TU Delft MSc Architecture Thesis

Explore Lab 41

A Home on the Horizon

Peeking into a Queer(ed) Collective Home through a series of Triptychs

Sandro van der Hulst

Suzana Milinovic & Robert Gorny

A Home on the Horizon
Peeking into a Queer(ed) Collective Home through a series of Triptychs

Sandro van der Hulst

Technische Universiteit Delft
MSc Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences
Van Eesteren-Fluck & Van Lohuizen Foundation

Contents

Introduction 1

Act 1 // Theoretical Approach 5
Queering 6
Enactment 8
Co-Creation 10

Act 2 // Analysis 15
De LTS 21
De School 23
Het Huis 25

Act 3 // Design 27
Communal Stages 35
Group Infrastructure of Desire 37
Fluid Personal Spaces 39

Conclusion 45

Introduction
The Heteronormative Housing System

Currently in The Netherlands, the housing market is gripped by a housing crisis not seen for a generation. David Harvey (2010) argues that capitalism characteristically triggers global crises through the relentless pursuit of capital accumulation. Neoliberal policies have played a constitutive role in transitioning housing from a fundamental right to a high-stakes financial asset. This "financialization" of the market has paved the way for skyrocketing rents. In this regime, the city is no longer for its citizens; it is a privilege reserved for those with the capital to claim it. Those who cannot keep up, often marginalized, precarious, and queer, are reduced to what Harvey (2012) calls "problem bodies" or, even more starkly, "surplus life" (Willse, 2015; St. Clair, 2024). In the eyes of the market, if you aren't profitable, you are spatially invisible.

But what if "problem bodies" refuse to disappear? Tom Ward (2022) notes that housing precarity is, at its heart, a queer issue. It dictates how we socialize, how we have sex, and whether we can afford to live openly without fear of reprisal. This is where Sara Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology* (2006) offers a vital architectural critique. She argues that capitalist space is not neutral; it is organized around a social hierarchy that prioritizes the straight, white, middle-class, cis-gendered man. As a result, queers have to conform or become 'disoriented'.

Northern European bourgeoisie invented the concept of "domesticity" between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries around rigid gender roles and a classist obsession with privacy. Under the guise of protecting the nuclear family from the "chaos" of the public sphere, domesticity, both privately and publicly, has always been about control. This perverse need for control through mechanisms of surveillance truly crystalised when settler colonial and postcolonial states operationalised it during Western imperial expansionism (Ahmed, 2006). Moreover, majoritarian white societies later adopted it as the 'threshold to assimilation' leaving inclusion into the housing system only possible on the condition if racialized, ethnic and later gay and lesbian families conformed to normative standards (Avalos, 2024).

The Dutch housing system has a long history of "conditional inclusion" of marginalized groups. During the seventeenth century, the influx of colonial and capitalist wealth allowed wealthy bourgeois families to build Bagijnhofjes. In the courtyard housing complexes women lacking male "support" lived from a welfare pension from the estate but only if they were Catholic and unpartnered (Hofjes In Amsterdam, 2026).

Moreover, nineteenth-century workers' housing allowed families to escape degraded souterrain dwellings for a "sanitized" apartment. However, this meant conforming to the nuclear family model and leaving street life as dictated by their financiers (Amsterdam Op De Kaart, 2018). Safety, it seems, comes with a heteronormative price tag.

Yet, there is a strange resilience in these historical models. Despite the aggressive financialization of the market, the collective association structures of these early models have often stood fast. Today, half of Amsterdam's Begijnhofjes remain exclusively for women, and much of the nineteenth-century workers' housing remains in the hands of the original foundations or housing corporations.

"Housing precarity governs how we live, how we can socialise, how we can have sex, and ultimately determines who has a secure roof over their heads. It is a queer issue precisely because it often dictates whether we can live openly as queer and love without reprisals."

(Ward, 2022)

While these examples suggest that the architecture is built on repressive hierarchies, association ownership structures might actually offer a future proof tactic to make housing accessible for marginalised people, including queers.

Building on the historical resilience of collective ownership, people are responding to the neoliberal system rotting from rising housing costs and increasing social isolation. Consequently, forms of communal living are being explored again in the Netherlands through housing cooperatives. Projects such as De Torteltuin and De Warren have self-organised through a combination of personal investment, crowdfunding, community loans, bank financing, and municipal support to create

sustainable, socially oriented, and communal housing models (Platform Wooncoöperaties Amsterdam, 2025). One particular ambitious project being designed at the moment, De Vlinderhaven, is a housing project for and by a queer community as a response to a tender by the Amsterdam municipality based on ‘neighbourliness’. However, to ‘live openly without fear of reprisal’, the heteronormativity within the housing system needs to be investigated to see what norms impede on queer lives.

So how is queer space actually emancipatory compared to traditional, heteronormative understandings of space? In *Unplanned Visitors* (2021), Ollivier Vallerand traces the trajectory of queer space theory from its emergence at the 1994 Queer Space exhibition at New York’s Storefront for Art and Architecture to various applications in the 2010s. A recurring theme in Vallerand’s analysis is the scarcity of built architecture that actively employs queer spatial concepts such a disrupting the public - private binary, sexual desire and domesticity. Consequently, the discourse has predominantly relied on abstract exhibitions to critique conventional architectural paradigms, particularly regarding assumptions around domesticity.

Ultimately, an analysis of the contemporary landscape reveals a dichotomy: queer space theory is either explored profoundly within the abstract, conceptual realm of exhibitions, or it is diluted into conventional, normative layouts when applied to built architecture—with radical exceptions like the work of MYCKET and OFFPOLIN. Building upon these precedents, this research seeks to bridge this critical gap. By extracting the radical spatial lessons found in conceptual queer theory and applying them directly to tangible architectural proposals, this thesis moves beyond both abstract critique and offers a design proposal for inclusive queer housing.

More importantly, this research offers a framework for an architectural process that tries not to repeat the repressive hierarchies embedded in architectural design practice. As the built environment is shaped by heteronormativity and decides which bodies, relationships, and ways of living are considered acceptable, architecture participates in this. Traditional design methods tend to repeat hierarchical, exclusionary structures through top-down analysis and program-focused design. Thus, to go beyond heteronormative housing, we need another way of reading and designing space.

The research is structured through a series of triptychs: three acts, each with its own triptych. The first act establishes the theoretical framework, drawing on queer theory, architectural performance theory, and the co-creation methodology used throughout the research. These approaches are grounded in my experiences within queer communities during the summer of 2025 and inform the analytical framework developed for the study. The second act applies this framework to three temporal moments in the lifespan of Docter Jan van Bremenstraat 1–3. The third act responds to these analyses with a design proposal I like to call, **A Home on the Horizon.** Together, these acts answer the research question:

How can co-creation and performative studies create a ***queer(ed) collective home*** *as a transitory space of emancipation?*

Finally, at a time when queers are increasingly under threat, especially trans people, I take to heart a message shared in response to Trans Visibility Day: “CIS PEOPLE: Select us. Protect us. Give us jobs. **Give us housing.** Love us. Consciously bring us into your worlds. We don’t need visible targets; we need the world to love us. Give trans people a little extra love. Equality is the lie that equal solutions mean equal results” (Pramuk, 2024). This research therefore takes a step toward legitimising queer(ed) ways of living and illuminates how queerness can be central to architecture, enabling queer people to findnot only a house but **a true home** to live their lives freely.

Theoretical Approach
Queer(ing), Performance & Co-Creation

To go beyond the heteronormative housing system, I explored how queer communities find home in clubs, bars, public spaces, rural communes, and squats. During my fieldwork I visited several and saw how queer communities use collective tactics of resisting, retreating, and revolting to quite literally and metaphorically hang their straight coats at the door. But what if queers could find emancipation at home? Gutterman, Manalansan, and Vider argue that "the strictness of the home's norms makes their disruption all the more certain (Gutterman et al., 2024)."

Homeless queers make the strictness of norms visible as they must perform private rituals in public and therefore reimagine it. Moreover, by facing adversity together, excluded from the rest of society, they find alternative relations to kinship, creating "comrade relations" that go beyond racialised, heteropatriarchal capitalist norms (St Clair 2024: 477). The "queer counterpublics" (Berlant & Warner, 1998: 558) they inhabit thus become spaces to create memories, assert identities, and build a sense of community through "communal intimacies" (Esparza 2024: 491).

Through the comrade relations and their communal intimacies they stage performances we do not expect because heteronormative housing system has enforced one constrained way of performing. When defining queer and queering, I therefore follow Manalansan's ideas on queer and mess: "My use of queer and mess is not limited to bodies, objects, and desires, but also relates to processes, behaviours, and situations," as it focuses "on the recognition and centring of underrecognized practices, stances, and situations that deviate from, resist, or run counter to the workings of normality" (Manalansan, 2014).

Alongside this, Muñoz's (2019) theory of queer time frames queerness as *a point on the horizon*: never fully realised, but residing in another realm to aim toward. He identifies four temporal registers:

"the strictness of the home's norms makes their disruption all the more certain"

(Gutterman et al., 2024)



Collage | Elsewhere (author, 2026)



Collage | Enacting Architecture (author, 2026)

the no-longer-conscious, the here-and-now, the making-present, and the then-and-there. Muñoz views the here-and-now as the pragmatic and oppressive heteronormative reality we live constraining our queerness. However, the making-present, fleeting moments where queerness is felt in the here-and-now signal this queer futurity. In this ephemeral moment the no-longer-conscious, a past erased only held through memories and oral histories comes together with the hope of a queer future to stage performances by queers together.

At radical faerie sanctuaries, tens or at some sites hundreds, of visitors form temporary yet deeply connected rural communities during gatherings. During these gatherings, organisers, visitors, and sometimes permanent residents live communally, beginning with morning and evening circles. Daily activities are horizontally organised, including cooking, building maintenance, performances, workshops, rituals, and emotional sharing in heart circles (Morgensen 2009).

Upon entering the sanctuary, faeries greet one another into the metaphysical 'faerie' or queer space through an embrace or kiss, but more importantly by welcoming each other home and asking for their faerie name. *Elsewhere*, the collage on the previous spread, peeks into this queer home full of serendiptious performances. In addition to communal spaces for workshops, circles, and rituals, faeries have initiated communal building projects that serve the community.
While I was there, I found the sanctuary's intentional spaces, such as the Drag Closet, Boudoir, and Ancestor Tree go beyond normative domestic stages. Over time, radical faerie sanctuaries become everchanging, **fluid sites that emancipate their visitors through co-created and performative community spaces**.

Furthermore, queer squats expand this interior emancipation outward in direct resistance to the housing system. While queer squats such as Hotel Gondolin in Buenos Aires and the Tuntenhaus in Berlin host transient communities and exist under precarious conditions, they function as relatively permanent queer spaces within their respective cities. This outward permanence allows residents to invite wider community members into their homes to organise.

For example, on the staircase at Hotel Gondolin or in the courtyards of the Tuntenhaus protests were conceived. These actions led the Berlin municipality to purchase the Tuntenhaus, safeguarding its future, and contributed to securing trans people's recognition and safe labour conditions nationally in Argentina (until Milei took office in 2023). Permanent queer spaces can therefore exert tangible political influence, as sites of collective debate and create the potential for real change (Lopez Escriva, 2005).

Learning from queered communal ways of living outside the heteronormative housing system illuminates on the impact a making-present in the here-and-now. A present where queers aim towards the then-and-there. A queer moment that is momentarily staged, sensed, or activated.

Following Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990), Katarina Bonnevier, one of the founding members of MYCKET, explored performance in architecture through her book *Behind Straight Curtains* (2007). She explores how the enactment of architecture questions repressive norms and systems embedded in buildings, which in turn shape their subjects (and the other way around). She argues that buildingh, through housing layouts, room divisions, windows, thresholds, and domestic arrangements, encourage certain identities and ways of living. This therefore not only shapes the spaces around us but also shapes how we understanding ourselves, and consequently, the way we shape our lives.

Bonnevier's concept of enactment operates on three levels: staging (the material container, lighting, props, costumes), performative act (speech, gesture, action), and performative force (command, regulation). Her queer spatial analysis actively re-stages space, shifting architectural analysis from representation to enactment as it reveals hidden norms and the relations within spaces. She therefore argues that a performative reading of space enables architects to design environments that don't simply repeat repressive structures but actively resist discrimination and dismantle hierarchies. For example, in the collage *Enacting Architecture* I reread a hallway as a catwalk on how this emancipation can function. However, only after analysing how spaces produce repression, we can begin to understand what enables emancipation.

To understand what represses, I need to go beyond my own interpretation of space. While queer(ed) communal ways of living outside the heteronormative housing system signal making-present, one thing is clear: they are staged *together* through collective efforts: through co-creation. Drawing on Arquitecturas Colectivas' co-creation method (Crespo Claudio et al., 2023) I included queer voices living on queer islands within the heteronormative housing system (see *Queer Islands* on the next page). Without a a community to design for the research risked falling flat as queer people are not a monolith. With the participants, from my own queer network, I gathered stories, photos of objects signalling participants' queerness, and a collective co-creation workshop

"To understand buildings as queer performative acts, and not static preconditions, opens architecture to interpretation and makes it less confined within normative constraints."

(Bonnevier, 2007)



Collage | Queer Islands (author, 2026)

to understand their needs and deisres while giving them decision-making power during the process. While these were part of the process of the project, bureaucratic limitations made it impossible to be included in the output of the research and thus were saly left backstage. Nevertheless, the research distinguishes itself from other architectural research as I put decision-making power in the hands of the participants.

To put this to test, I selected a single building as both case study and design site: Doctor Jan van Bremenstraat 1–3 in Amsterdam Nieuw-West, with Rembrandtpark to the South and the ring road bordering on the West. I chose it because it is a palimpsest of multiple temporal layers:

- As a boys' technical school from 1960 — De 2e Christelijk Lagere Technische School (De LTS)
- As a nightclub from 2016 — De School
- As a queer night club and queer squat from 2025 — Het Huis

In act two I restage these temporalities through a performative analysis conceived through the co-creation materials. My performative reading of space is supported by the analytical framework on the next spread which is based on the triptych theoretical approach in this chapter.

The four quadrants describe distinct but interdependent modes of co-creation, each defined by how people come together and determine their existence. Twelve actions, based on the co-creation process are set out along the quadrants. Following from communal aspect of the architectural question, the field of co-creation modes are set out to a degree of collectivity: person, group and community. Through this analytical framework the reading of space becomes a temporal and affective process, unfolding through different intensities of relation. Through investigating these relations the site becomes a dynamic field in which alternative futures are not only imagined, but rehearsed and partially made present. The analytical framework is represented through the use of the coloured actions. Finally, each analysis relates to another point in time of Munoz' queer temporality vocabulary, degree of collectivity and were conceived through one of the co-creation materials gathered to answer the following sub-questions:

- How does surveillance of homosocial groups produce normative subjects in De LTS?
- How does community monitoring constrain performance in De School?
- How does self-monitoring limit collective unlearning of heteronormativity in Het Huis?

"Knowledge must be situated in community initiatives and intersectional experiences, in inclusive and multidisciplinary pedagogy, and in the constant negotiation of the public space despite precariousness resulting from a neoliberal approach."

(Arquitecturas Colectivas, 2023)



Doctor Jan van Bremenstraat 1-3 (Nieuwe Instituut, 1960)

Exchange

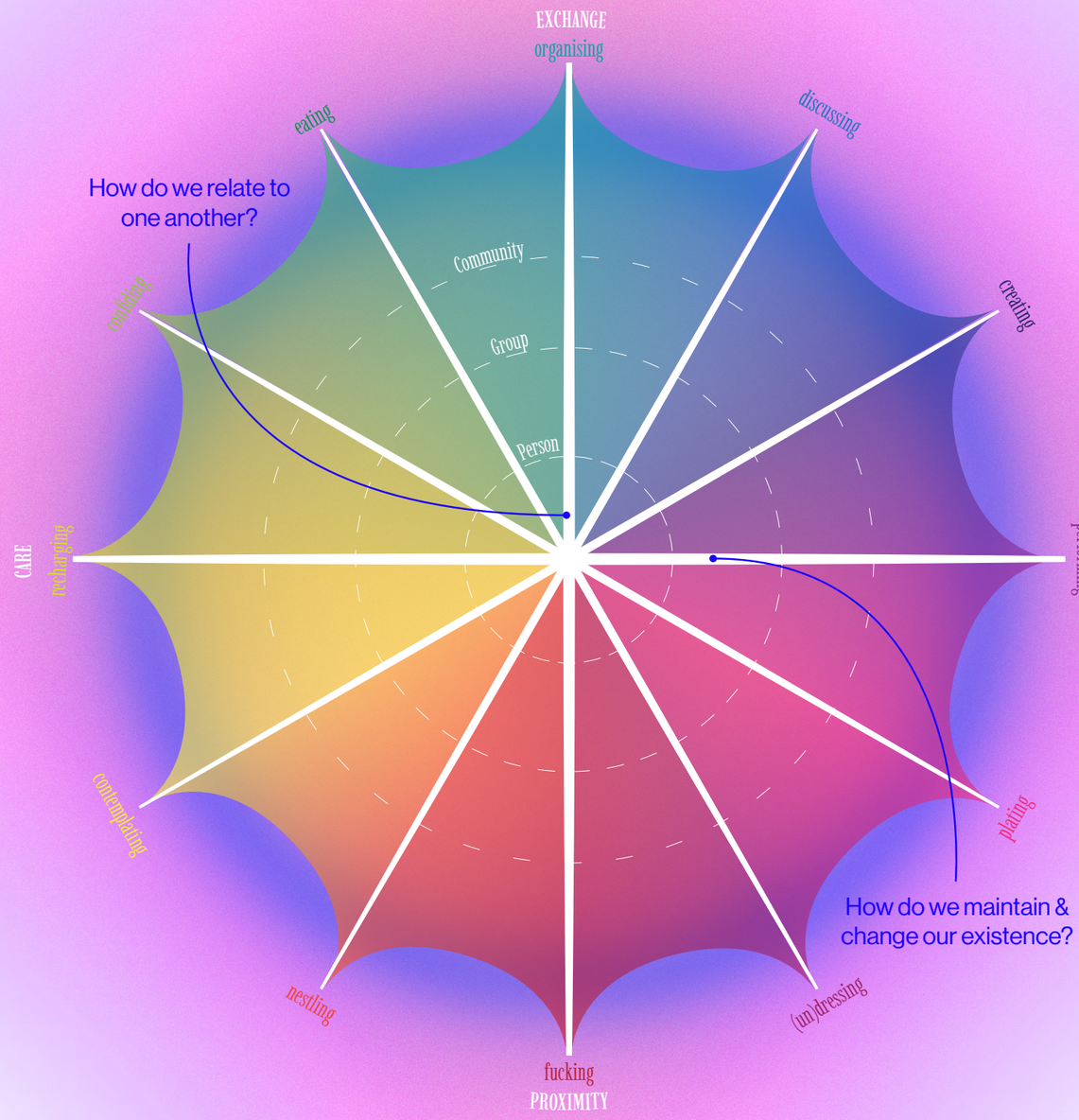
Exchange is the movement of things between bodies: ideas, goods, care and labour. Exchange structures reciprocal and negotiated interactions to stage a performance where relations are enacted and not just co-exist. Exchange is where the utopian glimpse becomes shared, transmitted, amplified and is about actualisation, organisation and mediation.

Exchange + Care
Support infrastructures, such as communal kitchens, tool libraries, or care networks, where acts of support are organized and circulated, making interdependence collective and visible.

Care

Care is the maintenance, support, and reproduction of social life. It is often invisible, durational, and affective and aligns with rest, repair, dependency while resisting efficiency and output but rather values continuity. Care is where utopia is quietly "made-present" through gestures that sustain collectivity. Care is performative through repetition and non-spectacular acts that produce space while stabilising and maintaining time.

Exchange + Production
Collective world-making, exemplified by co-design processes, collaborative building sessions, or organized workshops, where participants actively transform space and relations together.



Proximity + Care
Co-creation based on holding space—seen in shared living rooms, resting areas, or informal commons.They are spaces where people are together without obligation, and trust and continuity can build over time.

Production

Production is the active making, altering, and reconfiguring of space and relations. It is oriented toward change and emergence through experimentation to become something new. Production is where the future is rehearsed, a more explicit staging of the not-yet-here. Space is produced through action, not fixed form while destabalising and accelarating time.

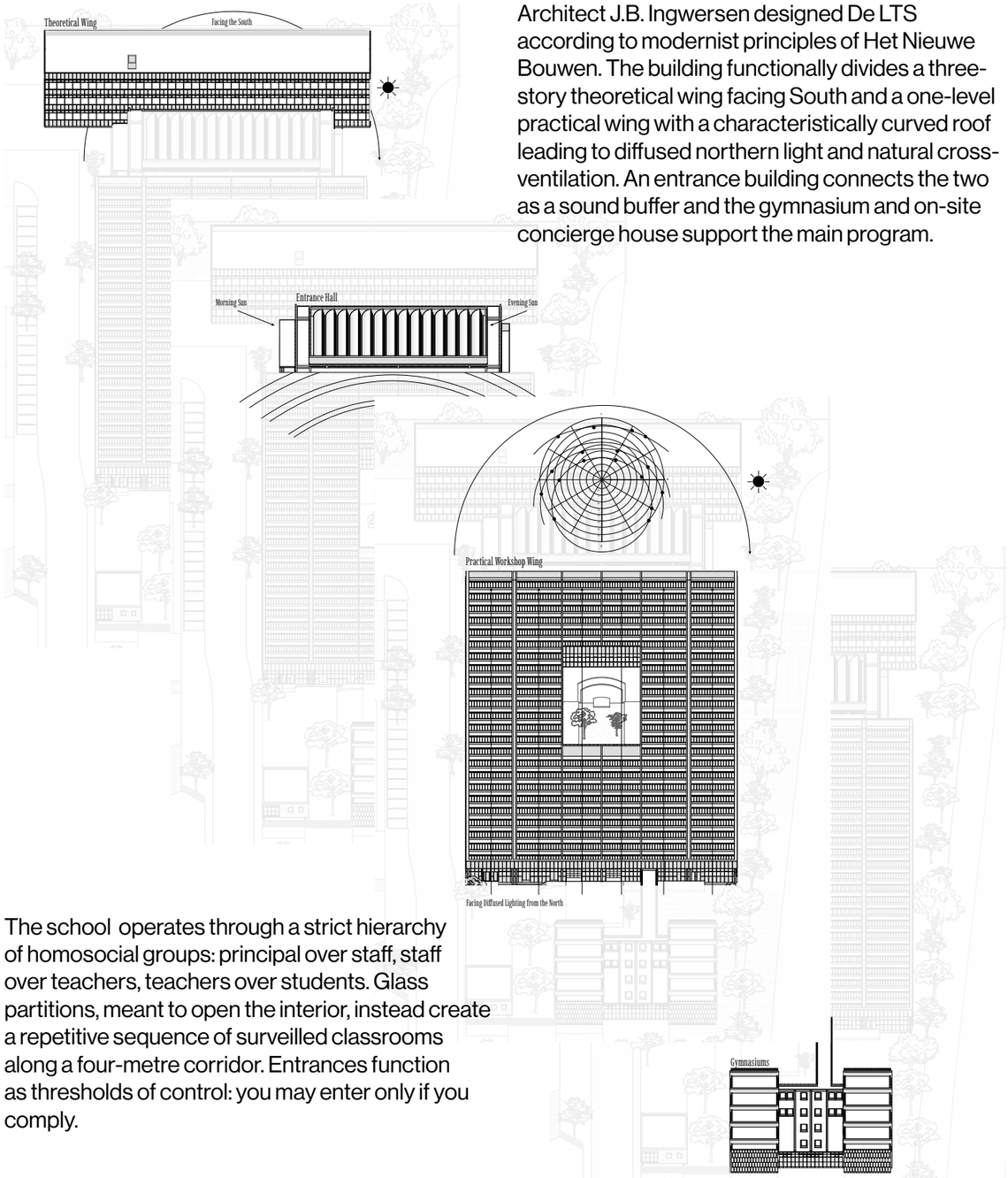
Proximity + Production
Spaces that generate emergent collaboration, like open workshops, spontaneous performances, or appropriatable environments, where co-presence tips into improvisation and making, allowing brief flashes of the "then-and-there" to appear.

Proximity

Proximity is co-presence, immediacy, and relational intensity without necessarily formalized interaction: interaction is latent, not required. It is where bodies share space, atmosphere, attention while enabling affective glimpses of queer futurity before they are articulated. It therefore emphasizes exposure, and friction while implicating potential, messiness and exposure. Space is activated by bodies being together as performance begins with co-presence.

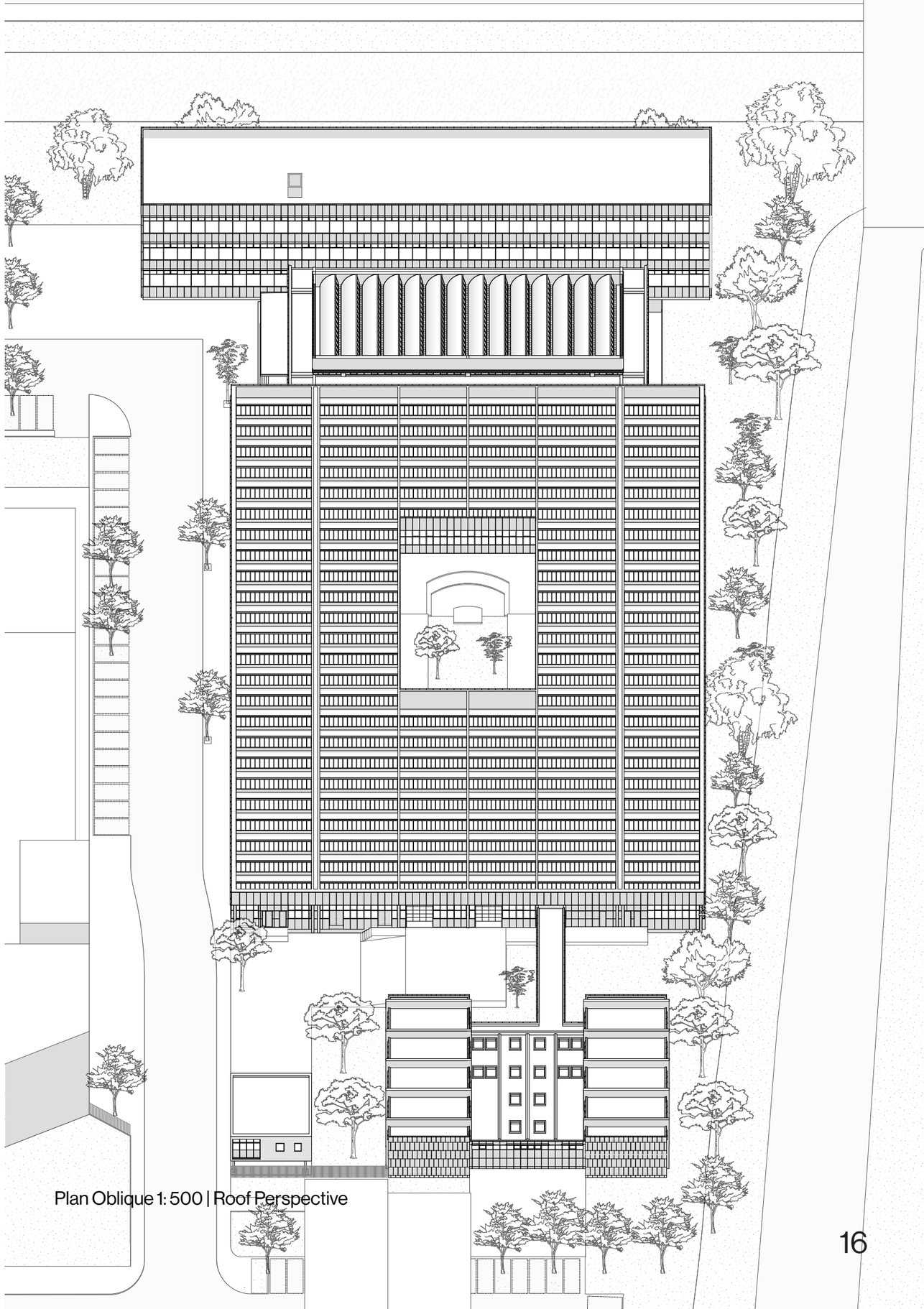
Analysis
de LTS, de School, het Huis

Architect J.B. Ingwersen designed De LTS according to modernist principles of Het Nieuwe Bouwen. The building functionally divides a three-story theoretical wing facing South and a one-level practical wing with a characteristically curved roof leading to diffused northern light and natural cross-ventilation. An entrance building connects the two as a sound buffer and the gymnasium and on-site concierge house support the main program.



The school operates through a strict hierarchy of homosocial groups: principal over staff, staff over teachers, teachers over students. Glass partitions, meant to open the interior, instead create a repetitive sequence of surveilled classrooms along a four-metre corridor. Entrances function as thresholds of control: you may enter only if you comply.

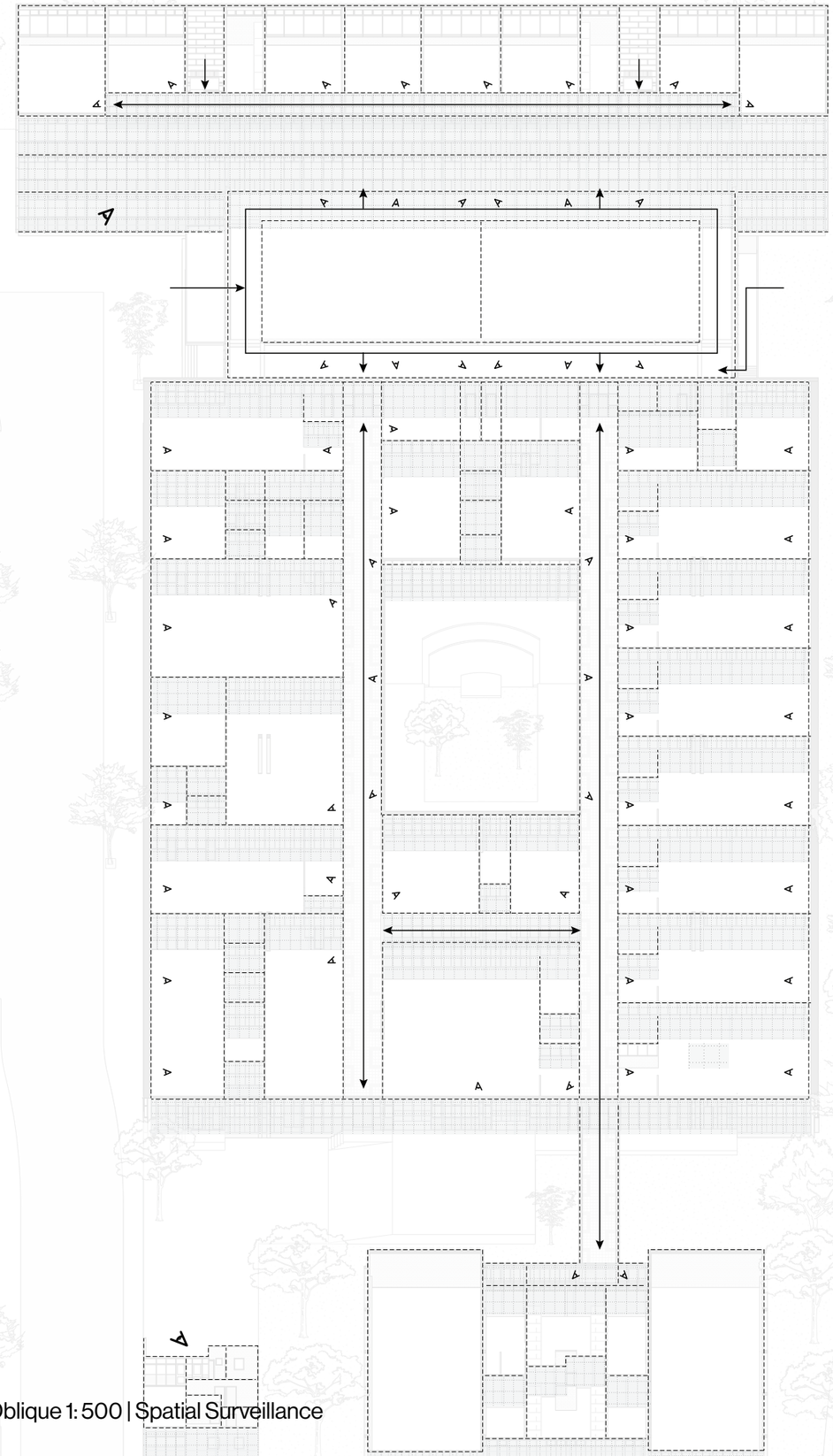
Plan Oblique Modernist Principles in De LTS (1:1250)



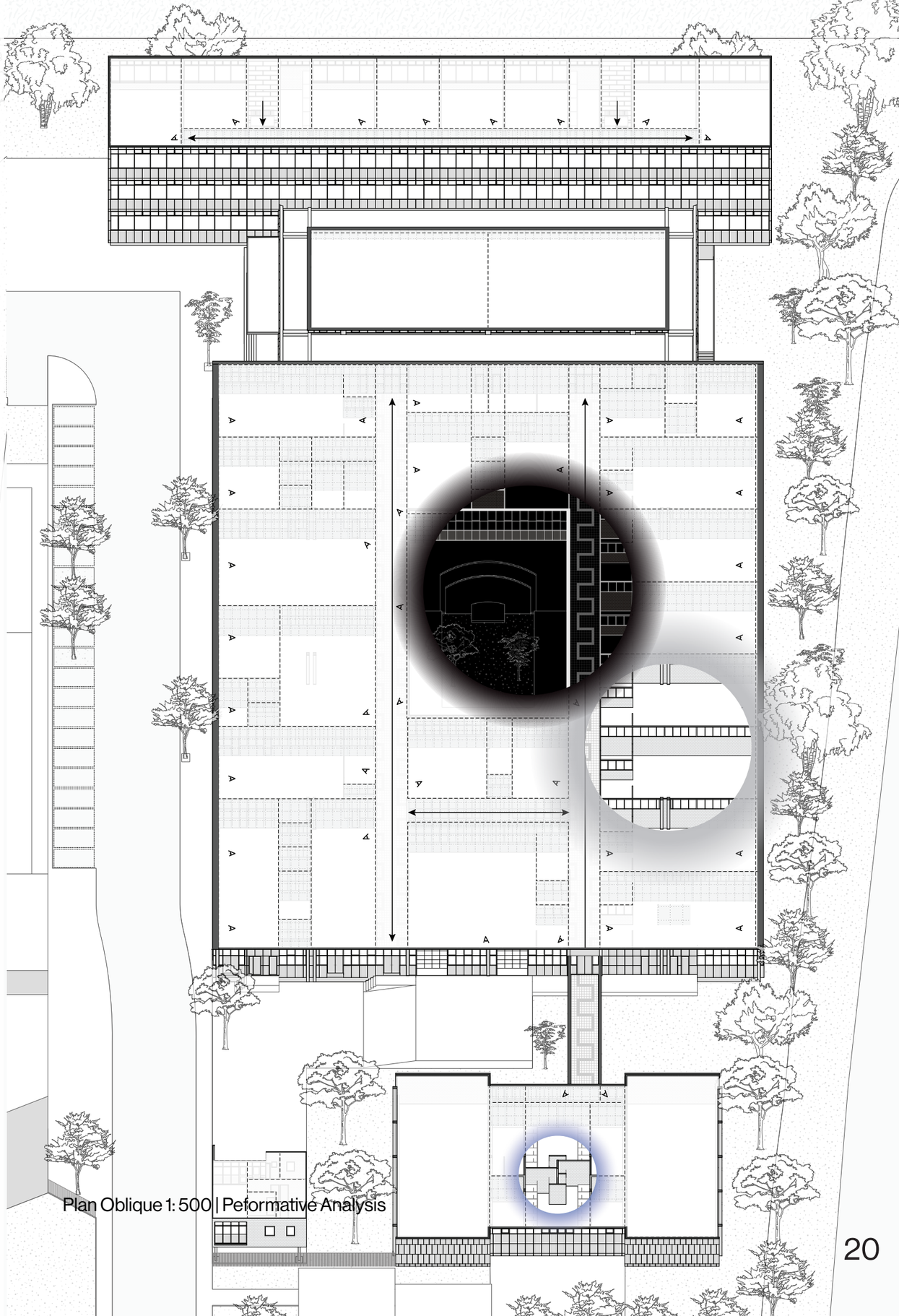
Plan Oblique 1: 500 | Roof Perspective

Site Plan | 1:500

0 5 10 15 20 25



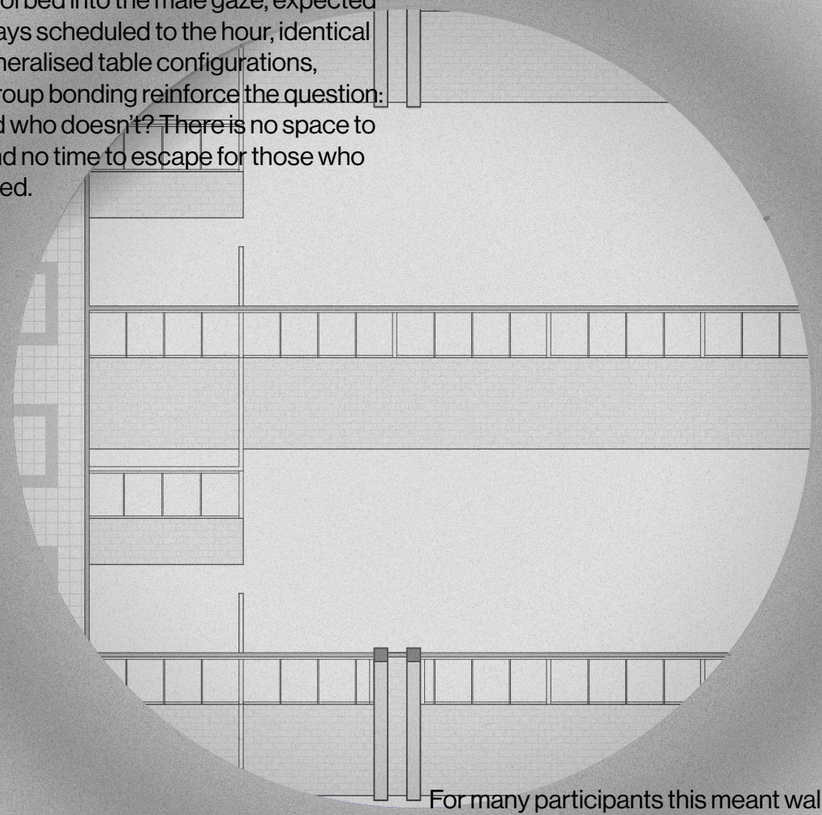
Plan Oblique 1: 500 | Spatial Surveillance



Plan Oblique 1: 500 | Peformative Analysis

De LTS (1960)
no-longer-conscious, group, stories

But let's step inside and disciplinary mechanisms become apparent which answer: How does **surveillance** of homosocial groups produce **normative subjects** in De LTS?. In class, boys learn to become normative subjects: workers ready to enter a male-coded industry. When girls joined, they were absorbed into the male gaze, expected to conform. Days scheduled to the hour, identical workwear, generalised table configurations, homosocial group bonding reinforce the question: who fits in, and who doesn't? There is no space to be different and no time to escape for those who are marginalised.



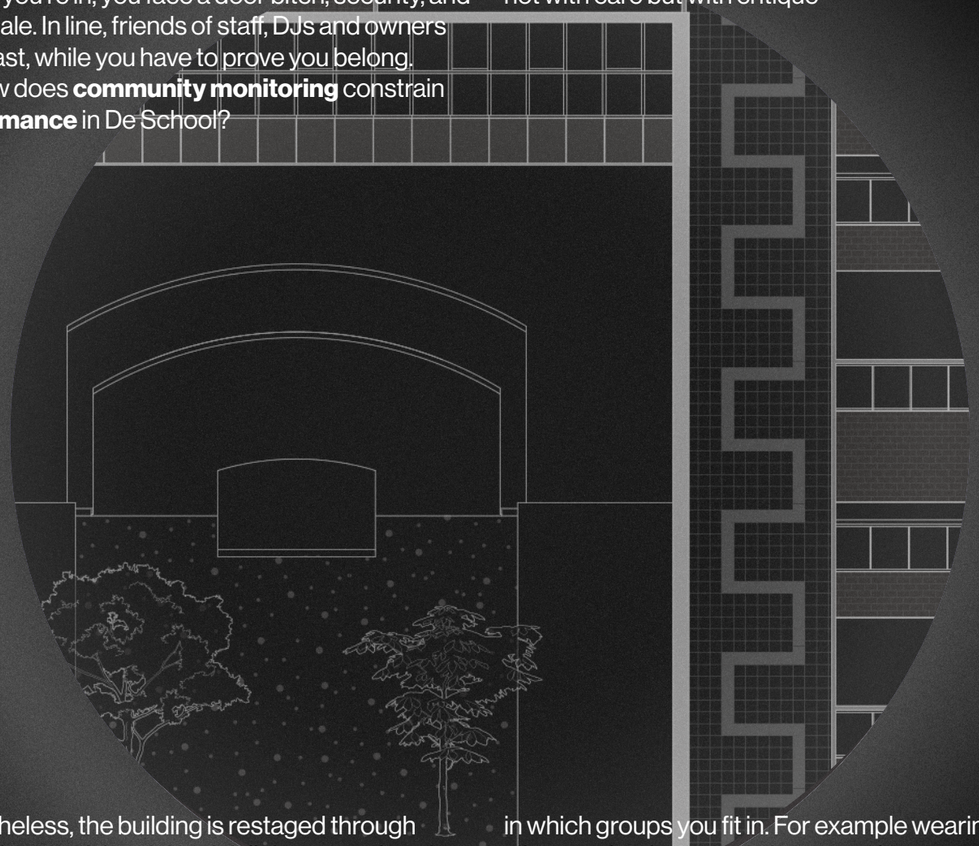
Plan Oblique 1: 150 | Classroom Analysis

For many participants this meant walking on eggshells. Watching every movement. Restricting themselves, always. However now, these memories produce small disruptions of heteronormativity through performances using perfume scents and the clacking sound of their boots. Surveillance enforces homosocial groupings through repeating spatial organisation, uniform material repetition, and rigidly scheduled time. Only one group is included and there is no space for difference. Those who don't conform are taught they are the problem and build up shame and trauma constraining their performances.

Perspective | Classroom Analysis

De School (2016)
making-present, community, pictures

In 2016, De School opened in the same building and quickly became one of the best clubs in the Netherlands. While it was a space many queers experienced as a making-present, it imported its own hierarchies to protect what was inside. Before you're in, you face a door bitch, security, and ticket sale. In line, friends of staff, DJs and owners walk past, while you have to prove you belong. So How does **community monitoring** constrain **performance** in De School?



Nevertheless, the building is restaged through the darkness of the night, club lights, sound, and spatial rearrangement — classrooms become dance floors of proximity, the courtyard becomes a space of exchange, and the corridors become a maze of serendipitous encounters. However, performances are constrained by the ones higher up the social ladder that decide who is according to their standards.

For the images I asked about people's outfits in which they felt queer. It seems personal expression and dressing up is a powerful tool as it determines in which groups you fit in. For example wearing a wig completely changes how people approach you. In De School this can mean you are suddenly elevated in the hierarchy by being the most visibly queer. De School restages De LTS to create alternative performances, but under the new hierarchy, community monitoring produces a new topology where relations are shaped not by how people want to perform, but by what they're expected to perform. To go beyond exclusivity to genuine emancipation, performances need to be co-created communally, with the support of experimentation in personal or group spaces.

While a liberating space producing alternative performances at first glance, the social ladder leads to community monitoring inside as well. Even in the most personal spaces — corners, toilets, darkrooms — community members are watching not with care but with critique

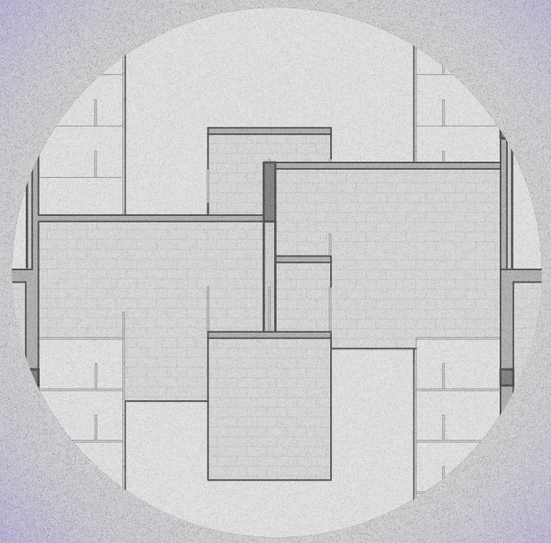
Plan Oblique 1: 150 & Perspective | Garden Analysis

het Huis (2024)

here-and-now, person, workshop

After De School closed in early 2024, some of the organising team of the new queer club Tilla Tec was able to squat some of the space and create a home. I wanted to investigate how we self-monitor even at home, away from an institution or community that watching to answer: How does **self-monitoring** limit collective **unlearning** of heteronormativity in Het Huis?

When we enter our homes, we use a key. We step onto our individual island, to disconnect from the world outside. We hope to hang our straight coats at the door, but the surveillance and group monitoring from our pasts still lives in us and still constrains us.



This is most visible in the most personal spaces. The bathroom is where these intimate performances take place. But even there, a shift in behaviour the moment someone enters, a sudden awareness, reveals the residue of years of living up to others' expectations. While we hope to hang our straight coats at the doom, but the shame from surveillance and group monitoring still lives in us, still constrains. We can manage this alone behind a closed door, there is power in addressing it collectively.

The co-creation workshop made clear participants wanted to disrupt their daily lives through communal intimacies, shared acts that don't stay private. Spaces need to actively push us toward a collective disruption. Co-created performative objects and atmospheres, can restage private acts into communal intimacies. Thus, dismantling surveillance, group and self monitoring requires collective endeavour, not only individual willpower.

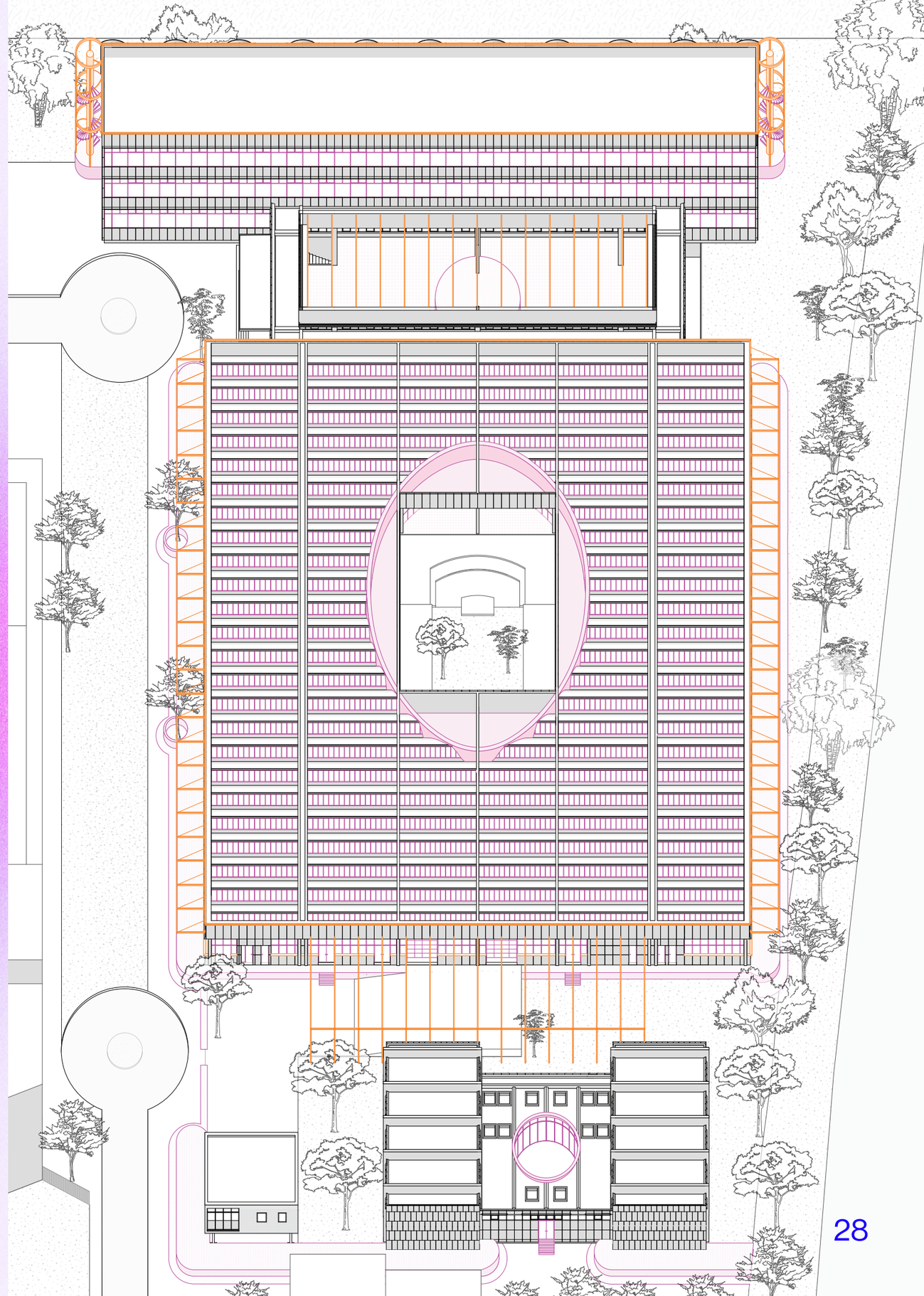
Plan Oblique 1: 100 & Perspective] Bathroom Analysis

A Home on the Horizon
Design Proposal

Following my analytical triptych, the architecture of the Doctor Jan van Bremenstraat 1-3 supports exclusion through diciplinary systems of surveillance, group monitoring and self-monitoring to constrain people into heteronormative performances. Together, the performative reading enlightens on how space can emancipate its queer subjects. *So How can co-creation and performative studies create a **queer(ed) collective home** as a transitory space of emancipation?*

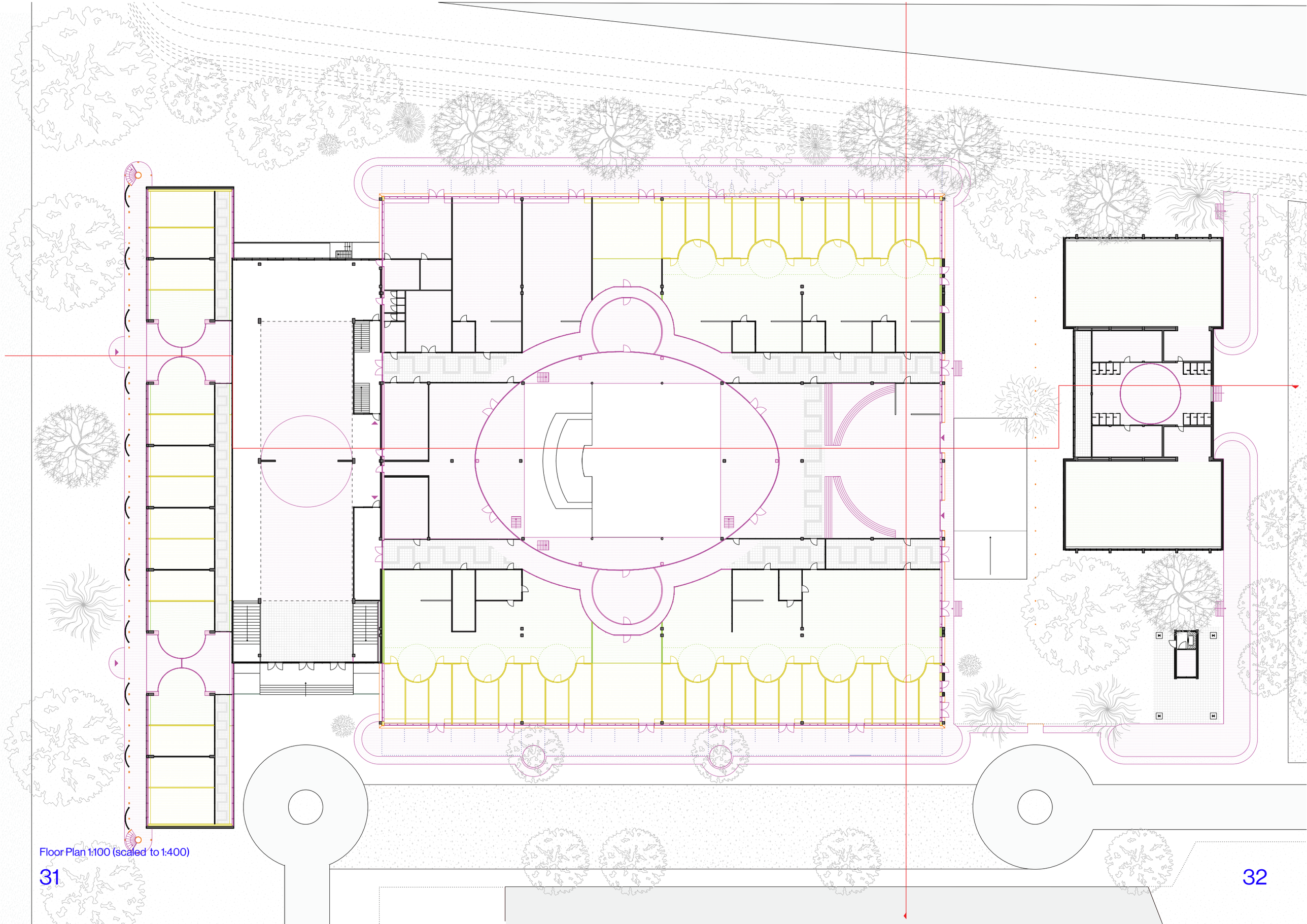
*To **unlearn** repressive hierarchies, architecture needs to be **staged for collective disruption***

Rather than organising the building functionally, I rotate the organisational logic 90 degrees and add a triptych of axes based on the degrees of collectivity. Thresholds become spaces to stay to mediate the axes. The rigid functionalist structure is disrupted by circular interventions in each axis—cut into the existing plan, while simultaneously exposing the palimpsest layers of the building. Old structure becomes visible and atmospheres create friction with the old material conditions: reflecting, unlearning, disrupting the building's conflicting past. Finally, within each axis, residents can change spatial organisation and material conditions how they see fit.



Plan Oblique 1:500 | A Home on the Horizon with roof

Plan Oblique 1:500 | A Home on the Horizon

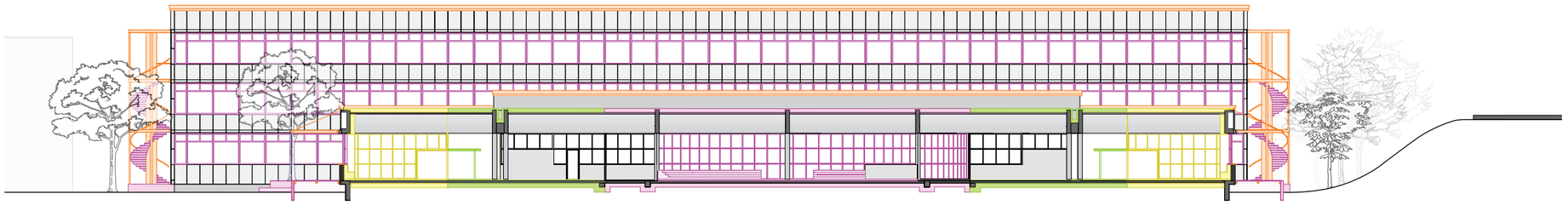


Floor Plan 1:100 (scaled to 1:400)

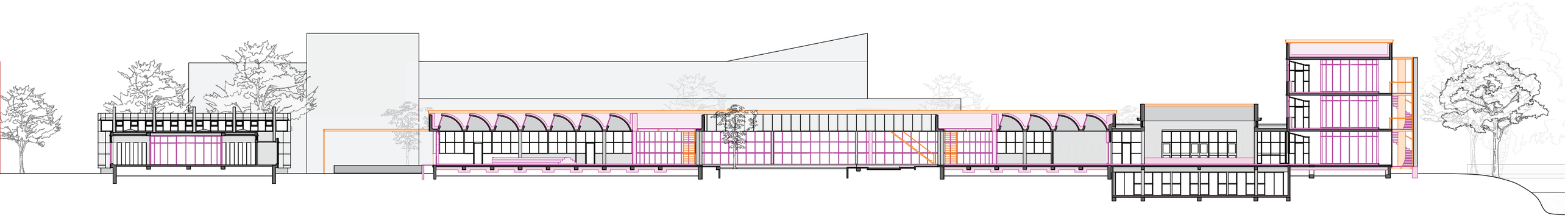
West Elevation 1:100 (scaled to 1:400)



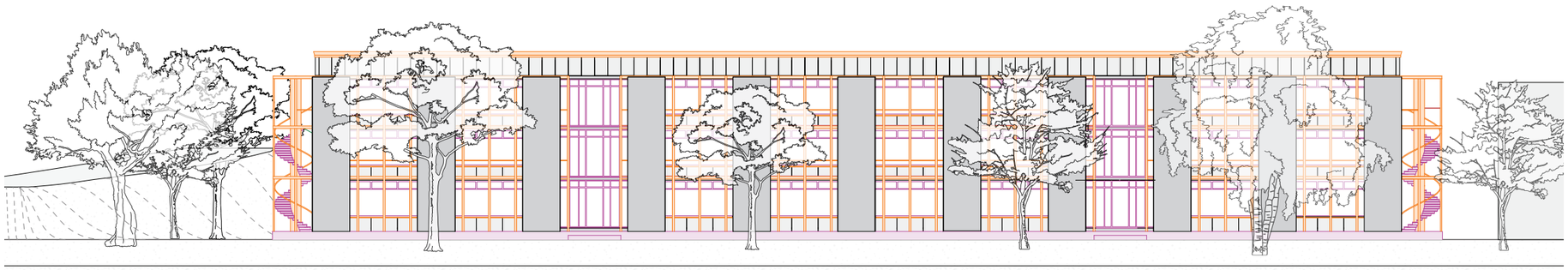
Section A 1:100 (scaled to 1:400)



Section B 1:100 (scaled to 1:400)



South Elevation 1:100 (scaled to 1:400)



Collage | Communal Stages - Entrance

By rotating the original logic of the building and moving the main axis with **communal stages** to the building's centre, the original front and back doors flip. Upon entering through the garage doors, remnants of the former car assemble class room of De LTS you walk into main communal stage where residents just had dinner.

In preparation for a performance tonight, they are reconfiguring the dinner tables to a stage and getting ready in the communal drag closet. As they configure their outfits together, they show them off on the old hallway serving as a catwalk. While dresing up, they also dress up the space with the curtains and lights. More and more people join the evening and while the drag closet becomes emptier, clothes start to pile up everywhere. Where De School's transformation from outside to inside was enforced by a door bitch enforcing a certain performance, here community members are invited to play together.

The spaces on the communal axis queer the building through the performative stages centered around performing, playing, fucking (un)dressing and nestling. The diverse performative objects restage private rituals into the most public space of the home. The co-created and performative space in which you enter structures a queer time and screams for collective disruption and unlearn together. Like the table or the drag closet, you could eat, dress up or perform on your own, but it is so much more fun if you do it together.

After passing the old hallway now filled with creative work spaces, a threshold mediating the communal and group axes, you enter the **infrastructure of desire**. Along this group axis, the design appropriates what exists rather than imposing a new structure. While the old class room material conditions remain and are appropriated into kitchens, seating areas and toilets, hooks, anchors, and supports, lets residents shape the space themselves, over time, together.

In the former class rooms boys learned to become normative subjects while girls conformed to the male gaze. The identical workwear, generalised table configurations and one-fit-wears all atmospheres, are replaced by a field of small spaces adjustable to the desires of the groups living there. It queers the past material conditions, but more importantly helps residents to appropriate the spaces around them as their desires change. This way they are not forced to live following someone else's or the architect's expectation.

Before moving to the fluid personal spaces, circular spaces connected to three personal units mediate the group's connection to the infrastructure of desire. Here curtains are again used in order to signal invitation or seclusion by the group.



Collage | Infrastructure of Group Desire



Collage | Backdoor Curtains and Fluid Personal Spaces

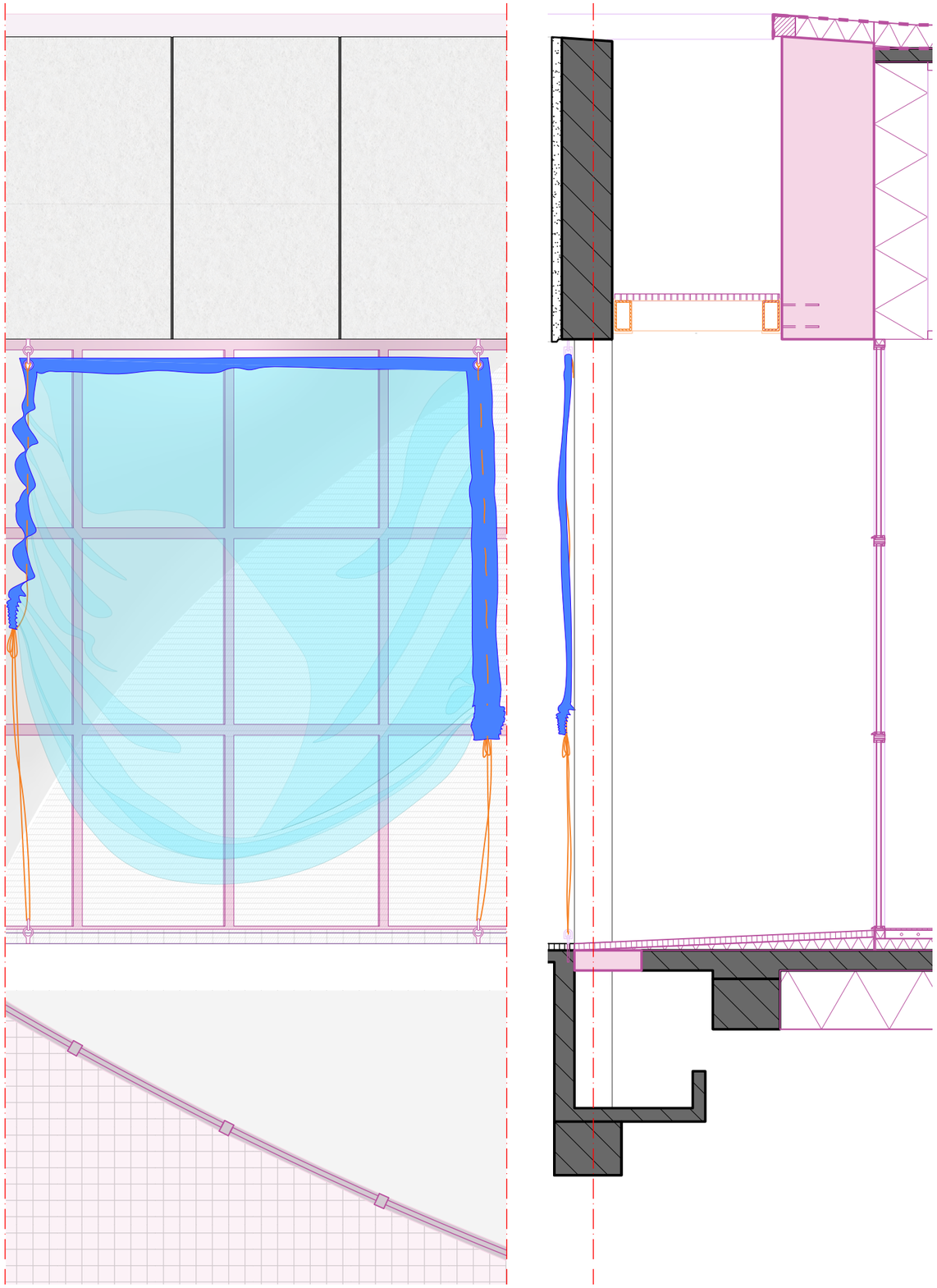
The most private spaces are positioned on the outermost flanks of the building. Modular aluminium frames divide the units, creating the option to combine or seperate personal units to become more group oriented. The fluid personal spaces therefore can change with a changing community and changing relations.

When analysing Het Huis, the door becomes an emancipatory mechanism to perform as we desire but limits these performances to a private space. Traditionally, the public - private binary is a straight line, moving from public spaces to an enclosed private space with the front door as a harsh threshold. A terrace with an open overhang and adjustable curtain in front of the building disrupts the private - public binary in three ways:

- By positioning the fluid personal spaces to the outermost flanks, public space is accessible from both front and back doors, disrupting the straight line of the public - private binary and making it circular.
- By placing the most intimate spaces in view of the public, private rituals are shoved into the faces of a heteronormative public.
- By positioning the curtain four meters away from the facade in front of the terrace, it queers an anti-monitoring measure usually confined to the private and in turn extends the fluid personal spaces outside.

Lastly, this border is kept at a distance by adding a strip of of high vegetation that is one meter wide so outsiders do not simply cross to the terrace. This protection is further enhanced by community gardens where before there was a very wide road.

On the next pages the technological apects are further developed. The Courtyard, with the main structural intervention shows the friction between existing and new elements. But more importantly, disrupts the site's rigid spatial organisation. The details go into this mediation between old and new in more detail while the structural plan oblique does this on a building scale. The climate section shows how the architectural interventions use the modernist principles of air, light and space but add relatively simple interventions like floor heating in order to make the practical workshop classrooms comfortable spaces to walk in and lay on. Finally, the same design strategy is used on the former theoretical wing. This is to show the strategy also works for a more conservative aprroach.



1:20 Section | Courtyard Garden Intervention
(scaled to 1:30)

Roof
Vapour layer
PIR insulation 140 mm
EPDM

Overhang
Aluminum roof edge
Wood support beam
150x150 mm
Anchor 220 mm Ø20
mm
Shim stainless steel
plate 200x200x15 mm
Clevis pin 70 mm Ø10
mm with SC clevis rod

Beam additions
Aluminium panel 20 mm
Stainless steel frames
50x50 mm
Wood wool insulation
280 mm
Air vapour layer

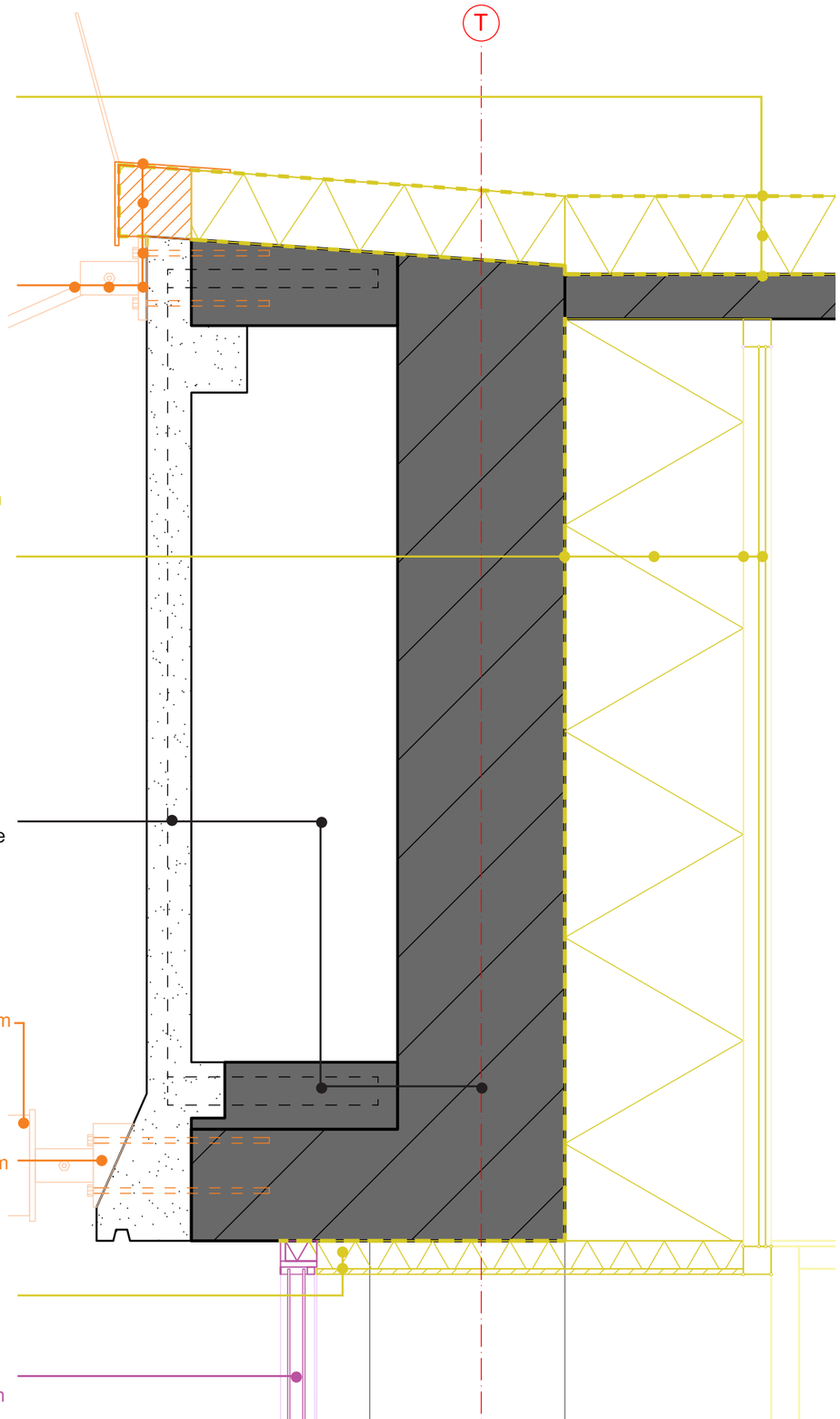
Existing Roof Beam
Prefab concrete beam
300x1800x3000 mm
Cavity 370mm
On site poured concrete
Quartz panel
1000x1800x80 mm

RHS 180×100x3390 mm

Tapered shim stainless
steel plate 200x200 mm
top 72 mm below 6 mm

Kingspan Kooltherm
Insulation board 50 mm
Plywood panel 10 mm

HR++ windows with
aluminum frames 60mm



1:5 Detail | Roof and Overhang Connection
(scaled to 1:10)

HR++ windows with aluminum frames 60mm

Sloped stainless steel windowsill 400mm with wooden support

Existing Wall
Brick 120 mm
Prefab Concrete 120 mm
Quartz panel 1000x1200x60 mm

Wall Additions
Plywood panel 10 mm
Wood wool insulation 280 mm
Air vapour layer

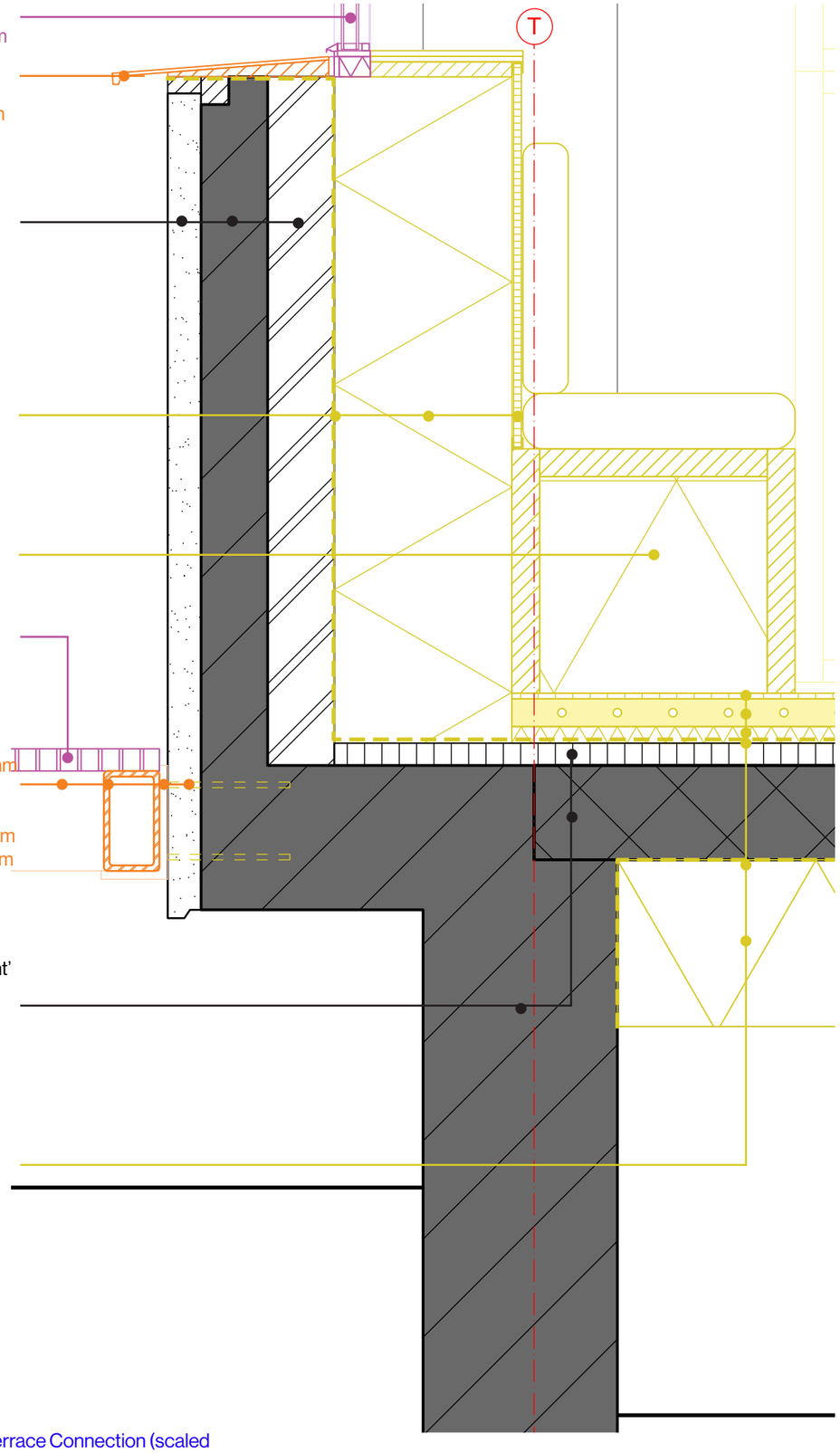
Wood wool insulation 510x440 mm

Stainless steel grating with pink paint 38x1000x2000 mm

Terrace Floor
Anchor 220 mm Ø20 mm
L angle Bracket 200x200x15 mm
RHS 180×100x3000 mm
RHS 180×100x3390 mm

Existing Floor
Ceramic Tiles 40 mm
Prefab 'kwartaalelement' floor 170x500x3000 mm
Prefab concrete foundation 200x1500x 2000 mm

Floor additions
Linoleum Floor 20 mm
Floor heating 50 mm
PIR insulation 30 mm
Air vapour layer
Wood wool insulation 300 mm



1:5 Detail | Floor and Terrace Connection (scaled to 1:10)

Plaster 20 mm

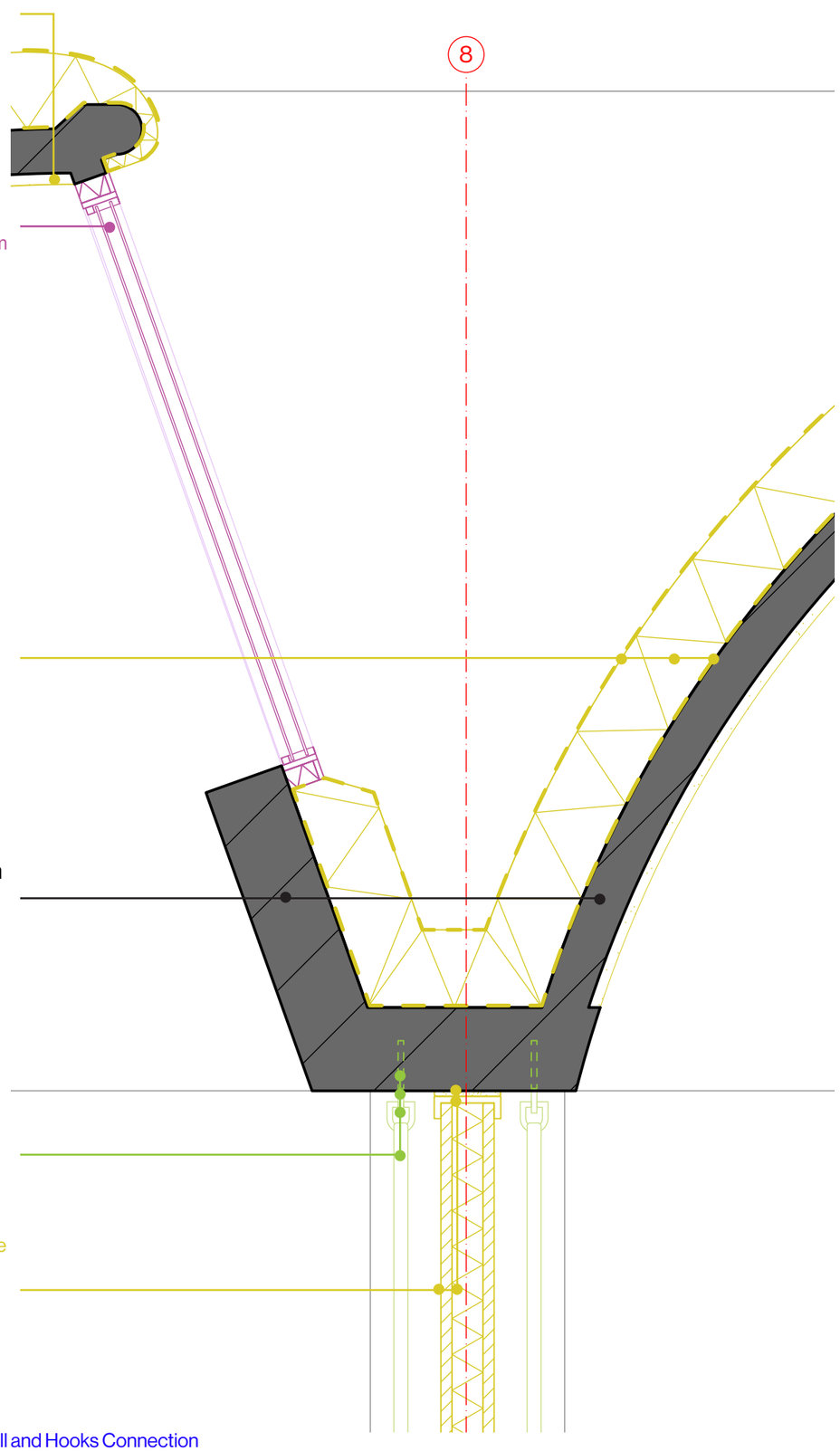
HR++ windows with aluminum frames 60mm

Roof Additions
EPDM
PIR insulation 140 mm
Vapour layer

Existing Roof Beam
Prefab concrete shed roof 145 and 80 mm

Hook Additions
Anchor 75 mm
Stainless steel eye bolt Ø30 mm
Stainless steel D ring Ø50 mm
Ratchet strap 40mm

Modular Wall
Compression foam tape 20 mm
Steel C Stud Frame 120x50x1000 mm
Plywood 20 mm
MLV membrane 56 mm



1:5 Detail | Modular Wall and Hooks Connection (scaled to 1:10)

Conclusion
Discussion, Recommendation, Reflection

A Home on the Horizon creates a transitory space of emancipation by:

Recognising repressive structures from the past
Through a performative reading supported by co-creation, emancipatory mechanisms in the building are created at three degrees of collectivity in a triptych logic.

Queering spatial organisation
Through circular interventions and subverted existing material conditions the diciplinary organisation of the building is disrupted making way for a queer future.

Restaging the spaces for deviating collective practices
Through performative objects and atmospheres straight time is disrupted as the home's community members are pushed to collectively endeavour and co-create the spaces together.

Tom Ward described how housing precarity is precisely a queer issue because it determines if we can live and love without fear of marginalisation. Through this research, I uncovered hierarchies embedded in the built environment, usually unnoticed or underinvestigated by spatial designers. This illuminates to emancipatory mechanisms and in turn to more inclusive housing.

However, the built environment is shaped by heteronormativity: a system of norms that decides which bodies, relationships, and ways of living are considered acceptable. Neoliberal policies have resulted in a building industry and economic system that relies on housing to be for profit instead of a right to all. While this has lead to a whole plethora of problems as David Harvey discusses, it has meant that housing in the Netherlands and globally has become increasingly more cost-efficient and normative.

So to really build homes where queers can live openly it requires an ambitious approach to housing beyond identity and instead takes represive structures like surveillance, group monitoring and self-monitoring seriously during the architectural design proces. Traditional design methods tend to repeat hierarchical, exclusionary structures, because they rely on top-down analysis and program focussed design. But if we want to actually design emancipatory spaces for people and communities, I argue we need to take radical action in changing architectural practice.

While queer theory, grounded in performance theory and co-creation, offers a framework for designing inclusive housing, it more importantly proposes a fundamentally different way of practising architecture. By making repressive structures visible and centering lived experience in the design process, emancipatory mechanism appear. Therefore Gutterman, Manalansan, and Vider (2024) were right to argue that "the strictness of the home's norms makes their disruption all the more certain", as it is exactly **by inspecting the norms, we are able to disrupt them**.

After a spatial reading and enacting architecture, the spaces produced can genuinely transform everyday life. Emancipatory architectural mechanisms with an awareness of these repressive hierarchies, might not lead to immediate change, but over time and experimentation this could change the built environment around us. Moreover, this approach is therfore not exclusive to queer communities. Everyone inhabits a built environment shaped by intersectional hierarchies and experiences levels of repression, as nobody fits into the capitalist box. Some only have a less harder time fitting in. As architects, we have the tools and therefore the responsibility to critically examine how those hierarchies manifest in our work, and in turn dismantle them. I therefore want to zoom into one word of one of the driving quotes of this research:

"My use of queer and mess is not limited to bodies, objects, and desires, but also relates to processes, behaviours, and situations," as it focuses "on the recognition and centring of underrecognized practices, ***stances,*** *and situations that deviate from, resist, or run counter to the workings of normality."*

(Manalansan, 2014)

Queer(ing) is thereforea political stance that would not only benefit queer people's lives. While queer (space) theory gathers ideas from queer perspectives, it is a mentality and an active deviation of heteronormativite hierarchies, just like feminism is an active rejection of patriarchal hierarchies. Therefore, the real power of this project is in the process not so much the design proposal.

The performative reading of the Doctor Jan van Bremenstraat 1–3 uncovered these repressive hierarchies, but it was only possible by the co-creation method. Nevertheless, the limited time of the graduation project only made it possible to conduct one interview per participant and one collective workshop. While this shaped the analyses significantly, it had less impact on the actual design output than I would have liked. For future work it is therefore important to inculde more workshops, across more stages of the design process. I think the method would works best when participants already formed a collective.

Morover, the process could be further enriched if participants have something real to gain. Several early participants withdrew from the process as it was too time-consuming, but more importantly without an immediate stake, commitment was hard to sustain. Consequently, the participant group ended up closer to me and less diverse than originally intended. Architecture faculties with practice-based projects, like at other TU Delft faculties, are well positioned for exactly this.

Reflecting on this process, I actually do not think it possible to explore graduation projects like mine in the future since the graduation was shortened by half a semester. It requires a reorganisation in the master's so that the theoreical approach is finished, while the research is ready to be executed. In my case this would have meant conducting the interviews before the pitch in fifth week of the graduation, while now only our planning is presented.

Furthermore, during the design process I uncovered how far the repressive hierarchies settle in our bodies. The internalisation of surveillance we experience at a young age, leads to group monitoring and self-monitoring even if surveillance mechanisms cannot reach us anymore. This requires an immense amount of unlearning which takes years, or maybe a lifetime. Similarly, I also encountered the need for unlearning in my own approach to the design process.

After seven years of my architectural education at TU Delft, my first impulse was to design the most logical and efficient way. For example, when I immediately started designing programmatically and focussing on the design of the units. Looking back, I feel like I first held onto this familiarity because of the stress I felt during this process. For months I felt on edge that if I did not do the next thing by a certain time it would put me into a difficult position in the end. At first I had to make sure I gathered a group of participants around me for the co-creation process, then I had to do the interviews, and then I had to make sure preliminary drawings were finished for the co-creation workshop. Every part of the process had its hurdles and needed extended time, and in the end as I expected, the design process felt cramped to say the least.

Most importantly, I think the stress I experienced gave me little time to reflect because there was always something 'on the horizon' that felt more important. I understand this lack of time management, and experiene of stress is also on me as it has been a critique in the past. However, I learned this from the culture at TU Delft as in my seven years of education there was only one design course where I was given the space to think, reflect and consider other architectural methods.

I believe this aspect of the architectural desgn practice really constrains the architecture architects design. It is something we need to unlearn as it really impedes the exploration of other ways of designing. I hope to build other projects from this graduation. But before I do this, I want to take the time to reflect.

In conclusion, a restaging of the Doctor Jan van Bremenstraat 1–3 across three temporal moments, supported by co-creation, was able to not simply repeat repressive structures — but create emancipatory spaces. Most excitingly, it gave me the opportunity to meet, spend time with, and better understand a group of wonderful people. They were so generous for what they shared with me and give me the motivation to continue this project and honour them. Only together, was I able to queer the architectural design process and to imagine a design full of the messy processes, behaviours, and situations that disrupt the heteronormative housing system and create a queer collective home.

Bibliography
Appendix I

Amsterdam op de Kaart. (2018, February). Sociale woningbouw in de 19e eeuw. https://amsterdamopdekaart.nl/t/4/Sociale_woningbouw_in_de_19e_eeuw

Ahmed, S. (2006). Queer phenomenology: Orientations, objects, others. Duke University Press.

Avalos, M.A. (2024). Queer Limitrophic Dwelling. GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, 30(1), 448-463.

Bonnevier, K. (2007). Behind straight curtains: Towards a queer feminist theory of architecture. Axl Books.

Butler, J. (1990). Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity. Routledge.

Crespo Claudio, Y. M., Rivera Crespo, O., & Santiago Rodríguez, I. (2023). Co-creating: Arquitecturas Colectivas. In C. Machado e Moura, D. Milián Bernal, E. Restrepo Restrepo, K. Havik, & L. Niculae (Eds.), Repository: 49 methods and assignments for writing urban places (pp. 46–49). nai010 publishers.

Esparza, R. (2024). Communal intimacies: Bringing the domestic into the public. GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, 30(4), 485-503.

Gutterman, L.J. Manalansan, M. F. IV. Vider, S. (2024). A Queer Idea of Home. GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, 30(1), 520,521.

Harvey, D. (2010). The enigma of capital: And the crises of capitalism. Oxford University Press.

Harvey, D. (2012). Rebel cities: From the right to the city to the urban revolution. Verso.

Hofjes in Amsterdam. (n.d.). Hofjes in de Jordaan. Retrieved May 30, 2026, from Hofjes in de Jordaan

López Escrivá, F. (Director). (2005). Hotel Gondolín [Film]. Available on Vimeo at https://vimeo.com/21772489.

Manalansan, M. F. IV. (2014). The “stuff” of archives: Mess, migration, and queer lives. Radical History Review, 2014(120), 94–107. https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2703742

Morgensen, L.M. (2009). Arrival at Home: Radical Faerie Configurations of Sexuality and Place. GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, 15(1), xx-xx. http://dx.doi.org/10.1215/10642684-2008-019

Muñoz, J. E. (2019). Cruising utopia: The then and there of queer futurity (2nd ed.). New York University Press.

Pramuk, L. (2021, March 24). “When I set out to create Fountain, I was reaching for a more intimate and fluid ...” [Instagram post]. Instagram. https://www.instagram.com/p/CNErnV6FNyI/

Platform Wooncoöperaties Amsterdam. (n.d.). Wooncoöperatiepact. Retrieved May 30, 2026, from https://www.pwa.coop/wooncooperatiepact

St. Clair, C. C. (2024). Disgendered: Imagining homeless kinships and futures during the Great Depression. GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, 30(4), 465-484.

Olivier Vallerand. (2020). Unplanned visitors: Queering the ethics and aesthetics of domestic space. McGill-Queen’s University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780228013778

Ward, T. (2022). The politics of queer precarity: queer resistance to rentier-capitalism. Women, Gender & Research, 33(1), 104-111. https://doi.org/10.7146/kkf.v32i1.128082

Willse, C. (2015). The value of homelessness: Managing surplus life in the United States. University of Minnesota Press.

Data Management Checklist
Appendix II

DATA MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

Instruction

This checklist is relevant for all graduation projects of the Master AUBS. The form is intended to highlight common aspects of graduation projects that require particular attention with regard to planning the research and data management. Relevant information and supplementary sources regarding each question are provided below each question.

With this checklist, the faculty wants to avoid that students unexpectedly find themselves in complex and stressful situations, in which ethical or privacy matters and/or other laws and regulations become an issue. In projects involving humans, certain types of data processing increase the risks to the human participants: planning such projects requires additional evaluations and advice from university staff before ethical approval can be received and the project can begin. In the case of a graduation project, obtaining additional advice or permits may delay the project with an extra education period or semester. To avoid this, it is recommended that students set up a graduation project with a low level of risk. Therefore, all students have to check their risk, by completing this checklist before their A1.

The first section of the checklist (A) should be completed by all students, together with their supervisor, during the planning of the graduation project, before the A1. It does not need to be submitted to anyone for review or approval. Please consider questions 1 to 3 carefully in relation to the intended graduation project, and answer with ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

The second section of the checklist (B) should only be completed if the graduation project involves working with data from human participants. In that case, the student and their supervisor must apply for and receive ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) before the project can begin (see the paragraph ‘Explanation and follow-up’ after the questions). The student can submit the application to the HREC, but the supervisor is responsible for making sure that the project is compliant with relevant privacy regulations and ethical policies.

Section A. General considerations	yes	no
1. Is the graduation project conducted as part of an internship (at a company), or as part of a research project at TU Delft? If a student’s graduation project is conducted at a company or as part of a research project at the university, questions of data ownership and intellectual property rights need to be addressed in a written graduation or internship agreement before the project begins. Students and their supervisor should consult the Intellectual Property Rights of Students webpage. Additional information can also be found in the Extended Personal Research Data Workflow.		✓
2. Does the project involve conducting (part of) the research outside the Netherlands? Students who intend to travel abroad (even to other EU countries) for study, exchange, research, internship, or graduation project purposes need to follow the Travel Safety Protocol. This includes attending a mandatory Travel Safety Training Session: see the Disclaimer.		✓
3. Will the research involve processing data from humans, such as running a survey, conducting interviews or workshops, collecting data through social media or internet forums, or re-using existing datasets about humans provided by a third party? (If ‘yes’, see follow-up questions 4 to 13 in Checklist B.) Students who work with data from human participants must complete the next section and apply for and receive ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) before conducting the research.		✓

