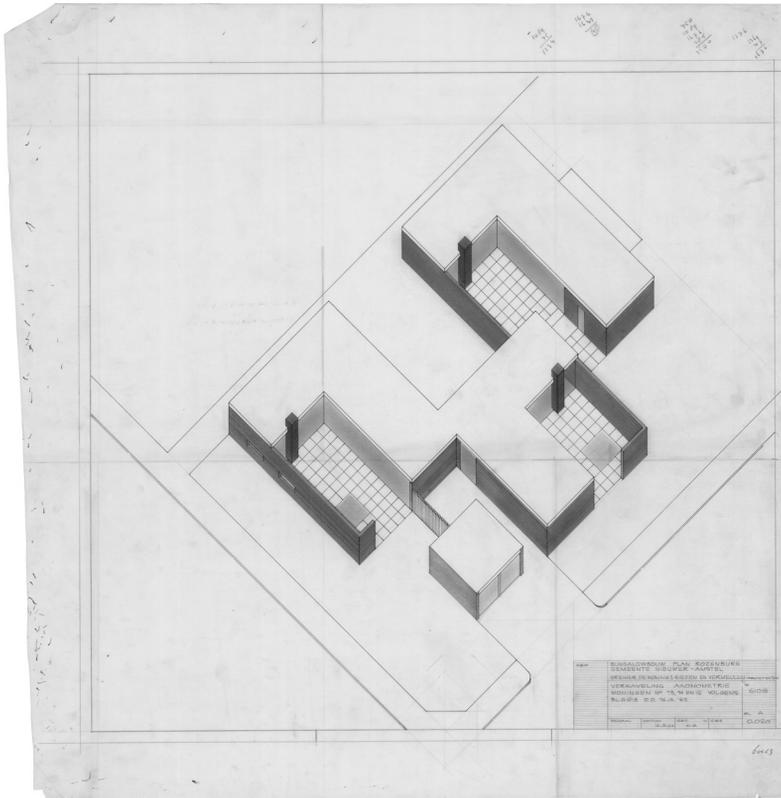


FIGURE 2.2 Onno Greiner, cluster of patio houses, Amstelveen, 1961–72, Axonometric drawing. (Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut, GREO_610187-2.)

conversation with his other companion point to this; they are little more than glimpses of a hidden love life. Interestingly, there is also legal correspondence between his lawyer and the Dutch Immigration Service about a residence permit for the first partner, a young Moroccan man. Six months later, this relationship was superseded by one with the partner from Algeria, who moved in with van Woerkom in 1978. For the most part, however, questions about the nature and duration of these relationships remain unanswered. According to one of his friends and former employee at the Documentation Centre for Architecture, Dick van Woerkom kept his private and professional life strictly separated, without exception.¹⁴ He would not invite colleagues into the private sphere of his own home for instance. His case fits a pattern of self-erasure by homosexual architects, who would destroy all their personal correspondence and documents before the acquisition process. It reminds us of Sharon Marcus's words that the production of gay history is often 'complicated by the privacy, secrecy, shame, and fear that inhibit people from leaving detailed records of their sexual lives' (Marcus 2005: 201).

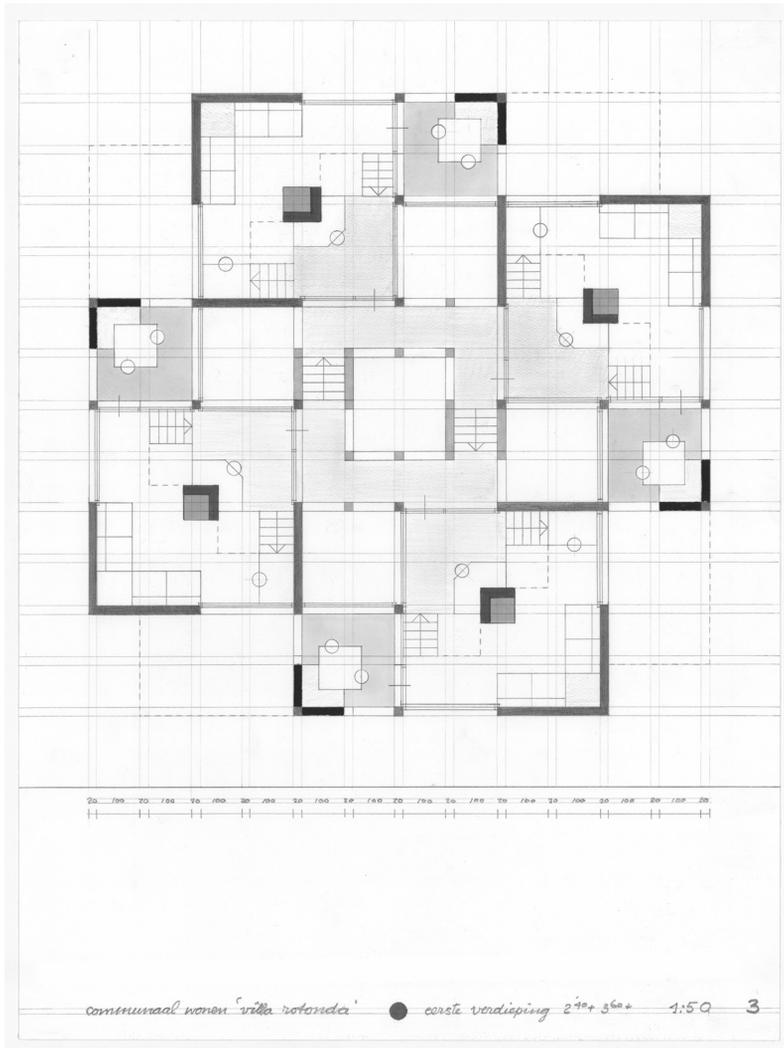


FIGURE 2.4 Dick van Woerkom, communal living 'Villa Rotonda', first floor, undated. (Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut, WOEX_347-3.)

that these house designs articulate a desire for forms of belonging beyond the heteronormative.

Wim den Boon

Last but not least, the most radical of the three was Wim den Boon (1912–68), an interior and furniture designer and an architect of a handful of

private houses. After the Second World War he was active in the foundation *Goed Wonen* (Good Living), which propagated strictly functionalist design. However, he was forced to leave this organization since his articles were too zealous and uncompromising in tone (Vöge 1989: 17). From the archive, an image emerges of someone who loved to kick over sacred cows and who cultivated a huge aversion to anything bourgeois, which can be seen from the preserved newspaper clippings about so-called Teddy Boys or greasers and anarchist Provos. With his leather gear, moped and greased hair, he appears as a textbook example of this youth culture himself, despite his middle age. His anti-bourgeois nature is mirrored by the renovations he carried out. The ‘before’ and ‘after’ photos give the impression that den Boon exalted the modern and minimalist interior as a means of liberating people from stifling bourgeois conventions.

The many travels he ventured on speak equally of a longing for freedom: in his youth he cycled to Southern Europe and later in his life he drove on a moped via France, to see the buildings of Le Corbusier with his own eyes, and Spain (Gaudi), along the coast of North Africa and back via Italy, where he took an interest in architecture of the fascist period. There are also canoe trips along the Rhône and around Corsica. These trips across rugged natural landscapes have been captured by him in beautiful photo albums and written reports – den Boon was an outstanding photographer and writer. His travel accounts to the Mediterranean also testify to a fascination for vernacular architecture of the Mediterranean, in particular the Maghreb countries. ‘The most primary and abstract architecture is the most human. [. . .] The Arabs naturally have this in them’, he wrote.¹⁶ This highlights the problematic ethnographical, othering gaze firmly inscribed in the tradition of Dutch modern architecture, to which den Boon was no exception.

Den Boon lived a double life, as we learned through the stories of his nephew.¹⁷ He hardly participated in family life, and his own brother purportedly did not know he was gay until after his death. There are stories about parties in den Boon’s tower room he rented in The Hague, which was raided by the police. While the archive does not reveal anything about den Boon’s sexual orientation and practice, there is a lot of equivocal material in the archive, especially in the personal photo albums. A recurring motif in the albums is the posed self-portraits in leather motorcycle clothing. The enigmatic title of one of his albums betrays his anti-bourgeois stance: ‘The respectable lies of the official decency’ (Figure 2.5). The pictures are quite intimate and personal, as den Boon exposes himself literally and figuratively, appearing as a kind of superman, clad in leather or wholly nude, riding a motorbike or enjoying canoeing holidays and hiking tours in the wild (Figures 2.6 and 2.7). Clearly, here he was his own man, unlike when around his family or in professional life.

In the 1960s den Boon designed a series of highly original fantasy houses, most unusual within the circles of Dutch functionalism and modern architecture. They were exercises without clients, such as the Narrow House

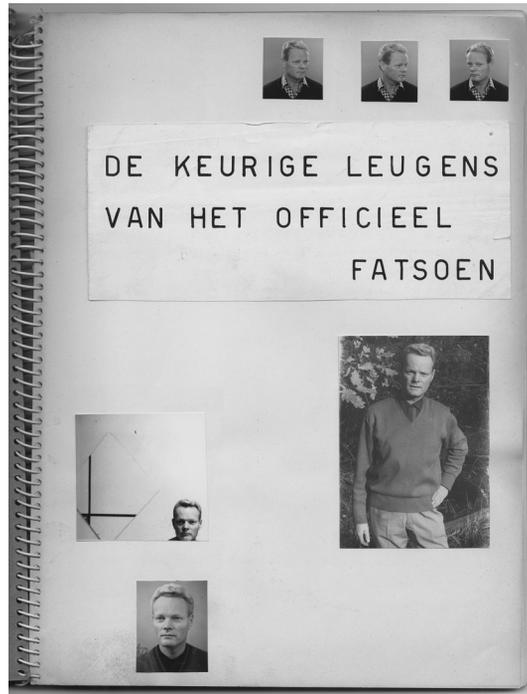


FIGURE 2.5 Wim den Boon, title page from private photo album, *'The respectable lies of the official decency'*, undated. (Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut, BOOQ_fa 12-2.)

(Figure 2.8). The section betrays some autobiographical aspect is at work here; we see for instance the kind of sports car he loved to drive, and a canoe as well. The designs are purely speculative, and they share some commonalities: in all of them, due to the absence of doors, the spaces flow into each other, different functions are separated by height differences and stairs, and the relationship between inside and outside (private and public) is designed in a most unusual way, not aiming for modernist transparency but rather for protection and control of the interior spaces from the outside, as if to create a safe space for a non-compliant way of life beyond bourgeois falsehood.

Concluding remarks

History looms large over the archive. Its fixed categories and canonical exercises cast long shadows over the subjects and materials, especially so in the case of marginalized queer lives. In this chapter, we have started to recover the incomplete histories of Onno Greiner, Dick van Woerkom and Wim den Boon through the traces of queer desires and lifestyles that haunt their archives.



FIGURE 2.6 *Wim den Boon, clad in leather, private photo album, undated.*
(Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut, BOOQ_fa 12-12.)

We have tried to highlight the work of perusing the dossiers and documents and the indispensable process of triangulating these with sources and voices from outside the archive. Such re-re-readings also need to aim for the revaluing and reconnecting of biographical ephemera to the monographic, disciplinary approach, which still dominates architecture and architecture history today, and which is in need of serious reassessment. In addition, we have underscored the crucial role of what we have coined ‘special agents’, the archivists and curators who are themselves both insiders and outsiders. Working from within the institutional confines, they are able to trace the



FIGURE 2.7 *Wim den Boon, canoeing in nature, private photo album, undated. (Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut.)*

double coding, to read against the grain and to help find those narratives that deviate from the established canon.

All this brings us back to the challenge of narrating historical queer experience from the archive, which conjures up the very question of methodology itself. At this point we might turn again to our divergent positions and perspectives as co-authors with different backgrounds and academic pedigrees.

One of us suggests that the work to be done is riddled with paradoxes which are often hard to straddle. To start with, he posits that it is not possible to fully abandon history, that it remains necessary to situate queer lives by careful historicizing and contextualizing – to try and understand them as being embedded in a specific place and time. This raises concerns from the other one, who warns of bringing back the fantasy of a fully transparent and neutral recovery of history, notwithstanding his appreciation of history as situated and embedded. This author is less interested in the positivist undertaking of historical analysis, in approaching historical queer experience through empirical data collection if you will, and more so in unsettling the

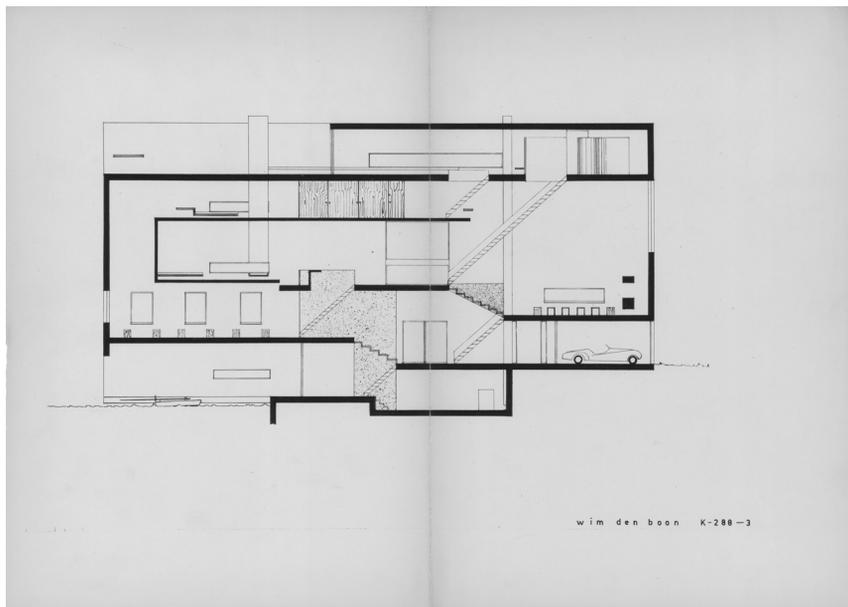


FIGURE 2.8 Wim den Boon, *Het Smalle Huis*, *fantasy house*, undated, c.1960. (Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut, BOOQ_k288-1.)

notion of evidence altogether. To him, mere evidencing is not enough to redress the epistemological erasure of queer existence.

Our first author agrees with this but also protests: situating and historicizing is not the same as empirical data collection, on the contrary. He once again argues that queer experience and concepts should not be understood as something a- or trans-historical, and that room should be left for yet unknown, future interpretations the moment new materials are uncovered and other connecting stories emerge. According to this author, narrating a queer past requires better care and understanding, while realizing that the curatorial work undertaken will remain an approximation and incomplete and, paradoxically, will always produce a new object, as it were, through which the historical narrative is made visible and palpable. The second author responds by posing that the key question at hand is how contemporary queer thought might enable us to narrate queer experience differently, and how it may help us to develop alternative, queerer modes of engaging the archive. Behind all this, the two agree, lies a shared desire and aspiration: to locate and narrate queer world-making practices that let us dream of, imagine and enact queerer ways of being in the world.

Notes

- 1 For an overview of the activities of Het Nieuwe Instituut one can visit the website: hetnieuweinstituut.nl; or see the book publication: Brendan Cormier, *Expansive Bodies. Contesting Design at Het Nieuwe Instituut*, nai010 publishers, Rotterdam 2021.
- 2 See for a history of this process of institutionalization: Sergio M. Figueiredo, *The NAI Effect. Creating Architecture Culture*, nai010 publishers, Rotterdam 2016.
- 3 There is one open and out lesbian urban designer in the collection: Riek Bakker (b 1944), but with a very small file of three panels of a competition design for Parc de la Villette in Paris, dated 1982. Bakker's archive is still with the office she co-founded, Bureau B+B, in Amsterdam. A recent acquisition of the professional, female network 'Vrouwen Bouwen Wonen' also has queer lesbian people involved, yet this archive has been researched thus far from a feminist perspective and less from a queer one.
- 4 Internal document '1. Matrix Archieven Werkbestand, Download 13-1', 13 January 2022.
- 5 Open and out trans presence in architecture is of relative recent date, and is admittedly still rare, although Uwe Bresan and Wolfgang Voigt have included a trans woman planner in their historical overview of German LGBTQ+ persons: Hildegard Schirmacher (1924–2015), see Uwe Bresan and Wolfgang Voigt (eds.), *Gay Architects. Silent Biographies from the 18th to the 20th Century*, Wasmuth and Zohlen, Berlin, 2022. Trailblazers in the field today are Paul Preciado and Lucas Crawford, while Simona Castricum features in this volume.
- 6 The initiative, instigated by the Dutch Gay and Lesbian archives IHLIA in Amsterdam, goes back to a symposium in 2015, organized by IHLIA, the Amsterdam Museum, the Reinwardt Academy for heritage studies and COMCOL, ICOM. The Queering the Collections network was hosted by Het Nieuwe Instituut in 2021, 31 March, in the framework of the project 'Collecting Otherwise'. For more information, see Riemer Knoop and Lonnee van den Hoonaard (eds.), *Queering the Collections. Tips & tricks voor het nog zichtbaarder maken van gender- & seksuele diversiteit in musea en collecties*, IHLIA and Reinwardt Academie, Amsterdam 2016. IHLIA stands for: Internationaal Homo-Lesbisch Informatiecentrum en Archief. Its history goes back to 1978, when the Dokumentatiecentrum Homostudies was established in Amsterdam.
- 7 'Queering Architecture' 15 September, 2016. Archivist Alfred Marks provided the specific queer selection of documents from the collection. Speakers included among others Jasmine Rault, who analysed Eileen Gray's work as an example of Sapphic modernity and the late Henry Urbach, one of the pioneers of queer theory in architecture. For an online report of the seminar, see <https://collectie.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en/activities/queering-architecture>
- 8 'Through Queer Eyes' 15 September, 2016, and 'Queer Houses and Places' 26 September, 2019. 'Dwars door het archief' literally translates as 'athwart

the archive'. The talks were moderated by the collection department and its archivists and curators, and take a specific societal view on the collection materials, which can lead to surprising selections and combinations. Past editions focused on a range of topics, among others: feminisms, squatting practices and colonial legacies. Curator Hetty Berens has called it an 'acupuncture' approach that allows to further explore the resources of the collection. See for an online report of both 'queering' events: <https://collectie.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en/activities/through-queer-eyes>, and: <https://collectie.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/activiteiten/queer-houses-and-places>

- 9 The Collecting Otherwise working group exists of a multidisciplinary and international team, who come together on a monthly basis to question the archival gaze using a work-in-progress method. The first iteration (2021) has looked into feminist and genderqueer spatial practices, resulting in the acquisition of the archive of the women's association 'Vrouwen Bouwen Wonen' (Women, Building, Dwelling). The current focus (2022) is on decolonizing methods, with a natural interest in the many traces of remaining, of historical relations with the former Dutch colonies in the Caribbean, and the former Dutch East Indies. Involved colleagues are among others Setareh Noorani, Delany Boutkan, Carolina Pinto, Federica Notari and Harriet Rose Morley. See the web magazine: <https://collectingotherwise.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en>
- 10 Eliza Steinbock, associate professor of Gender and Diversity Studies at Maastricht University, brought the network together, with Hester Dibbits of the Reinwardt Academy and Erasmus University, and one of us, Dirk van den Heuvel, as co-organizers. The team is completed by Noah Littel and Liang Kai Yu as PhD candidates. The project has received a grant from the Dutch national science organization NWO as part of their Smart Culture programme for the creative industries.
- 11 The Queer Salon series are conceived as open to the public and are hosted by Het Nieuwe Instituut. They are recorded and published online. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the first Queer Salon with a keynote lecture by Olivier Vallerand took place online on 11 February, 2021. It can be viewed at <https://jaap-bakema-study-centre.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en/activities/queer-salon>
- 12 In the spirit of the queer novelist Alan Hollinghurst, esp. *The Stranger's Child* of 2011; see also the interview with him in the Oxonian Review: <https://oxonianreview.com/articles/an-interview-with-alan-hollinghurst>
- 13 Conversation with Paul Rueckert, 5 February, 2022.
- 14 Conversation with Frank den Oudsten, 13 May, 2022.
- 15 Van Woerkom's archive was brought to the national collection by the architectural historian Bernard Colenbrander, after van Woerkom had passed away of heart failure. Colenbrander was the right hand of van Woerkom at the Documentation Centre for Architecture and acted as the executor of van Woerkom's estate. Van Woerkom had a disturbed relationship with his family, none of whom were still in contact with him at the time of his death. Conversation with Bernard Colenbrander, undated.

- 16 Travelogue North Africa, June–July 1954, Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut, BOOQ a21.
- 17 Conversation with Arie den Boon, 1 April, 2022.

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