Play
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Play Record Stream

public
building

Preface

PLAY RECORD STREAM is a research project accompanying the *Public Building* Graduation Studio of 2021/22. The topic of the studio is: Music Marvel, Music & Popular Culture Re-Wired. As the title suggests, the idea of a contemporary music venue is at the core of investigation. In addition, the proposal of this document is, also, an extension of the overarching framework—*Amplifier*—as previously developed within the group work at the start of this course, in collaboration with Zsa-Zsa Brouwers, Chris Huisman and Phat Ho.

The ambition of this paper is to illustrate the elasticity of infrastructure when used as an originating framework for spatially enveloping public performance venues. In its final form, the research will be substantiated through a visual atlas, presenting classified trace evidence of select operational systems; contextualised by relating the gathered spatial constellations to the various performance formats of music venues. In other words, through theoretical contextualisation of undertheorized infrastructures an attempt is made to mobilize assemblies of movement for the sake of enclosing.

Play Record Stream, in itself, then becomes an evidence based apparatus for REC, FF, PAUSE & PLAY; a tool for extracting tactics of shaping. A spatial record player, of a sort.

Contents

Opening

Play Record Stream is not the project name. It is the history of music development; it is the method of music production; it is the explicit reminder of the media infrastructure controlling the performer of today. The upcoming design project will be exploring the capacity of superimposing the music production methodology to that of space-making. Displacing and projecting the operational logic of a musical Apparatus onto a framework of a spatial Network.

The selected network as the testing ground?— Randstad. If "the city is stronger than architecture",[1] Randstad is beyond measurable strength. It exists only *de facto*, with no legislative core, no institutional evidence. It exists as a process that is supported by the comfort and speed of mobility. In short, it is regulated not through an administrative unity, but rather by being itself a working unity. That is the access point to the positioning of the design that this research project will exploit. The Music Marvel venue will be situated in the North-East part of Binckhorst, tangent to the currently unused rail tracks, allowing for a claim that it will also be a part of the Randstad Network. Today, trains go to this site to 'sleep'; the project entails an awakening. To maximise the potential of this connection, first, it needs to be understood what the connection is being established to. So, Randstad first, Binckhorst after: Research before Design.

1
Commentary by Nathalie de Vries, Chair of Public Building, during the intermediate presentations of the studio, 4 Nov 2021.

2
'Motto' for the Design Project, by Author.

3
Denise Scott-Brown in conversation with Enrique Walker in Philadelphia, 2013.
Koolhaas, Rem, Brown D. Scott, Yoshiharu Tsukamoto, and Enrique Walker. The Ordinary: Recordings. 2018. Print

4
"Neuer Realismus in der französischen Architektur." ARCH+, vol. 240, 2020.

"Music makes you move, architecture stops. Here, architecture is always on the move, and music is the stop"[2]—this is the Design. "To shelter people you have to consider built things and provide concepts for doing so"[3]— this is the Research.

The following chapters call for expanding the roles of observed structures. Insofar as to say that the building cranes can become inhabitable spaces; viaducts and ramps can be appropriated to envelope and enclose civic performances. Altogether claiming inventive resilience as the sole institutional verification of value.

"Less material, more space"[4]—Lacaton & Vassal mirror in their quote a central maxim of Russian Constructivism: minimum usage of material for a maximum cultural impact. Century old proclamations still resonate in the words of architects today. The Hague, being a city of cultural liberalism, tolerance, peace and justice, seems as good a place as any to ask *how music can be used architecturally for a maximum cultural impact*?

'Randstad Loop' in relation to the
Netherlands. Image by author.

1. Problem Statement

5
https://www.worldometers.info/
world-population/. Accessed 17 Nov
2021.

6
At the end of 2020 the amount of
anthropogenic mass on Earth had
become greater than biological.

Architecture is at the intersection of a global
crossover. In December 2020 the anthropogenic mass has
exceeded all biological—the global population grows; the
Globe remains fixed. The impossibility of set trajectory is
incontestable—it's mathematical. The dilemma: to continue
building at the expense of biological or declare intellectual
bankruptcy and call for a reorganisation of the metropolitan
structures. The amount of people from all of human history
combined had doubled within the 20th century alone, and
the current number is already double of what it was in
1970.[5] A completely new context in which one speculates
about which collapse will happen first: the one of the
population or the planet?[6]

So, 'human mass' is *the focus*. Mobile or immobile
is *the question*. The architectural discipline has an
inherent confidence to assume static supremacy over
dynamic; often promoting spaces as 'solutions', instead of
welcoming transitory structures as equally important. But
where does the architectural scale emerge in these claims?

Following the urgency of the initial statement,
fixating on 'containment' strategies seems less effective
than lending more rigid focus to exploiting the existing
structures of movement, passage and streams. In
consequence, the research is formed as an investigation
on the 'open case' of the larger-than-metropolitan
phenomenon—the 'Randstad Loop'. For addressing
the volume of masses, the building scale is too fixed to
experiment. The amplitude of improvisation is limited to
cosmetic and not spatial innovation. Infrastructural 'space',

on the other hand, is unapologetic.

Musically speaking, "it's not what you are given, but what you do with it."[7] So what could be done with the given infrastructural processes of Randstad, when appropriated for an architectural scale? The investigation becomes more than just shape-searching. When enlarging the reading to both Form and Symbols in space, a more complex image starts to emerge. In our group reflections, we formulated an inquisitive sequence of thought: "We like the *contrast* of industry & nature within the area, yet we wish there was a more *dynamic range* of sensations offered. We wonder what kind of an *island* will it be when connected, and if then still it can be considered as one? And, finally, what if Binckhorst was proclaimed a *festival area*?".

The relationship between the formerly introduced ethical urgency and the conscious position of a post-rational exploiter of existing structures establishes the margins for the framework of this Music Marvel project.

"Luigi Russolo, Intonarumoris, 1913". YouTube, uploaded by david rato, 1 Jul 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYPXAo1c-OA4&t=47s.

7
Honing, Yuri. "What to ask from the venue I play in?" MSc3 Live Lecture Series, 21 Oct 2021, TU Delft, Delft. Lecture

8
"80% of environmental impact is decided at the design stage." MacArthur, Ellen. https://ellen-macarthurfoundation.org/articles/recycling-and-the-circular-econo-my-whats-the-difference. Accessed 19 Nov 2021.

9
NP2F "Neuer Realismus in der französischen Architektur." ARCH+, vol. 240, 2020, pp.208.

2.   Why This, Why Now?

A.   Design choices matter.[8]

"We are children of a Crisis. The crisis has forced us to look at the situation more realistically. We base our projects on simple decisions, we accept the constraints in order to develop the architecture from them."[9]

B.   Circularity potential

Developing vocabulary and operational practices of circularity is crucial, as this holistic concept of production has not become mainstream yet, far from it. Designers have the responsibility to seduce their audience with illustrations of their practice, so that gradually an aesthetic interest is transformed into an active way of life. The following pillars of circularity are chosen to be developed within this project:

Performance Economy needs Performance Infrastructure. As the project is situated in Randstad, an 'amplified reading' of the existing 'signals' of the highly performative Randstad railway spaces is executed, in order to start developing 'architecture from within'.

Resilience through Diversity. The research will provide a broad spectrum of insight into the existing spatial systems. That then gives ground for a more active and confident position in programming spaces for mass-venues.

Circular is Interchangeable. That means general is preferred over specific. General is also the infrastructural space, which is more often a leftover than an attended domain. Isn't that already an

insight into the shortcomings of the claim itself? Additionally, in the context of a music venue, a paradoxical observation emerges after analyzing 16 world-known venues: people go to generic halls (arena-like) for a specific reason, and, in reverse, to spectacularly specific places for the most generic reasons. If interchangeability = circularity, then a more complex understanding must be developed on what that means in architectural terms.

C.   'Loop of Randstad' as an analogy to Circularity and vice versa.

On a rhetorical level, Randstad itself can be used to establish analogy with the notion of Circularity. Both can occupy interchangeable positions; can be used didactically with the more general public.

D.   Mass Coordination

Potentially, a music venue is physically the largest sustained cultural event that our societies organise (think multiple day festivals). It is an event of crowd combinations and movement. Infrastructure can support that format; already is. Testing how these qualities can be repurposed for cultural gatherings allows for expanding the architectural repertoire of coordination and spatial management.

3.   How? On Research Method

The guiding force of the research methodology is systematic inquiry into modes of mobility: transport infrastructure - transport buildings - transporting construction. All modes to be organised in a 'feedback loop', iterating itself from transporting construction, becoming construction in itself, and so the loop goes on. The dynamic becomes temporarily static; from transporting built matter, it becomes the matter itself. To use a musical analogy, the aim is to record separate channels, all to be subsequently 'mastered' during the Project Design phase of the project.

The goal is to REC. infrastructure, and then use the acquired 'piece' as one would use an audio record. FF., PAUSE, PLAY, STOP, REW. and, eventually, REC. again. No taxonomic separation between building and infrastructure. A scaleless recording, rigidly observing the assembly tactics that support integration of mobility in the processes of work. A downscaled simulation of the 'Randstad like' working processes.

A.   On the Road

Learn from the existing landscape: NS Infrastructure video capture and post-processed transcript of a return route between Rotterdam-Utrecht-Amsterdam and The Hague. Following the railway perimeter around the Randstad area, the immediate scenery will be recorded in two train rides: one capturing the Left side; other - Right. Afterwards the videos will be combined into a two split screen, providing a composite image of the scenery of movement through

Randstad. That material then serves as a base for re-recording notations of the more select spatial aspects and typological occurrences within the recorded journey.

B.   Built Case Studies

Case studies (Documentation, Re-Drawing and Co-Relation of findings). Buildings situated in the Netherlands where Infrastructure is an integrated co-existence with the users:

1.   Groot Handelsgebouw (1953)

       car, bike, truck, office, commerce

2.   Den Haag Centraal (1973)

       train, metro, tram, bus, office, commerce

3.   Kunsthal Rotterdam (1992)

       car, bike, truck, art, commerce

4.   Station Breda (2016)

       car, bike, truck, office, commerce, residential

C.   Unbuilt Case Studies

There is a lineage of Post-War projects that coincide with the emergence of computer technology and elaborated network theories. These are 'cybernetics' projects, which experiment and test the idea of architecture as a dynamic construct with interchangeable parts. For this research two projects will be critically revisited, both by Cedric Price: *Potteries Thinkbelt* (1964) and *Fun Palace* (1961). For what reason? "Price took the easy way out in Fun Palace because he left the program undetermined; left it to the people."[10] What if this is reversed, so that the indeterminacy is placed within the domain of structure, and

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Lee, Sang. "Music Marvel: Theory Research." MSc3 Public Building Graduation Studio. Class lecture, TU Delft, Delft, Autumn 2021.

the program is the one in full development? A building of permanent residency needs to provide stability, yes; but a music venue is of an ephemeral character, and here lies the curiosity to revisit and reapply some of the developments by Cedric Price. Music as a temporary and somewhat 'unstable' endeavour could prove to be a suitable match for the revisited idea of a 'Fun' Venue.

D.   Animation potential of Construction elements

1.   *Stageco*

       Largest stage manufacturer in the world.

       https://www.stageco.com/

2.   Building Cranes

       An inventory of typologies and mechanical principles of construction cranes (Liebherr, Demag, Hitachi etc.)

3.   Airport 'machine fleet'

       including mobile stair trucks, extending air-bridges and inflatable emergency exits.

E.   Arcade Principle

As a continuation of personal History Thesis research, the research project recognises the presence of the only surviving arcade in the Netherlands, *De Passage* in the Hague, as an essential typological reference point for the conceptual development of the Music Marvel. "Its potency lies in its ability to be simultaneously more than architecture (urban) and at the same time less (place). It addresses the complexities of the metropolitan in a multi-channeled way and is stubbornly flexible in adapting and

intervening in existing built morphologies. It is worthwhile to reintroduce it as part of a revised metropolitan repertoire of density coordination."[11] For this project it serves as inspiration for revisiting the typology as a potential spatial framework for reworking the well established and stable type of the concert hall. The success of an arcade depends on its publicness and publicity, which makes it a relevant reference for a Public Building project. And finally, it paradoxically being an 'open interior' allows for a speculative misplacement of a music listener playing a record in their domestic environment—within a scaled experience of an urban dimension. Would this be plausible?

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Jane, Edgars. "Arcade Principle: An urban review of De Passage in the Hague." 28 Apr 2021. History Thesis, TU Delft, student paper.

Arcade of the Hague

1. Groot Handelsgebouw, 1953

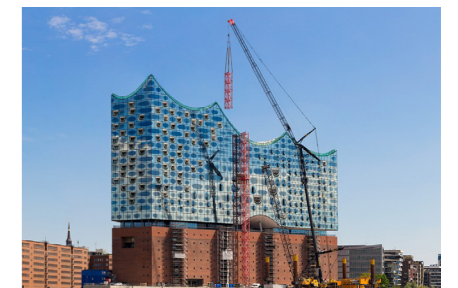2. Den Haag Centraal, 1973

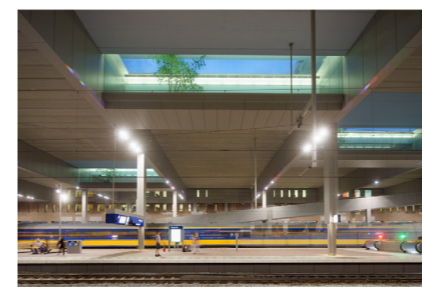3. Kunsthal Rotterdam,1992

Stageco lightweight modular concert construction

Stegeco 'Lowlands' structure: stored all year round on site, disassembled

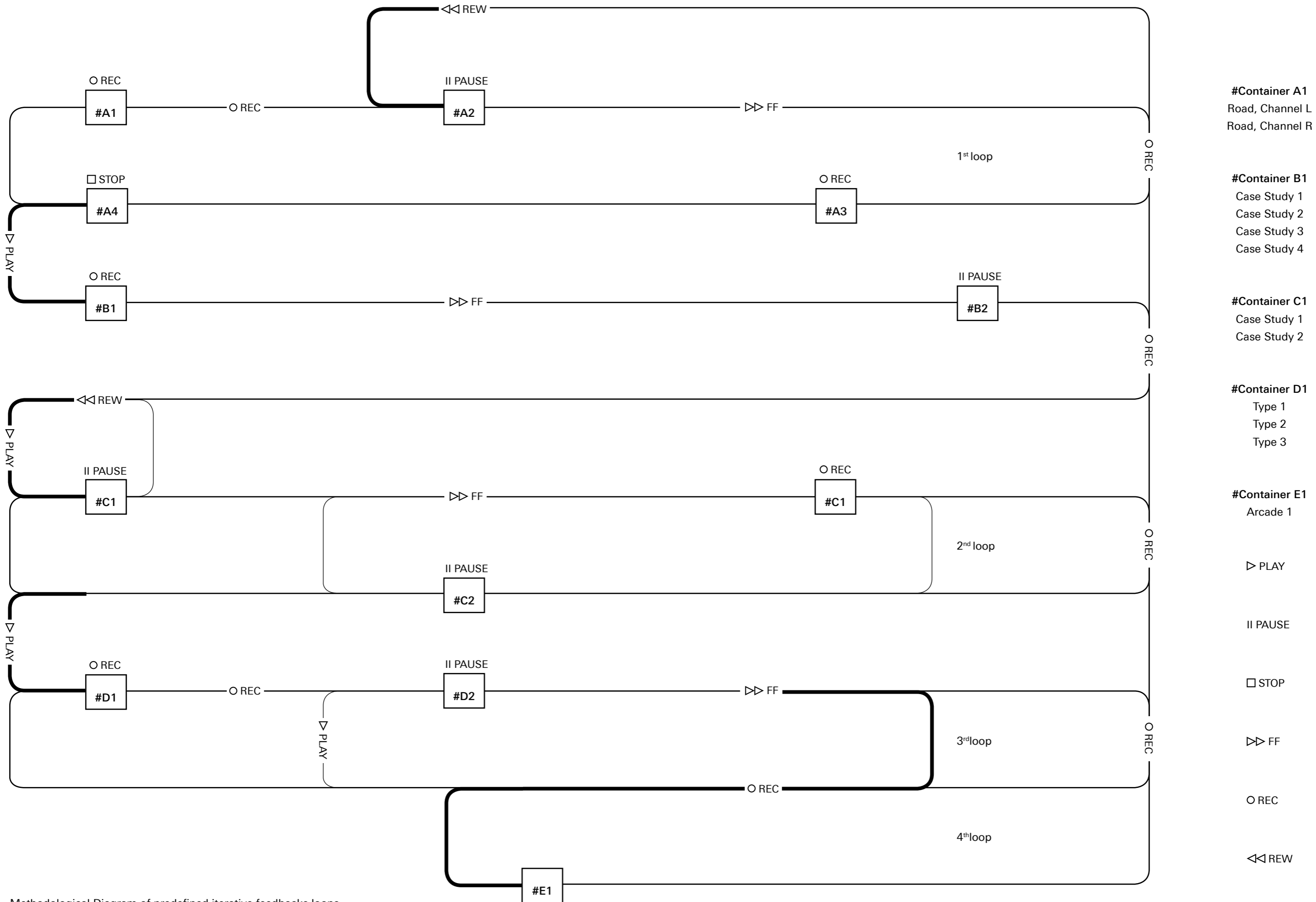*Potain* 'Igo 42' fast erecting telescopic mobile crane

4. Station Breda, 2016

Demag custom item process cranes (PRC Stroh)

Liebherr heavy load crane (2000 HC 60)

○ REC
#A1

○ REC

◁◁ REW

II PAUSE
#A2

▷▷ FF

1st loop

○ REC

#Container A1
Road, Channel L
Road, Channel R

□ STOP
#A4

○ REC
#A3

#Container B1
Case Study 1
Case Study 2
Case Study 3
Case Study 4

▷ PLAY

○ REC
#B1

▷▷ FF

II PAUSE
#B2

○ REC

#Container C1
Case Study 1
Case Study 2

◁◁ REW

▷ PLAY

#Container D1
Type 1
Type 2
Type 3

II PAUSE
#C1

▷▷ FF

○ REC
#C1

2nd loop

○ REC

#Container E1
Arcade 1

II PAUSE
#C2

▷ PLAY

▷ PLAY

○ REC
#D1

○ REC

II PAUSE
#D2

▷▷ FF

3rd loop

○ REC

II PAUSE

▷ PLAY

□ STOP

▷▷ FF

○ REC

4th loop

○ REC

◁◁ REW

#E1

Methodological Diagram of predefined iterative feedbacks loops

4.   Objective

1.   Mobilize the gathered evidence towards findings.
      Communicated by clear means of representation:
      verbal + pictorial.
2.   Extract themes that are beneficial for coordinating
      mass-venues of infrastructural scale.
3.   Randstad is a consolidated abstraction of a range
      of processes. Get a better grasp on this construct
      by notation and transcription. The end stop of this
      iterative loop is the starting point of the MM: Music-
      Stop: the musical arcade: *De Passage* revisited.
4.   Theoretical Contextualisation of undertheorized
      infrastructure. Generate a set of select hypotheses
      about the potential of gathered evidence & present
      them visually becoming an active performance
      envelope for cultural activity and exchange. Aldo
      Rossi in his writings suggests approaching design
      as 'Furnishing Hypotheses'. For this project, as it
      is a retrospective reading, it seems appropriate to
      reverse, and, instead, 'Hypothesise Furnishings'.
      In this case, the Randstad railway network and its
      supporting structure and leftover spaces. Randstad
      infra already has allowed for the intensification and
      hybridization of its internal interaction. Find out if
      there are more latent, implied potential qualities
      embedded within that structure.
5.   Being part of an active socio-economic network as
      well as an active 'player' in a 'musical network',
      the Music Marvel of the Hague is framed by the
      "absolute necessity to Compete & Collaborate

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Rikka Tuomisto, guest critic during
the intermediate presentations of the
studio, 4 Nov 2021.

simultaneously."[12] A symbiotic and self-cancelling
dynamic of self-regulating excellence: a potent
ground for a Music Marvel. See how to make use
of this dynamic, in order to generate an equally
dynamic experience within the venue; an exercise in
minimizing loss of dynamic.

5. Contribution to Discourse

This final chapter of the plan starts with an open claim of allegiance to the legacy of Aldo Rossi and the works of Denise Scott-Brown and Robert Venturi. Especially to their legacy of typological fractalization and the inexhaustible hypothesizing of communication forms. Not so much between, as within, this research project is positioned as successor of the post-war genealogy of architectural investigations into *cities as found*. In this case, what is found is the infrastructural in-betweenness of the cities of Randstad.

Reappropriating the investigative methods of the Las Vegas strip onto the Randstad loop, a mapping of personal findings within the infrastructure: e.g. patterns of activity, movement, communication, forms, signs, symbols is presented as a complete document.

Designer as apparatus: Recording, Playing, Pausing, Fast Forwarding and Rewinding, if necessary. In simple terms, the architectural designer acts as an operator of signals of crisis—amplifying and distorting the 'playback' to site specific conditions.

A quick browse of the titles of an architecture magazine today reads: "Neo-Rationalism", "It's the economy, stupid", "Realism—Idealism", "Economy as middle ground". Each categorisation implies classification, aestheticization and idealisation of the subject case examples. All driven by romanticism and desire for control of the narrative, and control in general. Aware of this 'discursive apparatus' this research offers a counter proposal, to still operate as an apparatus, but that of a

13
"Neuer Realismus in der französischen Architektur." ARCH+, vol. 240, 2020.
Titles taken from the magazine, featuring offices like Lacaton & Vassal, Bruther, E2A, Studio Muoto, LIN, Atelier Kempe Thill and Éric Lapierre to name a few.

record player. Instead of linguistic control, the narrative is achieved through predefined modes of control: Play, Pause, Stop, Record, FF and REW. There are already existing spatial typologies that operate that way, such as building cranes, festival structures and public transport infrastructures. Now, they will be presented together—as an alternative example of narrated craftsmanship.

Today, 'mediascape' is the prevailing platform for culture. Another word for it is: network. This network is fed by generated content. Often it reaches a point where the generative process generates generated content, just because it can. Generated, but where is the meaning? Who assigns meaning? Mediascape is an unconscious generator. Infrastructure is an unconscious theory. But isn't theory implicitly always unconscious; oblivious to the biases of its creators?

◁◁◁ REW

Key Theoretical Positioning

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Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. 1757

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Gideon, Sigfried. *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition*. 1941

Wittkower, Rudolf. *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism.* 1949

Banham, Reyner. *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age.* 1960

Rudolfsky, Bernard. *Architecture Without Architects.* 1964

Venturi, Robert. *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture.* 1966

Jencks, Charles and George Baird. *Meaning in Architecture.* 1969

Venturi,Robert and Denise Scott-Brown, et al. *Learning from Las Vegas.* 1972

Koolhaas, Rem. *Delirious New York*.1978

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Evans, Robin. *The Projective Cast: Architecture and Its Three Geometries*. 1995

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Hayes, Michael. *Architecture's Desire: Reading the Late Avant-Garde*. 2010