

# Public Realm | Rotterdam Lijnbaan

TU Delft | Faculty of Architecture | MSC 3 studio | 2011

Graduation studio  
Lijnbaan Rotterdam  
AR3AP130-1  
2011

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## PREFACE

This publication represents the achievements of our collective and individual research endeavors for the Msc3 Public Realm Rotterdam studio. At the beginning of the semester we were confronted with the urban totality which comprises Rotterdam, after which we gradually became more familiar with the design location's intimacy.

This process was well structured and guided by our tutors through means of literature- and design-studies, group discussions and informal site-visits.

To acknowledge their input, we would hereby like to thank our tutors Susanne Komossa and Nicola Marzot and student-assistant Francesco Cinquini.

We hope and strive to prolong the positive experience of this research-semester to that of the upcoming period which comprises the more design-orientated assignment of our graduation-project.

With kind regards,

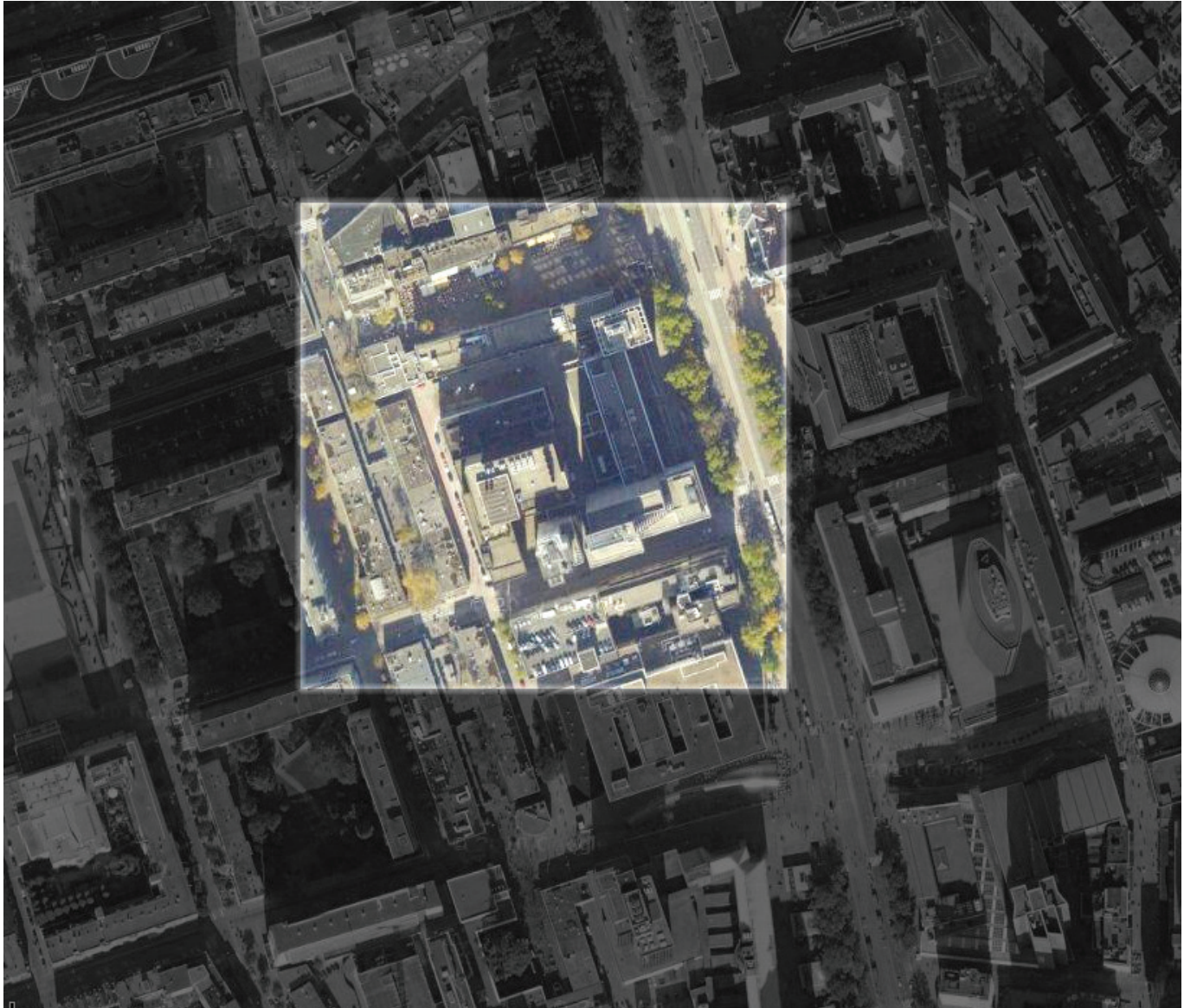
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## ASSIGNMENT

### **Public realm in the Network Society: new programmes and strategies**

In spring term 2011, the research and design studio of Public Realm explores the meaning of public realm in the light of current urban redevelopments occurring in the city centre of Rotterdam. The designated area lies in-between the Lijnbaan and the Coolingsingel, facing Aert van Nesstraat southward and Stadhuisplein northward. It consists of an existing urban block being part of the inner city after war re-structuring in the light of Van den Broek & Bakema Lijnbaan proposal. The building curtain of the block has to be preserved, while the inner core will be demolished, with the unique exception of a small part, listed in the municipality monument to be restructured, lining Sint Lucienstraat. The city municipality has already expressed the intention to densify the Lijnbaankwartier, to attract the so called "creative class", defining an overall framework, which is part of the Studio delivered materials, according to which individual proposals have to fit. Students also had to investigate the most important of them, as inspiring suggestions to criticize and/or develop further: Claus en Kaan Lijnbaan Masterplan, Kees Christiaanse Rotterdam Centre South Overview, OMA Coolingsingel ABN AMRO design etc..

A functional program is also provided, but students are invited to develop different programs based on thorough research and own insights, notwithstanding size and envelop limitations shall be respected. In potential the site can house offices, dwellings and shops but also social-cultural facilities. Mixed programmes and new strategies had to be developed to meet the social, cultural, political and economic problems and needs of the Rotterdam city centre in the 21st century Network Society. Such strategies can involve themes such as a public realm for a diversity of city inhabitants, users and visitors, densification, stacking

of programs offering facilities for specific groups, integrating production and consumption, working and dwelling, and so forth. Innovative concepts and typologies, like the urban hybrid building that address the search for a new public realm and accommodate these new programmes are thus important. Through the analysis of precedents of the 'European ground scraper' and on-site fieldwork should be developed tools in order to understand and address the issue of public realm in relation to actual urban spaces.

The architectural design assignments resulting from these programmes and strategies can involve the public realm on several levels. On the one hand, they may accommodate social, cultural and educational institutions that can function on the level of the city region as a whole. On the other hand, solutions can be generated for local problems, such as the lack of space for the small-scale urban economy in the city centre of Rotterdam. Thus the studio public realm can result in projects and visions on a larger urban scale, as well as in site-specific interventions that take into account the character of the modern Dutch city.

Susanne Komossa  
Nicola Marzot





## VAN DEN BROEK EN BAKEMA'S LIJNBAAN

The name Lijnbaan, a ropewalk, originated from the historical function of the street, as it was facilitating a rope factory between 1667 and 1845. Halfway the 19th century, the urbanization of Rotterdam started; the rope factory disappeared through the shifting of functions. The area steadily changed into an area built up as an ensemble of closed building blocks. The southern part of the Lijnbaan area facilitated a hospital.

In 1940 the centre of Rotterdam was destructed by the major bombardment of World War II. The hart of the city burnt down to the ground. After removal of the debris, all was left was an empty plain. Only a few buildings had survived, like the majestic City Hall and the Post Office, both located on the Coolsingel.

After the World War, the reconstruction of Rotterdam began. The architects Van den Broek and Bakema designed the Lijnbaan area, an ensemble of a shopping street with large apartment buildings on its side. The shopping street gained international attention at its opening in 1953, since it was a traffic free pedestrian zone in the middle of a city centre.

The Lijnbaan is a long and straight street, starting north at the office area at Weena and ending in the south at the Binnenwegplein. Nowadays the Lijnbaan facilitates mainstream stores and brands, mostly fashion based. On its sides are main public spaces of Rotterdam, for example the Schouwburgplein hosting the main city theaters, and the Beurstraverse, a shopping passage passing the Coolsingel underneath. The Lijnbaan is not only a well functioning shopping street and connecting element in the city, it also is one of the main icons of the architecture of the reconstruction in the Netherlands, therefore the shopping street has become a national monument.



Lijnbaan Rotterdam  
Image from <http://www.nielsvanhout2.blogspot.com/>



Lijnbaan Rotterdam in construction 1955  
Image from <http://bbst.thuisbak.nl/coppermine/displayimage.php?album=14&pos=1360>



Lijnbaan Rotterdam 1973  
Image from <http://bbst.thuisbak.nl/coppermine/displayimage.php?album=14&pos=1357>



## RESEARCH THEMES OF THE GROUPS

### RESEARCH ON ROTTERDAM AS EVENT CITY

*Erik de Haan and Vissarion Naoum*

The subject of this research is the small-scale, spontaneous event in Rotterdam. It implements new ways (via online media such as Facebook and Twitter) of measuring the popularity of places in the city during any period, especially on the short term. The gathered data renders clear the frequent visited places and its visitor numbers.

### PUBLIC SPACE AS FACILITATOR OF LEISURE ACTIVITIES

*Bob Blom, Dirk de Groot and Jelle van Vliet*

This research focuses on the different forms of public space dedicated to (commercial) leisure. The urban void as experienced through the perspective of the user is the object of interest. By researching several typologies, this experience, in turn, will inform the resulting design for the master-plan.

### MULTICULTURAL LIFE IN THE CONTEMPORARY CITY

*Aad Demenint, Kim Peeters and Michael Schuurman*

By examining the demography of the city on the general use of public life activities, the research focuses on finding differences and similarities between the four largest ethnic cultures in the city of Rotterdam. The outcome of the research is used to create a program that will be used by all ethnic cultures collectively to enhance social interaction.

### SML

*Roxsen Schwengle and Petty Tang*

"The Clubbing Project" is focusing on all sorts of events in the city of Rotterdam. Collecting data of the events and organizing them in a timeline and map to create a clear overview by season, duration, cost, target, ethnicity, visitors, genre, platform and location, gives a clear overview on the large amount of differing events and the interrelating sub categorization. By

translating the conclusion of the research topic into a concept, they realize a scala of platforms on the given location.

### FRAGMENTED SPACE

*Florian Nugteren and Wing Jim Yick*

The mixture of different places and atmospheres is one of the most characteristic aspects for the city of Rotterdam. By analyzing the fragments with different research strategies a better understanding of the coherency of the city can be found. This research is mainly focused on the physical aspects. The conclusion of the research is used as a basis for the urban scenario and the master-plan.

### MEET IN HETEROTOPIA

*Gretha Kuurstra and Chen-I Wu*

By studying density through time and by investigating the physical settings of the environment, the research brought two different conditions: Heterotopia and Isotopia. By investigating the site mechanism, the groups to target and the programs that should be inserted are identified, in order to facilitate the Lijnbaan area.





# Rotterdam Event City.

The small scale spontaneous event in Rotterdam

## Research

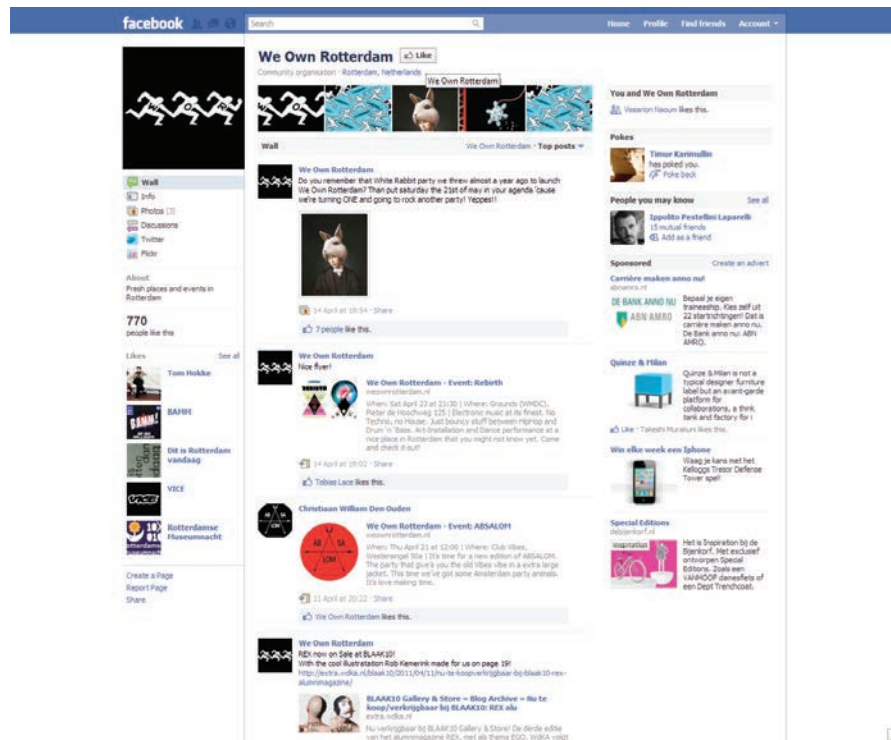
Erik De Haan | Vissarion Naoum

## ROTTERDAM EVENT CITY

### 1 Research theme

This analysis of Rotterdam is an effort to map social events in Rotterdam by using social media. We have tried to map small-scale, informal events instead of the large, well-known and widely published events. Larger events are easier to track because to receive larger media coverage and are already known to the public. They take place on a regular term, usually in the same place and over the years they became parts of the collective domain. However, these large events happen only once per year. They have a large impact during a few days, attracting large crowds and then disappear again. They make use of parks, theaters, roads, the river or other urban infrastructure that is used for other means during most of the year. They are a form of city branding, putting Rotterdam for a moment in the spotlight. They do not necessarily relate to the context or the character of the city and its inhabitants. For example, an event such as Rotterdam city racing, in which F1 cars drive through the city center, or the Red Bull Air Race are phenomena that appear in many cities around the globe, as a sort of chain events.

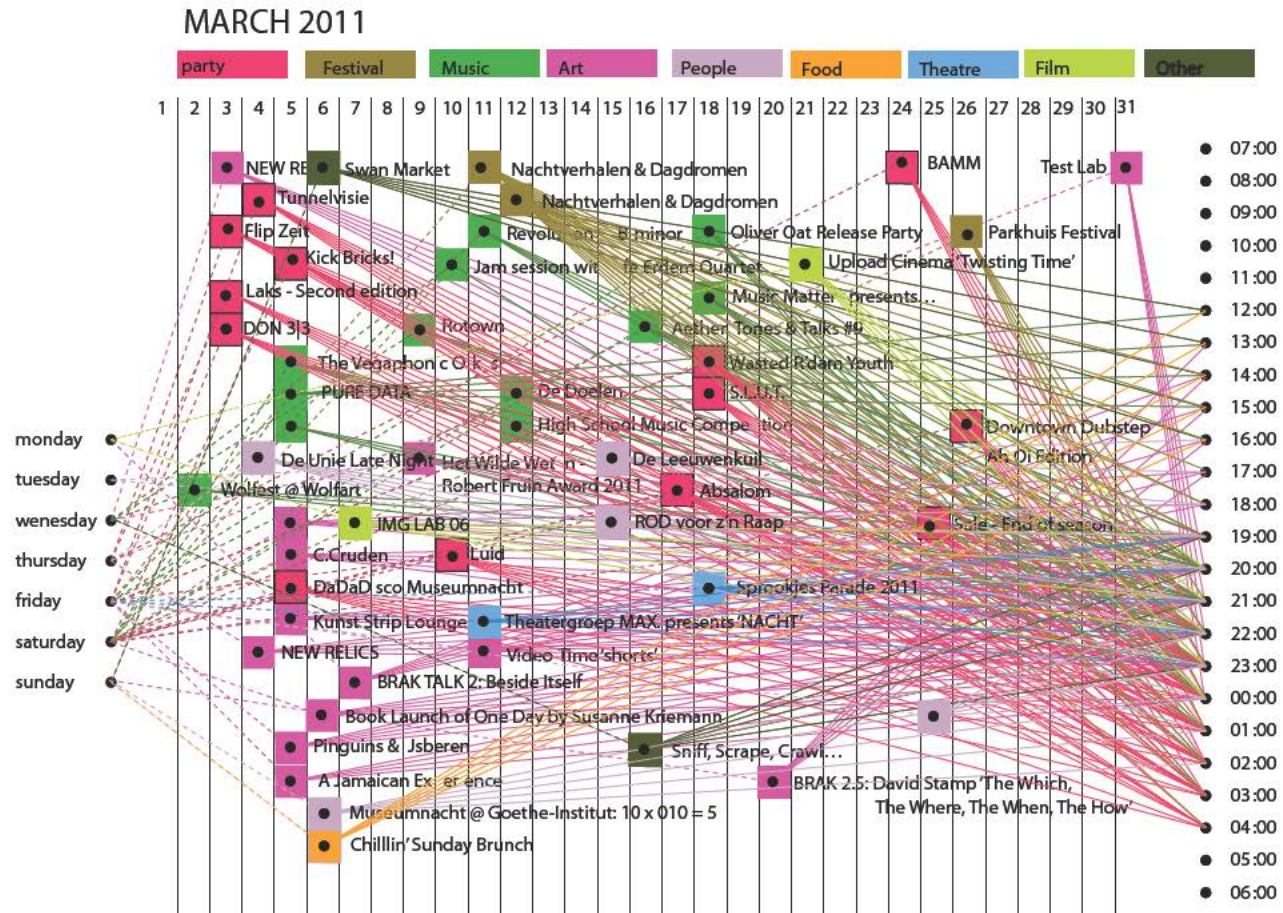
The subject of our research is the small-scale, spontaneous event in Rotterdam. Because of the infor-



mal character of these events, they are more difficult to map. They appear suddenly and last for only a short period of time. To map these events, we applied social media. Twitter, Facebook and websites such as We Own Rotterdam, are good tools to register what happens on specific moments at specific places. Traditional media such as television, newspapers, billboards, posters, etc. are too slow to react on and promote events that happen on the very same day. Facebook and Twitter on the other hand can be used to promote an event that will take place on a very short term, requiring almost no preparation, no

financial means and no more than one person to post the event online. The online communities then further transmit the information to those who are interested. They offer a bottom up approach where everybody can start to promote an event without any help from professionals, which would clearly be too costly in many cases.

This research shows new ways to measure the popularity of places in the city during any period, especially on the short term. On Facebook and Twitter one can see the amount of like or followers, representing interested in a certain event, or



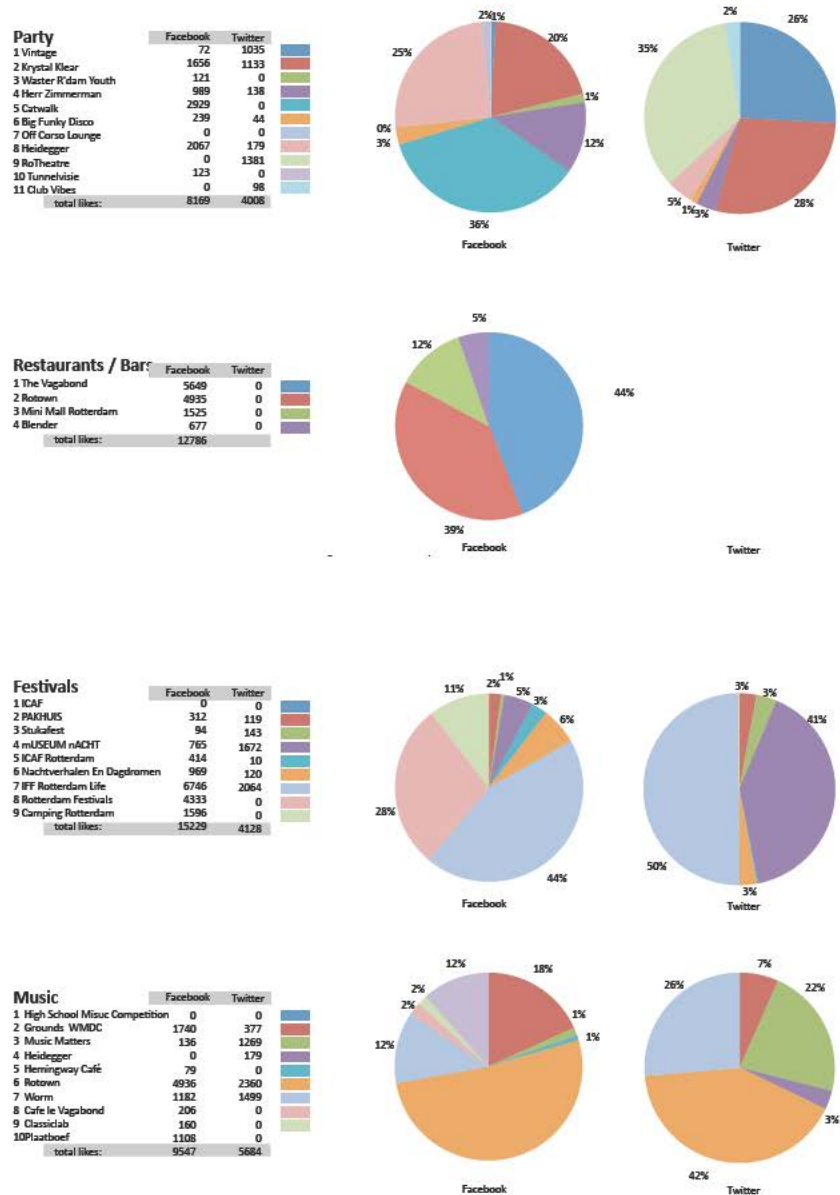
a place. Putting all the information together helps to map where people go during certain times of the day, and how many they are. Comparing the places that are found on the maps from the tourist information office with the mapping of events on social media shows that social media are a good instrument to map the nightlife, where the

tourist information map shows information about museums, shops, restaurants, etc. which are already known, rather than putting to ones attention the more unstable, spontaneous events.

## 2 Approach

Since the events we want to map have an informal character and they happen on irregular terms at different places, traditional tools are not enough to provide the information to map them. However, social media proved to be a good tool to map them, because they offer the possibility to display any event, regardless the size, place, financial means or any other factor that could restrict the flow of information. On the one hand, any person can start an event here. On the other hand, anyone can sign up to an event and thus receive information about that event or invite his friends. By mapping the amount of people who sign up to an event (on Facebook: likes, on Twitter: followers) one can get an estimation of the popularity of that event. This is not the same as the number of people who attend that event, because often people decide not to go in the end, but it gives at least an idea about the amount of people who are interested in that event and the more people know about it, the more will possibly attend.

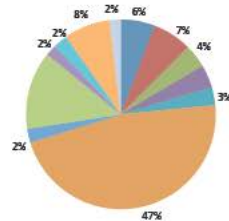
The events that we found this way are much smaller than the well-known, large events that are organized in Rotterdam. We then marked these new events on the map of Rotterdam to see where they take place. Also, we divided them by the time of day they appear, for example during the day,



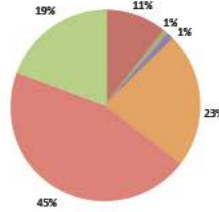


### Art

	Facebook	Twitter
1 De Zwanke Ruyter	835	0
2 VZ	952	388
3 DOWN ARTS	572	29
4 Duende Studies	555	44
5 Hommes	435	0
6 WDW Centrum (Witte de With)	6678	832
7 WDKA	332	0
8 IsWorks	0	1644
9 Tent Rotterdam	1907	709
10 Cafe IEZ	261	0
11 Galerie Iris Cornelis	356	0
12 Architecture Biennale	1121	0
total likes:	14004	3646



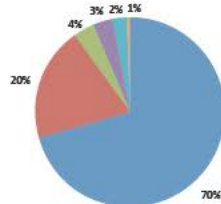
Facebook



Twitter

### Websites

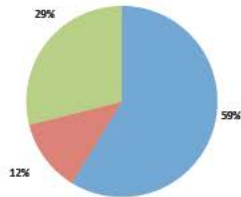
	Facebook	Twitter
1 Rotterdam Terror Corps	11651	0
2 Creatief Rotterdam	3212	0
3 RPMCartel	593	0
4 We own Rotterdam	533	0
5 Rotterdam Life	440	0
6 3voor12 Rotterdam	56	0
total likes:	16485	0



Facebook

### People

	Facebook	Twitter
1 Humebisten	340	0
2 nur iteratur	71	0
3 De Unie	167	0
total likes:	578	0



### Arch. and Design

	Facebook	Twitter
MVRDV	4980	0
Rem Koolhaas	3401	0
total likes:	8381	0

### Local Communities

	Facebook	Twitter
Greeks of Rotterdam	554	0

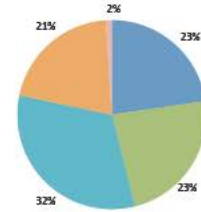
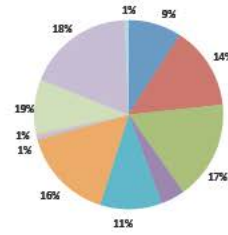
### Exhibitions

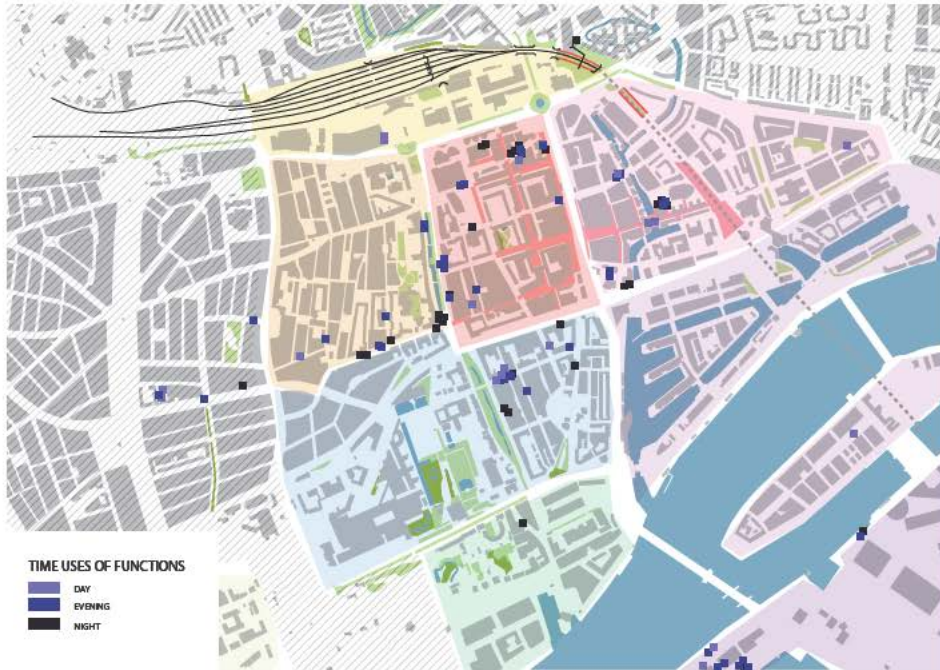
	Facebook	Twitter
TENT Rotterdam	1908	0
Kunsthall	1745	0
total likes:	3653	0

TheaterGroep Max	306	179
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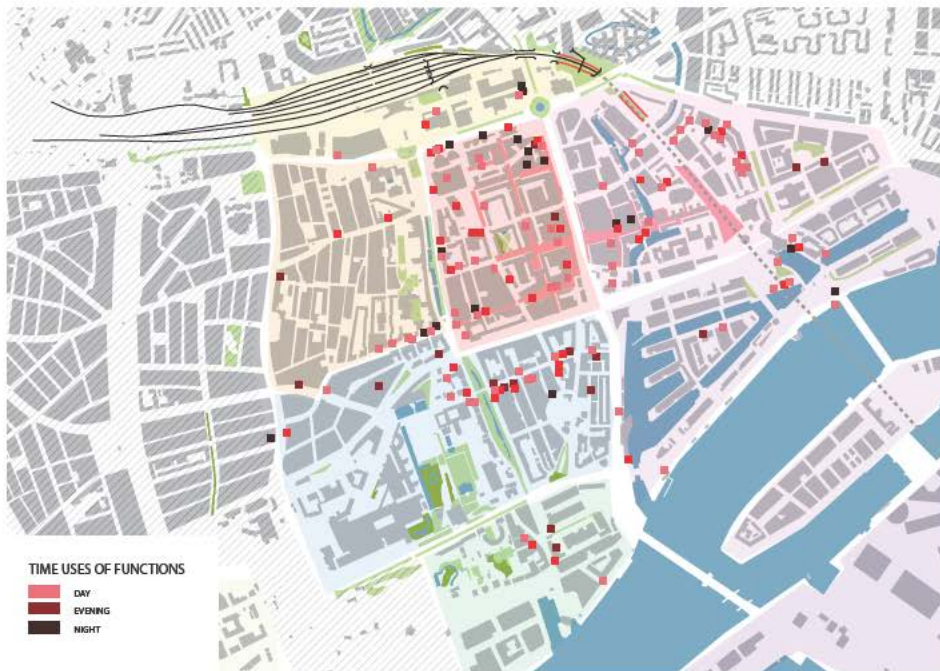
in the evening or at night. With this information we can create a map of the city that shows the events during different times of the day to see which parts of the city are more activated. We also made diagrams to show the relative popularity of different activities such as art, bars, restaurants, exhibitions, etc and to compare the popularity of certain places within these domains.

TOTAL		
	Facebook	Twitter
1 PARTY	8196	4008
2 Restaurants/Bars	12786	0
3 Festival	15229	4128
4 Exhibition	3653	0
5 Music	9547	5684
6 Art	14279	3646
7 People	578	0
8 Theatre	306	179
9 Architecture and Design	8381	0
10 Websites	16485	0
11 Local Communities	554	0
total files:	89994	17645



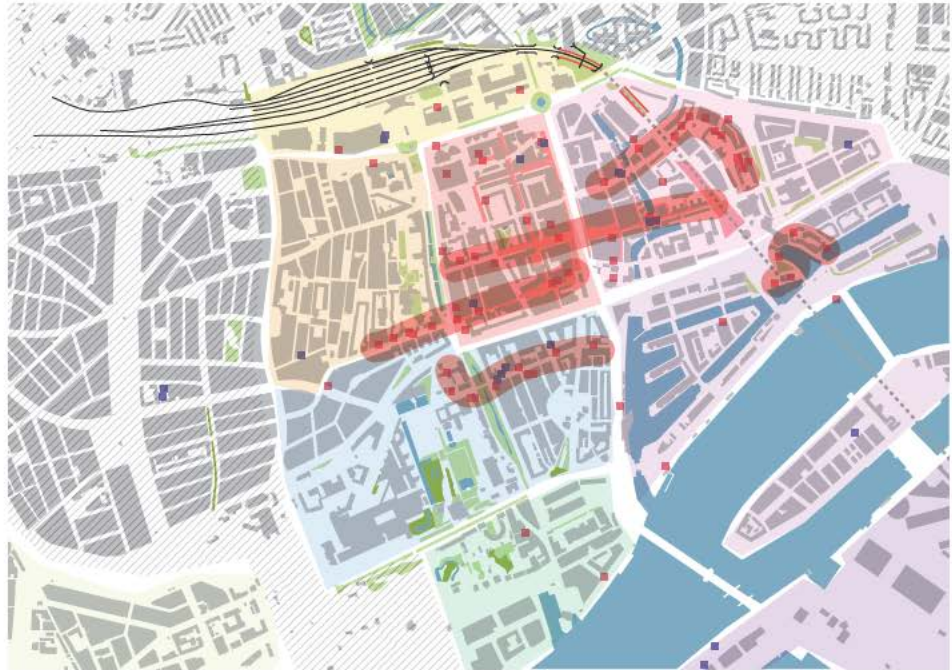


Events according to Facebook and Twitter



Places according to the tourist information guide

Most activated places during day

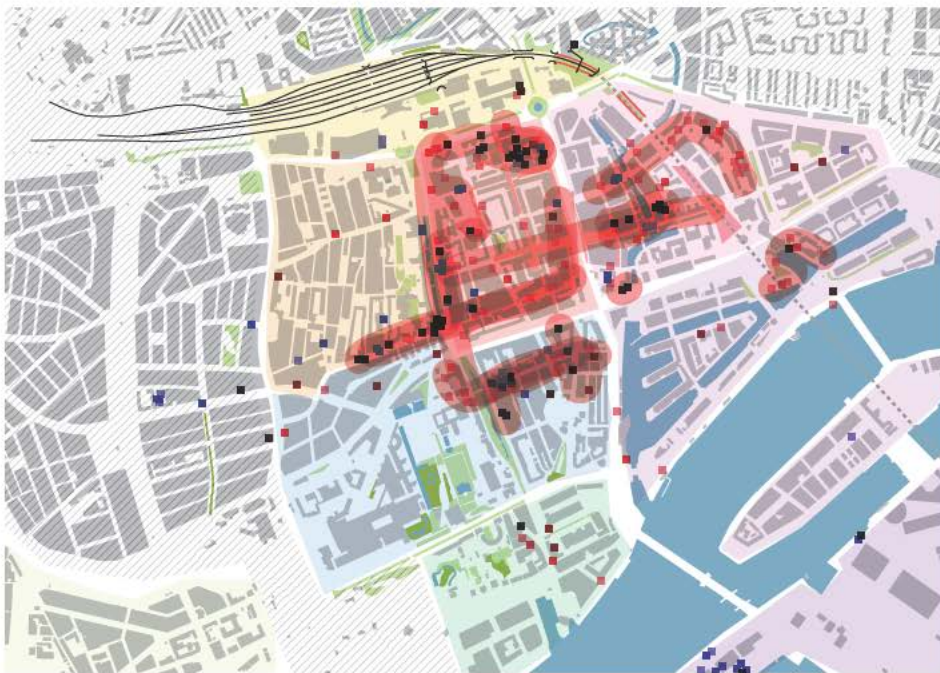


Most activated places during evening

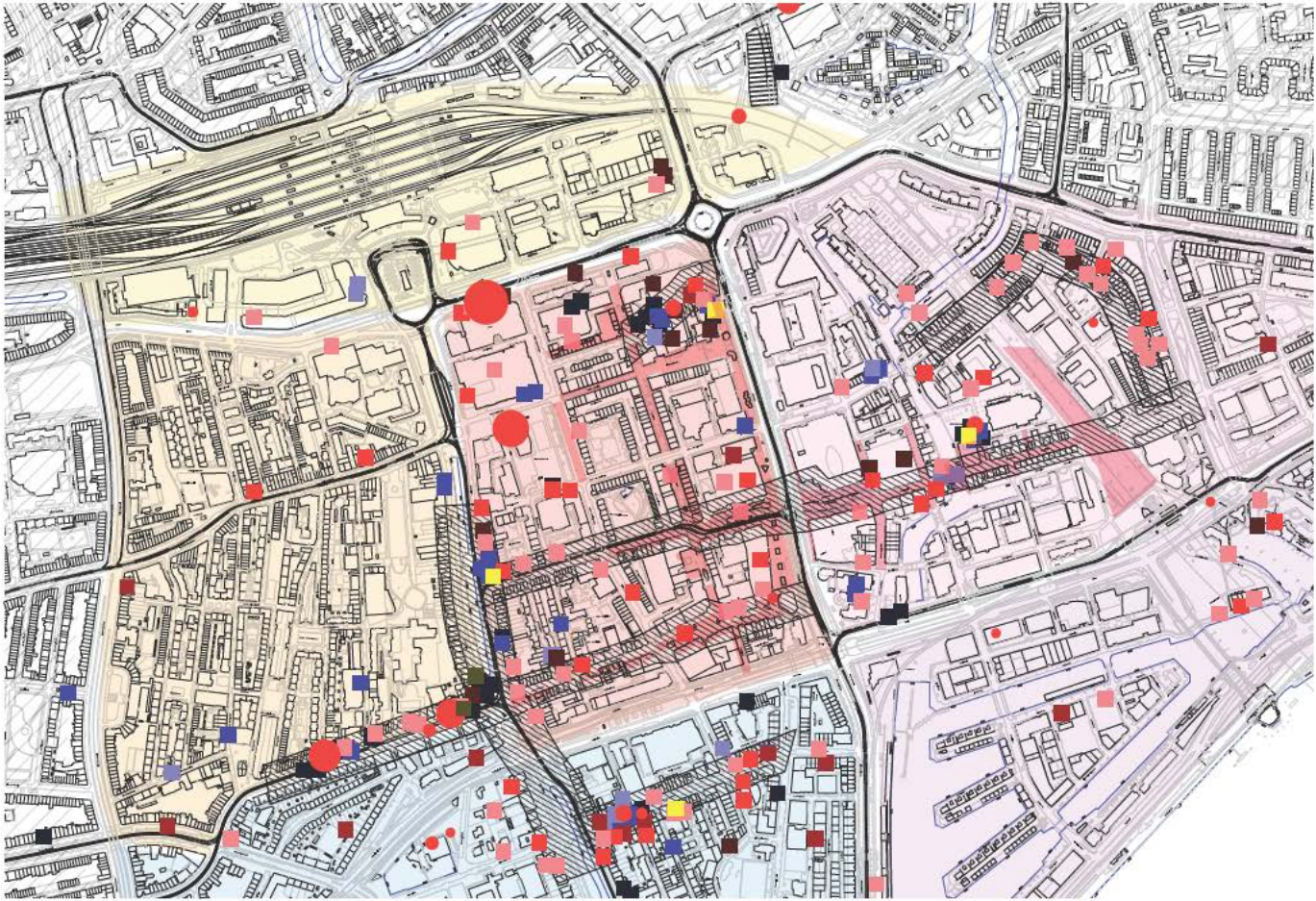




Most activated places during night



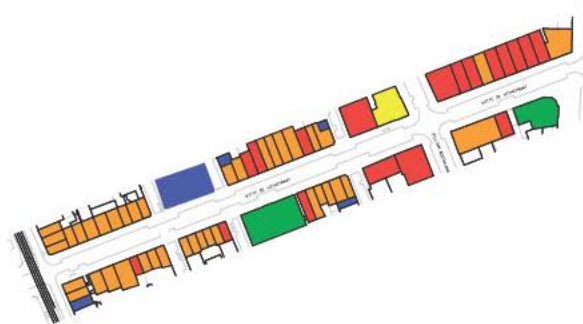
Most activated places during day, evening and night combined



Most activated streets in Rotterdam

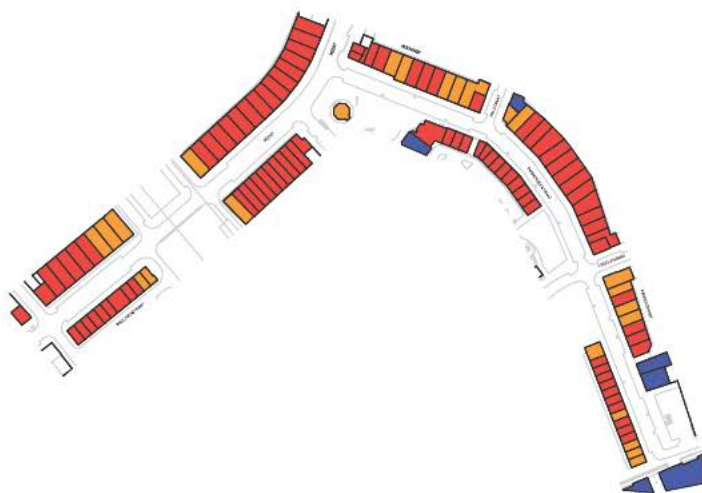
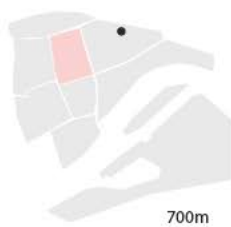
## Witte de Withstraat

1:2000



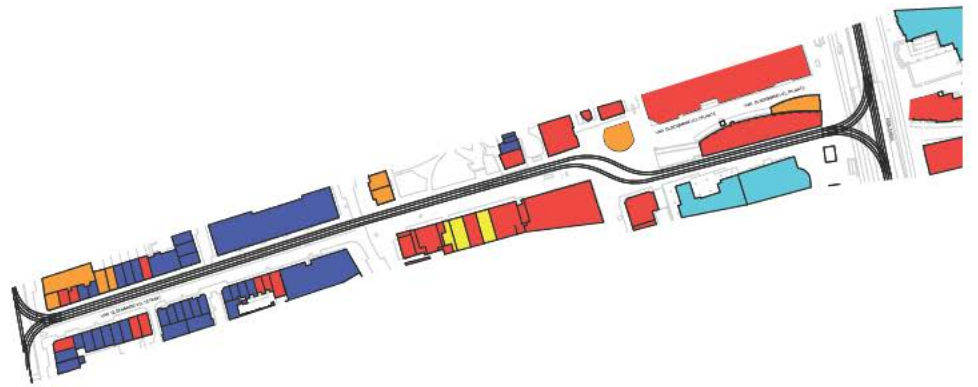
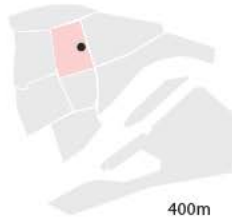
## Meent/Meenthof

1:2000



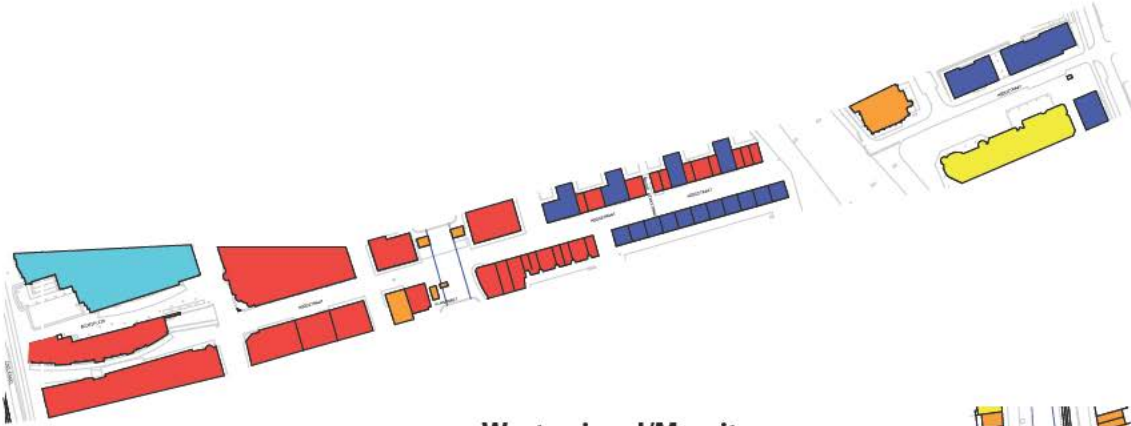
- shopping
- houses
- bars/restaurants
- clubs
- public services
- offices

## Van Oldenbarneveltplaats/Beurstraverse/Hoogstraat 1:2000

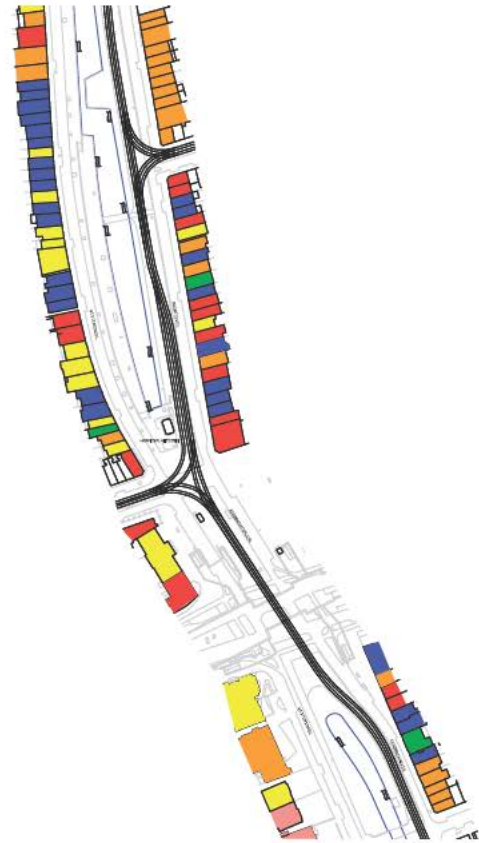
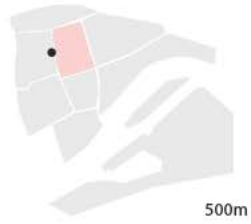


- shopping
- houses
- bars/restaurants
- clubs
- public services
- offices



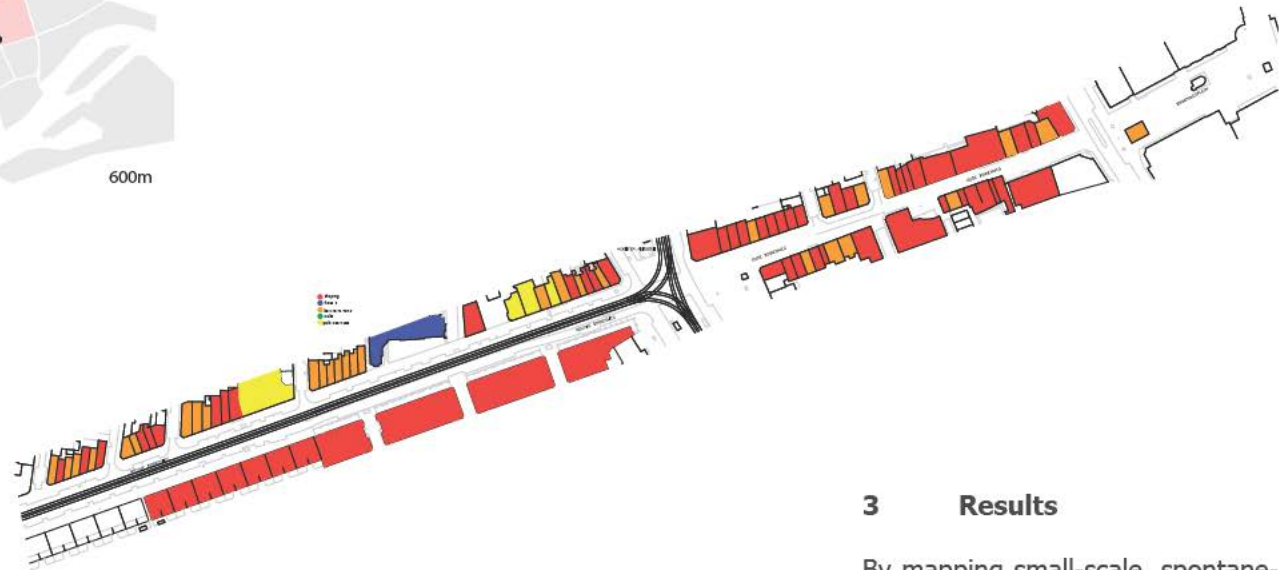
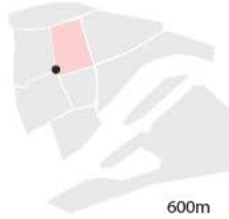


**Westersingel/Mauritsweg**  
1:2000



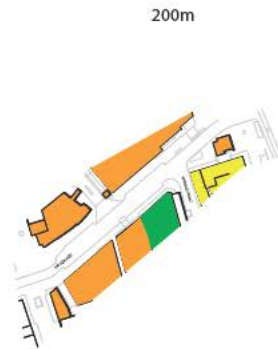
## Nieuwe binnenweg/Oude binnenweg

1:2000



## Kruiskade

1:2000



### 3 Results

By mapping small-scale, spontaneous events we found out that the most activated streets in Rotterdam are found around the city center, but not inside the center. Streets that combine a central position to the city and the station with a structure of small buildings appear to be the most suitable for night-life. We then zoomed in on these streets to see which functions are dominant there. From this comparison we can conclude that the most diverse streets, with a combination of restaurants, shops, bars, some housing and public buildings are the most activated during the days. Areas which are full of shops are very activated during daytime, but tend to be desolated at night.



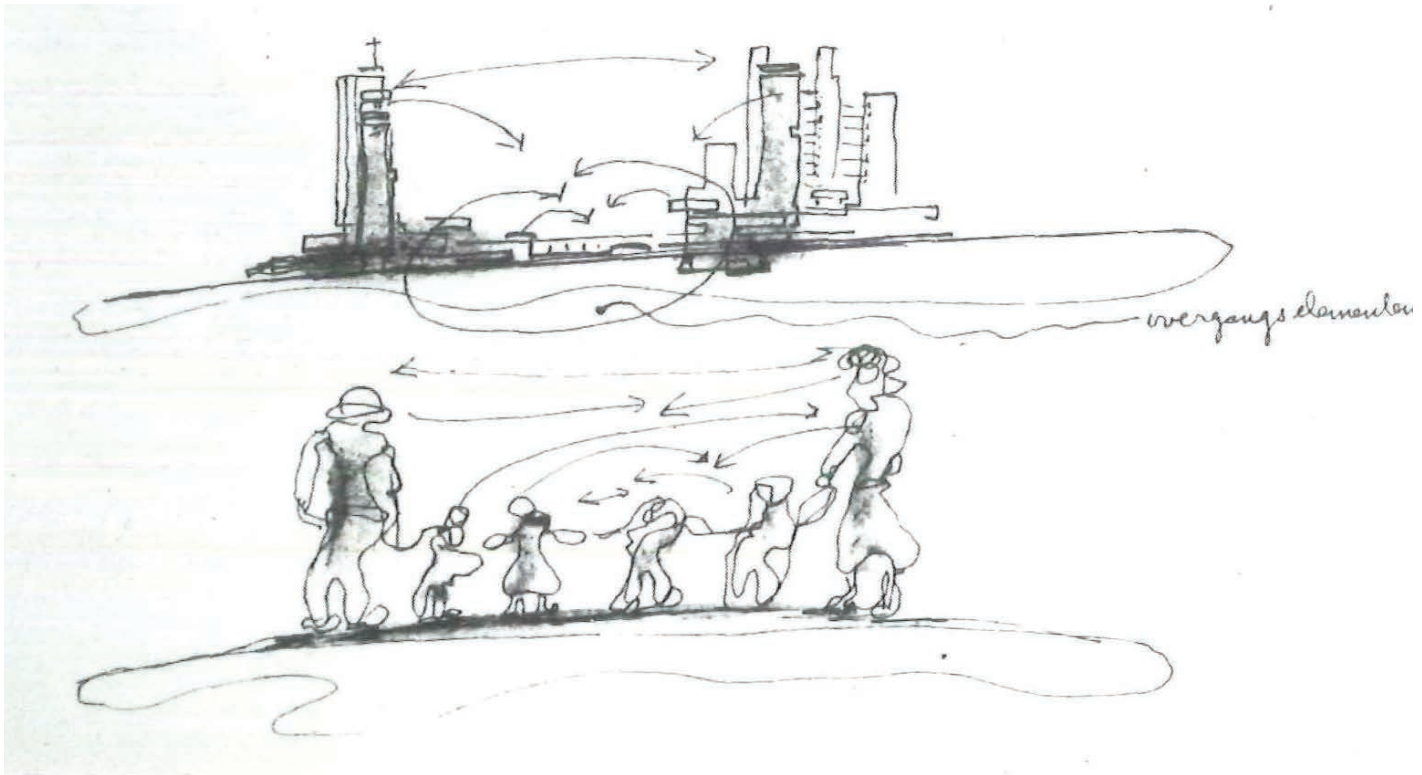


# Overlapping structures.

understanding the complex tissue of Rotterdam

## Masterplan

Erik de Haan | Vissarion Naoum

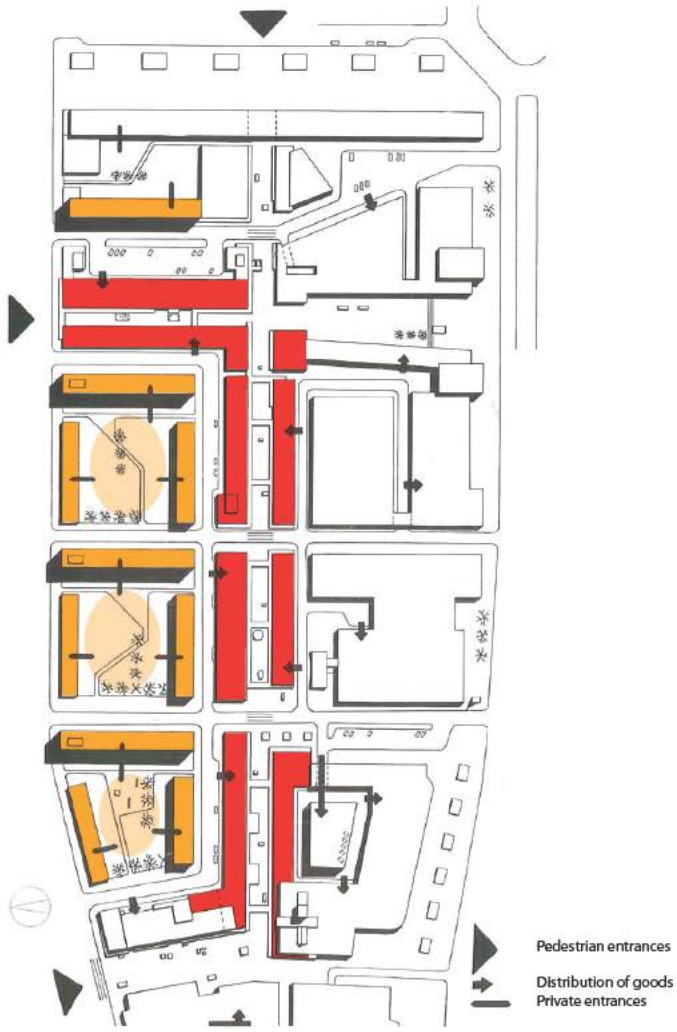


### LIJNBAAN CONCEPT - 'THE FRIENDSHIP MODEL'

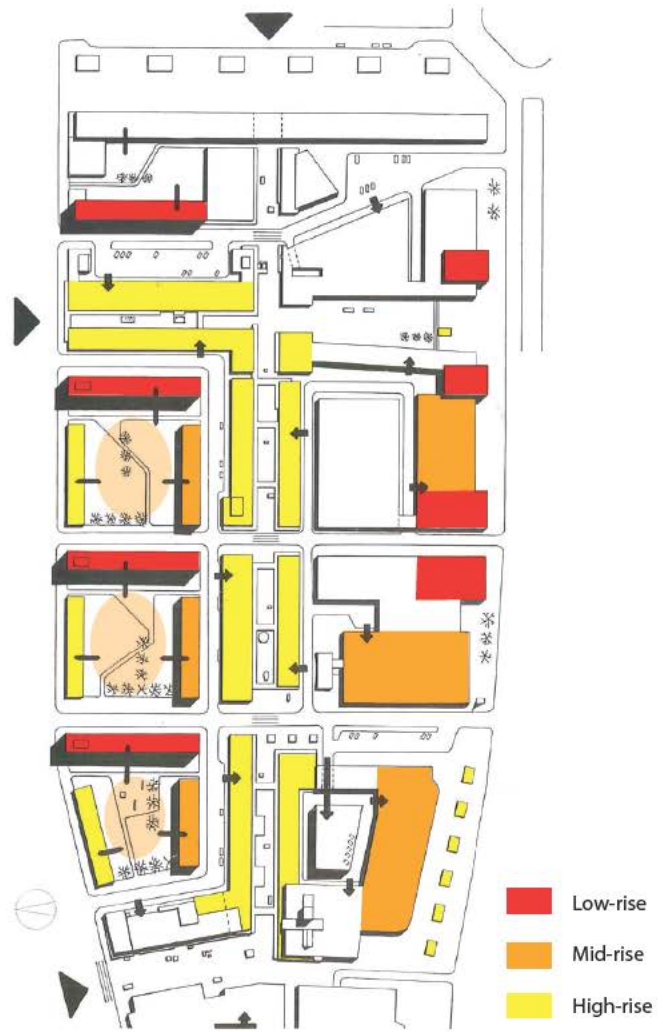
The design for the Lijnbaan was inspired by Van den Broek and Bakema's 'friendship model'. This model, in the above image illustrated by a sketch of Bakema showing a family with the children walking between their parents, is a solution to the problem of scale

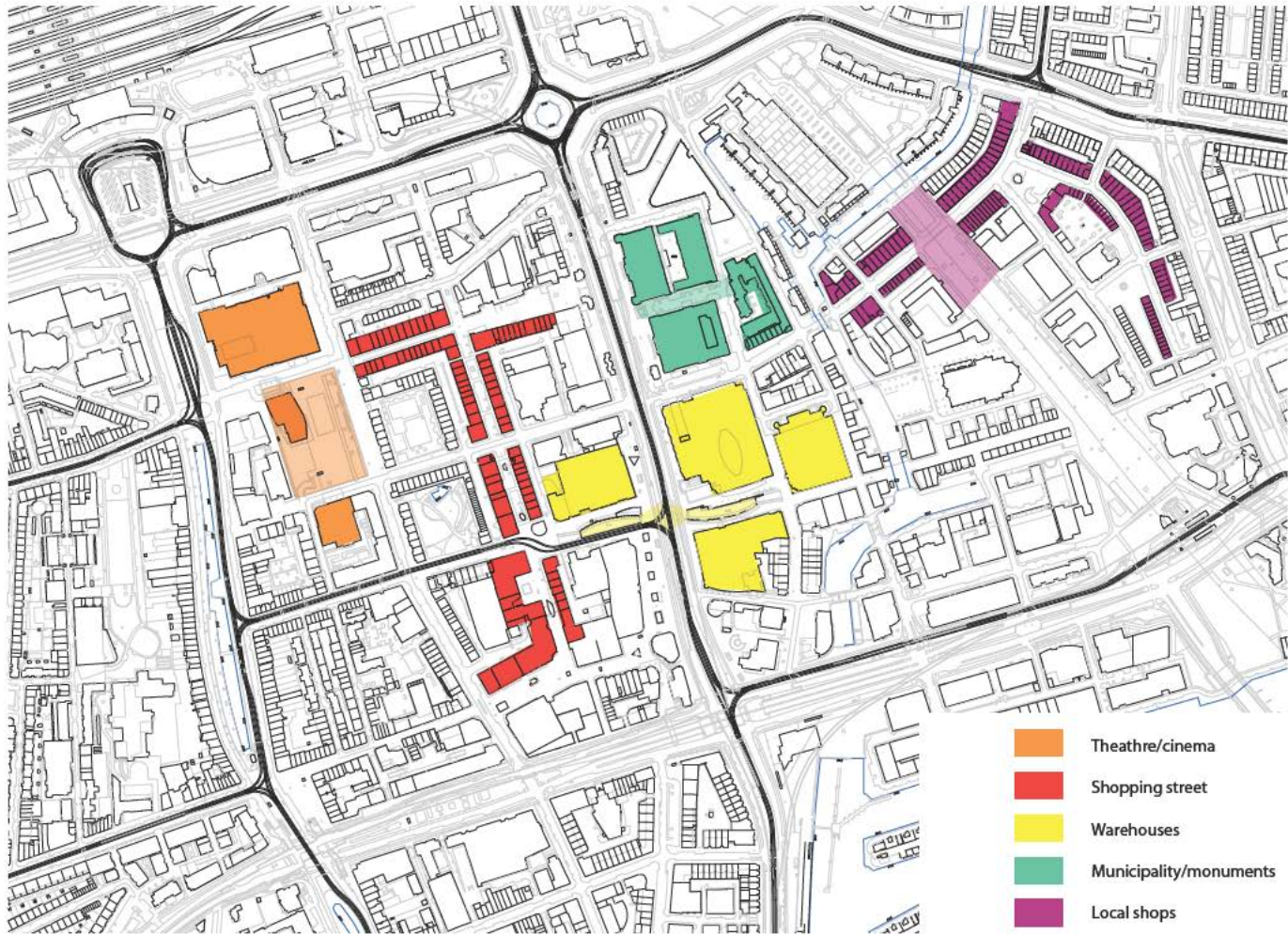
in a large-scale development such as the Lijnbaan. The low-rise shopping buildings in the middle (the children, in red on the next page) introduce a human scale, for a pedestrian area. The larger slabs on the left (the parents, in orange) define the streets and the public spaces inside. There is a visual relationship between high and low, as shown in the sketch, where

the scale of the buildings gradually grows from 2 floors to 14 floors for the highest slabs.



**LIJNBAAN CONCEPT**





## CLUSTERS OF FUNCTIONS

The centre of Rotterdam consist of several large clusters of functions. The image above shows where they are and how they are related to certain public spaces. The Lijnbaan in the middle is a pedestrian zone with shops. The public walk is furnished with benches, sculptures and trees. In the 1950 flowerbeds

where also part of the design, but the where removed later. Other clusters are the Pathé cinema, De Doelen (congress centre) and the theatre, all connected to the Schouwburgplein (theatre square) to the west. To the east there are several monumental buildings, being the City Hall, the former Post office and the new city administration designed by OMA on

the monumental Scheepstimmerhuis (all in green). To the south of the several large department stores and the world trade centre (yellow) are connected by the Beurstraverse, an underground shopping streets connecting the Bijenkorf on the west to the Vroom&Dreesman and C&A on the east. The last cluster is the Blaak square, where many cafés and small shops are found.





## FUNCTIONS BETWEEN LIJNBAAN AND COOLSIINGEL

The area between the Lijnbaan and the Coolingsingel is not very coherent in terms of architecture, program or public space. It lacks the formal unity and programmatic stability of the Lijnbaan, and it has to compete with the strong profile of the boulevardlike Coolingsingel with its monuments and its large new buildings. The blocks are on the west side part of the Lijnbaan, while the east consists of hotels, large towers of banks, some shops and a large department store. Inside the blocks anonymous parking and delivery spaces are found.

- Club
- Bar/restaurant
- Shop
- Hotel
- Small office
- Big office



## SITE VISIT AND USE

Again, the interiors of the blocks where designed as spaces for parking, delivery of goods to the shops and circulation. These spaces are not intended as public spaces, but they take up a large amount of the space in this area as the picture above shows.



### **PUBLIC SPACE AROUND LIJNBAAN**

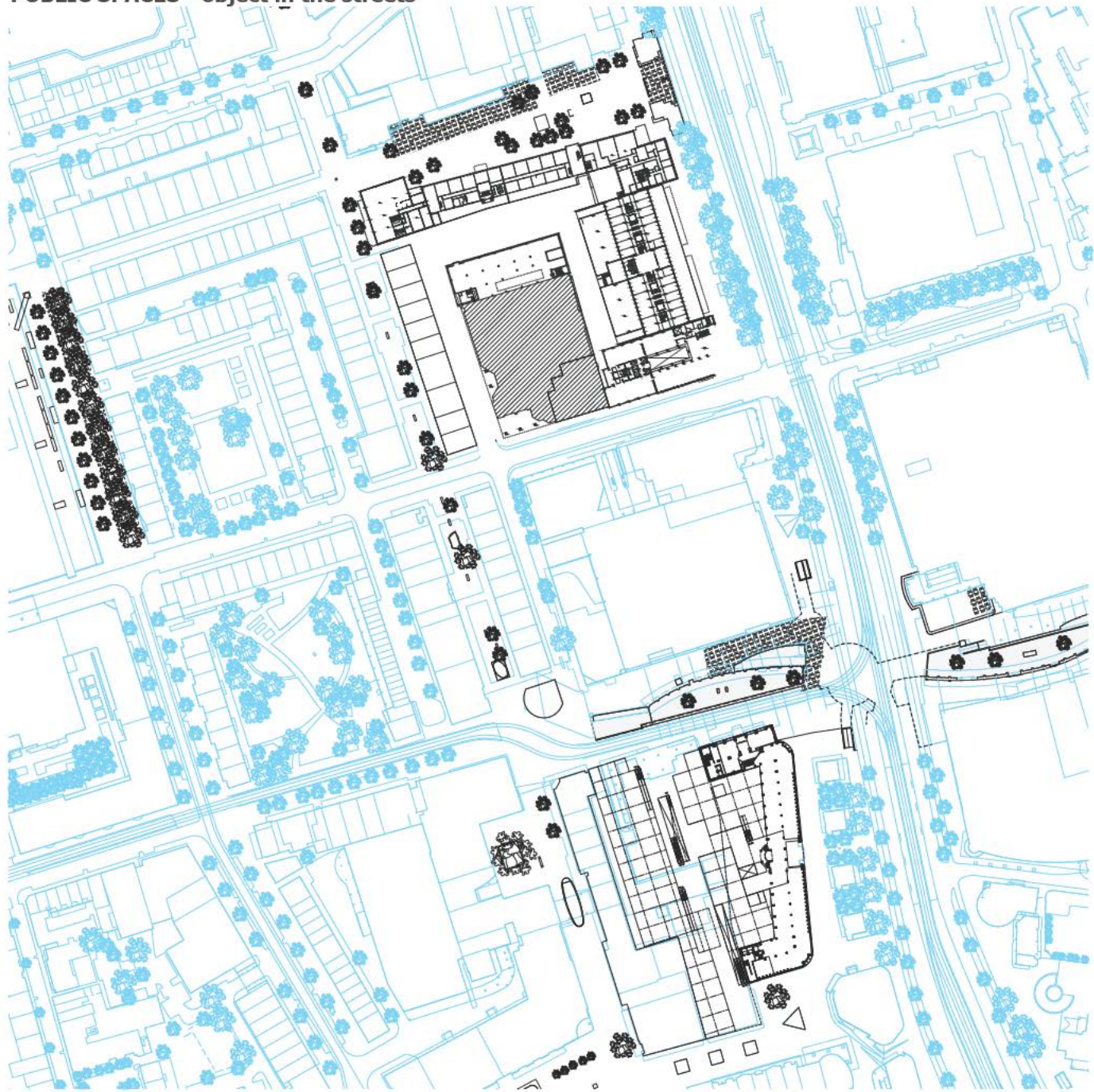
We propose to treat the area between Lijnbaan and Coolsingel as a collection of city blocks with different nature. The Lijnbaan is for shopping, the Lijnbaanhoven are dwelling. This area can become a leisure area.



### **PUBLIC SPACE AROUND LIJNBAAN**

The Lijnbaanhoven create a semi-public space inside the blocks, designed as parks. The area we work with has an opposite logic, where the public spaces are found between the blocks, such as Schouwburgplein, Binnenwegplein and the Beurstraverse.

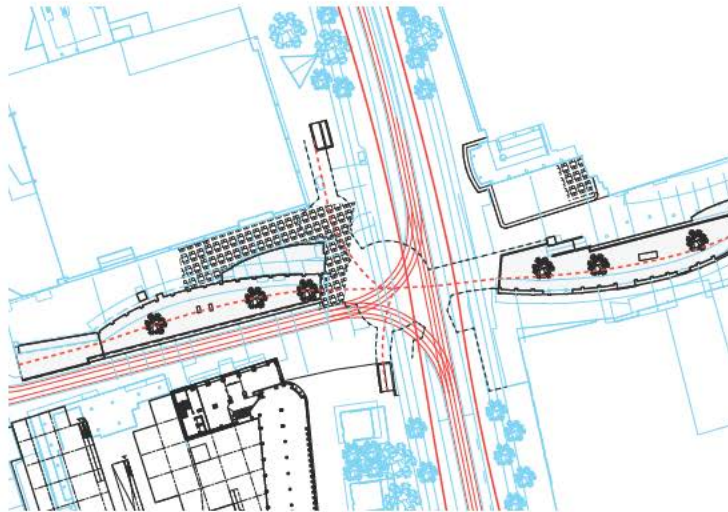
**PUBLIC SPACES - object in the streets**





### Stadhuisplein

- Intimate
- Strong borders
- Pedestrian zone
- Terraces and shops

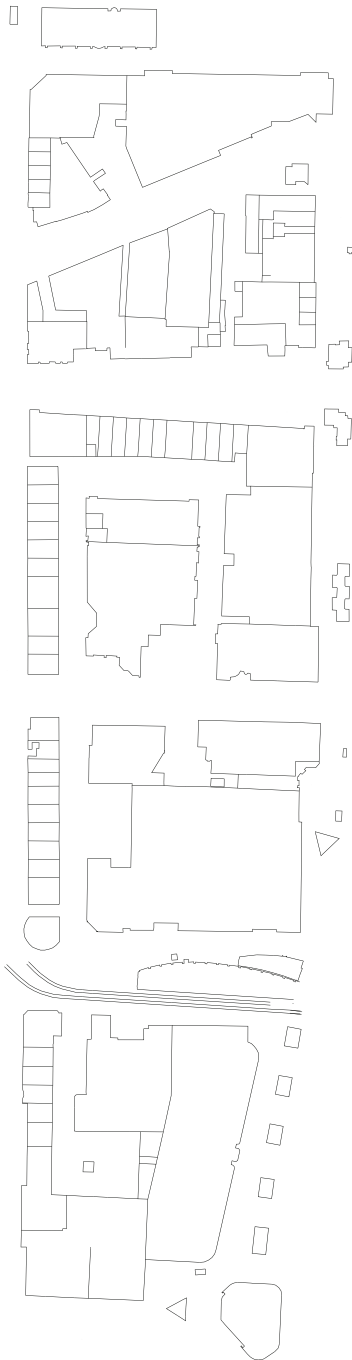


### Beurstraverse

- Point of connection
- Chaotic
- Department stores, terraces



## ANALYSIS OF THE USES OF THE BLOCKS

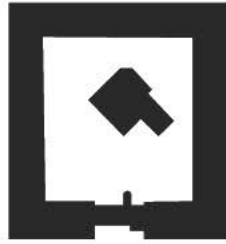


Architecture office  
 Organisation advice  
 Club  
 Hotel  
 Restaurant  
 Art and documentaries  
 Environment protection  
 Security  
 Cafés  
 Bank  
 Film theatre

Bank  
 Café  
 Birth hotel  
 Healthcare service  
 Textile shop  
 Restaurants  
 Bookshop  
 Bank  
 Employment office  
 Art/music school  
 Lunchroom  
 Software developing  
 Printshop  
 Architecture office

Restaurant  
 Hotel  
 Shoeshop  
 Flowershop  
 Art gallery  
 Hair salon  
 Jewellery  
 Bijenkorf

Hotel  
 Bank  
 Office  
 Housing  
 Leisure  
 Shopping  
 Food court  
 City information office



Amsterdam city block  
Openluchtschool - Duiker  
82 x 88 m



Amsterdam former barracks  
Academie voor Beeldende  
kunst - Koen van Velsen  
86 x 58 m



Former congress Hall, Nuremberg  
Documentation Centre -  
Günther Domenig  
100 x 70 m



Lijnbaan/ABN Amro  
Shopping/housing/leisure -  
OMA  
110 x 140 m



Marne-la-Vallee, France  
School of Architecture  
Tschumi  
73 x 57 m



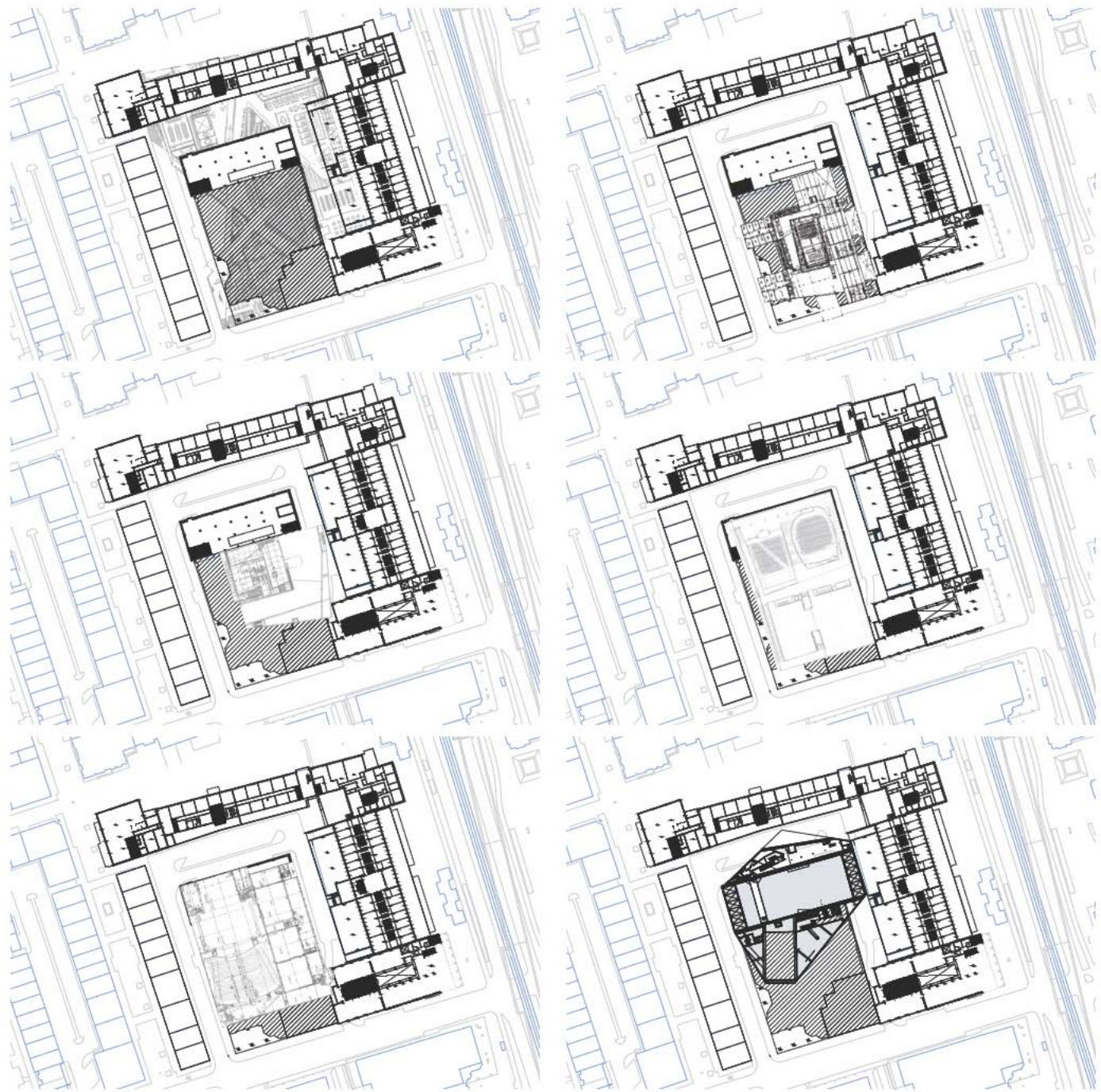
## DIFFERENT MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

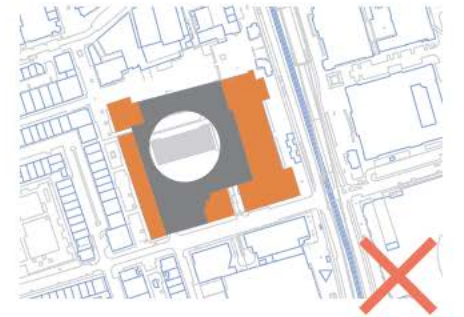
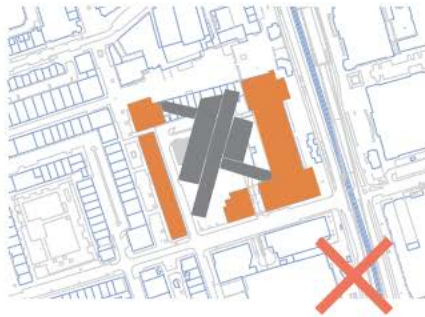
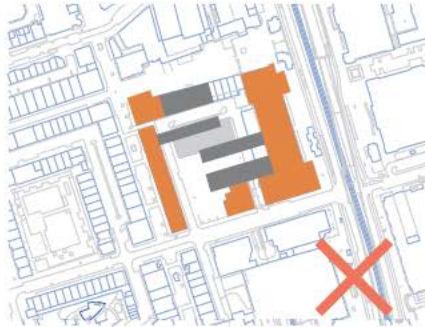
The structure of the Lijnbaan is different from the blocks around. The Lijnbaan is small-scale and has a wide range of different shops. The blocks around are occupied with large mono-functional buildings, making walking here less pleasant.

## SCALE OF THE BLOCKS

The blocks in this area are rather large. Therefore, most of the buildings do not occupy the blocks, but stand alone as objects in an undefined open space. The street profiles are weak and the plinths are empty. We propose to work with the block as a whole to create stronger profiles and clear facades.



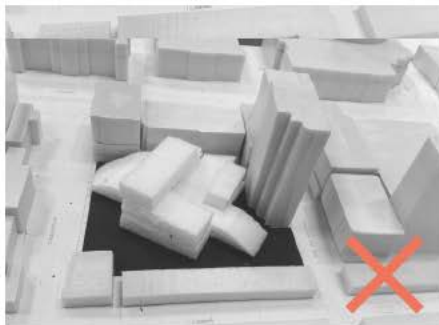
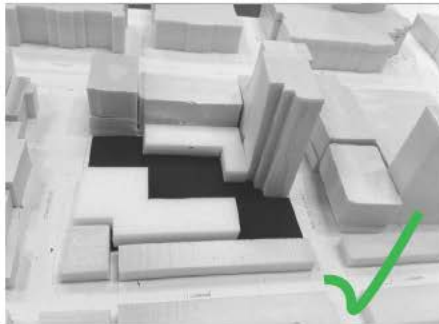
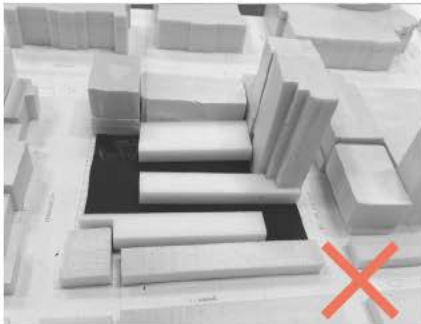
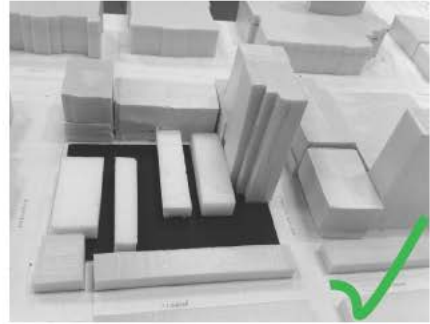
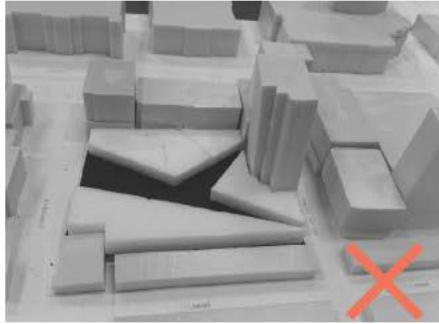
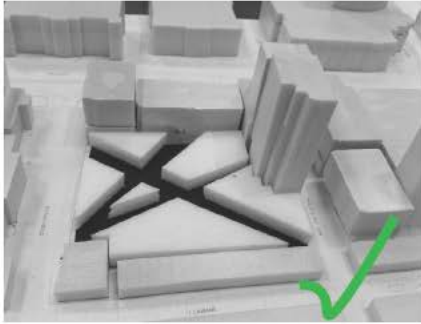




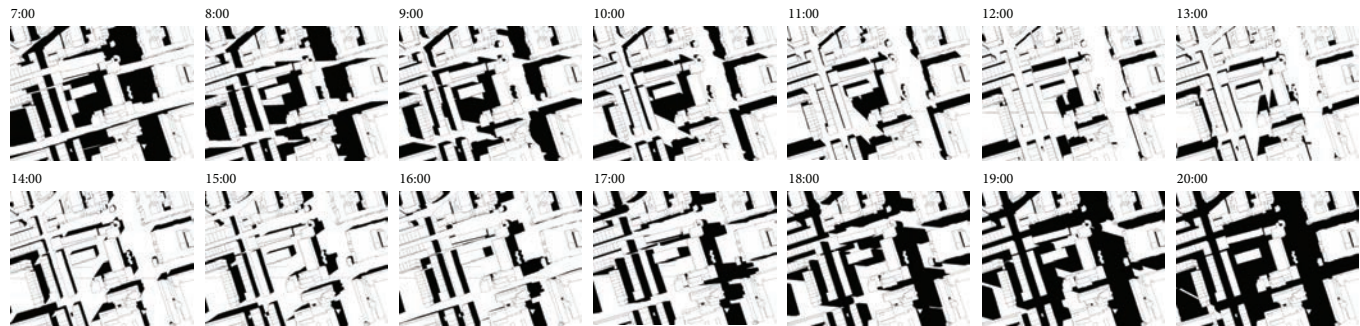
## MASS STUDIES

We tested several masses, starting by filling all the open space inside then blocks and then removing parts to create public spaces and connections between Schouwburgplein, Lijnbaan, Coolsingel, Aard van Nesstraat and the direction of the Meent area. We

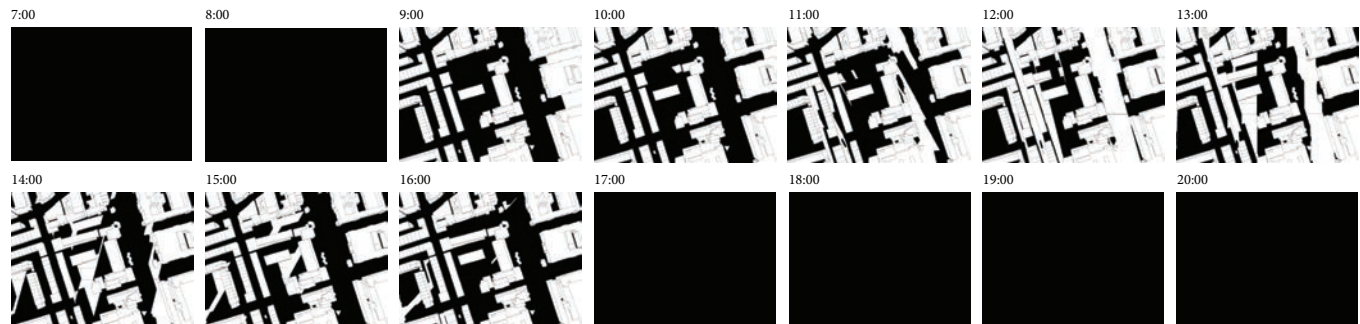
propose several schemes that relate the site to the Schouwburgplein in the north and the Lijnbaan in the southwest. From these explorations we picked three schemes to further develop in terms of functions and space.



JUNE 26th



DECEMBER 26th



## SUN STUDIES

We made several sun studies to test the amount of light that can enter in the blocks. Since this area is quite dark because of the large towers around we try to introduce more daylight. We found that especially the southwest allows a lot of light in the block.

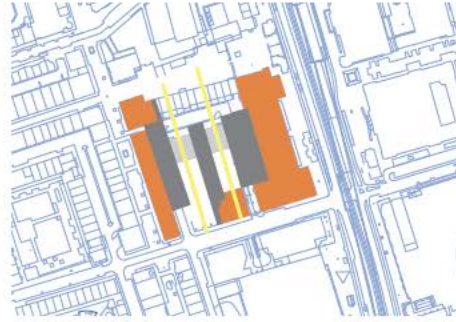
## Program definition

Space		Amount	Square meters	
<b>A Offices/studios</b>				
	Open office plan	15 (26 all in) pp up to 1000 total	1200	20-30m deep, workstations 7m 50 people
*	Meeting rooms	3 (24-30)	75	
*	Private offices	10 x 10 (22 all in)	100	
*	Kitchen	0.3-0.4 per seat		
*	Restaurant	1 6-1 8 per seat		
	Copy/printing		10	
	Reception		20	
	Mail room		20	
	(video) conference room		24-30	
*	Bathroom	1 per 10 women 1+2 per 15 men	50-100	1 per 125m2
*	Changing room	5-.6 pp	40	
*	Workshop		200-300	
	Terrace			
	Archive			
	<b>Total:</b>	75 people	<b>2000</b>	
<b>B Media school</b>				
		350 employees, 14 000 students	25 per student (10 parttime)	All of Rotterdam
Generic rooms*	Class rooms	5 (45-85)	350	
*	Lecture rooms	2 (100-200 (3 5m high)	250	
*	Assembly room	1 per 5 classrooms	20	
Special rooms	Computer/multimedia lab		100	
*	Workshop		200	
*	-Head of workshop		30	
*	-Materials		30	
*	Drawing rooms		3.5-4.5 pp	
*	Rehearsel		2.5 pp	
*	Service point	15 pp	20	
*	Departmental library		200-300	

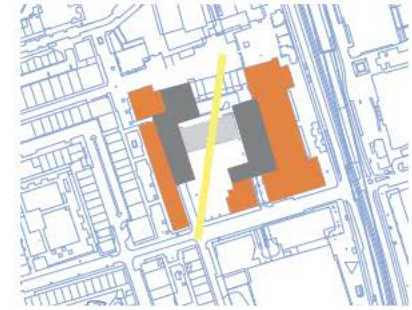
Office*	Professor		20-24 pp	
*	Administration	15 pp	450	
*	Deans office		25	
	Student union room		20	
*	ICT/technical support	15 pp	20	
*	Internship/employment office	15 pp	20	
Facilities*	Restaurant	1.4-1 6 per seat	150	100 seats
*	Kitchen	0 5-0 6 per seat	50	
	Bike parking			
*	Lockers	5 pp		
*	Bathroom	1 per 10 women 1+2 per 15 men	50-100	1 per 125m2
	Storage			
	Future extension			
	<b>Total</b>	300 students	<b>2000</b>	
<b>C Gallerie/exhibition</b>				
	Exhibition space		300-350	
	Film room		100-120	
	Storage		30-40	
	Reception/security		20-30	
	Store		20	
	Showroom		100	
	Cloak room		10	
*	Administration	15 pp	30-50	
	Workshop		150-200	
	Deliveries		01-10-20	
	Bathroom	1 men 1 woman	20	
	<b>Total</b>		<b>900-1000</b>	
<b>D Bars/shops</b>				
	Children daycare	2-3 pp	100-150	30 children
	Printing shop			
	Restaurant			
	Bar			



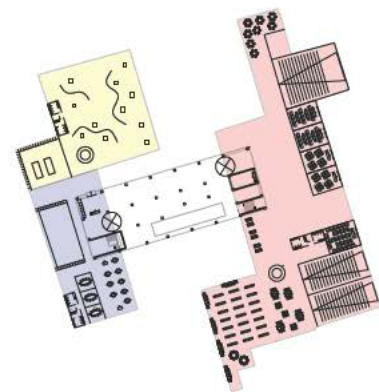
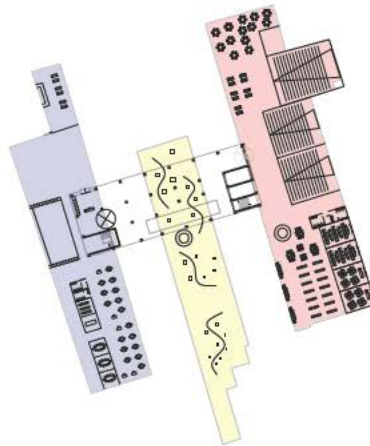
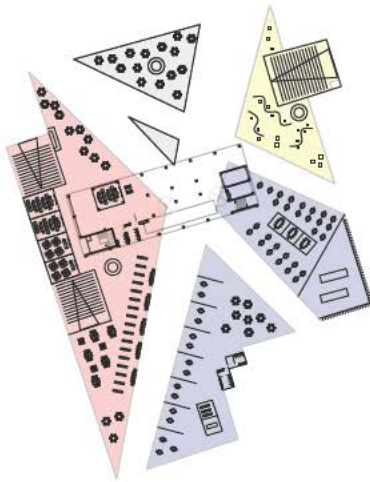
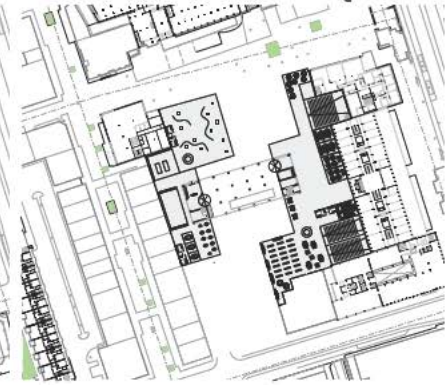
OPTION 1  
CUTTING PATHS

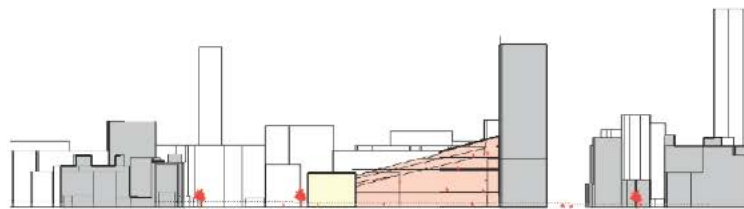
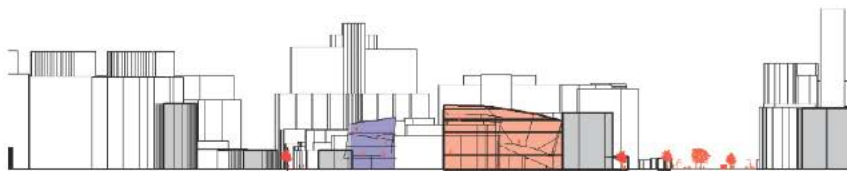
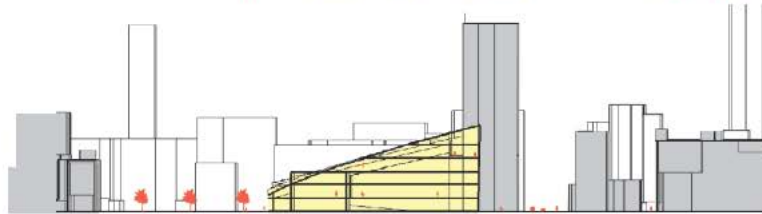
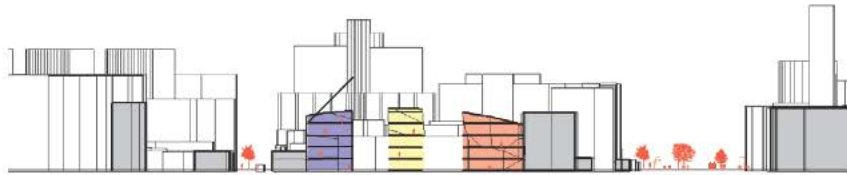
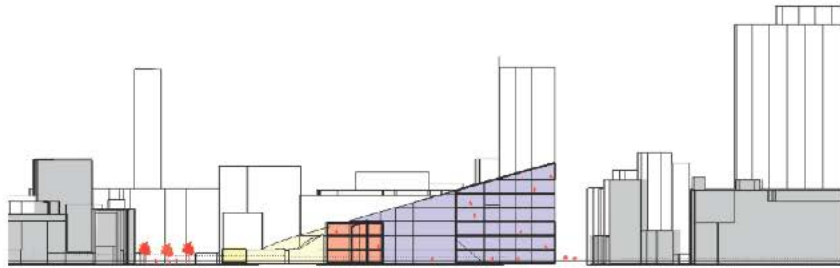
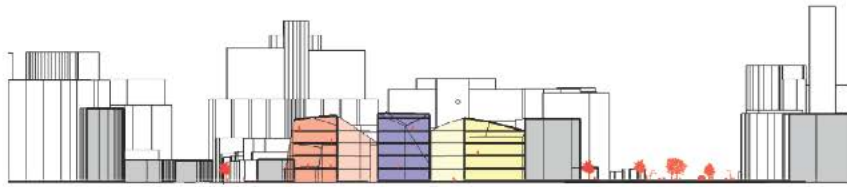


OPTION 2  
BARS



OPTION 3  
SQUARES



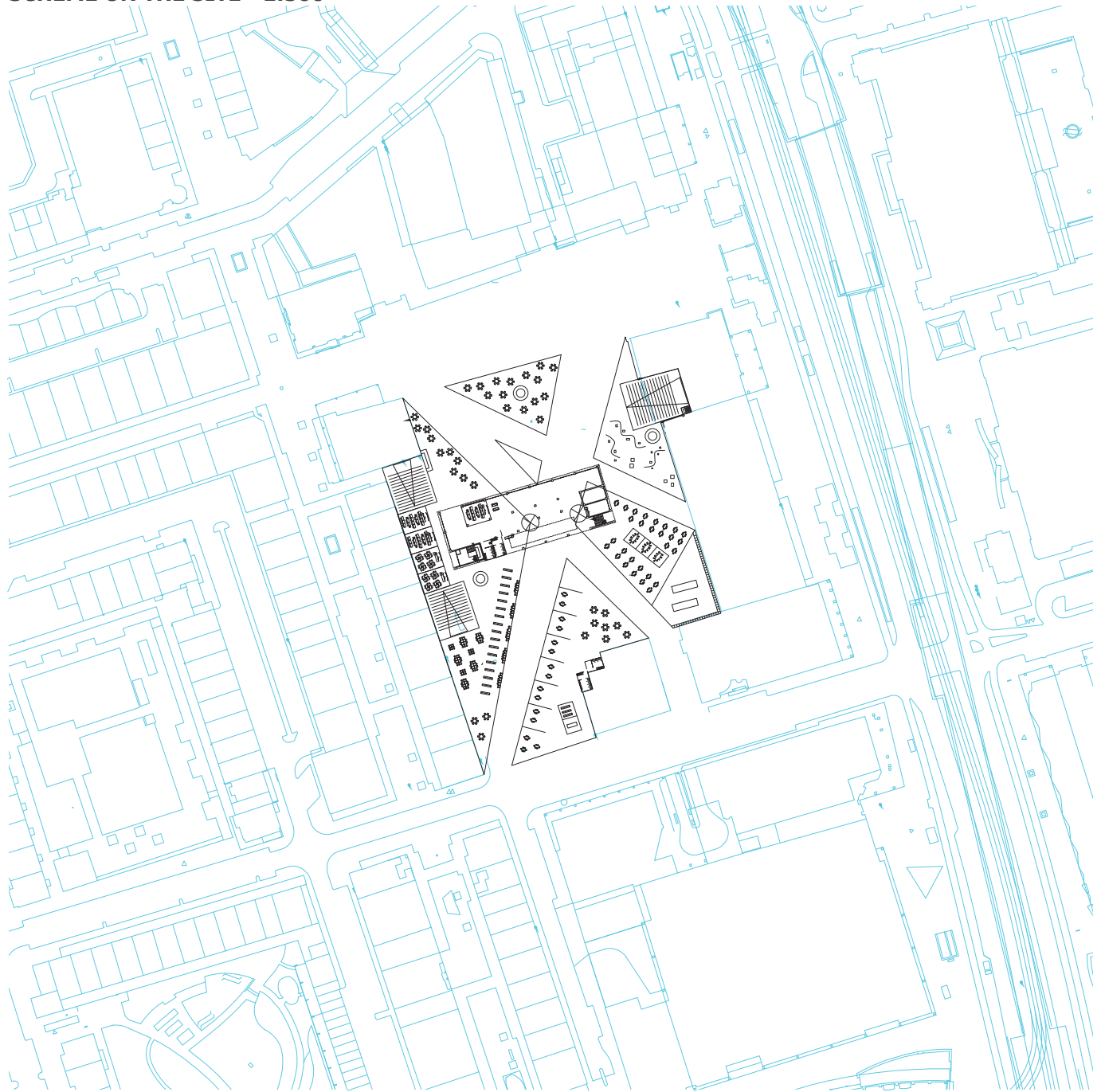


OPTION 1  
SECTIONS

OPTION 2  
SECTIONS

OPTION 3  
SECTIONS

**SCHEME ON THE SITE - 1:500**









# The Urban Condition.

The historical development of Rotterdam as a modern city

Essay

Erik de Haan 1236369



## INTRODUCTION

Rotterdam is a peculiar city in the Dutch context. Unlike almost any other city, it has no old city centre with canal houses and a big church. Although Rotterdam is as old as Amsterdam, Den Haag, Leiden, Delft, Gouda or any other historic Dutch city, it developed in a radically different way. The reason for this is clear and inelaborate: the destruction of the whole city centre in the second world war. Other cities with a similar history such as Dresden or Hamburg, decided to rebuild the old city centre and thus more or less continued the historical development of the city fabric. Rotterdam choose different: a radical break with the old structure to make place for a completely new urban plan. The bombardment and the subsequent fires destroyed almost every buildings within a large area at the north bank of the river, where the city was born 800 years before. The fires left an almost empty land, without buildings, streets or even trees. A tabula rasa. It gave Rotterdam the unique opportunity to start from scratch to build a new city centre. For the modernist movement this was an ideal playground to show that there ideas could improve the city and make it ready for future developments, such as the emergence of cars and advanced means of communication.

To understand where Rotterdam stands now, I will have a look on the development of Rotterdam from the urban plan by Van den Broek and Bakema for the Lijnbaan until now, in comparison to other cities and to scenarios that are laid out about the future of the city, for example Rem Koolhaas famous essay *The Generic City*. Along this path I will compare different ideas about public space in relation to the different approaches and see which condition best describes Rotterdam as it is. I will start at the beginning of Rotterdams recent development, the urban plan for the Lijnbaan area, where the new fabric for the city centre emerges.

## BAKEMA HIS 'FRIENDSHIP'-MODEL IN ROTTERDAM

The Lijnbaan is a superstructure, based on a coherent vision that determines the spatial, social and functional aspects of a large area for a long period of time. The Lijnbaan was a radically new development, due to the destruction of the heart of the city in the war and the emerge of the modernist debate in post-war Europe. The vision underlying the design is heavily influenced by these developments and thus a product of the 1950's. Modernist ideals such as division of functions and an urban configuration based on traffic are present, although Bakema en van den Broek gave their own twist to these principles. Some of their principles underlying the design of the Lijnbaan are described in their 'Three principles for a less sterile environment'<sup>1</sup>:

Functions are distinguished, not divided

Urban space must have a sense of continuity

Social awareness must be part of the program

Living, working, leisure and traffic are integrated into one design, and not divided as CIAM. The idea of a superstructure that organizes all aspects of human life is definite for this period of time and determines to a large extend how the Lijnbaan functions today. The plan is configured around a low-rise shopping street, free of traffic. A unique concept a that time. This street reintroduces the human scale in the empty gap that once was the historic city centre. Shelters are created to protect the shopping public from rain, making longer stays more pleasant, regardless the uncontrollable weather.

To the west housing blocks of different heights are built, the highest of them measure about 15 floors and stand perpendicular to the Lijnbaan. Between the high-rises park like areas are created as a contrasting quiet and light area in a dense city centre, another modernist idea. Here the plinths are used for garages and storage, freeing the dwellings from the ground. Between these two areas with their specific characteristics, small streets are laid out to provide the shops

with supplies, from the back. These streets have a radically different character, which is a bit hard to describe exactly. From the Lijnbaan they function as backdoor, to bring large amounts of goods by van or truck, while pedestrians walk on the other side along the shopping windows of all the different shops. The users or visitors of the dwellings neither use this streets. They enter their houses via the park like courts on the other side.

This configuration splits car traffic and pedestrian zones, which is convenient for shops. But, they also split the two different functions that are found here: shopping and housing. Although the Lijnbaan offers a mix of housing and shopping/working, the buildings that are specific for these functions turn their backs on each other. This excludes spontaneous exchange between these two different worlds, which limits the 24-7 use of space that would be possible here. Due to the mix of leisure, working and housing this area could function day and night, with enough critical mass to have spontaneous events popping up at any moment of day. The truth is that this area is crowded during daytime, but deserted at night.

Another problem is the weakness of the scheme on the eastside. The large, almost boulevard like street in the heart of Rotterdam known as Coolsingel is a combination of monuments that survived the war, post-war buildings and large corporate developments. The profile of this broad boulevard is strong enough to unite these buildings in one urban space. On this side the plots have the same dimensions as the Lijnbaanhoven, but they lack the big slabs that define these spaces. The large slabs of dwelling define space and simultaneously connect traffic and living spaces. They pronounce the streets and create intimacy for the inner courts. The blocks on the Coolsingel lack this definitien. They have become a sort of no man's land between the unity of the Lijnbaan and the large buildings on Coolsingel. The inner courts therefore are not open public spaces like the Lijnbaanhoven, nor user spaces like the Lijnbaan or traffic junctions like

Coolsingel. Instead, the area between Lijnbaan and Coolsingel is occupied by parking garages, corporate towers and shopping. This makes the plinths and thus the streets that connect Lijnbaan and Coolsingel rather unpleasant to stay.

Since the most happening streets in Rotterdam are found on the borders between neighbourhoods, this area could become also part of the network of night-life. Therefore it should be able to become a connector between the centre and the area around de Binnenrotte. The poor use of the inner courts has such a negative impact on the quality of space that this is not the case now.

Streets that do form a connection between old and new, such as the Nieuw/Oude binnenweg seem to have a spatial structure that mediates between the old and the new. For example, the Nieuwe Binnenweg is an old street with bars, dancings and cafés combined with quite dense traffic. When one moves towards the Oude Binnenweg the area turns into a pedestrian zone, which eventually turns into a square at the Binnenwegplein which then connects to the Lijnbaan. In this way it forms a sort a gradual transi-



The area that was destroyed after the bombardment and the connection between the old and new structure on the left

tion from the dense old fabric to the monofunctional modernist structure, without losing too much of its critical mass.

An interesting recent development within this area is the Beurstraverse or Koopgoot. It connects the metro station under the Coolsingel to both the Lijnbaan and the Hoogstraat, the two main shopping streets on both sides of the road. It divides the flow of shopping pedestrians coming from the Lijnbaan from the heavy traffic on the Coolsingel and creates a continuity between two important shopping areas with different characters. At the same time it is a knot of different flows of traffic, where the metro and the pedestrian area connect to the Coolsingel. It is a purely commercial intervention, with surprising positive urban implications. The layering of different modes of transportation is reminiscent of the drawings of Bakema and van den Broek, although the formal language is very different, as well as the intention of their use. Together with most of the developments from the 1990s, the Beurstraverse is made for shopping only. The initiative does not come from an idealistic, visionary architect, but from a project developer that builds shopping malls all over Europe.

## **CONFRONTATION OF OLD AND NEW**

Different ages and movements have different ideas about public space. The modernist movement propagated a completely new idea about function and space in comparison to the traditional city. However, although a tabula rasa was the starting point, these new developments were usually part of something that already existed. Even the radical plan Voisin of Le Corbusier for Paris still has context. And a very strong one. Since new movements come and go, from gothic, baroque, neo-classicism to modernism there are different ideas, but in most cities many of these exist together. The medieval city is surrounded by 19th century developments which again are surrounded by

modernist developments. The demolition of parts of old city centres to make place for modern buildings, especially in the 1970's and 1980's create a coexistence of old and new. In the case of Rotterdam this dialectic is essential since very large parts of the old city were destroyed in the war. Therefore Rotterdam has a very large amount of buildings from the 1950's, making it unique among the traditional (17th century) and the modern (1970's, 1980's) Dutch cities.

Rotterdam is a rare example of a city where a tabula rasa was indeed the base of a design that incorporated a wide range of functions, from housing to work and leisure. However, this tabula rasa was not endless nor perfectly empty. The Lijnbaan is a development that creates its own logic, without any influence from outside. However, the edges of the rectangular city centre do have context. Here the old city fabric is confronted with modernist forms. Also, some old monumental buildings were preserved, thus creating a contrast with the modernist language. The most striking example is the ABN Amro building, completed during the war. Its facade follows the old, bended Coolsingel. When the street was straightened towards the waterfront later it left a strange, trapezoidal space in front of the bank, which gives away the underlying old structure.

What makes these confrontations very interesting in terms of public space is the fact that these edges appear to be the most activated parts of the city. The grid that is introduced in the Lijnbaan meets at an important point with the old streets. Thus, the Nieuwe binnenweg, outside the rectangle of the centre, merge to the Oude Binnenweg, inside the new centre but with old fabric, which ends at the Binnenwegplein, where it meets the Lijnbaan. In a similar way the Schouwburgplein, the Lijnbaan and the Meent are connected. These sequences of different atmospheres, from traditional building blocks to buildings on the new grid to the modernist grid and architecture form a gradual transition from the old city to the new, rather than a

radical break. This has big implications for the way the Lijnbaan functions. The division of functions, a core principle of early modernism, is impossible to realize in an area that measures only 700 by 500 meters and is in all directions connected to the multifunctional old fabric.

In his famous book *The Architecture of the City*, Aldo Rossi expressed one of the first critics on modernism. Especially the focus on function is in his eyes a mistake. Adrian Forty explains: "*Rossi's thesis was that functionalism (see p. 192) was inadequate as a theory of urban form, because buildings outlast their original functions and take on new ones without themselves undergoing change.*"<sup>1</sup> If we look back again at the case of Rotterdam we see that the function of the streets around the city centre, where the old fabric was preserved, have adopted new functions and still are able to change. So almost all the bars and restaurants are found in old streets, as close as possible to the centre but never in the centre. The Lijnbaan and the Lijnbaanhoven are still the same today as they were fifty years ago. They seem to be unable to adopt any other functions than what they are made for.

Another important critic on modernism, formulated even before Rossi, came from Ernesto Rogers. He criticizes the abstractness of modernist schemes and their indifference to location. He proposed to '*consider architecture as a dialogue with its surroundings, both in the immediate physical sense, but also as a historical continuum.*'<sup>2</sup> He spoke about '*le preesistenza ambientali*' (surrounding pre-existences). He remarked: '*to understand history is essential for the formation of the architect, since he must be able to insert his own work into the preesistenza ambientali and to take it, dialectically, into account.*' The notion of the city as a historical continuum is important in the first critics on modernism that came mainly from Italy. According to Rossi the historical continuum manifests itself in the architecture of the city: "*These persistencies are revealed through monuments, the physical*

*signs of the past, as well as through the persistence of a city's basic layout and plans*"<sup>3</sup>. However, in the case of Rotterdam this critic misses the point since the paradigm shift to a modernist approach was not the reason for the destruction of the centre (the bombardment was), but the result of it.

## THE DOOM SCENARIO: THE GENERIC CITY

Rem Koolhaas speaks in *The Generic City* about the emergence of new cities where public space is no longer part of an urban plan. Buildings stand like islands in an open, undefined space. The only kind of public spaces are the atria inside buildings. But, they are a controlled space. Belgian philosopher Lieven de Cauter describes them as capsules. In his books '*De capsulaire beschaving*' (*The Capsularian Society*) he describes the near future as a state in which, thanks to technological advance, everybody lives in capsules. These capsules can be a car, a mobile device that plays music and thus disconnects one from his surroundings, the atrium of a buildings, etc. What they have in common is that they are like atoms: they float around in a social vacuum. They have no relation to each other. The atrium is a capsule, "sealed from reality".

Koolhaas describes the generic city as "a city without a centre, without identity and without history". This partially describes Rotterdam, or at least the general perception of Rotterdam. A city without a centre. The memorial statue of sculpture Zadkine to remember the bombardment shows a man with his hands in the air. Where his heart should be there is a hole. This is how Rotterdam sees itself and how others see Rotterdam. However, in a way this lack of a heart has become Rotterdam its identity. Although the neighbourhoods around the city centre are not different from any other old Dutch city, the centre with its constant renewal is unique. Rotterdam lost its history in the war, and since then has always try to be the most



modern city instead. But 65 years after the bombardment this struggle with its identity has become part of history, and many buildings from the 1950s are listed now as monuments, because they signify a period in which Rotterdam started to reinvent itself.

The many towers in Rotterdam signify a characteristic of the generic city, being its lack of concern about public space: *"De wolkenkrabber is de definitieve typologie. Hij heeft al de rest opgeslokt, hij kan overal staan, op zichzelf en geïsoleerd. De generische stad is opgebouwd uit tabula rasa, ofwel uit het niets ontstaan, ofwel als vervanging van wat er was."*<sup>5</sup> (The skyscraper is the final Typology. It has absorbed all the others, can stand everywhere, on itself and isolated. The generic city was built of tabula rasa, either started from nothing, or as to replace what has been). This description resembles the situation of Rotterdam, where since the 1990s many towers have been built in and around the city centre. These towers often have a very weak relation with the streets around, and they have been described as 'vertical gated communities', because of the 24h security and the tendency to put all kinds of facilities such as a gym, a swimming pool, a small supermarket and even bars and restaurants in the buildings, so the inhabitants do not have to leave the buildings anymore to enter the 'dangerous big city'.

As other cities have a historic city centre which attracts large crowds of locals and visitors, the situation in Rotterdam is again different. These city centre function as theatres: many people come together and see each other there. Unexpected things happen. The lack of such a place is one of the main concerns of the generic city: "Koolhaas' film moet toch nog een keertje van voor naar achter afgedraaid worden: de massa verschijnt wel degelijk opnieuw op het toneel, na in de generische delen van de posturbane zone te zijn afgevoerd, keert ze terug in de oude stadswijken. De heropstanding van de stad onder de aandacht van de nieuwe massa, is misschien juist het bewijs dat we met

z'n allen wel degelijk in een generische agglomeratie en een posturbane zone wonen. De Benelux bijvoorbeeld is dan een generische, posturbane zone met theatrale kernen (historische themaparken)". (Koolhaas his movie should be played back on last time: de mass certainly does appear again on stage, after dissolving from the generic parts of the post-urban landscape, it comes back to the old districts. De revival of the city on behalf of the new crowd, is possibly the evidence that we all together do live in a generic agglomeration and a post-urban zone. The Benelux for examples is then a generic, post-urban zone with theatrical cores (historical theme parks)). The theatre is what is missing in Rotterdam. It has no old city centre that can be 'thematized' and therefore lacks the possibilities of tourism, while bars and restaurants appear not that obvious as in other cities. For outsiders it is an agglomeration rather than a city, with no focal point. The buildings in the centre are large and anonymous. All what happens, happens inside.

## CONCLUSION

Modernists criticized the old medieval city as dirty, unhealthy and chaotic; a critic that was probably more relevant when hygiene was unheard of, houses were crowded and the car was seen as symbol of the future. Their solution was a city that was organized in the first place by traffic; fast lanes for cars, preferably on another level than the pedestrian walks and the public space. The landscape was freed from all objects by pilotis. The buildings stand far apart to admit light and fresh air in every space. These principles received harsh critic when it became more and more evident that the division of traffic flows and the detachment of buildings from the landscape caused serious social problems of safety. But the virtue of planning, whether successful or not, was lost somewhere in the 1980s, when a market driven economy was the new ideal. Buildings are individual, private developments,

no longer part of a masterplan. Although this is the current situation, Rem Koolhaas gives us a glance at the future when he describes the generic city, a city that has not coherence at all and ultimately loses the critical density that defines it as a city.

The new centre of Rotterdam has, unlike the modernist city or the generic city, clear borders that limit its growth and thus lead to an increase in density. If it is enough to make it a vibrant centre is uncertain. However, the condition is definitely urban. We can define buildings, streets and public spaces. The proximity of buildings and infrastructure still request a plan that goes beyond the individual buildings, because the neighbour is never far away. Many of the buildings are objects, but they are objects that have a strong relationship to each other. They don't stand alone. The land in between them is not a no man's land, neither is it by default a public space. The density fluctuates between crowded streets as the Lijnbaan, and completely abandoned streets inside the blocks. The overall density might be normal, but some places clearly have a density that is very low. If we compare this situation to an old, medieval city, we can see that the structure of the first is divided in low-rise public functions and high-rise private dwellings, as the latter has a structure that does not differ really, regardless the function. The area between Coolsingel and the Lijnbaan is of special interest because it clearly shows modernism's struggle with history. In the middle, where all the old buildings were destroyed, the scheme is clear and coherent. But the edges, where the new buildings are confronted with old streets and some monumental buildings, the scheme is no longer preserved. Instead of blocks with coherent architecture that addresses the public space and the traffic, the plots are filled with random buildings that do not follow the same logic.

Even though Rotterdam is usually seen as a city without history, if we look close at the history and take into account the bombardment, we see a strong continuity

in the city fabric. The street pattern of the modernist centre meets at important point with the old city fabric. Streets continue from one area to the other, softening the contrast between old and new. The idea of Rotterdam as a city without structure where everything can happen is a self-fulfilling prophecy. The city blocks are more defined than people use to believe. If architects would acknowledge this and create buildings that perform not just as objects but as part of a city, part of a block and part of a façade that defines the street profile Rotterdam can continue to develop as a city which grew from old to new and is capable to accommodate future developments.

The experiment of building a new city centre based on modern principles, instead of continuing to use old ideas is an important part of the history of Rotterdam. It shows both the radical nature of modernism as well as its struggle with history, of which is inevitably became part: *"On the evidence of the architecture produced by modern architects, and of events such as those just described, by the 1940s it was generally assumed that modernism was anti-historical. In fact, though, this was only a partial truth, for in another sense – the sense of William Morris – modern architecture was utterly 'historical', for it claimed to be an architecture wholly of the present, embodying the consciousness of the age, such as would be recognized in the future."*<sup>6</sup>

- 1 H. Ibelings, Van den Broek en Bakema 1948-1988 Architectuur en stedenbouw, Nai Uitgevers, Rotterdam, 2000
- 2 A. Forty, Words and Buildings; A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture, Thames & Hudson, New York, 2004, 201
- 3 Quote from: A. Forty, Words and Buildings; A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture, Thames & Hudson, New York, 2004, 132
- 4 A. Rossi, The Architecture of the City, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts / London, 1982
- 5 L. de Cauter, De Capsulaire Beschaving; over de stad in het tijdperk van de angst, Nai Uitgevers, Rotterdam, 2004
- 6 A. Forty, Words and Buildings; A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture, Thames & Hudson, New York, 2004, 199

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# Bridging cultures in Rotterdam City

The mix of nationalities in the same city.

Essay

Vissarion Naoum 1535196



## **Bridging cultures in Rotterdam City**

*Public Space – Public Realm in contradiction with the mix of nationalities in the same city. Is the city of Rotterdam capable enough so as to provide all the needs of the citizens or tourist in the center? Which is the catalyst of having a space (as meeting point, in the surrounding areas of Lijnbaan, Rotterdam). where could the different cultures meet and coexist harmoniously?*

In the public realm studio, space is examined in relation to its use, as vessel of life rather than a simple artifact. In the 21st century, in the era of globalization, when people with different cultural backgrounds, move everywhere, interact, we need to wonder whether the planned and designed mediums for our everyday activities are capable of “digesting” as well as making these differences emerge.

Public space is the corridor connecting residential, living and working spaces. It is the intermediary space where all people could meet, interact, play. It is the space that should incorporate and integrate the diverse cultural characteristics, while undertaking the role of

the middleman between the nationalities which are parochied in the urban fabric of Rotterdam. We need to wonder how could the public space provide with the stepping stones that connect these differences.

In order to understand the city of Rotterdam, in this essay, we try to approach it historically, in order to get familiar with its aspects and understand the forces and the factors that have resulted in the contemporary image and reality. A very important aspect is the demographics, as they influence, a lot, the culture of the city. For this reason, the analysis will focus on the nationality, the type of employment and all the important factors affecting the lifestyle of the residents.

The next step would be to identify where are the spaces where the diverse people meet and interact. Which is the group behaviour or the spatial representation of Rotterdam’s residents? We need to locate the functions within the city space, to find how and by whom they are mostly used. The layer of the built space will need to be overlapped with the practiced one, in order to find out how exactly the city space is used. Therefore, it is important to analyze the city of Rotterdam based on Use, Morphology and Functions.

## Historical Approach – Real Cases – Facts

The city of Rotterdam, is the second largest city in Netherlands, and the largest port in Europe. The name started as a dam on the Rotter river, Rotterdam has grown into a major international commercial center. By its strategic location at the Rhine-Meuse-Scheldt delta in the North Sea and at the heart of a massive rail, road, air and inland waterway distribution system extending throughout Europe means that Rotterdam can rightly be called the gateway to Europe. The population of the city proper was in March of 2010 by 603,425 habitants , and the whole area of Rotterdam is about 1.30 million people. By this, its known for its most vibrant and multicultural cities in Europe.

It can be said that the different poles of nations and cultural backgrounds are coming from different ethnic places. Statistics shows in 2008 the amount of the populations and their ethics origins. We could tell the population of the city of Rotterdam in 2008 was approximately 582,949 (100%). The Dutch population is approximately 313,765 (53.8%). Next to them are Surinamese 51,885 (8.9%), Turkish 45,099 (8%), Moroccans 37,476 (6.4%), Antillean / Aruba 19,562 (3.3%) Other EU Nations 32,134 (5,5%) and other nations 67,457 (14,1%).<sup>1</sup>

Around the actual city centre, which is dominated by shopping, we could say that a ring of clustered functions can be distinguished. These Functions have both a regional and local focus.

Sennet has been mentioned: *"The sense of who the "public" were, and where one was when one was out "in public" became enlarged in the early of 18th century in both Paris and London. Bourgeois people became less concerned to cover up their social origins; there were many more of them; the cities they inhabited were becoming a world in which*

*widely diverse groups in society were coming into contact. By the time the world "public" had taken on its modern meaning, therefore, it meant not only a region of social life located apart from the realm of family and close friends, but also that this public realm of acquaintances and strangers included a relatively wide diversity of people'.<sup>2</sup>*

By this statement of Sennet, i could say that differences could coexist if people accept implicit rules of new entrepreneurship, stated by the bourgeois profile. Which is happening today in the city of Rotterdam.

The city of Rotterdam, at some point we could say that is divided in parts from the different ethnics. But it is not really visible on map. The Chinese street is the only one which has its own character by small shops and restaurant. Apart from that, the whole city is participating to all its clusters and functions by their own ethic and cultural backgrounds. With result the whole city is sharing the same ethnics and nations at the same point. In few words the city of Rotterdam is a meeting pole for all.

On the other hand, the city has been divided in different ways, we could name them parochies. in this essay parochoy is referred according to cultures, or common ethnics characters, or people with the same background, such as working or way of life they follow in their everyday life. So the city is participating to all its events from different cultures such as Festivals and Events that the town is offering.

In the city of Rotterdam, people with same common character of background or parochies they normally are gathering in same places that they can coexist together. Of course this kind coexistence, does not have any borders, borders that only people with only one background can be invited. It could work better for all people, so they can all gather to the same place and by this they have the opportunity to correspond

1. Wikipedia, (Accessed May 9th 2011)

2. Sennet, 1974, The fall of Public man, p17



as much as possible to the event that it is holding in the specific place / location.

*All of this constitutes an experience of Rotterdam that might be characterized as exploratory, multilayered and full of surprises. The complex physical layout of the city, consisting of dispositioned structures, the incorporated height differences and the system of very specific places with their own identities combined with the fact that the population consists of only minorities, allows for a vibrant and dynamic city full of contrast.*<sup>3</sup>

It has mentioned that people in the city of Rotterdam, with all its different backgrounds, ethnics and nationalities, coexist in the same town. Groups of people can be characterized different from the other ones. The only common they have is that they are related with their common interest and hobbies. All these common aspects of people, are causing them to meet in the same place so as to exchange and share their ideas in the same area surrounded by others with

3. Sennet, 1974, The fall of Public man, p..

the same interest. By these statements, next step is to map the events and functions of the city Rotterdam so as to understand where are they located.

### Mapping the city of Rotterdam

By having analyze the map, the city of Rotterdam has been developed through years, we could see that the city has been divided in some way into parts. These parts are not shown, I could say, with borders so as to see a specific division of the areas but as areas in a way that people with the same interest and ideas of aspect of views are gathering according to the same character of each person. (map 1)

On the map 2, we can see many spots in the city by their uses and their functions in whole 24h such as shopping, china town, galleries, café streets and in general meeting point areas are gathering in the same city of Rotterdam altogether. People with the same background, ethnics, nationalities, interests makes it



map 1

activated by visiting them.

Furthermore, we could say that the city of Rotterdam consist of many functions. Most of the functions are located in the city center, and especially around Lijnbaan. Furthermore, the functions themselves differ from other ones. We could name the themes such as Architecture, Attractions, Museum/Galleries, and of course Shopping, Restaurants, Theatres, Clubs and Hotels which are surrounded in the periphery of the city center.

We have spot the fact that each function has a different time use. Some of them are activated during day and others during night. Each function, is activated from people with the same background that are paroching in the urban plan of the city of Rotterdam. And these groups of people, they are gathering to the specific places to share the same room and coexist friendly. On map we see with the same color the same type of functions in the city center.

The next diagram shows the whole functions / events which have been held in the city of Rotterdam on a specific day of the month of March. It implies the specific functions events of the city according to the day they work, the specific category of event and the time that this event is holding.

Apart from the parochies we analyzed before on the diagram, shopping is also one of the parochies that the city is offering, which are mainly activated by the Lijnbaan pedestrian street and of course to the surrounding areas, their working times are from 9:00 - 10:00 in the morning till 18.00 in the evening. Once a week they keep the stores till 21.00. The other functions mostly held after working times. The diagram is showing that its mostly activated between the times of 18:00 and 02:00 in the morning, and especially in weekends. (Diagram A)



map 2

According to the events, functions we mentioned previously that they held in different times during day, the following maps shows where are the functions mostly activated during day, evening and night. It's implied on the maps with the red color on the streets, and they show which parts of the town is more activated during different times of the day.

Having defined the most activated places during specific times of the day, the mix of them shows us an different picture. The maps shows which streets are more activated in the city in different periods of times during the day. (maps 3,4,5)

The last map (map 6) appears the combination of the three previous maps in one, with result that we can see which streets are more activated from the early times of the day till late at night. It is characterized that each street has a different character according to the functions, and where people with same

background are coexisting altogether. These streets are: Witte de Withstraat, Mauritsweg, and Nieuwe Binnenweg. Having named the streets, it is going to be to analyze them according to the uses, Morphology and Functions and to their building structure.

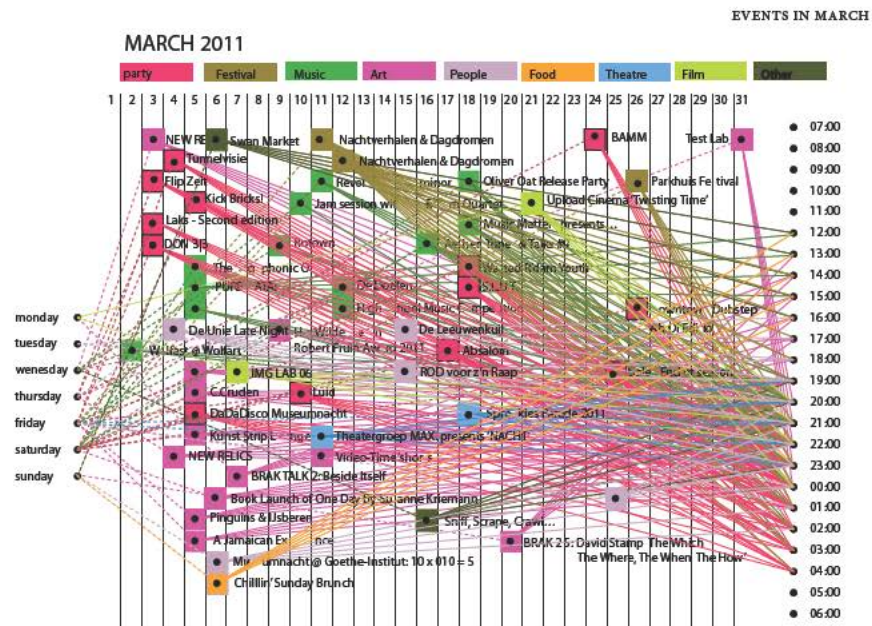
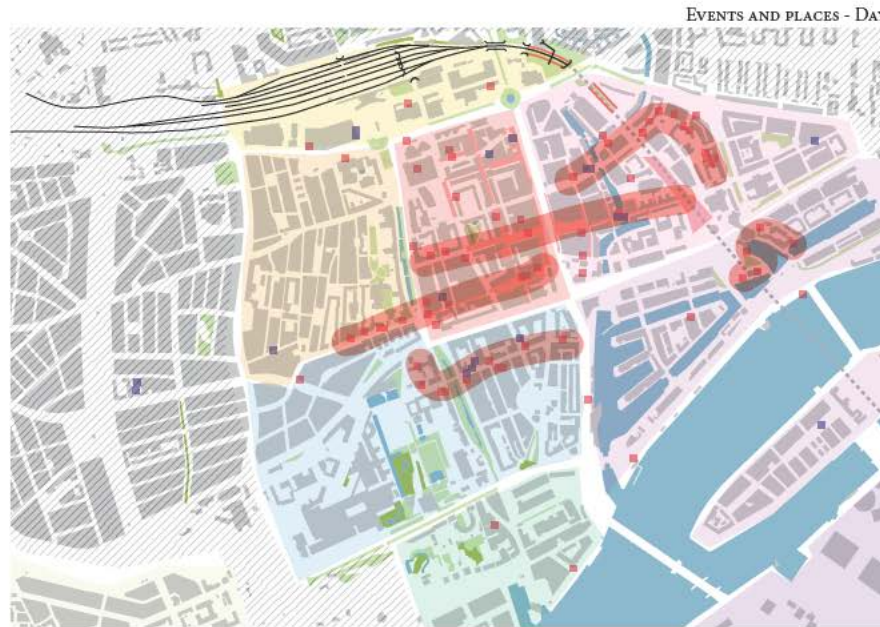
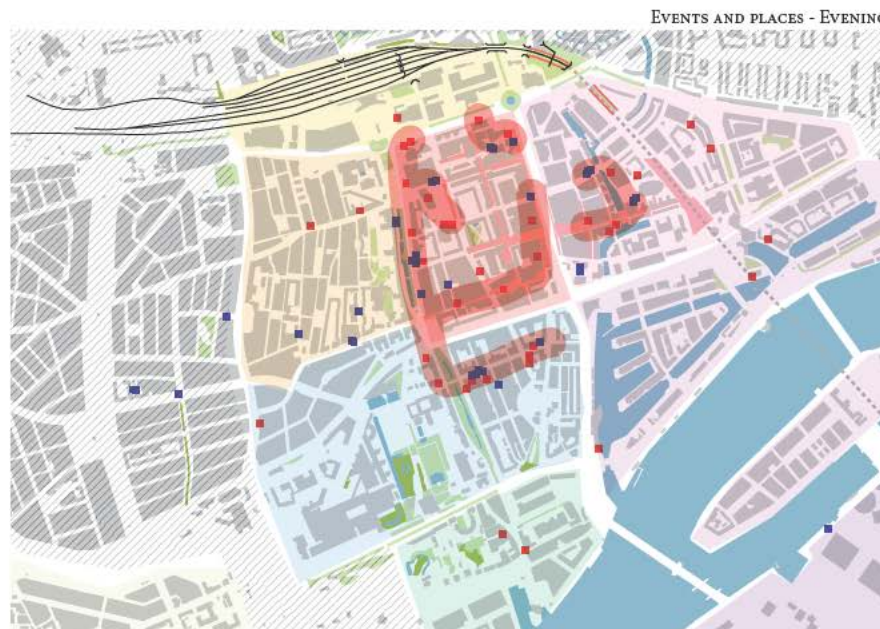


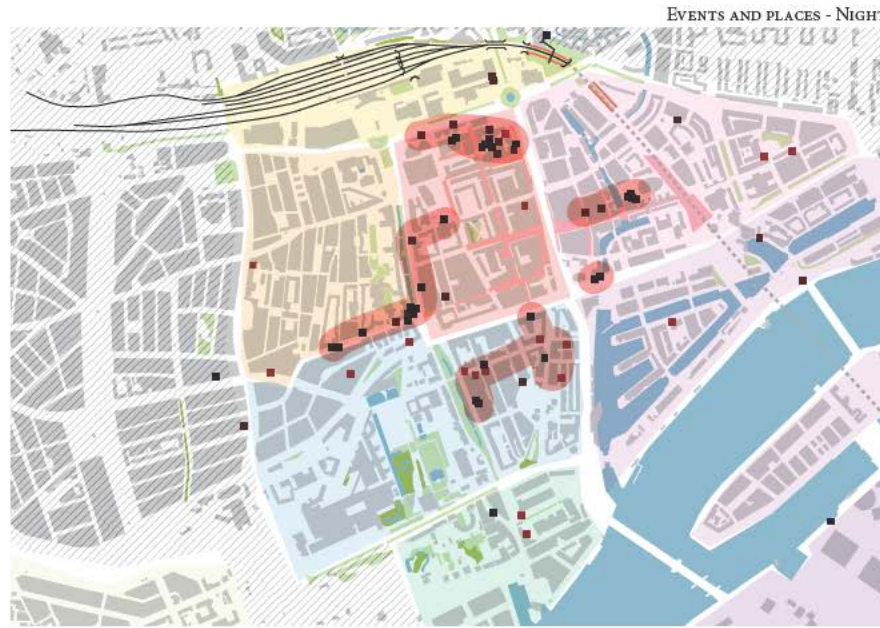
diagram A



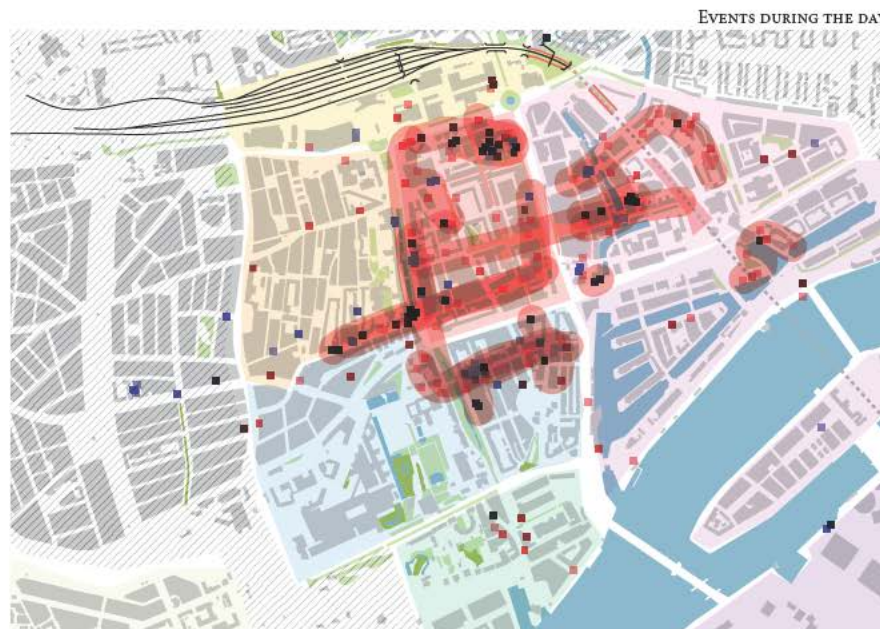
map 3



map 4



map 5



map 6

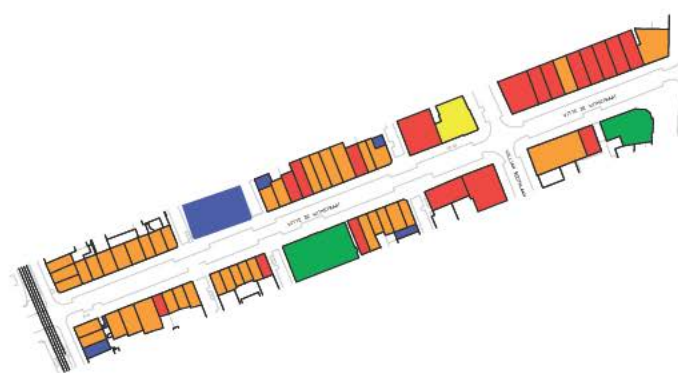
## Witte de Withstraat

The street of Witt de With, is located in the south of Rotterdam. On this street, the uses varies such in Culture, Café bars, restaurants and small galleries. The character of the street is more for people with an artistic background, people with an intellectual character, where they gather there and coexist. The bars and the restaurants vary too and sometimes the galleries are also part in the buildings. We can understand that the functions are inserted in the buildings that previously had other uses. Sometimes in the bars/ restaurants can be found in the same facility together or in different places. So people with that type of interest mostly are gathering to the Witte de Withstraat.

the space where those functions is given and takes place. The character of the building structure of this street varies. Most of the buildings are in small size, and most of the the façade of the buildings don't extend the 5-6 meters. And the height of the buildings do not extend more than 15 metres.



Perspective view of the street



- shopping
- houses
- bars/restaurants
- clubs
- public services
- offices

scale 1:4000

## Nieuwe Binnenweg

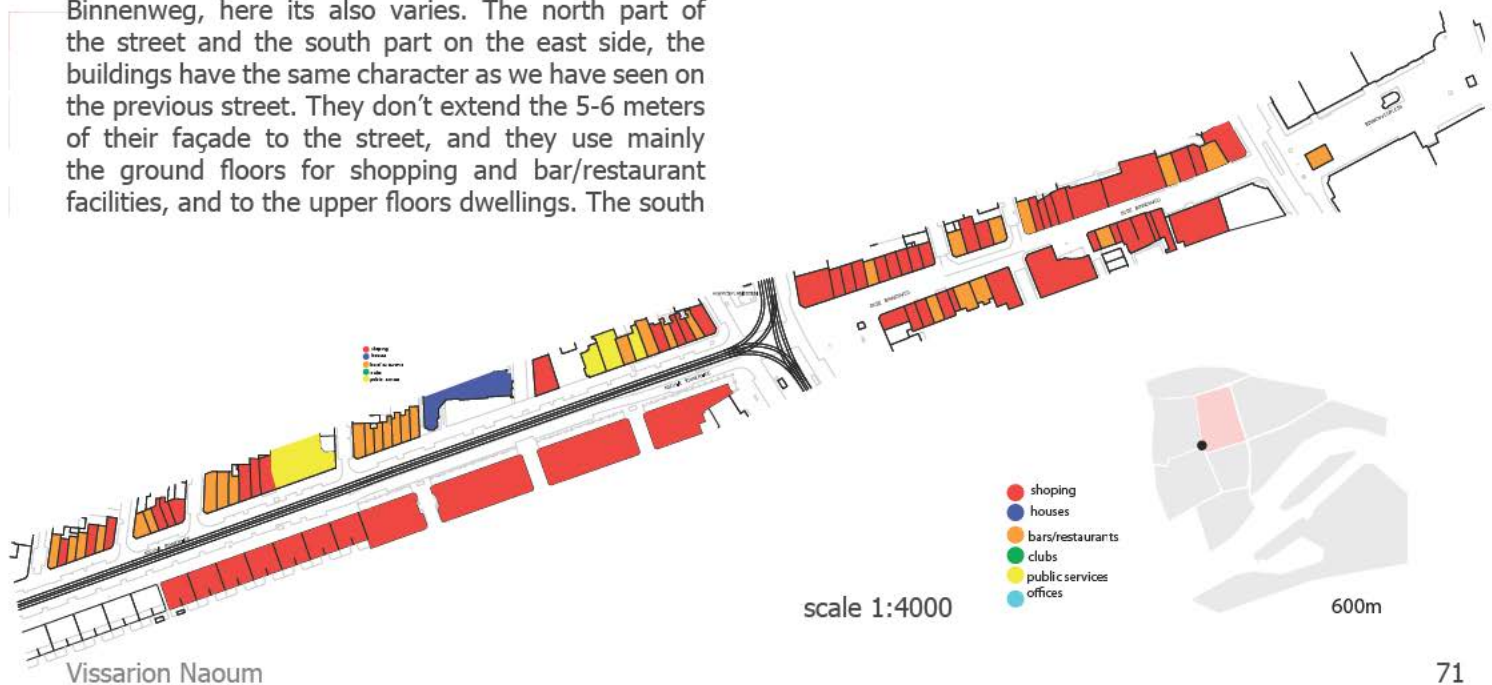
The street of Nieuwe Binnenweg is located just few streets above of Witt de Withstraat. The character of the street differs from the previous one. Most of the uses is shopping and bars/restaurants. The East part of the street portrays the uses of shopping, and in some parts some bars are also included. On west part, even the one side is activated by shopping, the other side of the street, the functions are mixed with other functions such as bars and clubs. On this street we can find people with all characters, and they are walking through the street daily. In the morning times, the shopping functions are more activated, and as long the day passes through, the character and the picture of the street changes, especially from late evening where clubs and the bars are having their turn. We could imply the fact that the street is mostly activated comparing to the previous one because people walk through it with the result the functions of its street are activated with their many uses.

According to the building's structure of the Nieuwe Binnenweg, here its also varies. The north part of the street and the south part on the east side, the buildings have the same character as we have seen on the previous street. They don't extend the 5-6 meters of their façade to the street, and they use mainly the ground floors for shopping and bar/restaurant facilities, and to the upper floors dwellings. The south

and west part of the buildings differ from the other buildings of the street and mainly the ground floor is shopping and the upper floors dwellings as well. Also, the character of the buildings according to the height do not differ from the previous one, they don't extend the height of 15 metres.



Perspective view of the street  
Nieuwe Binnenweg



## Mauritsweg

The last and selected street of Mauritsweg, is crossing vertically through nieuwe Binnenweg. Here we could state it's different character from the other streets we implied previously. On this street, which is starting from the south the Central station of Rotterdam, the functions are mixed in a way from all types. On this street, we can see functions such as shopping, houses, bars, in some parts clubs and public services. Apart from the traffic of the street by cars and trams, people are also crossing the street almost all the times of the day, with the result that the street is enough busy and crowded In the morning times. The most activated functions are the public services and the small offices, and some stores. From early of evening times the restaurants, café and bars are opening too for their services to the public. Furthermore we could say that on this street, most of the Chinese people are gathering, because the majority of the restaurants are Chinese.

According to the building's structure, the character has almost the same typology as the other ones. Most of the buildings do not also extend the façade of the 5-6 meters, as they vary in sizes. The south west part of the street differ from the other ones due to its uses, of public services and hotel facilities.

As far as the complexity of the functions and the uses of the main street is illustrated, the street is still one of the busiest streets of the town. To the north part of the street, the Central station is located, where a lot of people are coming and it is the first street they face. Here we could imply the fact of its difference from the other streets. A canal is through the street and its surrounded with green. And of course the length of the street is bigger and it give us the character that people can gather outside in the public space that the canal with the park is offering.









An architectural section drawing of a building. The drawing shows a multi-story structure with a complex internal layout. A large, stylized tree-like structure is integrated into the building's design, with its trunk and branches extending through multiple levels. The drawing uses fine lines to represent walls, floors, and structural elements. The text "Public Space as Facilitator of Leisure Activities" is overlaid on the upper left portion of the drawing.

Public Space as Facilitator  
of Leisure Activities

Research

## **PUBLIC SPACE AS FACILITATOR OF LEISURE ACTIVITIES**

The city of Rotterdam is, due to the bombing of World War II, a mixture between pre-war and post-war buildings. This forming of a new centre in an existing city, during a modernist minded period, resulted in a broad set up dominated by traffic and transit. The Coolingsingel, a mixture between large pre-war and post-war buildings, tells the story of Rotterdam best. The wideness of the set up and the scale of the pedestrian's space are typical for the city centre.

The location for our design is a transition area between the spatial axis of the Coolingsingel and the ensemble of the Lijnbaan area. This contradiction between large buildings and the amount of traffic at the Coolingsingel put against the low pedestrian street of the Lijnbaan shows the versatility in the identities of the public space in the city centre of Rotterdam.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In order to grasp and define our main topic of research, we started with a general functional analysis of the city centre of Rotterdam. This analysis aroused our interest in the way Rotterdam dealt with the different forms of leisure within the city.

We commenced a bottom-up investigation of how the concepts of commerce and leisure, that of the shopping areas, was related to the actual urban form. This approach gave us an insight into the direct leisure experience of the city, seen through the eyes of the visitor.

This specific perspective of analysis, in turn, had to be related to the methodology of our preliminary design. In this, we did not focus on the solids within the urban configuration, but rather on its open spaces, making explicit the experience of these spaces.

## **STRUCTURE**

Our research-report is structured around the following topics:

research phase

- preliminary functional analysis
- analysis streetscapes main shopping streets
- paths and visual elements
- neighbourhood embedding
- program analysis
- analysis streetscapes design location

design phase

- methodology (relating analysis and design)
- urban scenario

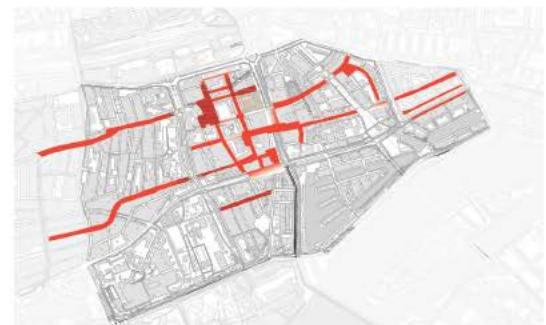
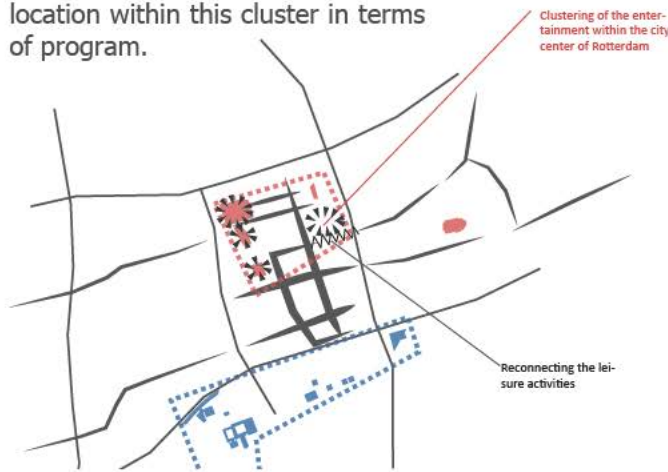


Lijnbaan Rotterdam image from <http://www.flickr.com/photos/thamar/27931815/>

## PRELIMINARY FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

Rotterdam's city centre has a lot to offer in terms of leisure activity. It harbours a dense network of shopping streets, which in turn offer different pedestrian routes. The south-west quarter of the centre contains a cluster of culture-related functions such as museums and art-galleries, whereas the north part offers functions more related to entertainment, such as the Schouwburg, cinema and casino.

If we compare activities related to day and night functionality, our analysis shows that during the night, the leisure activity within the centre is concentrated around the Stadhuis- and Schouwburgplein, Witte de Withstraat and some other small locations; essentially fragmented throughout the city. Given that our design location is situated within the cluster of entertainment, our preliminary conclusion is to integrate our location within this cluster in terms of program.

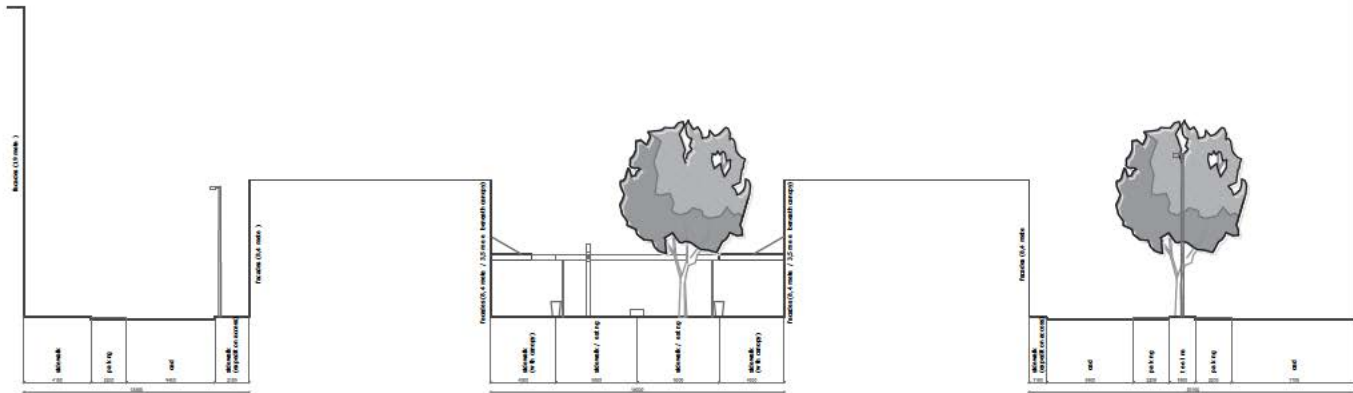
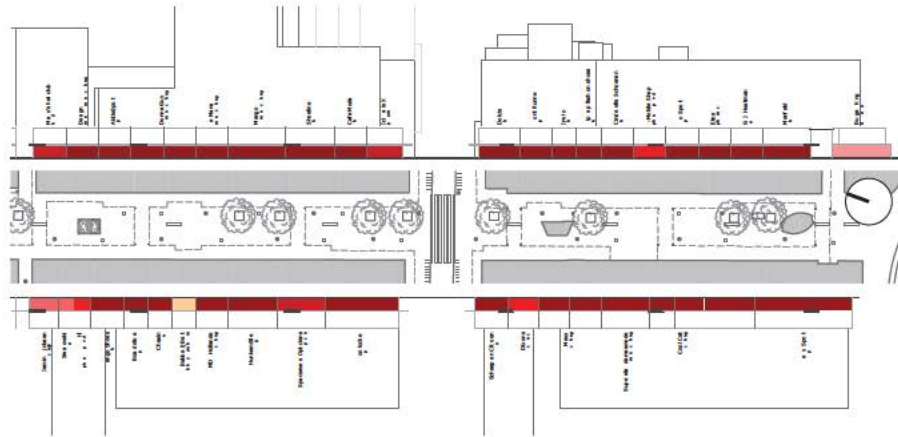


## ANALYSIS STREETSCAPES MAIN SHOPPING STREETS

In line with the general functional analysis, we decided to focus on the network of leisure / shopping-streets with a more in-depth investigation.

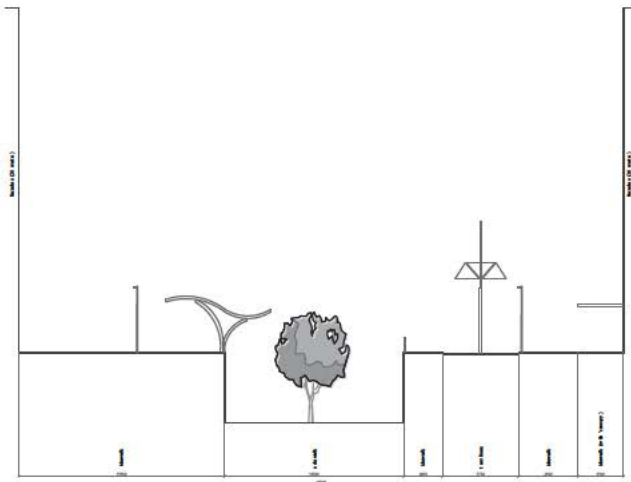
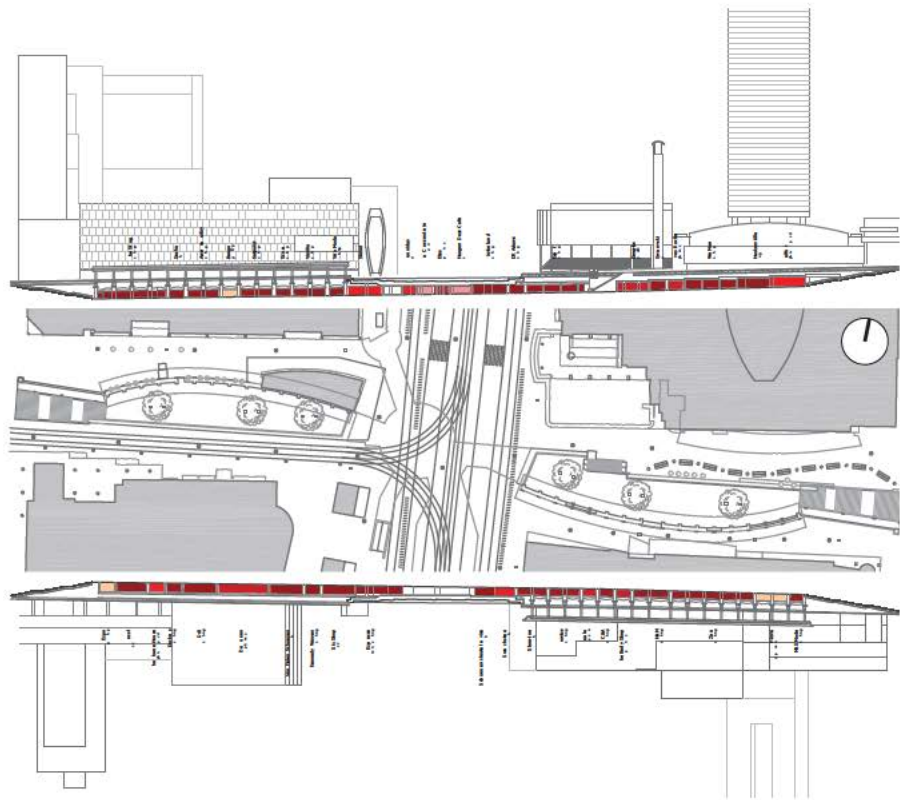
The main purpose of this was to determine which architectural principles were readable in relation to public space dedicated to leisure activity.

To this end we drew façades, plans, sections and perspectives of the most distinct streets within the city centre; the Coolingsel, Witte de Withstraat, Nieuwe Binnenweg, Meent, Beurstraverse and of course the Lijnbaan. Purpose of these drawings was to delineate their respective atmospheres in terms of scale and proportion, spatial division and functionality and its rhythm.

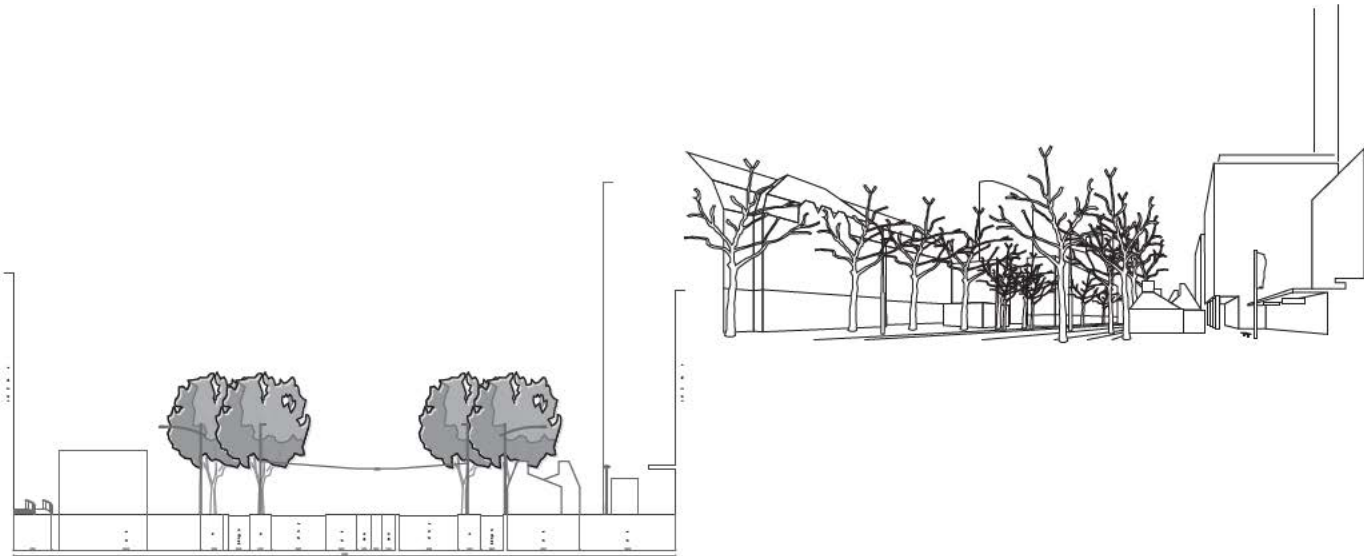
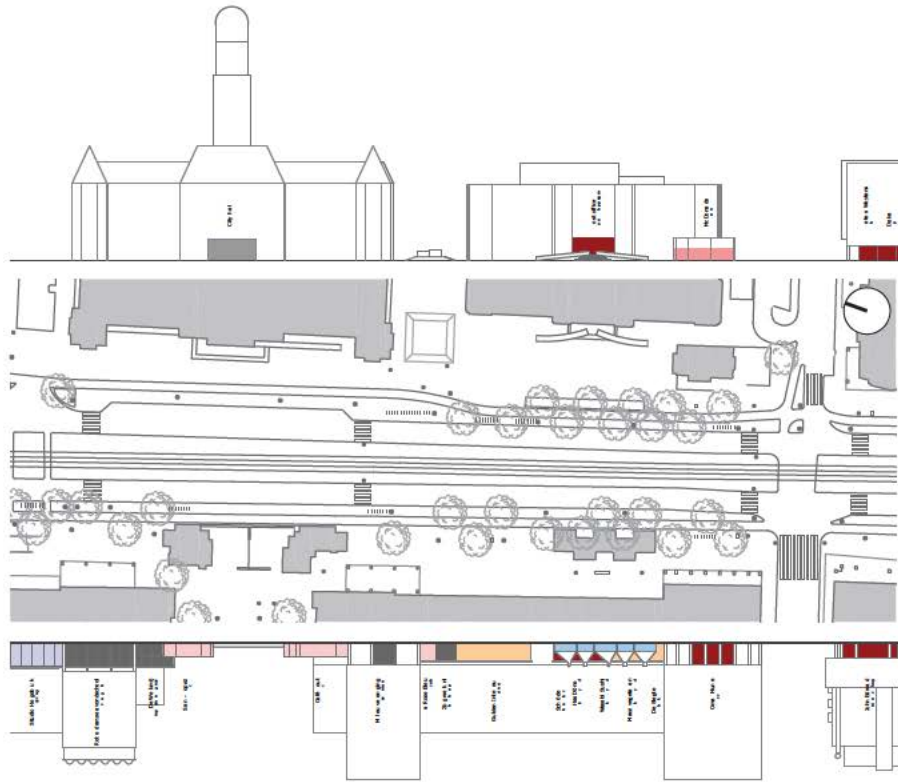


The Lijnbaan and Beurstraverse facilitate regional commercial functions, which mainly relate to fashion (chain stores). The Lijnbaan has a monotone rhythm, only interrupted two times, by Bakkerij Bart – a different function, and the Aert van Nesstraat – which interrupts the rhythm of the passage. In addition the rhythm changes several times by differing façade lengths, but this effect is less noticeable.

The Beurstraverse is fractioned through the underpass under the Coolsingel. The underpassing breaks the façade rhythm and creates a sequence of light, dark and light. Its shopping functions are relatively monotone, except for the stores located beneath the Coolsingel.

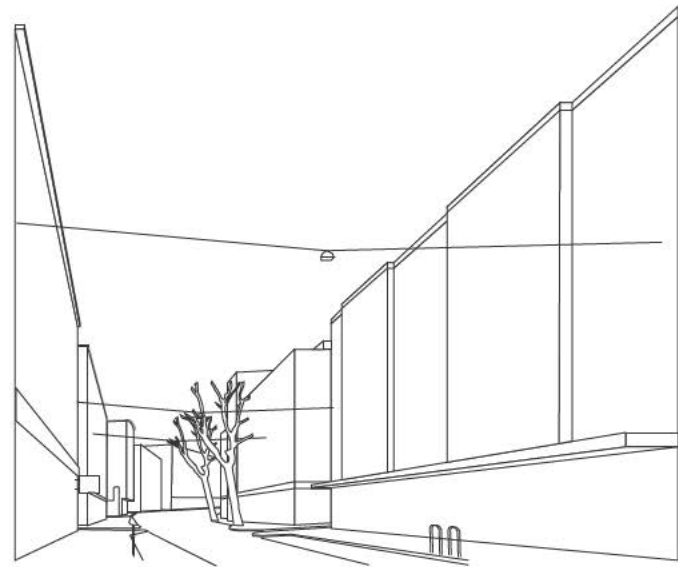
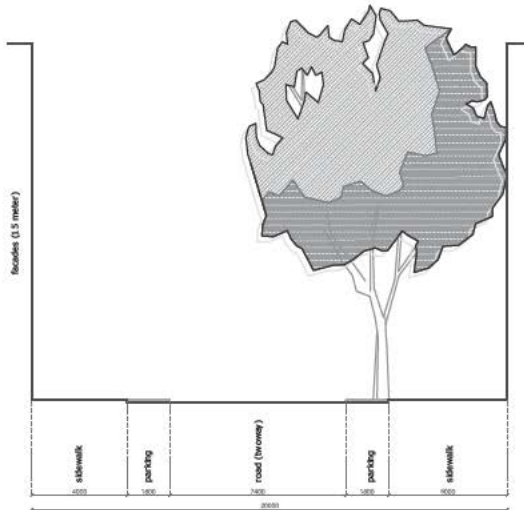
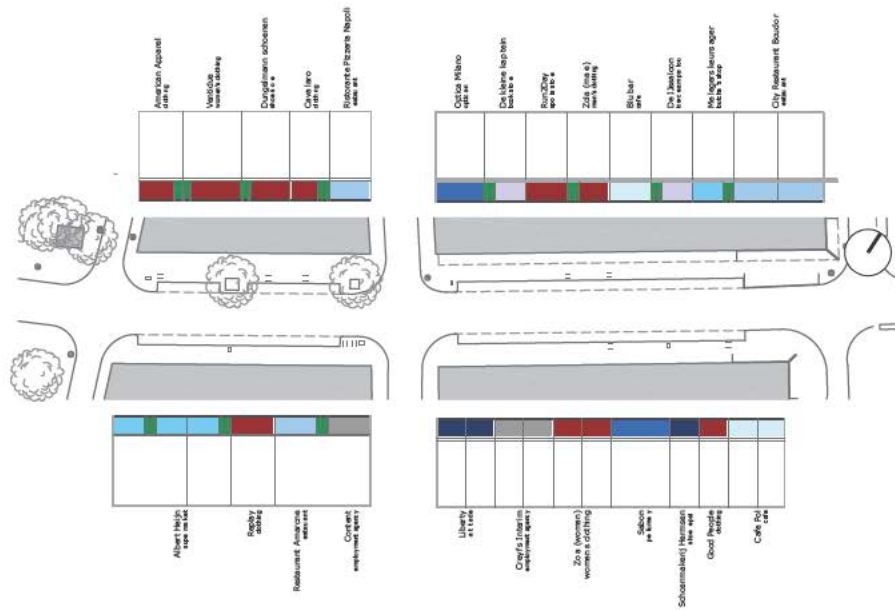


The Coolsingel harbours both regional and local orientated stores, but its functional rhythm is lacking; the density of stores is too low to function. Also the majestic City Hall and former Post Office are situated at the Coolsingel; their facades are appealing but lack an interaction at plinth level with passing pedestrians. Additionally there are follies placed on the sidewalk, mostly facilitating takeaway restaurants, small scale elements in relation to the large buildings and functions on both sides; local elements in between regional functions.





The Meent harbours both regional and local orientated stores, but offers a limited amount of diversity as it limits itself to fashion, 'food and drinks' and offices. On one side, the apartment buildings above the functions are entered through staircases placed in between the functions. This strengthens the interaction between residents and visitors of the Meent, rather than on the other side where the apartments are entered via galleries at the back.







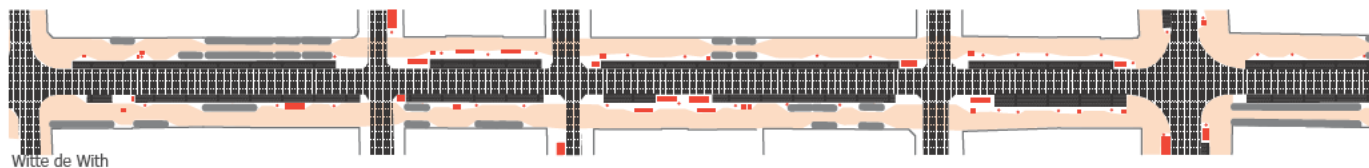
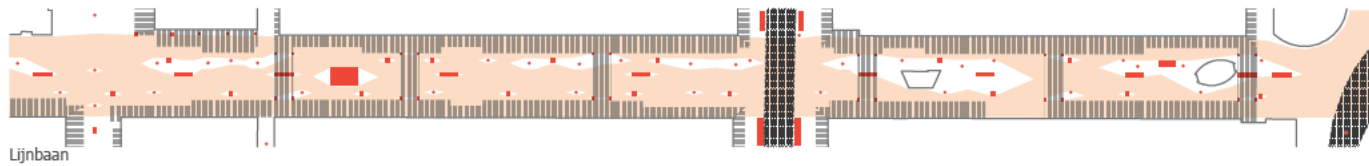
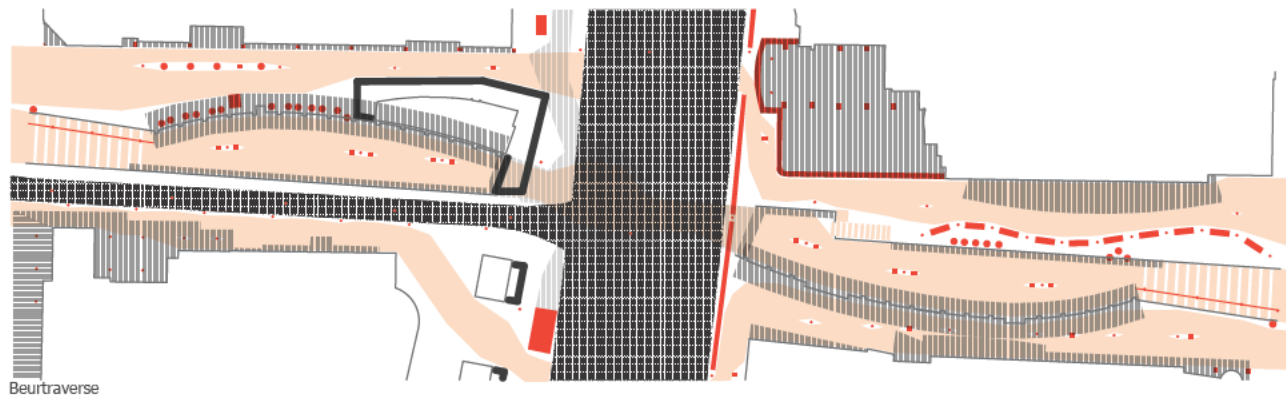
## PATHS AND VISUAL ELEMENTS

In order to identify the blocking and improving elements regarding the continuity of the pedestrian's route we made an inventory of the paths and street elements of the regarded streets. The paths concern the pedestrian areas (orange) and other traffic areas (grey hatch). The elements concern

parked vehicles, street furniture, and vertical elements such as trees and poles. In addition the café terraces and canopies in the area are depicted.

In the Lijnbaan and Beurstraverse you can pass virtually unobstructed from one side of the street to the other. In the Witte de With, you are obstructed by parked cars and one-

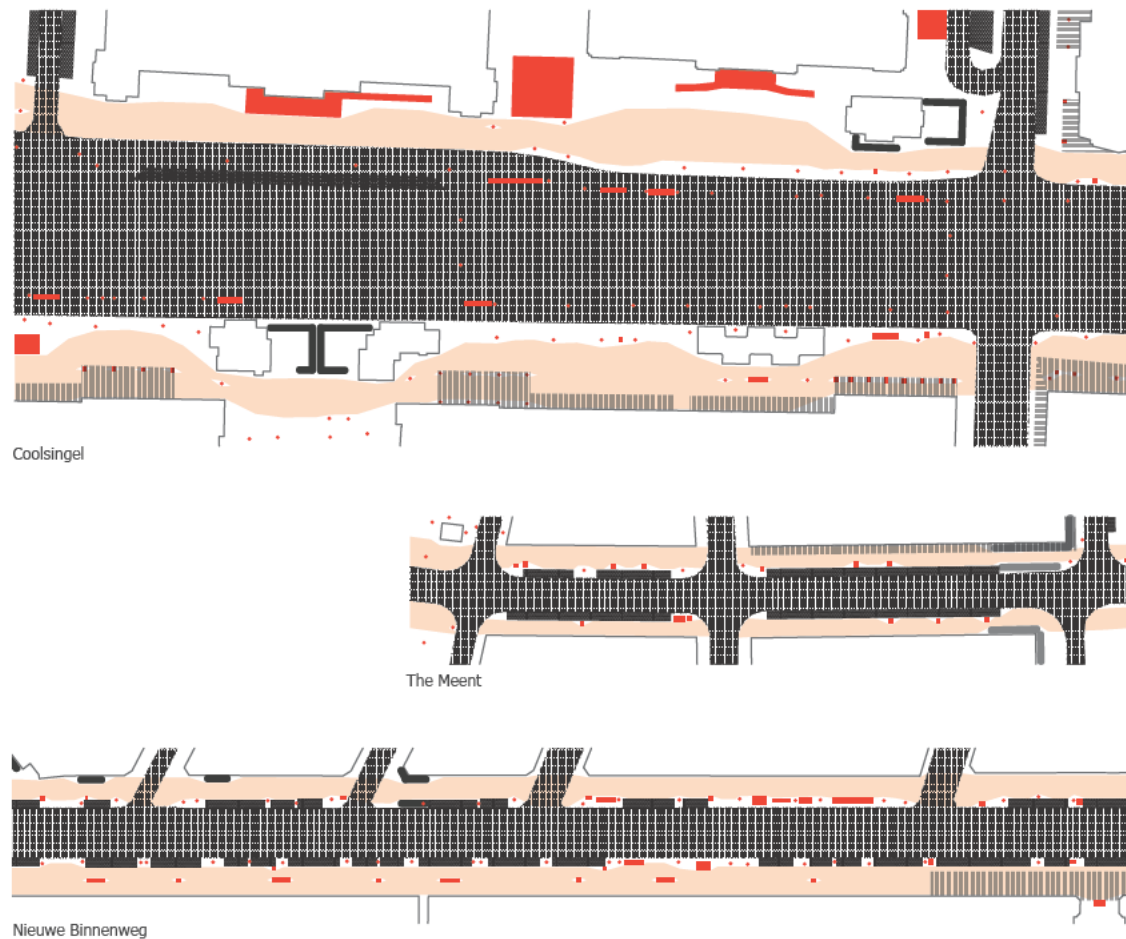
way traffic to reach the other side. The Meent with its two-way traffic and the Nieuwe Binnenweg with its two-way traffic and a tram lane are obstructing your connection to the other side of the street even more. The Coolsingel is even further obstructing your connection, here you are constrained to one side, one façade of the street.



The Lijnbaan has far more obstructing elements centred in the mid-section of the street than the Beurstraverse. This way visitors use this middle part as a place of stay. In the Beurstraverse there are no marked spaces facilitating such events. Here, these elements are arranged “on top” of the Beurstraverse, as a voyeuristic way of watching the pedestrian flow

through the ‘Koopgoot’. The Nieuwe Binnenweg has on one side an unobstructed route for the pedestrian. The other side has side-streets breaking up the building blocks, interrupting the visitor’s constant flow. The pavement is ongoing at these crossings, so the interruption is limited. At the Witte de Withstraat the pavement has multiple terraces interrupting

your passage, since the pavement narrows as a result of these elements. The Meent doesn’t have ongoing pavements, here the side streets block the pedestrian’s steady flow even more.



## NEIGHBOURHOOD EMBEDDING

This map indicates the streets in their context of the Rotterdam city centre. In the second instance, it reveals whether or not these streets are locally supported. The Nieuwe Binnenweg, Witte de With and Meent are embedded within dwelling areas and through

their offer of local function, such as a supermarket, they form a relation with their neighbourhood. In contrast to this, there are the Lijnbaan and the Beurstraverse, which cater mainly to the regional visitor through their mono-functional offer. They offer no direct relation to everyday local needs other than passing through. It also shows how the Beurstraverse

is the only element functioning to connect the both sides of the Coolsingel successfully. It does so by passing the Coolsingel underneath and offering rich commercial program on this route.



Unembedded Beurstraverse



Unembedded Coolsingel



Unembedded Lijnbaan



Embedded Witte de Withstraat



Embedded Nieuwe Binnenweg



Embedded Meent









# Public Space as Facilitator of Leisure Activities

## Masterplan

Bob Blom | Dirk de Groot | Jelle van Vliet

## METHODOLOGY

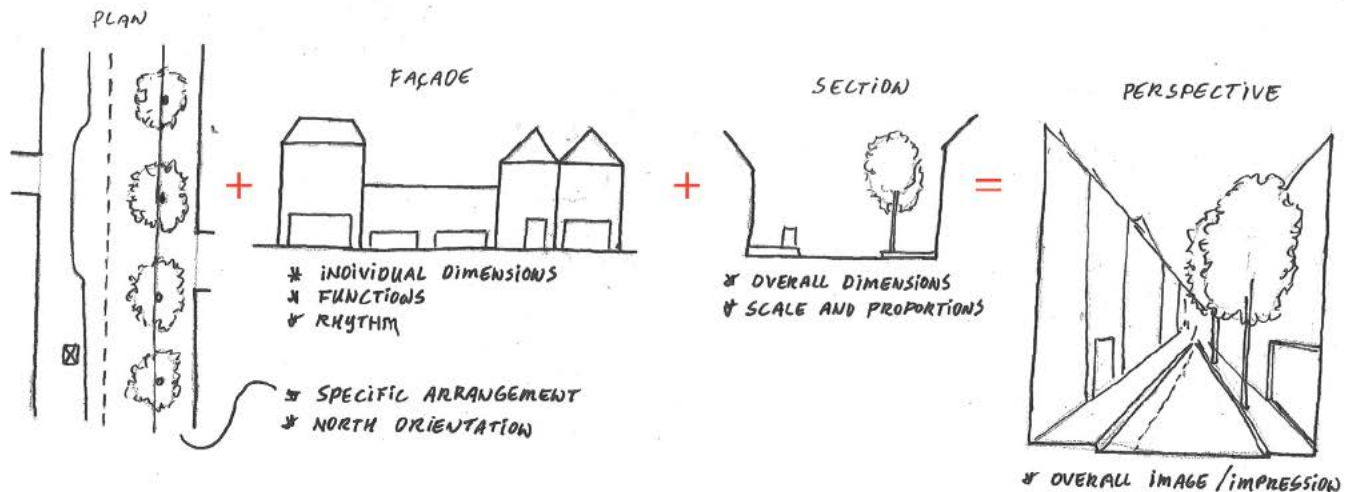
In order to stay coherent within our line of work, a reflection on our research and design methodology is of importance.

The more generally accepted approach to research and design is that from a top-down perspective. According to a certain theme, the analysis works its way down from the level of the whole, to the level of the part or detail. The approach

to the design in this sense works in a similar manner.

Our group's bottom-up perspective within the analysis works the other way around. By analysing at the level of the part or detail, we are able to later on compose the analysis and design at the level of the whole. By positioning ourselves within the void-system, the streetscape, we are mapping and defining the spatial experience from street-level.

However, as an architectural design isn't made up only out of streets and open outside spaces, it is important to constantly switch between scales and exterior and interior spaces within the frame provided by this bottom-up orientated research and design approach.



## PROGRAM ANALYSIS

The clustering of entertainment functions, as found in the functional analysis of the city centre of Rotterdam, is mainly focussing on regional visitors, offering commercial theatre and cinema. The main functions are the Doelen as a large congress and concert hall, the Schouwburg as a stage for music, dance, and theatre performances, and the Pathé as a chain cinema with 7 rooms and over 2700 seats.

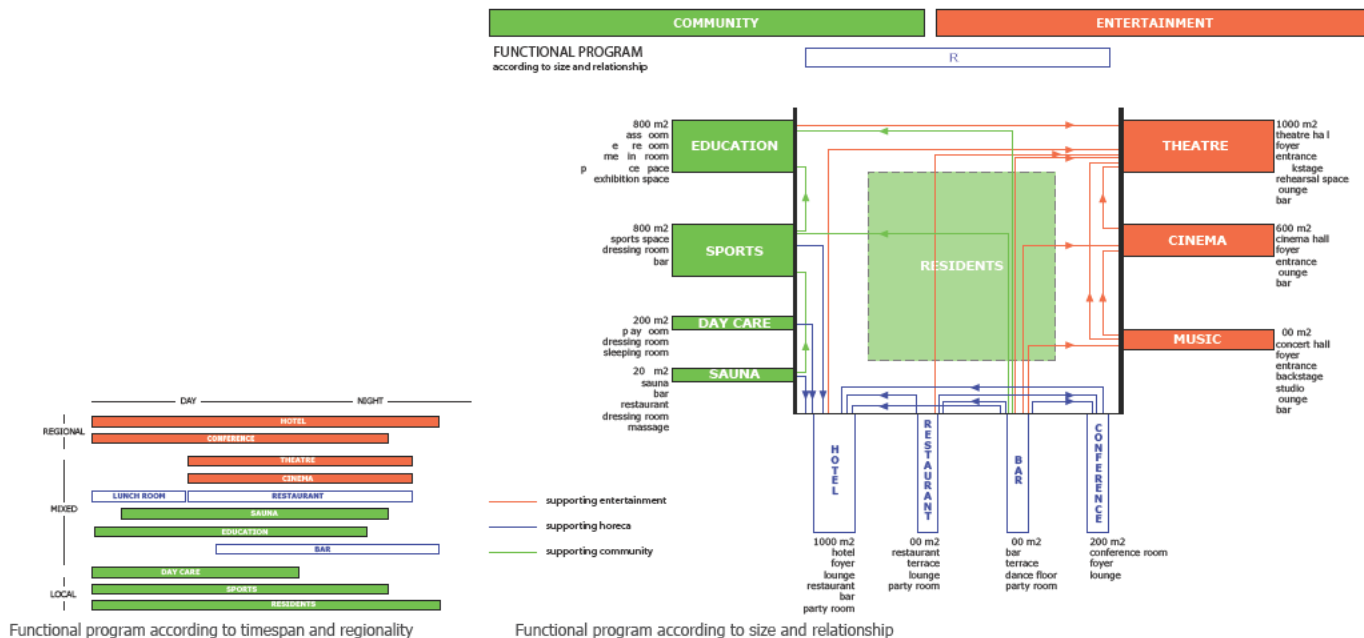
The current location hosts the Rotterdam School for Artistic Design, the SKVR. It resides in the former Saint Lucia school, a national monument, designed by the architect Leo de Jonge. In our

opinion this school can form a strong connection to the entertainment area, by working together with a new low profile theatre. By making this theatre easy accessible, it will connect to both regional and local visitors.

The Meent is embedded within the dwelling of its surroundings, therefore it also attracts the residents of the area. This creates a mixture between local and regional visitors, as mentioned above. Since we tend to strengthen the attraction of both regional and local visitors, the introduction of dwelling on our location is desirable. To further enhance this embedding, and to create the desired social interaction, local functions are introduced. By adding sports functions, a sauna,

day care, food and drinks, and preserving the presence of the SKVR, the interaction is enhanced during the day. Supporting the regional characteristics of our location, we introduce a hotel with supporting functions like a bar and restaurant. By doing so, the regional/local interaction during the day is even further enhanced.

Thus our program, based on interaction between regional and local visitors and residents, can be divided into two categories: community and entertainment. We want create interaction between these flows by introducing two degrees of interaction; a public and a semi-public space.



## ANALYSIS STREETSCAPES AND URBAN SCENARIO

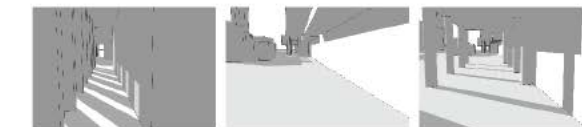
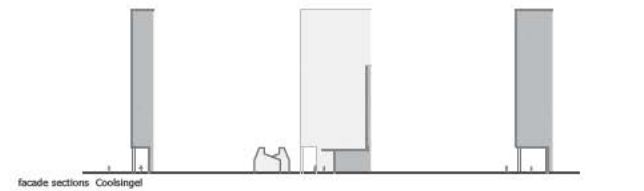
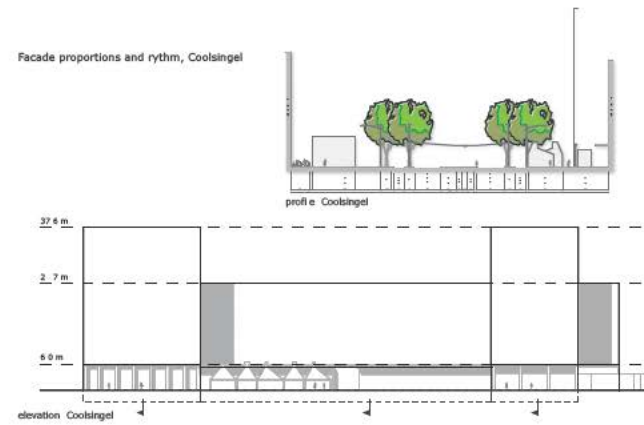
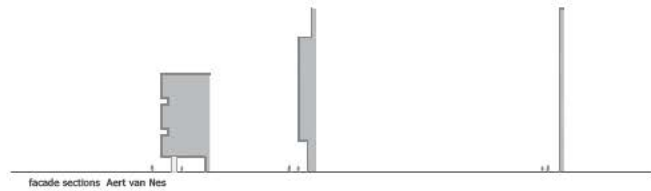
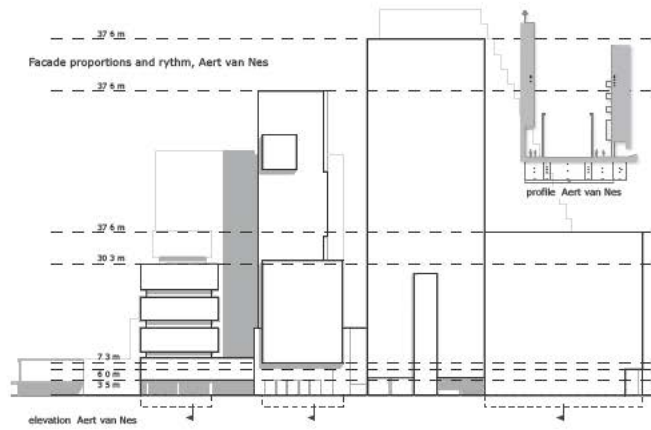
The approach we implement in the analysis of streetscapes surrounding our design location is the same as it was for the main shopping streets covered earlier.

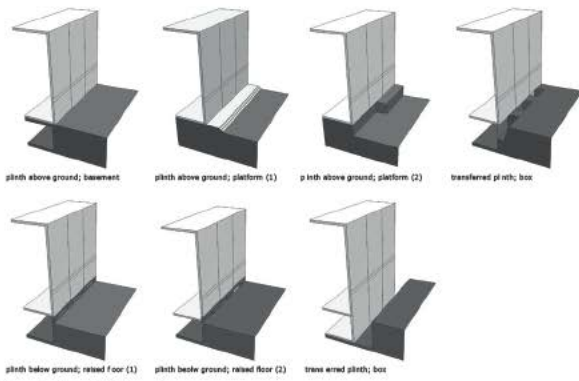
However, as we venture further into the research assignment, its outcome becomes more important as potential tools for

design. The inherit atmospheres of the surrounding streets; the Coolsingel as boulevard, the Aert van Nesstraat as extension of the Meent, the Lijnbaan as shopping promenade and the Stadhuisplein as horeca square, become starting points for the design. Rather than assigning these street's different functions and atmospheres, we choose to maintain and strengthen the experience of these public

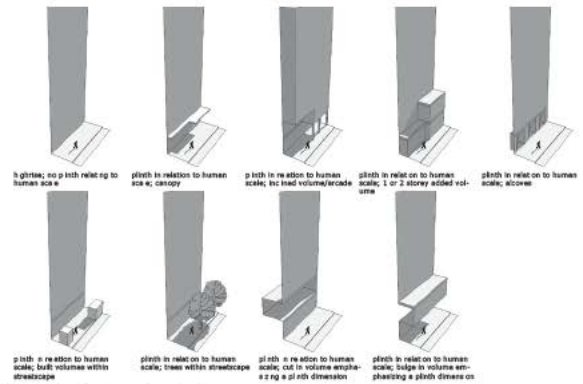
places of stay.

As the four edges bordering our design location, the next step is to relate their relation to the inner world of the building block.



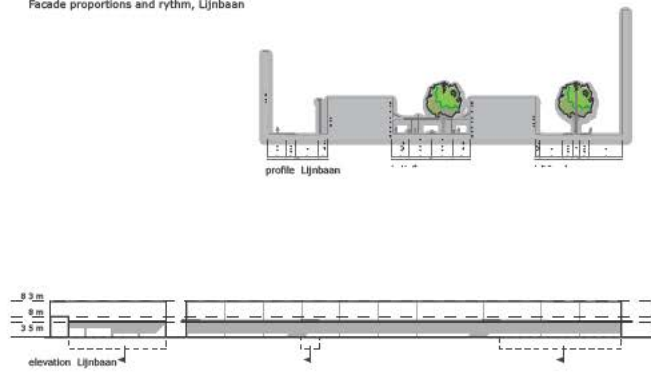


Case study plinth typology

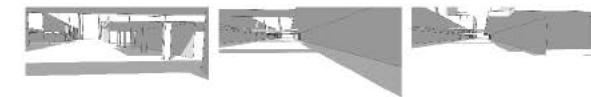


Case study Aert van Nesstraat

Facade proportions and rhythm, Lijnbaan

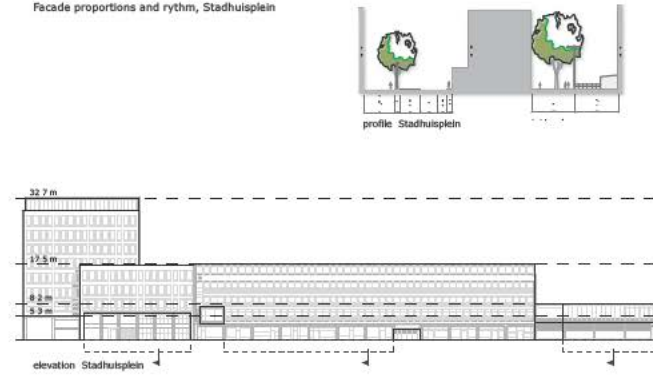


facade sections Lijnbaan



perspectives Lijnbaan

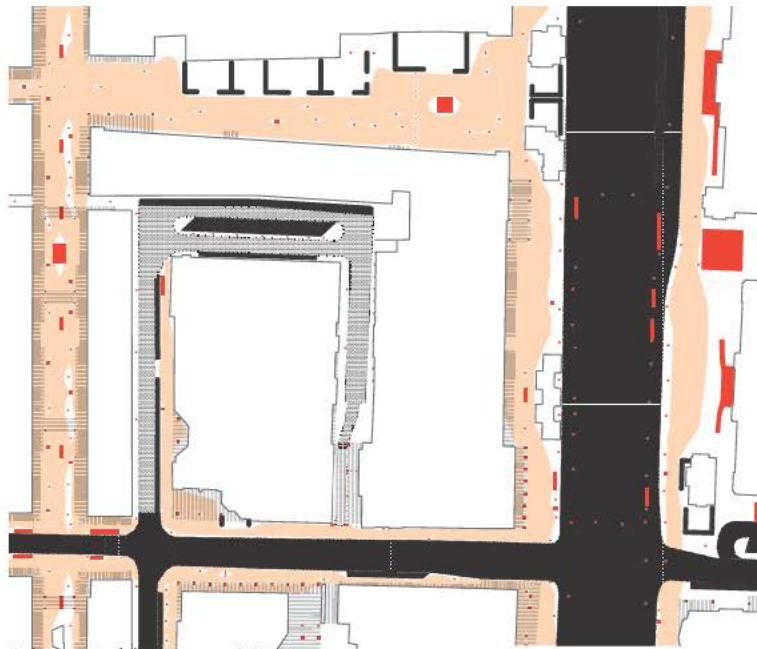
Facade proportions and rhythm, Stadhuisplein



facade sections Stadhuisplein



perspectives Stadhuisplein



Paths van visual diagram present situation

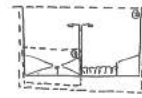


Paths van visual diagram proposed situation

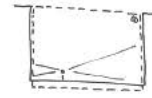
- Pedestrian's route
- Traffic space
- Parking space
- Elements
- Terrace
- Canopy
- Building

## IDENTITIES SURROUNDING STREETS

The four sides of the block each have their own identity, the one more present than the other. By stating these identities, the current characteristics become important, either to retain, remove or improve. The Lijnbaan has a vivid identity of a commercial shopping street, where the idea of Van den Broek and Bakema is still present. The other surrounding streets do need to be enhanced in order to strengthen their character. When looking at the situation of the Stadhuisplein, the horeca is present through several

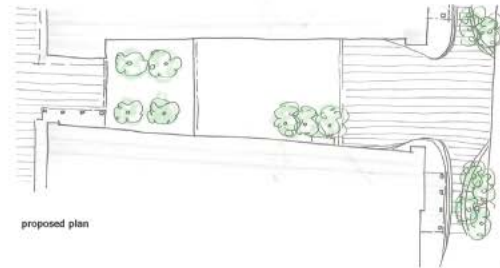


existing definition of space and view

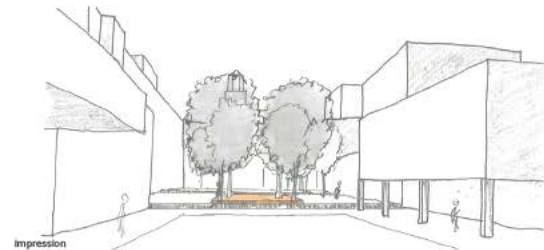


proposed definition of space and view

proposed section



proposed plan



Impression  
Proposed Stadhuisplein

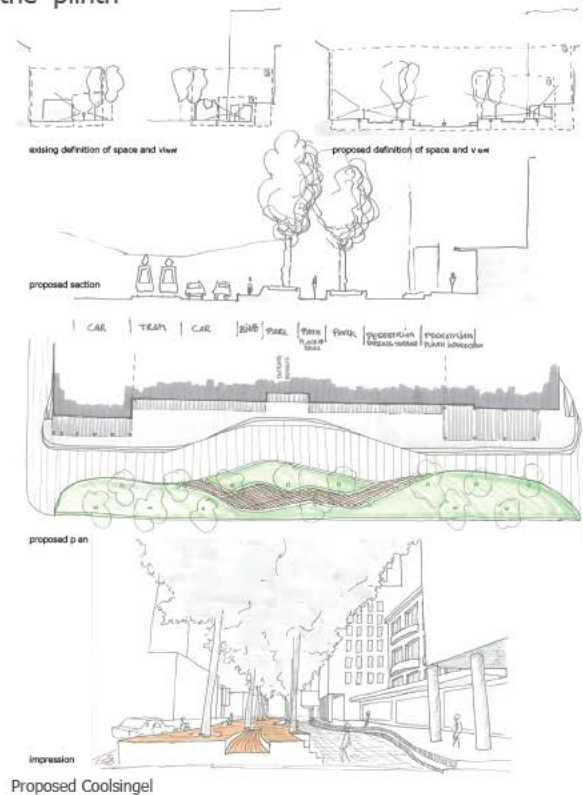
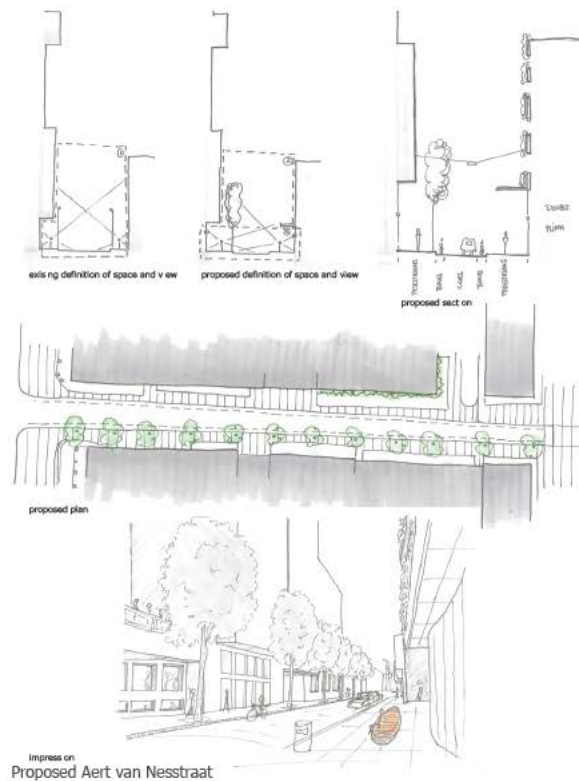
extensions on the plinth level, most of them too present. Also their terraces occupy more than half of the width of the square, making the stretched square work like a street. Our proposal therefore focuses on the removal of extensions and terraces, and creating a phased square with a marked location for terraces. The square is divided in three parts to create a sequence along the stadhuisplein and to redesign the dimensions of the square from the current length to a better proportioned dimension, by adding a transit between the Lijnbaan area and the square and by pulling in the character of the

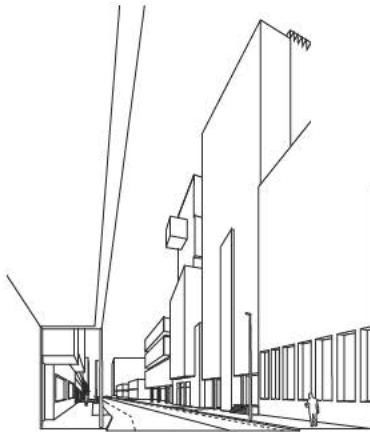
Coolsingel on the other side to recreate the connection with the City Hall.

The Coolsingel lacks a well functioning sidewalk and needs a stronger connection between the both sides. Therefore we narrowed the traffic space to its minimum and through that widen the pavement. The width hereby created is used to add different levels of pedestrian flows to strengthen the identity of the flaneur on the boulevard. Ongoing pedestrians with a strong destination are able to rush through, whereas other pedestrians can enjoy the here and now. Therefore two routes, one along the plinth

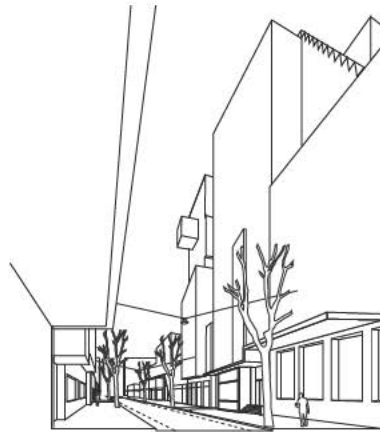
and one meandering in between the trees, are created, the latter also creating a place for stay.

The Aert van Nesstraat has to become the main connection between the regional Schouwburgplein and the Meent as a mixture of local and regional visitors. Therefore the quality of the sidewalk and the relation to the human scale has to be formed. Adding trees, opening the plinths and widening the pavement is a strong start to make the pedestrians feel comfortable again.





Aert van Nesstraat - current situation



Aert van Nesstraat - proposal



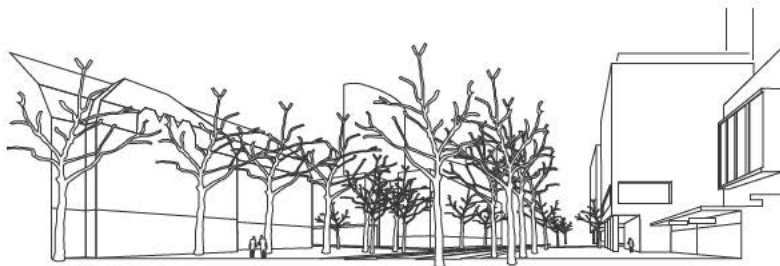
Stadhuusplein - current situation



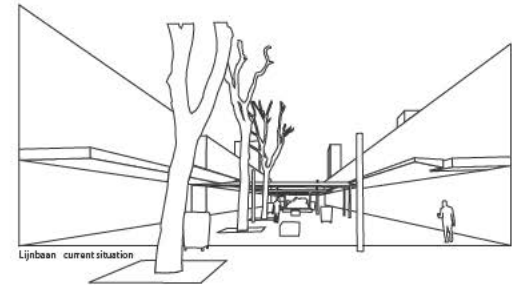
Stadhuusplein - proposal



Coolsingel - current situation



Coolsingel - proposal



Lijnbeaan - current situation



Lijnbeaan - proposal



## DESIGN MODELS

The urban scenario makes up the game-plan for our final master-plan. In the aforementioned we already hinted that in order to revive our design location, we would like to maintain and emphasize the inherit atmospheres of the streets surrounding the block.

By enhancing the qualities of the Aert van Nesstraat, this street should in addition function as a connector between the axis of the Schouwburgplein and the Meent.

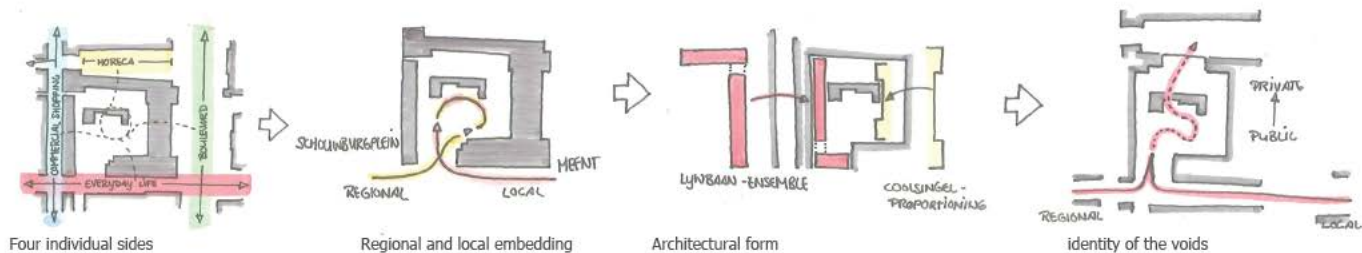
In this scenario, our design location becomes a cornerstone in the crossing between the axis

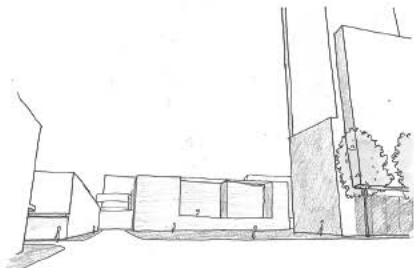
of the Lijnbaan and the Aert van Nesstraat.

To profit from this newly created crossing and to ensure a local embedding of our location, we propose to open up the building block to the proposed theme of the 'everyday' of the Aert van Nesstraat. In order to come to a potential 'infill' of the design location, we combined the earlier defined program with the proposed relations resulting from the surrounding streets and the possibilities of the block itself.

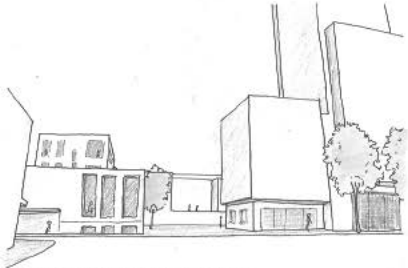
Constantly switching between the proposed experience of the streetscape and that of possible block typologies, we studied three

final alternatives through sketches and models. Using the same methodology as in the research we made several case studies in order to distillate it to a final model. The most favourable option relates strongly to the qualities pursued by our approach of the eye-level experience.

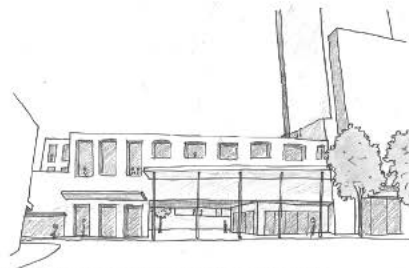




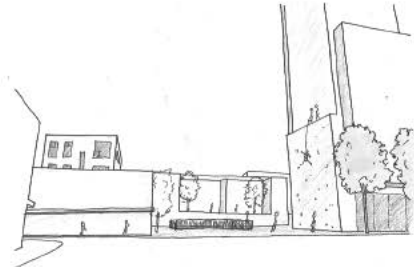
Ae t van Nes / Zone block - connection existing (after demolition)



Ae t van Nes / Zone block - connect on addition to (Ijzbaan and Spilste)



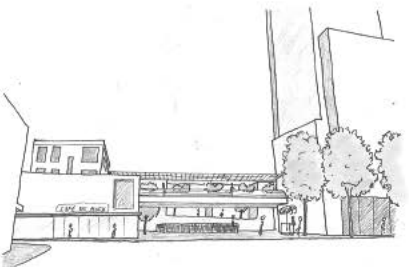
Ae t van Nes / Zone block - connection continuous at setback with b width equal to row space s



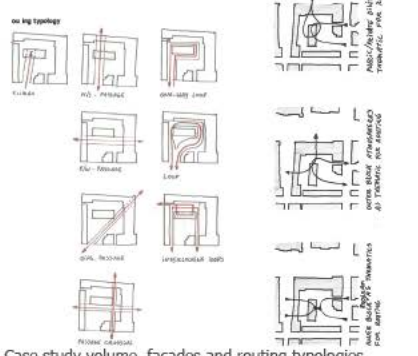
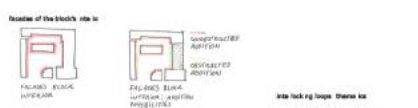
Ae t van Nes / Zone block - connection addition to (Ijzbaan / expanded)  
Case study entrance from Aert van Nesstraat into site location



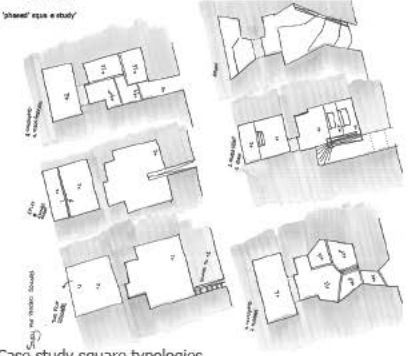
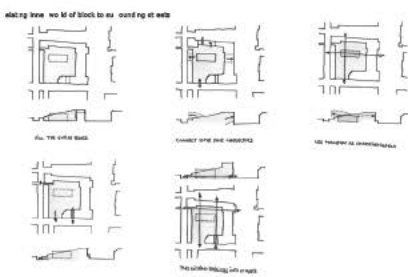
Ae t van Nes / Zone block - connect on addition to (Ijzbaan / expanded) at setbacks



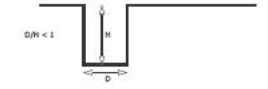
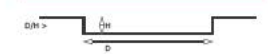
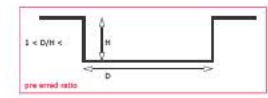
Ae t van Nes / Zone block - connect on podium on b slope row king set zone and defining row space s



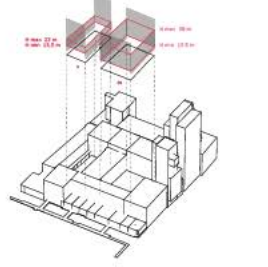
Case study volume, facades and routing typologies



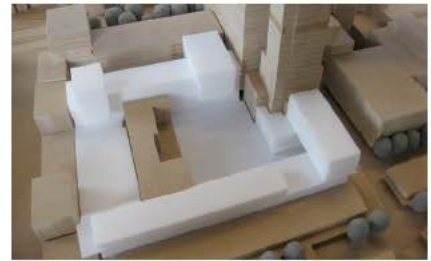
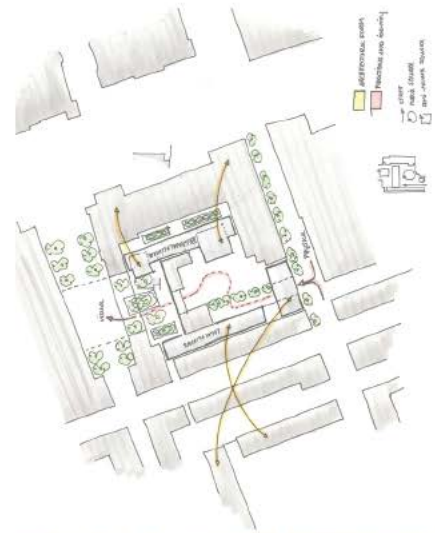
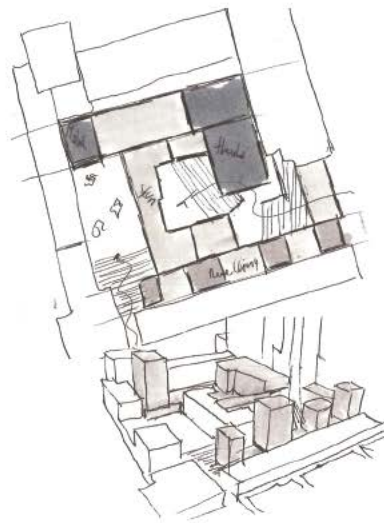
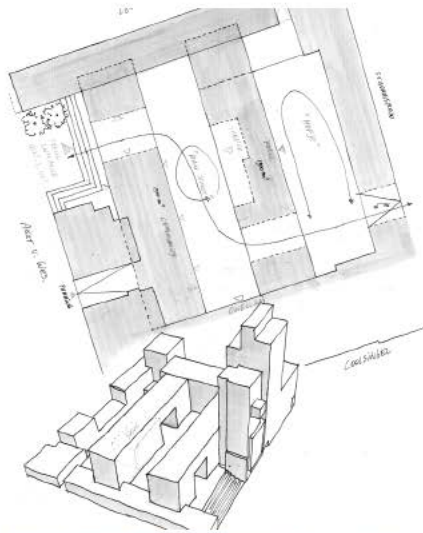
Case study square typologies



Case study square typologies - D/H-ratio (rule-of-thumb)



optimal D/H-ratio (1 < D/H < 1.5)



Preliminary design variant 1

Preliminary design variant 2

Preliminary design variant 3

## PRELIMINARY DESIGN

The model relates strongly to the qualities pursued by our approach of the eye-level experience. The urban volumes of the Lijnbaan and the Coolingsingel are 'copied' into their respective inner-block counterparts. In relation with the existing SKVR-building, two squares are created, one public, relating spatially to the Aert van Nesstraat, and one informal, functioning as 'hofje'. The

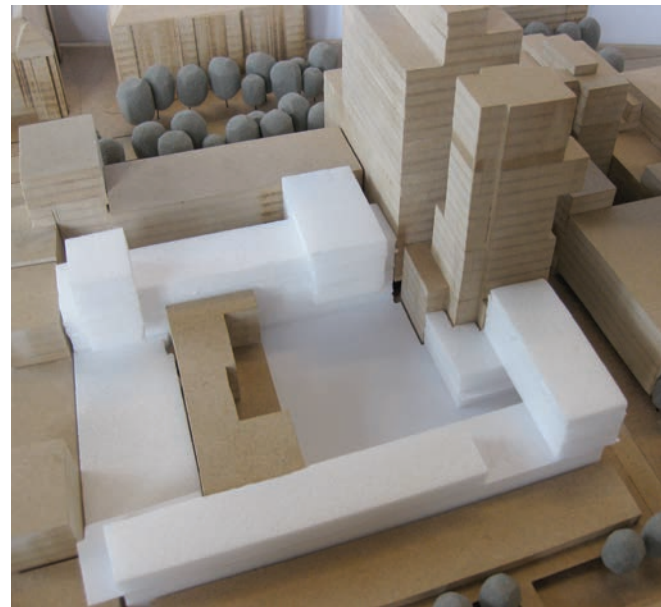
copied volumes are placed against the neglected backsides of the outer-block ring; instantaneously activating the inner-block ring.

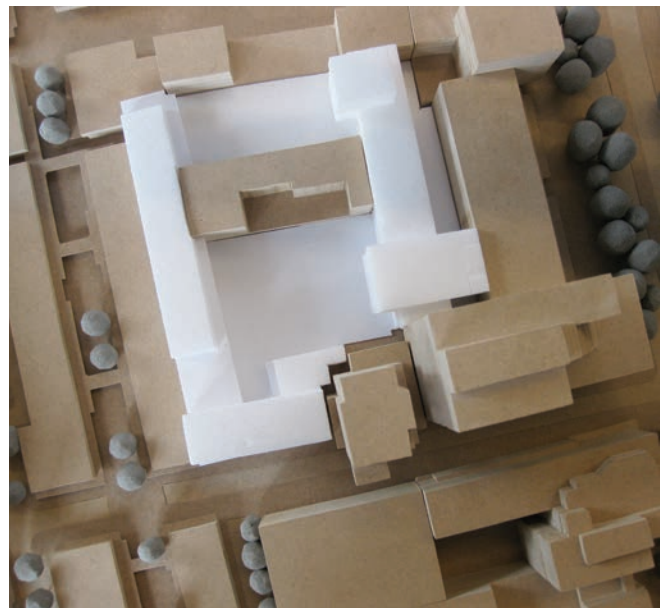
In addition we relate the situation of the program to the specific approach of the visitor. If one would approach the site from the direction of the Schouwburgplein, the visitor is confronted with the analogue regional character of the program in a first instance. Reversely, if one were to approach the site from the

direction of the Meent, the more local character of the program opens up. Once on the inner-block square, both types of program can be perceived and enjoyed.



Preliminary design







# Identities of city streets

how to build a successful environment for pedestrians

Essay

Bob Blom 12/10/88





## INTRODUCTION

When visiting Rotterdam by train, the main entrance of the city is the Westersingel. This axis perpendicular to the Central Station is an attractive boulevard which will be experienced as a comfortable street. This is a street every city would like to have.

There are many ingredients influencing the quality of city life. Climate, functions, space, elements, diversity, persons; these are all factors affecting the way you experience a street or a square as a pedestrian, a biker or a driver. All these elements influence a person – conscious or subconscious – by making them feel comfortable or uncomfortable. Of course the weather is a temporary factor, as is the presence of people on a certain location. But also the functions based in a street are not influencing a street at every moment. On Sundays shops are closed, where a theatre will have a matinee. Offices are nine-to-five, restaurants are open until midnight. All of these factors are decisive of giving the streetscape its colors, yet since we are architects, we should focus principally on solid and timeless factors: the framing of the outside space, the canvas of elements within it. These solid factors are hosting the city's ever-changing painting at every time of the day.

The Westersingel shows that a street does not necessarily need an active plinth to be a properly working city street. The classical row houses occasionally host an art gallery or a barber shop on the ground floor level, a few houses are turned into offices. The Westersingel is also an ongoing route for cars, trams and bikers. This presence of traffic does not affect the quality of the street for pedestrians. What is it, then, that even though this street has a large amount of traffic and an inactive plinth, this street is still functioning well? If it is not necessarily made by factors like low traffic and an active plinth, what solid factors do create the present atmosphere? How can we translate these factors into a design tool?

In order to have an audience to design for, you have to have people passing a certain street for a

reason, mostly a function where they are heading for; the street can also be hosting this function itself. In this essay we consider the destination as a given, not as a factor that needs to be created – they could be created by the interferences to be mentioned, but that is not the main purpose per se. The purpose is creating the right atmosphere for the visiting pedestrian, why they prefer this route over another. In my opinion this is to be done by creating the right atmosphere for the pedestrian at street level. The aforementioned solid factors are influencing the pedestrians experience on different scales. First of all the large scale of city elements is discussed, the elements that form a certain pixel of its identity. The smallest scale is how the pedestrian experiences the present moment, the canvas of the city. In between these scales, the interrelation of buildings is forming the transit between large and small, the medium scale. An architect will have to fit his design into the city structure on these three layers to enhance the pursued condition for the pedestrian.

## LARGE SCALE – CITY ELEMENTS

In the past century, the presence of traffic more and more influenced the character of the city streets on a major scale. It is a fact that people need this mechanical transportation, they cannot live without it anymore. Traffic is a factor in between temporary and solid. Of course the traffic is flowing and is inconsistent in density over the day. But it occupies a certain amount of the public space constantly. The density of Dutch cities causes that ongoing traffic streets encompass road users all day – in differing amounts. The bigger the amount of traffic space in a street, the bigger it defines its character.

In his book 'The Image of the City', Kevin Lynch describes the principal of city streets by defining the characters of city elements in 5 typologies: paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks (Lynch 1960, pp 46-48). I will clarify these elements by describing city elements of Rotterdam. In my opinion, these

Figure 1 (see front page) – Westersingel facing south, Rotterdam

elementary factors are also to be used as design elements, rather than using them as descriptive characteristics as is done by Kevin Lynch.

According to Kevin Lynch's theory the Westersingel can be categorized as a node, an edge, as well as a path. The node means that the Westersingel is a strategic spot in a city which an observer can enter, and which is an extensive focus to and from which he is traveling. The Westersingel is an attractive city element, with the outside parts acting as a city street and the middle part with qualities of a park and of a square. The differences in height levels, which create the difference in perception between the place of ongoing traffic and the place of leisure, gives the middle part the qualities of a node; you will not only use the Westersingel because it is the shortest route, but you will also receive pleasure from the experience of the street. The path function of the Westersingel facilitates the people who move, who just use the street to go from A to B. These path elements are on both sides of the street; both existing of a sidewalk, a bicycle lane and a car lane. Between these path elements, the nodal functions are present. The path functions are made subordinate through the strength of the nodal characteristics. For example the green lawn forms an attractive element, which makes the formal tram lane

running through a much more pleasant view. Factors like this enhance the attractiveness which makes this a nodal location. This combination of a path and a node forms the strength of the character of the Westersingel.

The Westersingel also is an edge, according to Kevin Lynch, since it divides the districts on its sides in a strong way. Especially the part of the Westersingel between the Kruiskade and the Nieuwe Binnenweg; it forms a distinctive separation, since this is a long distance from the one crossing to the other. The length of the building block is a physical obstruction, therefore it blocks the connection between the west and east side of the Westersingel spatially. Edges can also be formed by mental boundaries, like transit in building structure (houses to offices), busy roads or crossings, even change in pavement structure. Even though the road is continuing, you will feel the differences between the sides of the changing element.

The Coolsingel is a very wide lane, the main axis of the city center of Rotterdam. In theory the traffic space only occupies the middle deck of the public space on the same level as the sidewalk, but in reality the traffic itself is the main factor in blocking the connection between the sides of the street both physically and mentally. The factor of traffic on the Coolsingel is the most dictating characteristic of the



Figure 2 – Coolsingel, with the Post Office on the opposite side, Rotterdam

street.

When analyzing the current situation at the Coolsingel by use of Lynch's elements, it has the characteristics of a path rather than a node. Of course its arterial function, and because of that the mentioned dictating characteristic of the traffic, is the main reason for this. Ever since the filling up of the canal ("singel") in the 1920's the Coolsingel was meant as a traffic space. After that, landmarks as the City Hall and the Post Office were located on the Coolsingel. Even further in the 19th century, the Coolsingel became more important for the city center of Rotterdam as a symbol as well as its arterial function. But, in my opinion, with its four car lanes, two tram lanes and two bicycle paths, the arterial function blocks its symbolic function. Not the beauty of the Westersingel should be the main guidance of this essay. No, the Coolsingel should be the most beautiful boulevard in Rotterdam. Football club Feyenoord celebrates its championships here, the Rotterdam Marathon finishes here, etcetera. This grandeur cannot be truly created when the traffic is the defining element of the street's character. The Coolsingel should be a node whilst forming a strong connection with the city landmarks. The Coolsingel may be a path for the driver, but should be a node for the pedestrian. The path function has to be inferior to the nodal character.

What is it that makes a street a node? The answer to that is as simple as it is complicated: it needs to have a certain quality why someone wants to follow, or stay in, this city element rather than another. It might have a junction of paths, so the node can form a recognition point from which you travel onward through the city, or have a concentration of a certain characteristic. Multiple aspects of the street and its buildings have to strengthen each other in order to form a coherent experience for the visitor. The visitor must be able to feel the quality of a public space, whether it is a boulevard or a shopping street, a square or a park. As in the case of the Coolsingel, it should breathe the identity of a boulevard, since the

Coolsingel needs a strong representational character of the qualities Rotterdam stands for. Some elements are there yet, like the pre-war and post-war buildings, representing the phases before and after the bombing in World War II, symbolic for the history and rise of Rotterdam. Also the grotesque trees are present on both sides, strengthening the factors of height and protection, providing a natural roof for the visitor. It also emphasizes the length of the street, a crucial element of a city boulevard. Of course the Coolsingel does not only need to strengthen its character of a city boulevard, it also should relate to Rotterdam itself. Therefore it is important to accentuate the wideness of the set up of Rotterdam, a factor that is present at the moment but needs to be strengthened. Since the traffic is interfering the connection between both sides of the street, the experience of the wideness has therefore fallen apart. Also the pedestrian space lacks certain qualities why its nodal character isn't as strong as it should be. You could say the vertical elements are present – the buildings, the trees – but the horizontal elements are limited – the sidewalks, the traffic. This will be discussed further on at the scale of the buildings and the scale of the pedestrians experience.

### **MEDIUM SCALE – BUILDINGS: FUNCTION AND PROPORTION**

In order to enhance the atmosphere of a public space, the main design strategy is to find (or when building from scratch: decide) the character of the space and, according to that, design the proportions belonging to the certain identity. A suburban residential area has different proportions than a residential city street. At the medium scale, the proportions of the buildings will have to interact with the proportions of the street, and the elements within it.

Several elements of the Coolsingel have the grandeur of a boulevard. Not only the City Hall and the Post Office, both classical buildings who individually form a building block on their own, also the buildings on the opposite side of the Coolsingel have their strong,

even though less obvious, presence.

The presence of the City Hall and the Post Office is very obvious. Both monuments have a firm basis, a strong connection to the ground. Their majestic occurrence, their firm materialization, every aspect of these buildings contribute to their allure. Even though they are standing next to each other, they don't need the other to be grand, but since they are standing aside, they together strengthen the Coolsingel with their distinguished presence.

This in contrast to the buildings on the other side. Here the Coolsingel has a rhythm formed by the corners of the building blocks standing forward, jumping up, out of the monotone modernist façade. Even though these buildings are designed by different architects, they all have comparable proportions and are standing on columns of two floors high. This way the repetition of the building proportion forms the grandeur, where on the other side the buildings form their allure themselves. Two different methods, where the character of the time period is the reason for this difference, yet the grandeur is in both cases the

guidance for their designs.

The factor of proportioning has also been done properly by the architects Van den Broek and Bakema in their design of the Lijnbaan ensemble. After the aforementioned bombing, the Lijnbaan area was designed to be the new city center of Rotterdam. The small scale Lijnbaan – two storey buildings enclosing an 18 meters wide walkway – are attended by 9 and 12 storey apartment buildings standing free behind the shopping street at some distance. Therefore the person walking at the Lijnbaan shopping street is in proportion with the small scale buildings, and these small building blocks are in proportion in its relation with the high apartment buildings. The pedestrian does not experience this relationship consciously, but will feel comfortable in the small scale, almost rustic public space at the Lijnbaan, created by this ensemble.

Not only proportioning of the building as a whole, also the rhythm within a façade of a building or building block contributes to the character of a street. The horizontal length per function in the plinth and the



Figure 3 – Lijnbaan, with the apartment buildings on the left, Rotterdam

rhythm created by this during your walk passing this plinth, creates a certain emotion. When having short plinth lengths, your mind will not always see every function since they are following up too soon. When the functions are taking up too much length, you will get bored; it is as easy as that. Of course also the forwarded information has to be informative for you, since this is a personal matter. Therefore the Lijnbaan is not suiting everybody's desires, as the diversity of the functions and their width are both very monotone. Still, it works exemplary for a mainstream regional shopping street.

### **SMALL SCALE – THROUGH THE EYES OF THE PEDESTRIAN**

When walking over the sidewalk at the Coolsingel, your route gets obstructed several times; small buildings soil the profile of the street. In my opinion these small scale buildings are placed at random, without doing right to the surrounding buildings and to the experience of the sidewalk. They don't only block the connection between the both sides even further than the traffic already does, they also block the experience of the pedestrian as walking on a city boulevard, since they minimize the visibility in the depth of the walkers route. This depth is important to experience the length of the Coolsingel in relation to its width, important for experiencing the identity of a boulevard.

"If you look at the plan of an environment where outdoor spaces are negative, you see the buildings as figure, and the outdoor space as ground. There is no reversal. It is impossible to see the outdoor space as figure, and the buildings as ground. If you look at the plan of an environment where outdoor spaces are positive, you may see the buildings as figure, and the outdoor spaces as ground – and, you may also see the outdoor spaces as figure against the ground of the buildings. The plans have figure-ground reversal" (Alexander 1977, pp. 518-519). In other words, the buildings form an interaction with the pavement and

vice versa, or, as I stated before, together form the framing and canvas of the painting formed by city life. This example of the Coolsingel with its buildings placed on the pavement rather than forming an interaction with the larger buildings and, more important, with the sidewalk itself, is a good example of how it should not be done; the small buildings make the pedestrians meander through narrow spaces.

On top of this, the speed of the pedestrian is a factor that is quickly forgotten. On a main public space in the city, like a boulevard or a square, you will find people using the space to come from A to B, often in a hurry. In contrast to these pedestrians are the people who have the public space itself and the present facilities or functions as their destination; enjoying the qualities of the public space and the activities coloring it. It does not mean that the faster pedestrian is not enjoying the public space, but the slower pedestrian will make more use of the provided experience. Viewing shop windows, sitting on benches looking at people passing by. When having large amounts of both categories of pedestrians, or having a wide public space, you might consider providing different surfaces for these pedestrians speeds to improve the use of the sidewalk. For example a meandering route along the shop windows, a straight path providing an unobstructed passage, and next to that an area to sit down.

A good example of proportioning the pedestrians experience is the Lijnbaan, where the canopies protect the visitor against the weather. It also gives the visitor a protective feeling, being in a (partly) enclosed environment and in scale with the height of the functions aside. The 10 meters between the canopied areas were originally filled with small shopping displays and places for stay, intended to keep the pedestrians furthermore under the canopies and to have an interaction between the passing pedestrians and the people taking a break. The ongoing flow takes place under the canopies, forming an interaction with the people sitting on the benches or enjoying a conversation with each other in the therefore

designed middle area. "Where there is a mixture of static possession and possession in movement, we find what may be termed viscosity, the formation of groups chatting, of slow window-shoppers, people selling newspapers, flowers and so on" (Cullen 1961, p. 24). By designing spaces for the different speeds – fast, slow, stay – and placing these spaces next to each other, this viscosity can be created. The guidance of the visitors, close to the façades, creates an interaction with the shop windows, so that the visitor also directs its attention to the displayed goods.

"For good reason, climate is mentioned as an important factor for the extent and character of outdoor activities. If it is too cold, too hot or too wet, outdoor activities are reduced or rendered impossible" (Gehl 2010, p. 21). Architects will have to use this negative aspect as a positive design element. A good example of this stands in Delft, where the library of the university has a convex roof covered in grass. This shell starts as a slope at the ground floor, bending over the entire building and finally stops after having passed its highest point, leaving space for a large glass façade. The start of the slope forms a transit from the horizontal public space to the natural ramp, designed to be a place for students to stay on at beautiful days. But this sloping field also has its qualities in rainy days; the soothing form reads like a rolling plain, forming a natural artwork on its own. It has its qualities when people are sitting on it, having lunch in the sun, yet it also shows its quality on rainy days. This quality of a space being a place of stay in good weather and being a glimpse of nature or a piece of art in bad weather, gives it a multi-use quality. A square should not be designed for just the sunny days. You must define its qualities on a bad day as well, probably even stronger. Dealing with weather is not only possible in an artistic way, the main intervention of dealing with nature is physically protecting pedestrians.

The Westersingel uses both this artistic and natural quality to grasp the focus of the pedestrian. When walking on the east side of the street, there is a green lawn between the road and the small canal,

accompanied by large trees. Even though the tram lane is running through this lawn, it still is giving the street experience a rustic character. On the other side of the street, the car lane is accompanied by two extra sidewalks, both on different levels. These sidewalks are providing room for the aforementioned slower pedestrians and the persons looking for a place of stay. The pavements aside of the row houses are used by the ongoing pedestrians.

The quality of the identity of the Westersingel as a city boulevard is enlarged furthermore by added elements as trees, a pedestrian bridge, benches and several art works. For some it might be an exuberance of elements, but there is no discussion that it is fulfilling its purpose: maintaining the focus of the visitor.

## CONCLUSION

How to implement this layering of the city streets in your design? I have shown you examples of how it could be done and how it has been done insufficiently. Nowadays, architects often design one solitary building in an existing street. In these situations you cannot change the character or function of the entire street. What you can do is determine the current character of the surroundings – the street and/or the district – and define the qualities of this identity. When you also analyze the present experience of the pedestrian – why they walk there, if they use any part as a place of stay – you will have analyzed the large scale and the small scale. After that, you can start designing your building, the medium scale. In the design process, you now will consider the negative and positive qualities of the outdoor space around your building plot and as far as possible improve it with the relationship of your design to the public space. The plinth of a building and its rhythm forms a strong relation with the infill of the public space, where the proportions of the entire building connects to the characteristics of the city elements.

To reconsider the question of the Westersingel: why is it that a street with an inactive plinth and a

large traffic flow is still considered as a well functioning city boulevard? It is because its focus is not on the plinth, but on the attractive elements on the middle part of the street. It is also because the traffic road is not a blocking element since it is divided into two parts on either side of the wide street. When a pedestrian wants to walk in the middle part of the street, he only has to cross one bicycle lane and one car lane, just having to look out in one direction. It seems to be a small difference, but this way the cars will never become a decisive factor in the ambiance of the street.

Extracting this into a design tool, the general qualities lay in the layering and the focal point. Intending to create a well functioning pedestrian street, the traffic should not be the dictating factor; make the traffic subordinate to the public space of the pedestrian. A possible way as shown with the Westersingel is dividing the traffic to both sides of the public space. When having enough space, divide the route of the ongoing pedestrians from the slower ones, and create positive places of stay.

You will see that, when designing a street, the separation between the large, medium and small scale is not that large. As belonging to a certain identity, they often overlap. The nodal or path-like character of a street is directly decided by the infill of the street at the level of the pedestrian. The elements placed in the street to grasp the attention of the passing visitor make a space worthwhile and therefore strengthens its elemental status.

As mentioned before, an architect should focus on the solid factors influencing the pedestrian's experience. These are the factors that will be present at every moment, at every situation. But an architect should always keep in mind that the changing factors influence the atmosphere at a certain moment. Be aware of the different situations that your design will face through these differing factors, but keep in mind that strengthening the identity of the public space should be the main design strategy; this identity should be present at every moment and therefore should be created with the design of the solid factors.

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## IMAGES

Image 1: Westersingel, Rotterdam Own archive, taken March 9 2011

Image 2: Coolsingel, Rotterdam Own archive, taken March 9 2011

Image 3: Lijnbaan, Rotterdam Own archive, taken March 9 2011







# The Campo Marzio within Rotterdam

the city as a collage, an urban palimpsest and as a geometrical configuration

Essay

Dirk de Groot 1519670



## THE SIX PLATES OF THE ICHNOGRAPHIA

The Campo Marzio is part of the 1762 publication of Giovanni Battista Piranesi's *'Il Campo Marzio dell' antica Roma'*. In his book Piranesi provides a complete redrawn map of the monuments of the Campus Martius, the old part of Rome. The publication is divided into ten different parts which Piranesi calls plates. Plates V to X make up the big map of the Campo Marzio. This Ichnographia formed Piranesi's reconstructed Rome, or better put, it formed a reenactment of ancient Rome. This was mainly a speculative archaeological research which relied on about 300 existing ruins, artifacts and written sources of ancient and modern authors. The other plates are smaller details of the total plan and a texts explaining the (fictional) history. At first glances the city of the Campo Marzio seems huge, labyrinthic and a place where the topography of Rome is hard to find. It looks like a formless mass of colliding fragments. The whole area seems to be based on a method of random association of which the aggregation principle deludes every organicity. It is clear that it was Piranesi's intention to hide the distinction of the method in which the fragment is made more evident. When you take a closer look at the Campo Marzio, the first orientation points are visible, the Pantheon, theatre of Marcellus, etc.

Compared to the modern city, as for example Rotterdam, the fragments of the Campo Marzio offer a new insight into the configuration and built of a city. In order to better grasp these elements, this essay is divided into three different parts. Each part considers the structure of the Campo Marzio compared to the modern city through a different perspective and scale. The first one deals with the discussion whether or not Piranesi's drawing can actually be compared as a city collage and thus questioning the line where a collage of fragments become a city structure. Secondly the Campo Marzio offers an unusual insight into the historical built of a city and how the modern city should deal with monumental old buildings, their function



1. Ichnographia Campus Martius, sometime after 1762  
image from <http://www.quondam.com/27/2743a.htm>

and the different layers of time within the cityscape. The third and final chapter takes a closer look at the geometrical configurations of the Campo Marzio and at which point it could act as a starting point of how to combine individual configurations in one coherent architectural design.

## THIS IS NOT A TOWN

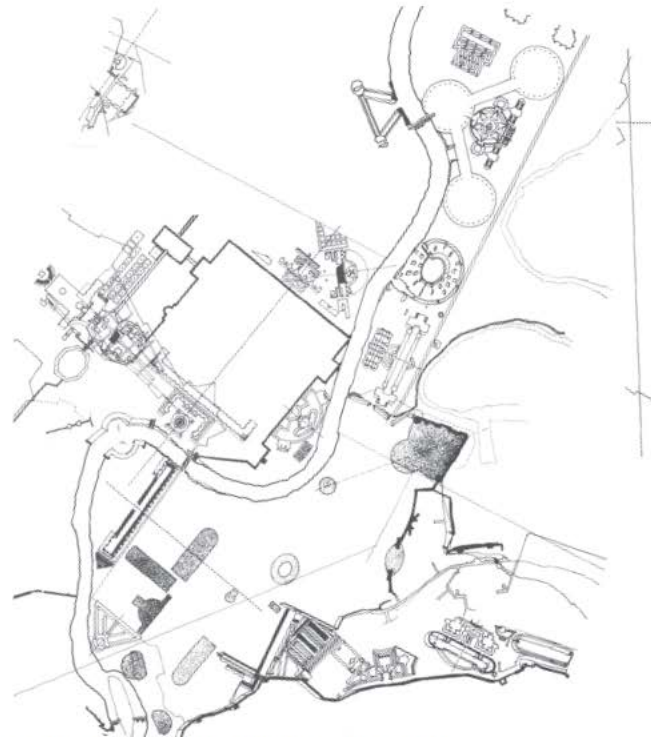
*"Ceci n'est pas une ville!"*<sup>1</sup> This is how Aldo Rossi described his entry for the Roma Interrotta in 1978 where twelve architects were invited to re-elaborate on a specific part of the 1748 Nolli map (see <http://nolli.uoregon.edu/>) drawn by Giambattista Nolli (and in which he worked together with Piranesi). In Rossi's view the project did not refer to any hypothetical

1 Michael Graves and Aldo Rossi, Profile 20 Roma Interrotta, Architectural Design vol. 49 no. 3-4, 1979, page 88.

alternative pattern for the city's growth. This could also be said of Piranesi's Campo Marzio where many suggested that his plan is not a city plan. Although the map of the Campo Marzio has both a scientific as a historical background, it is a loose design. Piranesi combines archaeological projects with present projects and his own projects thus making the Campo Marzio more than only a city floor plan like Giambattista Nolli did with his plan of 1748. The idea that the plan of Piranesi can be seen as a city is discussible. *"The existing theories of the architecture of the city describes the Campo Marzio as an impossible city. Viewed from the classical idea (Rykwert) it misses the edge, center and hierarchic totality. Viewed from the modern variant the Campo Marzio lacks a traffic system, parcel system, a functional form and a programmatic totality. Viewed from the critical variant of the classical city idea (Tafuri who inquires it on formal grounds) the Campo is a chaotic city, formless by the excess off form, adrift by the polemic fragmentation, abstract and lied by the excessive machinations of place, center and space..."*<sup>2</sup> In fact it is easy to see the Campo Marzio as a non-city. The drawing is very figural and seemingly without any order in it. But does this differ from any other modern city such as Rotterdam. If there could be a clear connection between the Campo Marzio and Rotterdam it is that both were built from scratch, one by the fact that it is an reenactment and the latter by the bombing during World War II. As Gijs Wallis de Vries explained, the Campo Marzio has no clear traffic system thus becoming to chaotic. In contrary to Rotterdam which has too many traffic systems it becomes disconnected by it, especially the city center.

In order to see the Campo Marzio as a city you must distillate its underlying structure. Because the Campo Marzio is not divided into districts, the plates make it more feasible to analyze the individual parts within the Campo Marzio. The most obvious element within the Campo, one that is present on all plates, is the river Tiber. The Tiber represents nature within the

<sup>2</sup> Gijs Wallis de Vries, Piranesi en het idee van de prachtige stad, Uitgeverij Duizend & Een, Amsterdam, 1990, page 155.

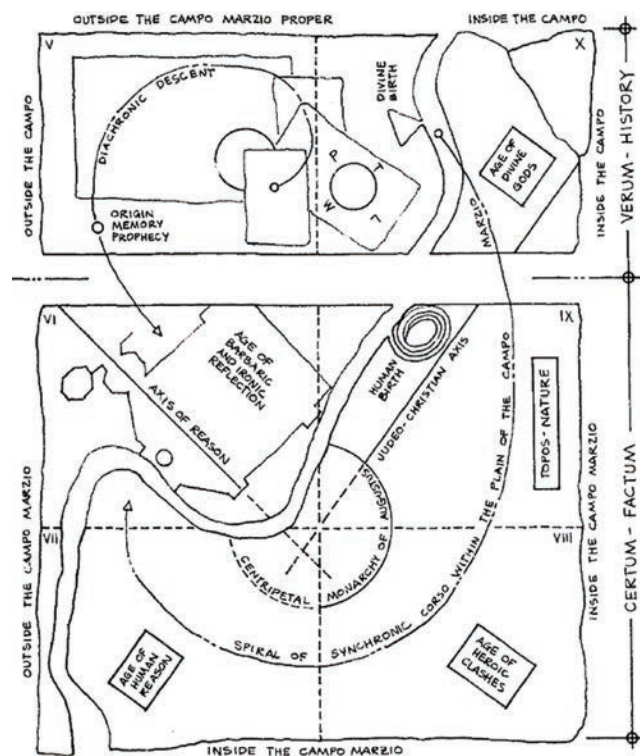


2. Collage of border and frames within the Campo Marzio plan image from Stanley Allen, Piranesi's "Campo Marzio": An Experimental Design, *Assemblage*, No. 10 (Dec., 1989), viewed from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3171144>, page 84

ichnographia. It also acts like a border that gives the Campo two sides. The river is not paved or canalized, it possesses hardly any architecture where only a few projects of the Campo Marzio use her shoreline. This dominating structure within the Campo Marzio and its relation to other important borders is made visible in the collage made by Stanley Allen in *Assemble 10* (image 2). Although it was not further explained, the drawing reveals the Campo Marzio's important axes and structures. From this image the axes on the other plates become evident. Some are aligned to an orthogonal direction system of axis or meandering routes, other are free-roamed within larger open spaces.

The anatomy of the ichnographia (image 3) gives us even more insight into the Campo Marzio. The anatomy, mainly based on the readings of Fasolo, reveals the

major organizing axes of the ichnographia identified, such as the Equiria, running from top right to bottom left, or the axis centered on Hadrian's Mausoleum coordinating the major composition on plate VI. Although other secondary axes are more locally based, the two primary ones are centered on the Mausoleum of Augustus where the lower four plates come together. "Along with these axes, several authentic and verifiable reference points, as benchmarks, serve to fix the orientation of the plan. Piranesi's inventive compositions around these antique nuclei analogically retain the character of the antique lines, revealing antiquity through the development of his own ideas."<sup>3</sup> In addition the map shows the underlying symbolic meaning of the Campo Marzio as each plate and each axes can be characterized with a certain meaning. Lying outside of the consecrated ground defined by



3. The anatomy of the Ichnographia  
 image from R. James Aitken, Piranesi-Vico-II Campo Marzio: Foundations and the Eternal City, McGill University. Montreal, 1995, page 75

the city walls, which Piranesi depicts as a small dotted line, the Campo Marzio had traditionally been the site of funerals and burials. This is in fact one of the main reasons for questioning the Campo Marzio as a proper city structure. The urban texture is characterized by marginality. It becomes the locus of all that is excluded from the city proper: the armories and military exercise yards; the stadia and gymnasia; the amphitheatres and circuses; the gardens and pleasure fountains; the crypts and tombs. This results in a city with a specific mix, as most of its buildings are monumental with only a few private buildings. Viewed from the perspective of a modern city this would be an unrealistic collection.

If you were to compare Piranesi's Campo Marzio with Nolli's plan, there are extreme differences between these two positions: one is a composition of mutually adjusted set pieces, and the other involves the mutual modification of figure and ground, providing a comprehensible equity between figural object and figural space. "...the Campo Marzio would not function as an urban entity. There are no streets as such; rather, the ground is filled with what can be called interstitial figures. In this fabric of fact and fiction, there are no clear figure/ground relationships, one of the underpinnings of the dialectics of contemporary architecture. There is no primacy given to the ground or to the figure. The result is not a figure/ground projection, as in the Nolli map, but what could be called a figure/figure urbanism."<sup>4</sup> With this Eisenman stated that Piranesi abolished the relationship of figure to ground by producing a plan made of only figures in where the ground is an emptiness outlined by the decorated figures, where even within these figures he added additional figures. Eisenman sees the Campo Marzio as an example of a new type of urban form that is defined through the relationship between figures. It was the first town plan to emphasize an anti-hierarchical ideology. But although within its totality

3 R. James Aitken, Piranesi-Vico-II Campo Marzio: Foundations and the Eternal City, McGill University. Montreal, 1995, page 120.

4 Peter Eisenman, A critical Analysis: Giovan Battista Piranesi, in Luca Molinari, Peter Eisenman Fients, Skira Editore, 2006, page 40.



4. Figure-ground of the Campo Marzio plan  
 image from Rupinder Singh, Piranesi's Campo Marzio Plan the palimpsest of interpretive memory, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1996, page 46

the Campo Marzio seems very chaotic and delusive in its representation, one can actually make a figure-ground map of it (image 4). The figure-ground of the Campo Marzio makes the concentration of structures versus public space and versus each other more feasible. As it shows, most of the structures in the plan are located in the area around the Pantheon and the actual Campo Marzio. These were primarily structures from the literary sources. A comparison between the figure-ground and the actual plan also reveals that the larger map appears so figural simply due to the rendering technique used by Piranesi, which makes landscape appear as figural structures. But moreover the figure-ground actually offers an explanation of the 'hidden' street structure within the Campo Marzio. As Eisenman states that there were no streets. The figure-ground shows us that for example the Via Flaminia (bottom

right on image 4 and right image 5). Via Flaminia is the only road named in the plan and perhaps an odd placement in the Campo Marzio, Fasolo even refers to the placement of the Via Flaminia as arbitrary. While most structures located in other areas exhibit an orthogonal relation to each other, structures around Via Flaminia can only be explained from their alignment to this road. Another example, maybe less evident in the figure-ground, is the porticus (see image 5 left and in the middle of image 4 next to the river Tiber). The porticus is the most prevalent building typology within the *ichnographia Campus Martius*. At least one porticus is found within every quadrant of the large plan. Each porticus contains a quantity of colonnades. Some are simply linear in plan, or incorporate circular motifs, and others are very hybrid in that they incorporate any number of colonnade plan motifs, as well contain an array of enclosed spaces.

The way the Campo Marzio deals with the structure of the streets and public space forms an important connotation to the modern city which stands in contradiction. In the figure-ground map of Rotterdam the transit structure is defined by the 'empty' space. One that clearly is present in the centre of Rotterdam. The Campo Marzio is a reference for a city in which the public space is designed and structured by the architecture of the buildings and not by the architecture of the traffic structure. It is exactly through this perspective that we should design a hybrid urban plan,



5. left the Porticus a S.P.Q.R. Aemontati Dicata, right the via Flaminia  
 left image part of map from <http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/gVQu3fjo0sj2XgdgY-vZHog>  
 right image from Jennifer Bloomer, *Architecture and the Text The Scripts of Joyce and Piranesi*, Yale University Press, 1993, page 73

relating it to the public space and its interrelationships.

## FABRIC OF TRACES

The linkage between the Nolli map and the Campo Marzio offers us another perception into the ichnographia. Whereas the Nolli map was a literal projection of Rome as it was in the eighteenth century, in contrast to *"the Campo Marzio has little to do with representing a literal place or an actual time. The Campo Marzio is a fabric of traces, a weaving of fact and fiction."*<sup>5</sup> Piranesi uses the Rome of the eighteenth century as a starting point. Piranesi takes buildings that existed in the first and second centuries and places them in the same framework of time and space in the eighteenth century city. Even more so, Piranesi moves monuments of that era from their actual location to other locations as if that were their original sites. He also incorporates buildings that never existed. Through this perspective the city that Piranesi drew becomes more than just a complex collection of figural objects.

As an architect within the architectural profession, this combining of own projects within a citystructure has a very ideological reason. James Stirling is an architect who used the term megalomaniac architect



6. Figure-ground map Rotterdam center  
image from private source.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Eisenman, A critical Analysis: Giovan Battista Piranesi, in Luca Molinari, Peter Eisenman Fiets, Skira Editore, 2006, page 40.



7. Nolli sector IV, James Stirling, 1978  
image from Michael Graves, Profile 20 Roma Interrotta, Architectural Design vol. 49 no. 3-4, 1979, page 43

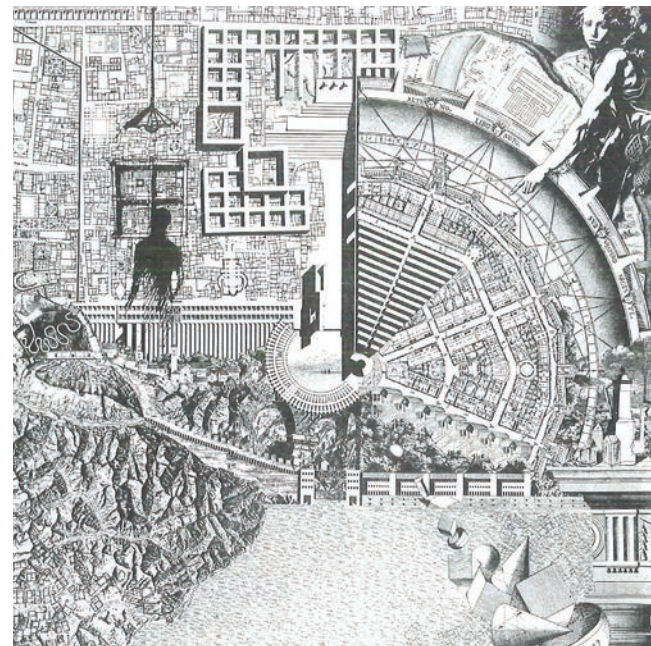
(an architect with delusional fantasies of wealth and power) to incorporate several designs in one cityscape. As explained earlier, the Nolli map served as the main reference in the 1978 Roma interrotta exhibition where twelve architects were invited to re-elaborate a specific part of the Nolli map with the main question of how the public space had changed in Rome and what were the perspectives for the future. James Stirling was one of the architects who made a reinterpretation of the Nolli map (see image 7). In his essay Stirling described Piranesi as a megalomaniac frustrated architect whereby the megalomaniac architects are most frustrated with regard to projects designed but not built. Through the Nolli sector IV, Stirling used the same method as Piranesi did with his plan. Incorporating own designs from different periods in time (past, present and future) and preserve, integrate and intensify the context of the 18th century Rome via typological, symbolical and topographical considerations. Stirling's Nolli sector becomes a scheme which is the temporal inversion of Piranesi's Ichnographia in which instead of a past Rome that never was, the plan presents a future Rome that will never be. Stirling used a contextual - associational way of planning to achieve a similar density to that which has been achieved via a historic process in order to accommodate a similar quantity of working, living and public space.

The process of translating this technique to a city like Rotterdam and how it could combine different layers in time is explained in Collage City of Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter. Rowe and Koetter state that utopian ideals have always relied on an engineered total design or total architecture in order to realize their prescriptions whereas in contrast to the ad-hoc nature of Levi-Strauss bricoleur, piecing together instant solutions from a limited palette of tools, does not achieve workable results either. Rowe and Koetter suggest that architects and urban designers should aim for a middle ground, somewhere between the scientific engineering and the ad-hoc bricolage, to produce solutions which can be both contemporary and efficient, but flexible enough to move with the times and adapt to future situations. The outcome is a proposal of Collage City, a city of fragments from the past, present and future, taking inspiration from working examples in existing cities. It may be argued that many contemporary cities, due to the nature of their development over time, are already collages of historic fragments. But the nature of Collage City is that the fragments are applied strategically and affably so as to allow the city to develop and nurture itself, free from prescription which may still linger in cities already containing fragments.

This lies in close respect to how the Campo Marzio relates to the traces of time by incorporating fragments from the past, present and future. Even more, this link between the Collage City and the Campo Marzio is also depicted in Aldo Rossi's work. Like Nollisector IV his Analogous City of 1976 (image 8) gave an interpretation of the relation of the city as a collage of present, past and future. The analogue city illustrates the theory of 'The Architecture of the City'. Here architecture does not mean the visible image of the city and the sum of its different architectures but architecture as a construction of the city overtime. Rossi in his writings tries to redefine the 'architecture of the city' with a concentration on 'urban artefacts', the catalyzing monuments from the past. Rossi defines urban artifacts as primary elements because their

existence has contributed to the morphological and cultural evolution of the city. Any element capable of accelerating the process of urbanization in the city is a primary element, including an empty space. In contrary to the real city, Rossi's analogous city is a city which includes the existing buildings, buildings which existed in the same place in the past, and imaginary buildings (our visions of future development of the city). As a result the city is a place where real and virtual meet within a mental map which includes real and unreal forms representing, at the same time, remembered and imagined events.

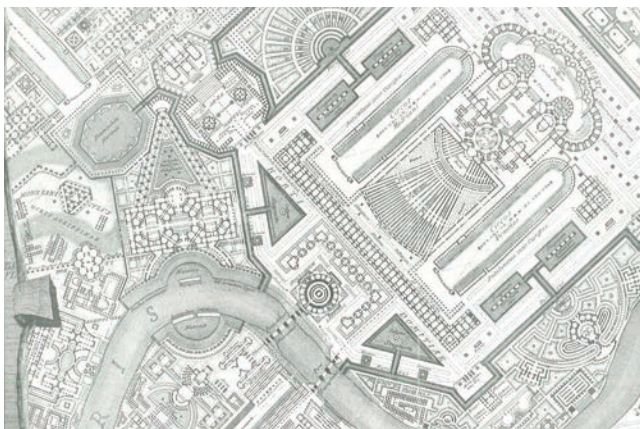
By the collage Rossi shows how a very logical way of thinking or treating, can transform a design style. In the drawing he organized the city (spaces, volumes and emptiness) as three dimensional. By using the layers of different pieces of images in which they overlap each other and by manipulating the viewpoint and the angle he gave the two dimensional artwork a



8. Aldo Rossi, La Città Analoga, The Analogous City, 1976  
image from Hans G. Hannesen, Aldo Rossi Architects, Academy Editions, 1994, page 99



three dimensional effect. Through this method Rossi layered the plan of an ancient city with a modern part. By recycling pieces and objects from history, combining and layering the different art and architecture, Rossi wants to see the new and old together in one work without destroying the past. He in fact creates a kind of urban palimpsest. Rossi analyzed the city, as a whole constructed by its parts and in which urban form is the result of a patchwork, in which different features are stitched together. Within this stitched patchwork-city function plays an important role. In Rossi's view any explanation of urban artefacts in terms of function must be rejected if the issue is to clarify their structure and formation. Because he thinks the function of an urban artefact is changeable over time. He sees function as physiology in nature which justifies the formation, development and alterations of form, and vice versa. Since every function can be articulated through a form, and forms in turn contain the potential to exist as urban artefacts, forms tend to allow themselves to be articulated as urban elements. It is precisely a form that persists through a set of transformations which constitute an urban artefact per excellence. In short functions are dominated by form and these forms determine the individuality of every urban artefact. Compared to the real city, as for instance Rotterdam, the functions of the urban artefacts are related to



9. Sepulchra Libertorum et Servorum  
image from Gijs Wallis de Vries, Piranesi en het idee van de prachtige stad, Uitgeverij  
Duizend & Een, Amsterdam, 1990

monuments. As mentioned before, where the Campo Marzio has an unrealistic collection of monuments, which actually forms the base for the construct of an collaged urban palimpsest. Throughout the history of cities the persistence of the city is revealed through monuments as well as through the city's basic layout and plans. Cities tried to retain their axis of development by maintaining the position of their original layout and growth according to the direction and meaning of their older artefacts. A monument becomes propelling when it survives precisely because of its form which accommodates different functions over time. What both Rossi as Piranesi illustrate is the importance of how the monument should relate to the city and to the historical and future changes.

Looking closely at The Analogous City also reveals the strong influence of Piranesi on the designs of Rossi. Not only did Rossi incorporate references of Piranesi's Carceri (1745) in the middle part of the plan, he also shows a bit of the Campo Marzio in the upper right corner. Also one of his own projects, the 1971 Cemetery of San Cataldo, bears direct resemblance with a part of the Campo Marzio called Sepulchra Libertorum et Servorum (image 9).

In retrospect to the present Rotterdam, in what degree had the city remained its collage of past, present and future or the transformation into it? The bombing of World War II has erased most of its 'urban artefacts'. But in comparison to the Analogous City and the Campo Marzio, Rotterdam mostly ignored its old remains and instead created a whole new collage of independent modern architecture separated by traffic lanes. In relationship to the latter 'De metamorfose van de Coolingsel, of de weldadige kaalslag van de Stad' from van Assen, van Hooijdonk and Ronner, explores the essence of this architectural metamorphosis. In the project, transformation confronts itself with the consequences of a senseless hypothesis in an urban environment entrusted to us with the question of the autonomy of architecture. In their research the



10. Lilith van Assen, Lieke van Hooijdonk and Elsbeth Ronner, De metamorfose van de Coolsingel, of de weldadige kaalslag van de Stad, TU Delft 2010  
image from [http://www.lilithronnervanhooijdonk.nl/?page\\_id=959](http://www.lilithronnervanhooijdonk.nl/?page_id=959)

Coolsingel becomes the subject of metamorphosis. By projecting the essence of Coolsingel, the street turns into a runway. In order to house the aircrafts in this new context, the environment of the Coolsingel transforms in an airport. When the airport left the city, the Coolsingel transforms again in a new form. The project depicts an interesting way how the Coolsingel could be transformed in a new collage of buildings by altering its functions in a similar way like The Analogous City.

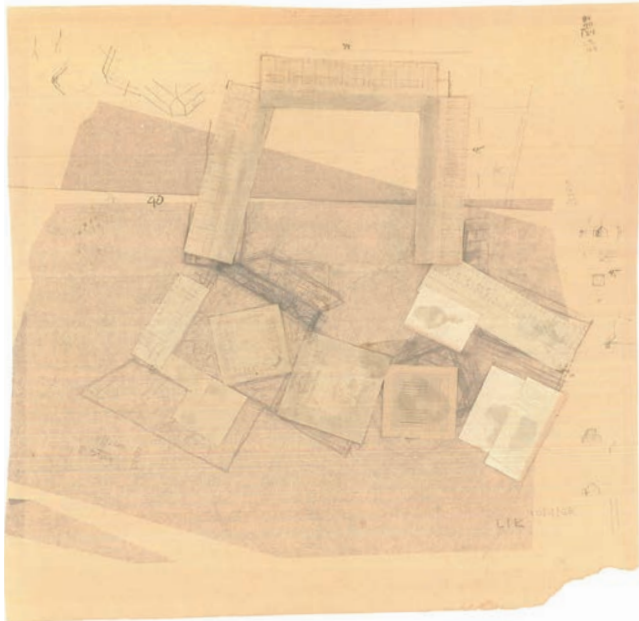
## GEOMETRICAL CONFIGURATIONS

The previous chapters dealt with the structure of the Campo Marzio as a city collage and as the functions of monuments within the historical layering. But in order to really understand the Campo Marzio, one has to look at its smallest detail. From a bottom-up perspective the urban cohesion can be defined as configurative, as a group where the mutual position of different independent elements have a connection but differ in geometry and system. This was a very important point for Vincenzo Fasolo in his interpretation of the Campo Marzio. As he explains, the formal patterns remain essentially within the world of geometric signs, as they constitute an explanation of the work, rendering it understandable or exposing its irrationality. In Vincenzo Fasolo's analytical drawing (see image 11) the geometric language clearly implies a strong schematics

in which it appears more as a diagram. When analyzed individually and in connection between each other it becomes evident that it is a composition based on the diagonal, oblique lines and intersections of lines and curves. The geometrical configuration is mainly based on triangles, ellipses, squares and their combination and intermingling. Within this geometry, the edge of complexes formed by buildings is composed by means of recurring colonnades and alignments of green areas. The geometrical configurations of the Campo Marzio served as reference for several architects and their design methods. For example, as mentioned earlier, the Cemetery of San Cataldo of Aldo Rossi. Louis Kahn was an architect in which Piranesi had great influence on his projects. Although Kahn concealed his sources, for instance he won't use columns and entablatures, the link is most evident is the design of the Dominican Motherhouse between 1965 and 1968. Although the Motherhouse had to be cancelled due to the Dominican Sisters' diminishing numbers and budget, the project



11. The Campo Marzio of G. B. Piranesi by Vincenzo Fasolo of 1954  
image from <http://www.quondam.com/26/2691.htm>

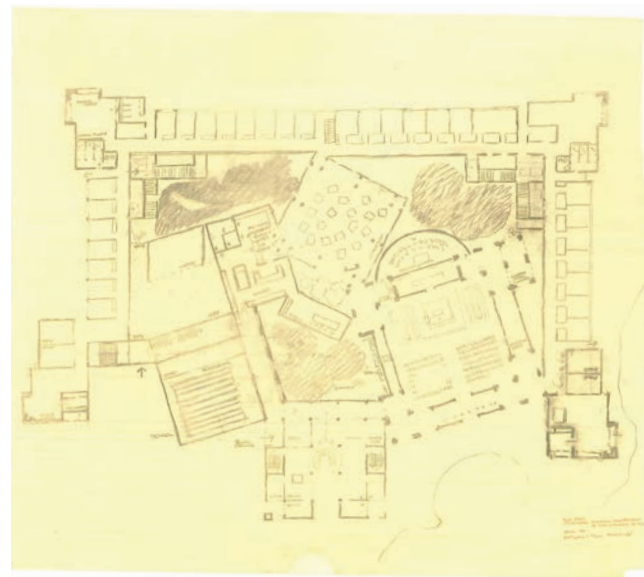


12. Louis Kahn collaged plan, 1966  
image from Michael Merrill, Louis Kahn Drawing to find out the Dominican Motherhouse and the patient search for architecture, Lars Muller Publishers, 2010, page 65

underwent a characteristically protracted development over three years. The design is an example of Kahn's unique ability of turning rigorous combinations of simple shapes into elegant plan compositions. *"What is remarkable is how the contrast between the simple shapes and their seemingly spontaneous collisions within the orthogonal frame gives the plan a hitherto unknown internal tension, as if the several buildings of the previous plans were striving to become the single building."*<sup>6</sup> Interesting to notice in one of his preliminary design of 1966 (image 12) is the use of a collaged plan. As mentioned earlier the Campo Marzio can in fact be seen as a collage of individual components. When the spaces are divided into those which are linked together in a continuous distribution circuit and those in which activities are private, the eccentric, shifting bricolage floor plan results in a small Nolli plan as a miniature urban scheme with streets,

<sup>6</sup> Michael Merrill, Louis Kahn on the thoughtful making of spaces, Lars Muller Publishers, 2010, page 67.

widenings, squares and buildings. Although using this method was very rare for Kahn to do in such manner, the collaged plan gives insight into a method that may have encouraged this freedom. The shapes of the various spaces have not been called into question, but rather the connections between them and how they are to be grouped. By cutting the rooms from a blueprint and repositioning them on paper, Kahn was able to shift and adjust the bodies. In a later plan of 1968 (image 13) the connection to the Campo Marzio has increased in whereby the compact form resembles the chaoticness of Piranesi's city. Geometrically the new scheme is an inversion of the first scheme, in which the freely floating cells were juxtaposed to the orthogonal upper part communal spaces, in the new scheme the cells themselves form the orthogonal counterpart to the informally ordered communal spaces. Each part acts like an entity in itself, but the in-between space forms the various relationships between their neighbors.



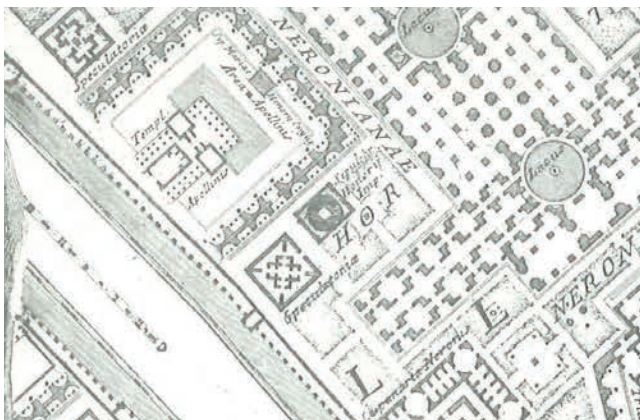
13. Louis Kahn first floor plan, 1968  
image from Michael Merrill, Louis Kahn Drawing to find out the Dominican Motherhouse and the patient search for architecture, Lars Muller Publishers, 2010, page 143

## CONCLUSION

On a city collage level the Campo Marzio offers a new perspective in how to relate open space to closed space and each other. Although the Campo Marzio is figural and seemingly without order, the figure-ground offers a clear differentiation between the volumes and public space. The Campo Marzio is not without streets, in contrary, within its collage the streets are formed by its architecture.

Secondly the framework of time and space within the Campo Marzio plan and the way Piranesi moves monuments and insert its own design illustrate, for an architect, how to incorporate own designs together via typological, symbolical and topographical considerations. As a cityscape the use of a collaged city offer a intelligent way to combine fragments from the past, present and future and in relation to that a way to piece together monument and the ever changing functionality within the city.

Eventually the Campo Marzio is all about the geometrical configurations but moreover their individual placement within the greater whole and their interrelationships between them. As stated before the Campo Marzio is a collection of basic typologies like the triangle or square.



14. The Sepulchrum Honorij Imp.  
image from Gijs Wallis de Vries, Piranesi en het idee van de prachtige stad, Uitgeverij  
Duizend & Een, Amsterdam, 1990

The Sepulchrum Honorij Imp. (image 14) can be called the base for this geometrical figures. Designed as a square void within a circular solid within a rectangular void created by a wall. The in-between space is not merely a filler or left-over space. The in-between space invites to enter buildings and invites into leaving them. The in between space makes the metamorphose from one type to another. The Campo Marzio is in fact a search into architectural organism that within a certain configuration can confront each other. In this way we should perceive our city and its surroundings. Not only on a large scale but also on smaller scales like the plan of a building. A perception that uses mainly the basic geometrics but combine them in a palimpsest collage.



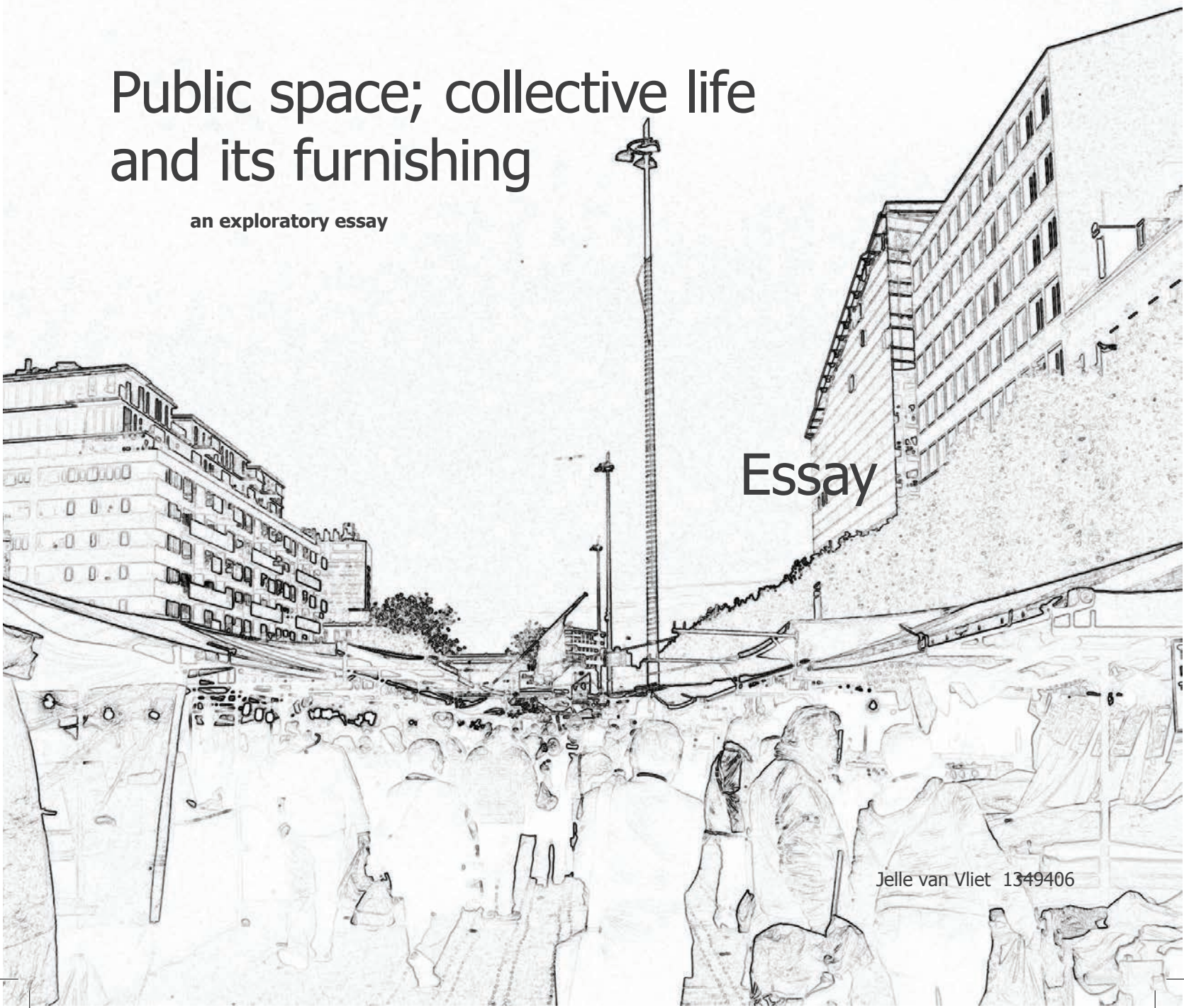


# Public space; collective life and its furnishing

an exploratory essay

Essay

Jelle van Vliet 1349406



"Architecture has its own realm. It has a specific physical relationship with life. I do not think of it primarily as either a message or a symbol, but as an envelope and background for life which goes on in and around it, a sensitive container for the rhythm of footsteps, for the concentration of work, for the silence of sleep."<sup>1</sup> - Peter Zumthor



## INTRODUCTION

The development of the agglomeration of Rotterdam and also the urban problem in general demand a structural vision and application in relation to the furnishing of public space. Inherent to the definition of the notion of public space is that it is to be accessible to everyone. It is space which services culture and society, as well as space which is formed by culture and society. The difference in experience and appreciation of public space by society can differ strongly depending on the location and group or individual. This means that the (design)problem concerning public space isn't unambiguous. Furthermore, it means that the design of public space is not 'merely' an assignment in relation to aesthetics, but also more and more in relation to social-cultural aspects, in which society, through its users, plays an ever growing (conducting) role.

Public space, its meaning and experience of it, is subject to constant change. The urbanization of the Dutch landscape is in part responsible for this. The enlargement in scale as a consequence of urbanization is cause to a changed perspective of experience and use. The 'obtained' freedom offered by the urban public space to society on the one hand, gives an oppressive feeling on the other. Or, as A. Geuze states: "The economy and the efficient functioning of the city are based on an optimal layout of functions and a first-rate infrastructure. The euphoria of mass culture, is the product of the accessibility and inter-changeability of the different cultures which is what gives urban live the proverbial combinatorial freedom of the video clip. This freedom is paradoxical, however. The price that is paid for it is the fully programmed public space."<sup>2</sup>

Aside from being the price paid for the aforementioned freedom, the fully programmed public space in part embodies the problematic 'endowed' on us by modernism. Pallasmaa states on this matter: "No one would deny the argument that public space has lost its cohesive, dignifying and sensuous qualities in the

modern era."<sup>3</sup>

This belief is exemplified by what he expresses as: "Our cities have lost their voice and echo. It is a great pleasure to walk on the paved narrow streets of an old town and hear the sound of one's own footsteps reflected back from the surrounding walls; I touch the city with my ears, and grasp the scale of its spaces, as well as its formal complexities and material qualities. But, the wide spaces and flat surfaces of the modern city do not return our sounds. Besides, the acoustic landscape is usually outright offensive; I feel alienated, alone and defensive."<sup>4</sup>

So, in our contemporary world, on the one hand public space seems to be under our detailed control, but on the other, seems in part to be devoid of a relation to human scale and the ability to facilitate social cohesion.

If the experience of the traditional city is to be understood as an all sense one, how could we define it within the current condition? And in a second instance; how can architecture relate to this current condition we perceive as the modern city?

## SENSORY EXPERIENCE WITHIN THE URBAN CONDITION

In the article 'Het ontstaan van de homo urbanicus'<sup>5</sup> (roughly translated: 'The emergence of the homo urbanicus'), the problematic regarding man and city is discussed. According to evolution-biologist Tijs Goldschmidt there's a limit to the number of relations a person can maintain with other people on the one hand, and the quantity of information one can process on the other. In order to defend ourselves against the deluge of impressions with which the urban environment confronts us, we switch to the act of ignoring congeners, i.e. other people. "Every urban dweller has the need to make his own village. By ignoring fellow urban dwellers and his act of constructing his own villages, the urban dweller survives the harsh conditions in which he is

condemned to live: an abundance of congeners and information.”<sup>6</sup>

The reference to this psychological reading of the urban dweller serves to make clear that most people tend to construct their own ‘mental villages’ within the urban fabric of the city. As a matter of habit or routine, these ‘villages’ consist of the places and connections between them, which we (may or may not prefer to) visit most frequent.

Within the same line of thought, the authors of the essay ‘De hoed en de rand’ state: “To many, the use of public space is characterized as no more, and no less, a transition from the one enclave to the other. ‘Inside’ – within your capsule, among your acquaintances or in the disco – and ‘outside’ – in the public domain, in the ‘city’ – are separated further. Physical, virtual or psychological boundaries are erected.”<sup>7</sup>

Again, this reference serves to illustrate a shift in balance of the use of public space acting lesser as a collective place of stay, and more often as a medium for travelling from A to B.

The places we reside in most, their interconnections; in other words, the public spaces of stay and transport, are perceived by us through all of our senses. But unlike most spaces of traditional cities, the spaces of modern cities seem to stimulate some of our senses more than others. Simply unintentionally, but more often by design, these types of spaces, through their selective relation to the senses, seem to invoke specific types of perception and as a result, a feeling of (dis)comfort and/or behaviour. Just as certain spaces could make you feel ‘alienated, alone and defensive’, there are those that respond to feelings of comfort, sociability and so on.

### **TYPES OF SENSORY ENVIRONMENT; THE CONTEMPORARY URBAN CONDITION**

If we relate the most commonly used public spaces of stay and those of transport to our group theme of

leisure, we could characterize roughly four categories of spatial environments endowed on us by the current urban condition of the city of Rotterdam:

- commercial (shopping) areas (shopping streets, malls)
- free leisure areas (parks, squares, boulevards)
- infrastructural areas (mainly perceived as, or through transport vehicle interiors)
- residential areas (streets, gardens, interiors)

The first two of these strongly relate to the ‘milieu’ enclosing our design location. But it’s not only function which makes us associate certain spaces as being comfortable with certain categories or types of spatial environment. Next to the ‘different’ kind of shops, it is their specific spatial relation within for example the Lijnbaan which endows on us the environment of a commercial shopping area.

The constant rhythm of medium-size and often trendy or even cosy stores is perceivable along both sides of the street. Because these sides are positioned relatively close to each other, both can be perceived simultaneously and in a second instance affords the shopping public to switch between them. The street’s façades in combination with the canopy partly obstruct the view of the large scale buildings surrounding its perimeter. The ‘blurred’ peripheral vision to the surroundings, the small-scale, partly encapsulated street-section and the prominent transparent shopping windows all try to relate to the human scale, the user, but most importantly; make this user aware of his or her environment and its intention; the exchange of goods and money.

A similar description or analysis can be made for example for the Coolingsel. Compared to the Lijnbaan, the experience of this street is radically different.

The wide section of the Coolingsel hosts different lanes to the different types of traffic. Its sides are paved with wide pedestrian zones. The façades, in proportion relating to the larger scale, hosts a variety

of more timid functions. But for the Coolsingel the main focus isn't its façades, plinths and the functions they contain. Here, the grandeur of the city of Rotterdam is expressed; monumental architectural objects and composed line of trees, luxurious dimensioned traffic lanes and unobstructed lines of vision (apart from the later added 'follies').

As a central city axis, it connects north and south, and at the same time forms a stage on which to carelessly stroll as flaneur. As the centre's main boulevard, its spatial layout focusses on precisely people and their activities; its architecture, its façades merely act as a décor to which the city projects itself.

These two examples make clear that both streets, at a stone's throw apart and only divided by a row of building blocks, both breathe their own atmosphere. Both have a main purpose and both relate differently to what an individual would perceive as a preferable place of stay or transit.

Both as types of the modern vocabulary, this shopping street and boulevard express themselves within the current condition of the urban. Compared to the all sense experience of the traditional city, they differ; in that they relate selectively or specifically to our senses and therefore our 'psychology'. They do so, in order to provide the right atmosphere to accommodate to an optimum their purpose; that of commerce and that of urban leisure.

However, if their purpose should for some reason disappear within the current condition, their atmospheres and the experience associated with it could become suddenly obsolete. Whereas an all sense orientated street, building or space could more easily adjust to an altered perspective in purpose.

## **PERCEPTION; EFFECTS OF MATERIAL PROPERTIES AND POTENTIAL FOR ACTION**

The different categories of spatial environments are perceived as such, because they each differ in certain

properties. The most important of these properties from an architectural standpoint are that of space (voids) and that of which encompasses, or defines space; materiality (surfaces).

Through the use and manipulation of materials, or surfaces, we're able to give form to space, or voids, and the characteristics or atmosphere it upholds.

It is the surface, and its material properties which determines for the most part our perception within a space. It is the surface which through its placement, form and materiality determines the void, directs light, water or sound, and conveys a certain tactility.

Next to its capacity of encompassing a certain spatiality and atmosphere, a surface can offer, or even induce reason to a certain kind of behaviour.

In his column 'Opportunities and Risks' from the series 'Matter Matters' Manuel DeLanda touches upon this capacity a surface (in potential) possesses.

"We could say that an animal perceives not the properties of its material environment, but the potential for action that those properties supply it with: a piece of ground is perceived not as horizontal, flat, and rigid, but as affording the opportunity to walk. Conceptually, the distinction that we need here is that between the properties of an object and its capacities: a knife may possess the property of being sharp and this may give it the capacity to cut, but the latter can only be exercised with respect to another object that has the capacity of being cut. In other words, unlike properties that an object either has or does not have, capacities are relational: a capacity to affect always goes with a capacity to be affected.

This is why a given distribution of opportunities and risks depends both on an environment's materiality as well as on the behavioral capacities of an animal. And whether an animal will pay attention to a given environmental feature, that is, find that feature worthy of perception, will depend as much on its own abilities as on the objective properties of the feature."<sup>8</sup>

We can conclude from this that the material properties

of a surface relate to our senses in a direct way. In an indirect way these properties provide a potential for action. This potential for action is only interpreted as such, if it relates to our own ability to potentially partake in this action.

The awareness of the two-fold conceptual properties of the urban surface in that sense relates strongly to our group's research methodology. Perceiving and analysing the design location's context from within the void-system, the street-scape, already implicitly deals with the condition of the surface. It is this combined approach I think can provide sufficient ingredients to implement in a recipe for the design location as a specific sensory environment, providing a niche within the mental villages of the contemporary urban condition.

### **URBAN LEISURE AND ITS SPECIFIC SENSORY ENVIRONMENT**

If we agree that the experience of the traditional city is to be understood as an all sense one, natural or (seemingly) unspecific, the experience within the current urban condition seems artificial, specific to the senses, as delineated in the aforementioned.

For the architecture of the design location to become part of the network of mental villages, it needs a specific atmosphere related to its purpose, that of urban leisure. In addition, this atmosphere needs to be connected, or maintain a certain relation with the atmospheres surrounding it.

So then, what composes this atmosphere related to urban leisure? It for sure could contain elements of those already discussed; the Lijnbaan, the Coolsingel or even the Stadhuisplein. But rather than to plainly copy their approach to the concept of leisure, it would be more evident to research new or other ways of providing a leisure experience. Analogue to the settings we perceive in parks, (waterside) boulevards and squares, the proposed spatial environment of urban leisure, to me, should rather than merely

providing a place for activity, be a place for interaction, to interact with. A condition of the 'urban surface' which is both capable of acting as décor to which city life is projected, as well as one which provides the conditions for bodily and tactile engagement.

### **PERCEPTION AND SENSATION THROUGH PERIPHERAL VISION AND AFTER IMAGES**

"As architects, we are orientated to designing solely visual landscapes, settings for the eye. As a consequence, the most significant single deficiency of the modern public space is the lack of positive tactile stimuli. We touch unconsciously the walls of even distant buildings, we caress their edges, materials and details, we sense their hardness, moisture and temperature. We do not only touch the city with our eyes, we also unconsciously project our bodies on to the various levels, recesses, balconies and openings of the surrounding urban space, and our bodies feel either welcome or rejected. The city, the public space becomes genuinely a part of our very bodies and body schemes."<sup>9</sup>

Thus for Pallasmaa, 'Unconscious peripheral perception transforms retinal images into spatial, tactile, and bodily experiences'.<sup>10</sup> In this sense, the formation of a specific (thematic or narrative) image-construction becomes imperative to the desired perceived atmosphere of urban leisure. But this image-construction as experience should not only manifest itself in the here and now. In order to increase the willingness of a visitor to return to this specific experience of urban leisure, the feeling of satisfaction, the sensation should be prolonged, imprinted in the memory even.

In their essay 'After image', van Berkel and Bos elaborate on the importance of the image today, and particularly what it should embody. Part of it reads: "Images only partly work through meaning; the other side of their effectiveness resides in pure, physiological

sensation, which exists separately from the world of signs and mental representations.”<sup>11</sup>

And in addition: “‘After image’ refers literally to the lingering visual impression caused by intense or prolonged stimulation of the retina. ... we use it to include the entire scale of sensory perceptions caused by intense impressions.”<sup>12</sup>

It continues: “The intensity of the sensation aimed for is achieved by combining different types of image constructions, within the structure provided by the design model. ... The variety of images that result in a proliferation of after images can be roughly divided



Image 1: Galleria Centerticity, designed by UNStudio, 2008-2010, Cheonan, Korea

Jelle van Vliet

into the following types: those that relate to the stretching and interconnecting of several themes; those that relate to structure and time; and those that relate to movement and future-orientated topics.”<sup>13</sup> (design model; referring to the different models implemented in their designs, and discussed in the essay ‘Design models’)<sup>14</sup>

### **PERCEPTION AND SENSATION THROUGH SURFACES; MATERIALITY AND POTENTIAL FOR ACTION**

In search for a specific atmosphere related to the urban leisure experience, the sensation caused by a narrative image-construction already implicitly engages with a tactile, bodily experience. In order to intensify this effect, the furnishing of the proposed spatial environment should facilitate actual tactile, bodily experiences. Here, both the conceptual properties of the surface, materiality and the potential for action, delineated by DeLanda come into play. Precisely the word ‘play’ implies what the exterior and interior surfaces of the location dedicated to urban leisure should afford the ‘urban hiker.’<sup>15</sup>

The design of the Simcoe Wavedeck in Toronto, Canada, exemplifies the multifold properties of a surface. Here, the deformation and materiality of a ‘single’ surface relates to both the maritime thematics of its surroundings as well as the ability to provide different potentials for action. The gradation in different continuous foldings affords the act of strolling, provides a terrace to see and be seen as well as ‘higher ground’ to enjoy uninterrupted views.

### **PERCEPTION AND SENSATION THROUGH SURFACES; INTERACTION**

Much like the way surfaces can provide potential for action, they too can offer potential for interaction.

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Image 2: Simcoe Wavedeck, designed by West 8, 2008, Toronto, Canada

A notion of imagery related to the emergence of the virtual public sphere is the changing image or 'interface'. Achieved through either new or alternative forms and meaning of materialization, digital patterns, or physical interaction with the user, interfaces allow for an architecture in which surfaces and shapes can become interactive. Architect Jean Nouvel speaks of architecture's relation with the virtual in what he states as: 'de-materialization of the limit.'<sup>16</sup>

"Architecture is the production of images. One must stop thinking of space uniquely in terms of three dimensions to penetrate the times of perception. There are too many architectural exercises where spaces are weak or self-sufficient. One talked of 'served/servant' spaces, now one thinks more in terms of interfaces. This means that from the moment where the six sides of a cube are programmed images, the aesthetic is no longer in the relation between space, shape and technical expression, but in the matters-lights-images relation. This is because the image subverts the intimate relations of public-private, interior-exterior,

and reveals new scale principles of proximity."<sup>17</sup>

For the design of the urban leisure environment Nouvel's concept can be interpreted as the opportunity to experiment with a sensation which renders close the virtual. In which "... We discover a concept of architecture, an architectural virtuality, in a maniacal work to free the apprehension of building through the glance. The architectural emotion is connected to the moment, conjectural and fugitive convergence of different factors of perception. What is permanent is no longer one, but thousands of changing, fleeting sights. From this point of view, the theoretical disappearance of the limit is a critical stake. It is about simulating the disappearance to imply the bodies-actors through the sensations: an emotion."<sup>18</sup>

An example of a direct implementation of an interactive surface is the sustainable dance floor designed by Studio Roosegaarde. The force of people's movements is converted into energy and subsequently light. The interaction between a person's movement and

the material environment in this case adds to the sensation of dancing.

## CONCLUSION

We've seen that most contemporary public spaces of commercial leisure relate to some of our senses more



Image 3: Sustainable dance floor, designed by Studio Roosegaarde, 2008, Rotterdam

specifically than others. In relation to the question stated earlier, we can define the experience of the contemporary city within the current condition as one which is directed by the purpose of a specific place. In other words, the spatial environment relates selectively or specifically to our senses, in order to provide the right atmosphere to accommodate to an optimum its purpose; that of commerce and urban leisure.

This, in part helps to answer the second question, that of how architecture can relate to the current condition we perceive as the modern city. Analogue to the settings we perceive in parks, (waterside) boulevards and squares, the proposed spatial environment of urban leisure, to me, should rather than merely providing a place for activity specifically targeted at a certain purpose, be a tangible place for interaction, to interact with. Rather than merely act as a space for shopping, these spaces could furnish other 'layers' as equal part of the concept of leisure as well.

In order to create an urban leisure environment in which the 'urban surface' is both capable of acting as décor to which city life is projected, as well as one which provides the conditions for bodily and tactile engagement, the design research should focus on the perception and resulting sensation of this environment. The concepts within this research include that of peripheral vision and its after images, and the conditions of the surface; materiality, potential for action and interaction.

The ultimate goal being to create a niche for urban leisure which affords a more playful, and tactile environment in which the contemporary dweller can unwind.

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### Images

Title image - Photo by the author, marketplace on the Binnenrotte at Rotterdam (date 10-11-'09)

Image 1 Image by Christian Richters, obtained from: [http://www.archdaily.com/125125/galleria-centercity-unstudio/03\\_christian-richters\\_4172-064/](http://www.archdaily.com/125125/galleria-centercity-unstudio/03_christian-richters_4172-064/) (date 30-05-'11)

Image 2 [http://www.west8.com/projects/design/simcoe\\_wavedeck/](http://www.west8.com/projects/design/simcoe_wavedeck/) (date 22-05-'11)

Image 3 <http://sustainabledanceclub.com/pop/html?http://sustainabledanceclub.nl/img/products/sdf/Dvll-DanceFloor-2.jpg> (date 30-05-'11)









# Multi-cultural public life

“How does the multi-cultural life of Rotterdam translate in the contemporary public realm of the city?”

## Research

Aad Demenint, Michael Schuurman, Kim Peeters



## INTRODUCTION

Contemporary society is constantly changing and more rapid all the time. Internet has had an immense impact on social life, globalization on cities and its public domain and people become more and more individualistic while time commences. Understandably these phenomena influence daily life hugely and our perception of our surroundings. This is no exception for the city of Rotterdam.

Looking at the big cities of The Netherlands, one cannot deny that Rotterdam varies from all others. Everything is different.

First of all, due to the bombing of the Second World War, the city centre has a history of only 65 years. So, all though it has a great and colorful past, it only exists in memory and history books.

This historical moment has influenced Rotterdam immensely. Even until this day, one can notice that it has determined the course of its architectural and social-economical structure.

For instance, unlike the other Dutch cities, it has a centre that represents a different architectural period; it's a product of the Modernists ideology, which has great consequences on the atmosphere and the use of its public domain. But there are also demographical differences and even political comparison shows that Rotterdam is unique.

It's these differences, in combination with Rotterdam being a city

for the working class that makes examining the demography of this city extremely interesting. The composition of the population of Rotterdam is very dynamic. If there is one city in The Netherlands that has put the multi-cultural society to the test, it's Rotterdam.

When Rotterdam had to be rebuilt, city planners grabbed the opportunity to propose plans that would provide solutions for the occurring problems that fast growing city were facing in those days. Rapid accessibility towards and from the city centre and optimal use of the area were key goals to face the future. It resulted in a centre build on a larger scale than our other cities. High-rise buildings and big traffic lanes, but also, as a consequence of those fast and big traffic lanes, hard borders separating different neighborhoods.

While examining these neighborhoods, we also took into consideration the different functions that dominate the area. It's understandable that the public domain in an office area is differently used than the public streets of a living area. Especially the Lijnbaan shopping street has a very specific use because of its mono functional character. The Lijnbaan by night shows a different picture all together.

The detection of a multi-cultural society implies that groups with different cultural backgrounds react on and use public domain differently. What are those differences? Furthermore specific cultural habits

and use can sequentially cause for morphological changes and influence the atmosphere of an area.

We studied does different cultural backgrounds to see if indeed people relate and interpret differently to public areas and if so, how it can be used for the city to benefit.

It's important to point out, that in our studies when spoken of typical cultural behavior, this is meant in a general sense. It's an average indication of typical behavior of a specific ethnic group. It is interesting to investigate what kind of effect that specific cultural usage of a public area has on the atmosphere of that area and even on the city. To put it more directly: What are the effects of a multicultural society? Does it change a city and in what way?

It resulted in our main question: "How does the multi-cultural life of Rotterdam translate in the contemporary public realm of the city?"

## DEMOGRAPHICAL STRUCTURE

Demographical investigation shows (see images) that just after the Second World War, the population of the city of Rotterdam existed of mostly autochthonous inhabitants. This changed off course when in the early sixties the 'guest workers' started coming to our country.

### 1965

After the reconstruction of Europe, a period of economical prosperity followed. Wages started to increase. Education improved which resulted in more and better educated people. Production and demand continued to grow and resulted in a shortage of workers for unskilled and heavy work. Around the same time, countries like Turkey and Morocco were confronted with high unemployment numbers.

The work and higher wages in the Netherlands drew Turkish and Moroccan people and people from countries around the Mediterranean. The Dutch government sets up treaties with those countries to keep control of the flow of immigrants. The idea was suppose to be temporary so integration schemes weren't introduced.

All nations involved thought to have invented a win-win situation.

Unfortunately no one can predict the future and the oil crises of the early seventies changed all dramatically. Jobs became more scares as a result and the economical situation in Turkey and Morocco didn't

1965

100% Western  
0% Not western



1990

80% Western  
20% Not western



improve. The guest workers didn't want to return back to their native country and decided to reunite with their family over here.

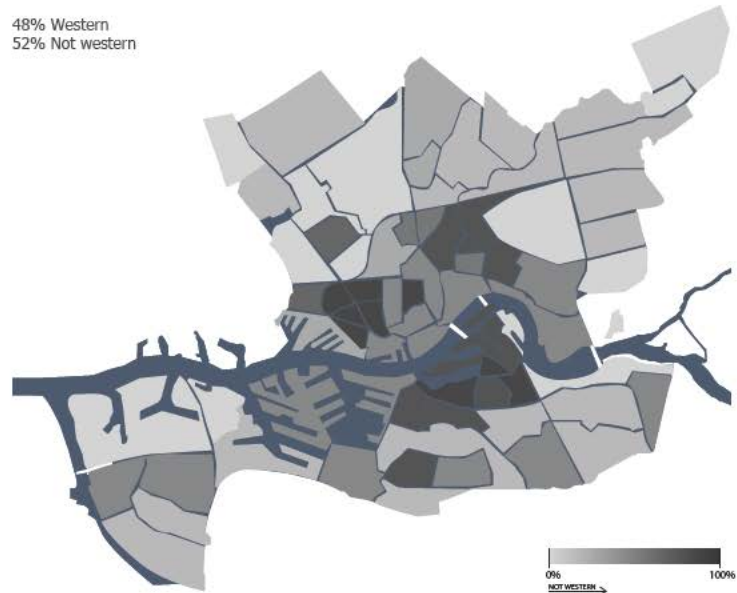
At this point, the Dutch government still believes that the immigrants will eventually return to their country of origin and promotes keeping different cultural habits. This is eventually not the case, in the eighties it's accepted that the immigrants are here to stay and legislation and rules for integration are introduced. Focussing on Rotterdam, this gradual change of population structure could be noticed especially in the harbour areas.

Before the sixties, less than 2% of its population had a different national background. Until then, only Indonesians immigrated to The Netherlands but they weren't called guest workers. The 'invitation' for foreign workers started in 1956 and concerned mostly Turkish, Moroccans and immigrants from southern Europe. These were the first generation guest workers. But it wasn't until the end of the sixties that the formation of Rotterdam's population started to show dramatic changes. Instead of returning to their native countries, the reunion of the families took place in Rotterdam and consequently a high number of foreigners passed our borders.

The city centre of Rotterdam started to become more multi cultural. Especially the neighbourhoods with the cheaper houses gained a more various ethnic character, such as Oude Westen, Nieuwe Westen and

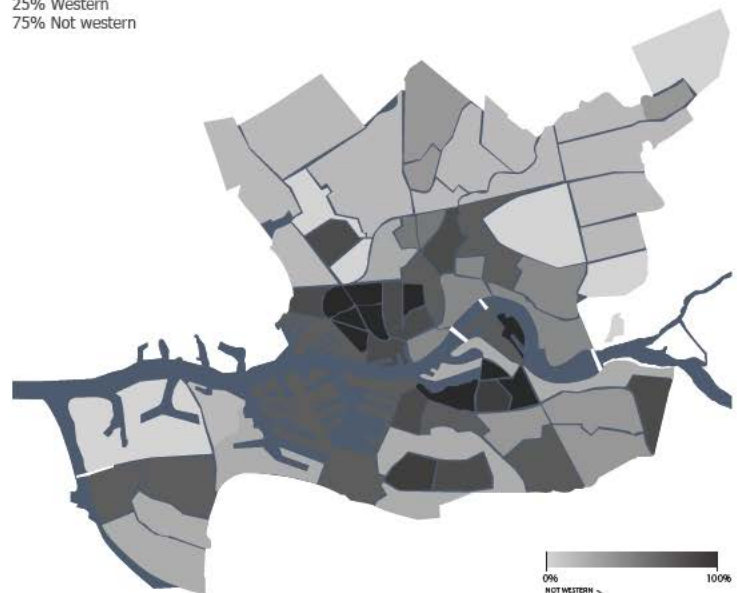
2011

48% Western  
52% Not western



2025

25% Western  
75% Not western



Agniesenbuurt. Our area, Cool, show statistic results in 1965 that are almost equal to the numbers for the complete city. In the vicinity of 20% being non-western immigrants.

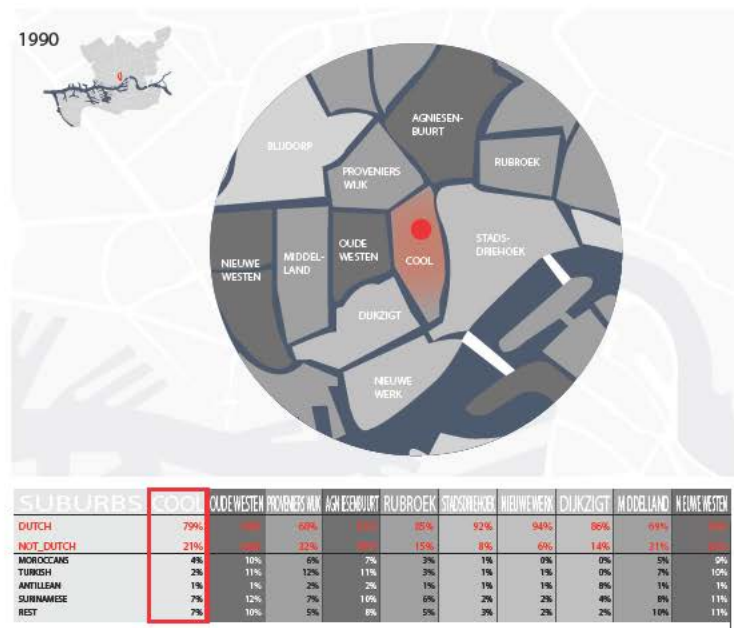
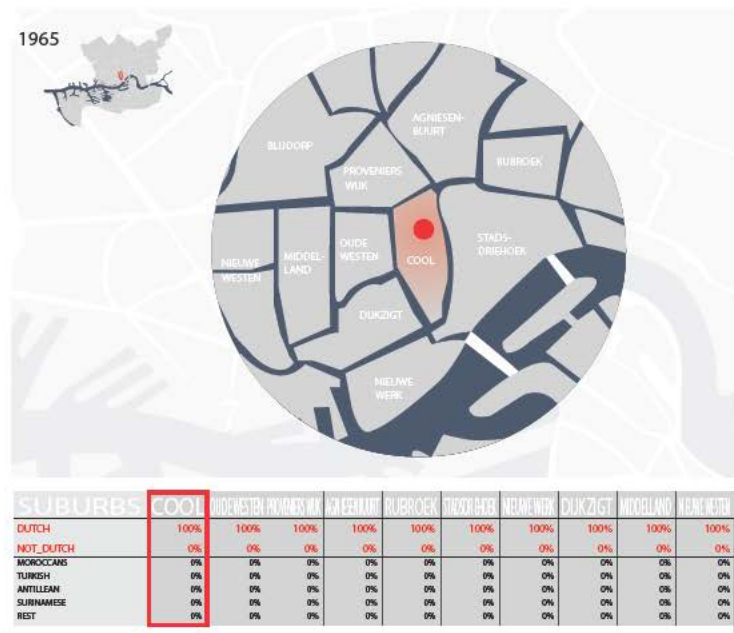
### 1990

This increase partly had to do with the families moving to be with the 'guest worker' and partly because these guest workers started or expanded their families. This new generation was called the second-generation guest workers.

Besides the second-generation, The Netherlands was also confronted with a new group of immigrants. Because of economical misfortune, Surinamese and Antilleans, people from the Dutch colonies, came to The Netherlands in hope for better days. They were part of the same kingdom, so there weren't any restrictions to come over and give it a try.

### 2011

The increase continued and today almost half of the inhabitants of Rotterdam have a non-western background, mostly living in the centre of the city. Due to cultural differences immigrants tend to have more children than autochthonous residents. Consequently having an influence on these numbers. For instance Dutch native families nowadays have an average of less than two kids per family and most Moroccan families an average





of over three.

## 2025

The prognoses for the future indicates that even more inhabitants with a non-western cultural background will dominate the public domain in the city centre.

Calculations show, that in 2025 no less than 75 % of the entire population of Rotterdam will not be autochthonous. Most of the autochthonous population is predicted to move towards the suburbs surrounding the city centre, while different cultural groups remain growing in numbers.

All though the statistics show a shift of cultures, an important question shines a more nuanced light on the matter. Is a third or fourth generation immigrant still an immigrant or autochthonous citizen?



	SUBURBS	COOL	OUDE WESTEN	PROVENIERS WUJK	AGNIESEN-BUURT	RUBROEK	STADS-DRIEHOEK	NIEUWE WERK	DUKZIGT	MIDDELLAND	NIEUWESTEN
DUTCH	49%	27%	10%	15%	10%	6%	4%	10%	10%	10%	27%
NOT DUTCH	11%	73%	90%	65%	89%	13%	6%	10%	10%	14%	73%
MOROCCANS	0%	13%	8%	11%	7%	2%	1%	0%	0%	9%	13%
TURKISH	3%	14%	14%	14%	6%	2%	1%	2%	1%	11%	16%
CAPE VERDE	3%	7%	2%	4%	3%	1%	1%	0%	0%	8%	9%
ANTILLEAN	2%	3%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	3%
SURINAMESE	0%	15%	0%	12%	0%	5%	2%	10%	12%	13%	13%
SOUTH EUROPA	5%	6%	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%	2%	5%	5%	4%
REST INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES	0%	4%	7%	5%	5%	11%	15%	0%	0%	6%	3%
REST NOT INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES	12%	11%	0%	11%	0%	11%	10%	10%	12%	12%	9%



	SUBURBS	COOL	OUDE WESTEN	PROVENIERS WUJK	AGNIESEN-BUURT	RUBROEK	STADS-DRIEHOEK	NIEUWE WERK	DUKZIGT	MIDDELLAND	NIEUWESTEN
DUTCH	28%	5%	20%	16%	20%	12%	4%	10%	20%	20%	5%
NOT DUTCH	72%	95%	79%	84%	80%	88%	16%	10%	80%	80%	95%
MOROCCANS	8%	28%	7%	13%	7%	3%	1%	3%	3%	0%	18%
TURKISH	5%	16%	15%	17%	6%	2%	1%	5%	1%	14%	21%
CAPE VERDE	5%	6%	4%	5%	3%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	11%
ANTILLEAN	4%	4%	5%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	20%	2%	5%
SURINAMESE	14%	20%	13%	16%	0%	5%	2%	13%	15%	15%	16%
SOUTH EUROPA	7%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	4%	3%	7%	7%	5%
REST INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES	14%	5%	10%	7%	5%	11%	15%	11%	0%	0%	7%
REST NOT INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES	20%	17%	12%	14%	0%	11%	10%	14%	15%	15%	11%

## CULTURAL USE

One of the first steps we undertook in our research was to determine which functions of the public domain the different cultural backgrounds use.

To be more specific, which public function is used in which intensity by which cultural group? (in the diagrams the y-axis indicates time, 100% represents every day of a year, 12% is a month).

Recent research has indicated that some functions are generally used by all cultures and some are more associated with a specific culture. The Turkish for instance have a more rural origin and are used to recreate and even work close by, while the native Dutch people go out more and make more use of cinema's, theatres or restaurants. These specific characteristics find

their origin in different cultural habits and believe. Religious ones for instance, Dutch women are more liberated cause of our secular system and are thus more outgoing then Islamic women.

Social economical ones: The Moroccan and Turkish families are much bigger then the Dutch or even Surinamese families, which results in less money to spend per head. It also results in staying more in ones own neighbourhood because travelling with a lot of children is a bigger burden then travelling without. The autochthonous Dutch people mainly use restaurants, discos and recreational facilities while the other cultures show less interest.

Whether this is habitual or it has to do with financial spending abilities, it causes for different cultural mixture in specific places in the city. It makes the city centre of Rotterdam

culturally fragmented in a sense. While the functional use of the city has already created hard borders between the different streets, this variety of use by the different ethnical groups, emphasises this contrast even more.

Besides the difference in cultural use, there is also variety in male and female use. A tea bar for instance is intensely used by Turkish and Moroccan men and far less by those women. Again religious reasons cause for a restriction of free movement in some cultures and this, understandably, has effect on the intensity of use of a certain group in the public areas. On the other hand city parks, shops and music halls are integrated in most cultures and are intensely used by all. Parks are still considered as a good place to meet and in summer time even used as a place to eat.

PUBLIC SPACE: RECREATIONAL FACILITIES	DUTCH	TURKISH
LOCAL SERVICES (SQUARES PLAYGROUND PARKS IN THE SURROUNDINGS)	77%	82%
CITY PARKS	83%	88%
RECREATION	66%	30%
BEACH AND DUNE	66%	34%
NATURE LANDSCAPE	51%	16%

PUBLIC SPACE: CULTURAL FACILITIES	DUTCH	TURKISH
THEATRE	23%	20%
MUSIC	33%	27%
MUSIC THEATRE	15%	7%
DANS PERFORMANCE	3%	15%
MOVIE	71%	42%

PUBLIC SPACE: SPORT	DUTCH	TURKISH
PERCENTAGE	61%	38%
1-10 IN A YEAR	13%	16%
11-25 IN A YEAR	16%	27%
26-50 IN A YEAR	48%	27%
51-100 IN A YEAR	7%	16%
>100 IN A YEAR	16%	14%

PUBLIC SPACE: CATERING	DUTCH		TURKISH	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
CAFFEE/TEA BAR	23%		40%	
CAFE	61%		27%	
RESTAURANT	75%		48%	
CAFETARIA/ SNACKBAR	70%		37%	
DISCO	36%		16%	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
CAFFEE/TEA BAR	19%	43%	66%	16%
CAFE	62%	61%	45%	11%
RESTAURANT	67%	72%	40%	34%
CAFETARIA/ SNACKBAR	72%	39%	61%	15%
DISCO	30%	42%	26%	8%

PUBLIC SPACE: RECREATIONAL FACILITIES	DUTCH		MAROCCANS	
LOCAL SERVICES (SQUARES PLAYGROUND PARKS IN THE SURROUNDINGS)	77%		86%	
CITY PARKS	83%		92%	
RECREATION	66%		31%	
BEACH AND DUNE	66%		50%	
NATURE LANDSCAPE	51%		13%	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
RECREATION	59%	71%	38%	18%
NATURE LANDSCAPE	35%	56%	14%	18%

PUBLIC SPACE: CULTURAL FACILITIES	DUTCH		MAROCCANS	
THEATRE	23%		39%	
MUSIC	33%		25%	
MUSIC THEATRE	15%		20%	
DANS PERFORMANCE	3%		15%	
MOVIE	71%		49%	

PUBLIC SPACE: SPORT	DUTCH		MAROCCANS	
PERCE TAG	61		8	
10 N A YEA	3		24%	
1 25	1		3	
26 5 IN A YE R	48%		8%	
51-100 IN A YEAR	7%		10	
>100 IN A YEAR	16%		26%	

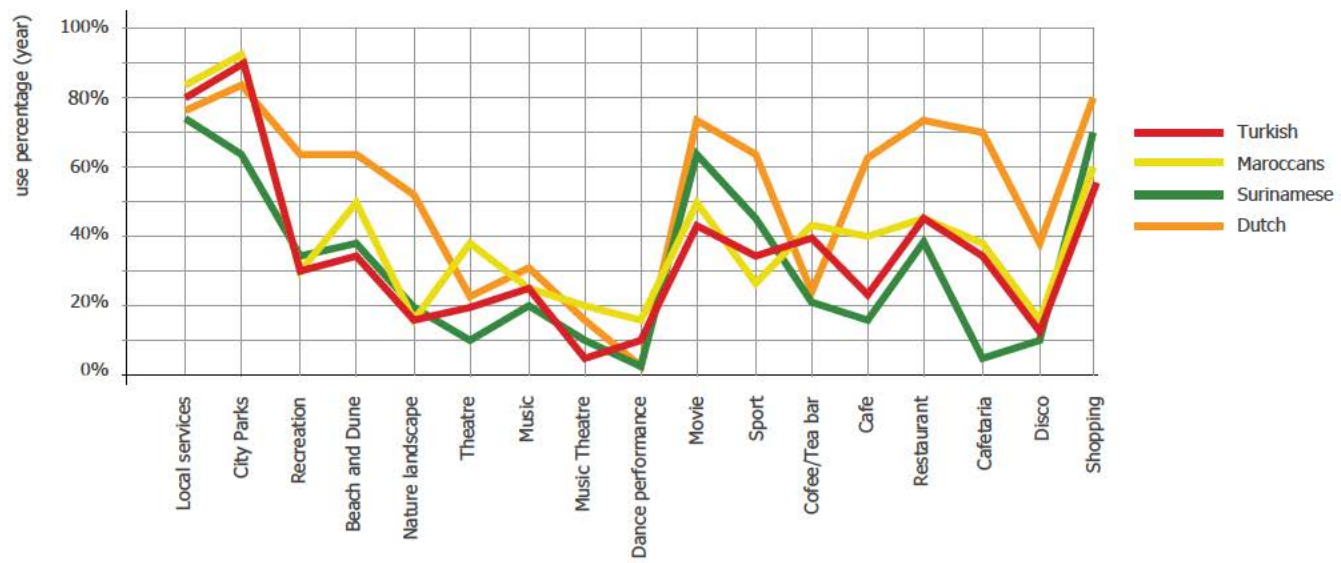
PUBLIC SPACE: CATERING	DUTCH		MAROCCANS	
CAFEE/TEA BAR	23%		39%	
CAFE	61%		41%	
RESTAURANT	75%		46%	
CAFETARIA/ SNACKBAR	70%		37%	
DISCO	36%		16%	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
CAFEE/TEA BAR	19%	43%	33%	30%
CAFE	62%	61%	45%	25%
RESTAURANT	67%	72%	43%	40%
CAFETARIA/ SNACKBAR	72%	39%	50%	10%
DISCO	30%	42%	34%	17%

PUBLIC SPACE: RECREATIONAL FACILITIES	DUTCH		SURINAMESE	
LOCAL SERVICES (SQUARES PLAYGROUND PARKS IN THE SURROUNDINGS)	77%		74%	
CITY PARKS	83%		65%	
RECREATION	66%		35%	
BEACH AND DUNE	66%		38%	
NATURE LANDSCAPE	51%		20%	

PUBLIC SPACE: CULTURAL FACILITIES	DUTCH		SURINAMESE	
THEATRE	23%		10%	
MUSIC	33%		30%	
MUSIC THEATRE	15%		9%	
DANS PERFORMANCE	3%		2%	
MOVIE	71%		68%	

PUBLIC SPACE: SPORT	DUTCH		SURINAMESE	
PERCENTAGE	61%		45%	
1-10 IN A YEAR	13%		30%	
11-25 IN A YEAR	16%		17%	
26 50 IN A YEAR	48%		40%	
51-100 IN A YEAR	7%		4%	
>100 IN A YEAR	16%		11%	

PUBLIC SPACE: CATERING	DUTCH		SURINAMESE	
CAFEE/TEA BAR	23%		21%	
CAFE	61%		35%	
RESTAURANT	75%		56%	
CAFETARIA/ SNACKBAR	70%		62%	
DISCO	36%		38%	



Percentage use of public function each culture

## CULTURAL USE IN COOL

Zooming in on our area. Being in the Cool, you are immediately confronted with multi-cultural society. People from all ethnical groups wander through the streets of the Cool. It's a true mixture of all cultures, however it's mainly an optical mixture. The public domain is used by all, but mostly individually. It means that there is no contact between the different cultural groups, other than being in the same place. No social integration, no meeting. Also another important given came to light while studying the users of the public domain closely. Most users, no matter which cultural background, were on their way to another destination. The public areas of the Cool are, almost without exception, never a user's final destination. Only on the Lijnbaan, people could stay for a longer period, but still moving from shop to shop. These constant flows of people make the Cool a centre without an actual central place of being. It's like a crowded train on the move from one station towards another. The way all functions are organized in the Cool cause for a district full of clusters. The Lijnbaan is mainly a shopping street, the Coolensingel is a big transport avenue, the theatres and cinema are combined on the Schouwburgplein and bars can be found on the Stadhuisplein. There aren't many spots where you can find a combination of functions, were people with a different func-

tional purpose come together and cause for a possible mixture of culture.

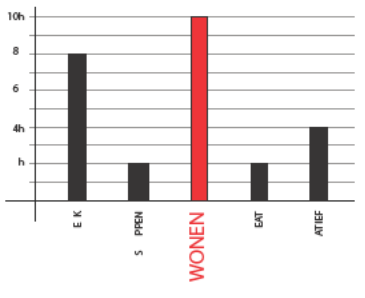
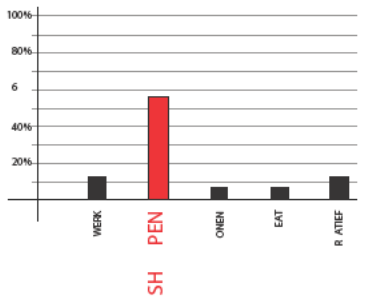
### Questionnaire

To investigate different cultural use of an area, it's, next to stats and figures, also very important to look at how the users/visitors of that area feel and react on that area. With a street interview we wanted to see if practical use confirms the collected data and it could additionally indicate why people visit the area. Is it a visit with a specific destination like work or a certain store or is it a visit of a more 'flexible' nature, like a walk through a park or a straw on a beach.

This questionnaire could also help showing how local or non-local the use of the area is, if the Cool is structured for the local residents or for the outside visitors.

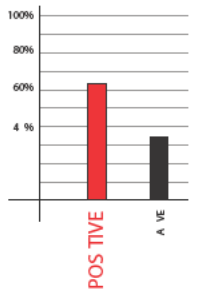
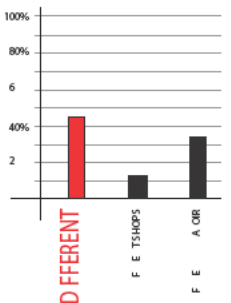
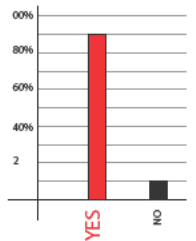
Remarkable outcome was that all visitors of the Cool are aware of the attendance of the mixture of different cultures but also indicate that more integration of those cultures is requested. The questionnaire also shows that the mono functional set up of most of the streets in the Cool cause for an unsafe feeling on the moments that those specific functions are closed and thirdly the area lacks green spots or colour in general. (next page: the bigger the word, the more often it was answered)

**Percentage use of area      Percentage use of day      Why shop here?**



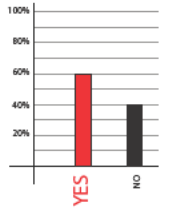
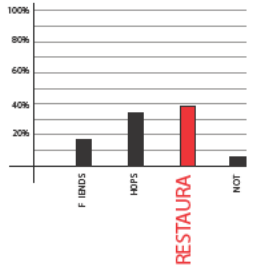
**FUN**      **COSY**  
**BIG**      **LIVE C**  
**A LOT OF S**

**Notify anything? How?      Positive/Negative?      Positive**



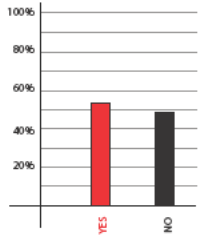
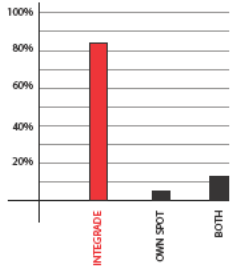
**MIX OF SHOPS**      **M**  
**MORE IN**  
**BIG**      **COSY**  
**DIFFERENT**      **CC**

**Use of cultures      Do you feel safe?      Positive**



**LIKE TO EAT DIFFEREN**  
**YOUNG PEOPLE & SECOND C**  
**T ON:**  
**MORE DIFFERENT CULTURE F**

**Intergrate?      Missing anything?      Intergrate?**



**YES!**  
**RESPECT**  
**OWN CULTURE,**  
**INTEGRADE IN PUB**

WORK CLOSEBY

MEETING POINT FRIENDS

NE CLOSEBY

LUNCH BREAK

OF SHOPS

Negative

MIX OF PEOPLE  
INTERACTION

MAROKKANS LESS RESPECTFULL

HANGING/MEETING ON THE STREETS

OSY

**LESS SAFE**

TO BUSY

COLOURFULL

MAKING JOKES  
NO UNDERSTANDING

Safe?

Why?

ENT FOOD

DURING THE DAY YES

**NO SOCIAL CONTROL**

ND GENERA-

DURING THE NIGHT NO

LESS POLICE

RE FRIENDS

GIRLS FEEL NOT SAFE

PEOPLE GATHERING

NO LIFE IN THE STREETS AT NIGHT

What do you miss?

*OUTSIDE CAFE*

DISCOTHEKE

**GREEN**

OPEN AIR PODIUM

**STREET LIGHT**

CHINESE SUPERMARKET

PUBLIC LIFE

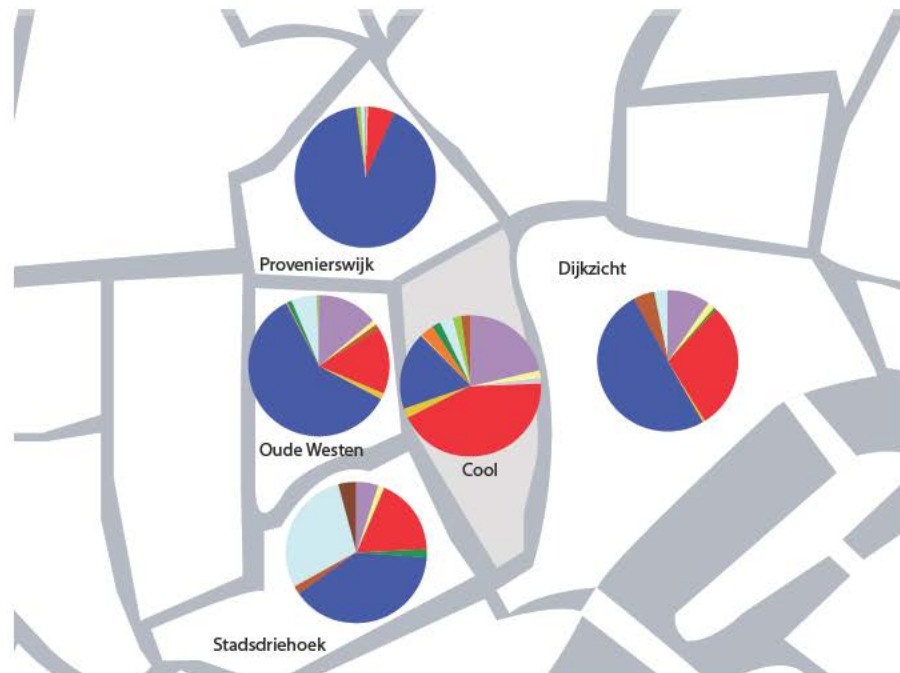
**ATMOSPHERE**

ROTI SHOP

## PUBLIC REALM COMPARED

Before drawing conclusions we decided to compare the Cool with its surrounding districts. An investigation as such could show if some of the functions missing in the Cool could be found in an adjusting neighbourhood and could therefore possibly influence the intensity of people in our area. Dijkzicht, the district south of the Cool, has a big city park and partly makes up for the little recreational green offer our area has. The Cool, in return, is the shopping and office centre of Rotterdam and is used as such by the residents of the close by neighbourhoods. This case study could also indicate if inhabitants with the same cultural background would cluster together and as a result create some sort of Chinatown or little Turkey.

The Cool is in fact surrounded by more residential districts and is sequentially more intensely used by those districts. In that sense The Cool is functionally organized as the centre of the city, it attracts users from all Rotterdam and even from outside the city. But that's just during the day. When shops and offices close, the atmosphere changes completely. Streets and squares become empty and a feeling of discomfort increases. The few functions that are operational during night are geographically scattered over the neighbourhood and therefore not in cooperation with one another.



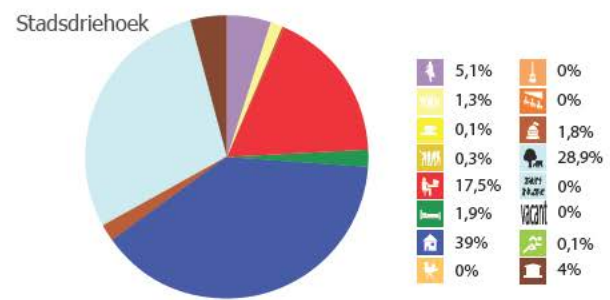
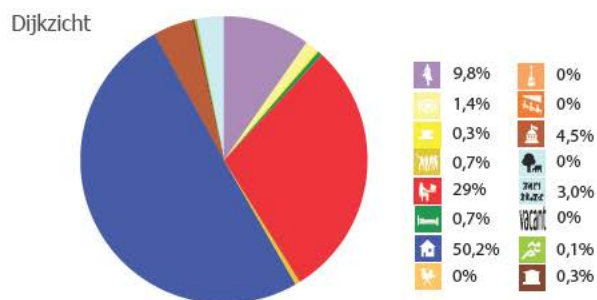
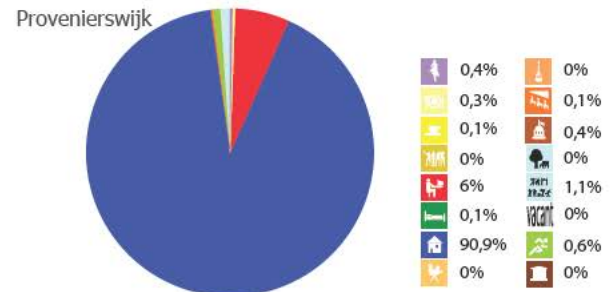
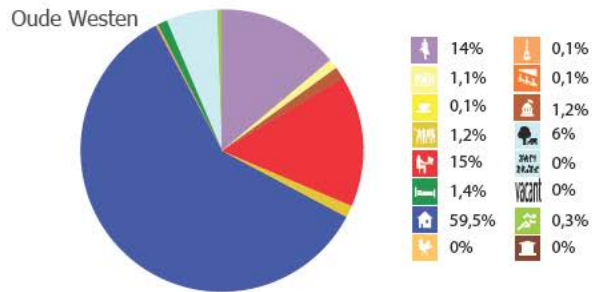
The scale of Schouwburgplein is so immense that the small clustering of functions realized here unfortunately doesn't combine the different users, not to mention the different cultures. It turned out not to be a place where one would like to hang out.

At night the Cool loses its city centre appearance somewhat and turns out to be a collection of various spots.

The lack of local facilities, a city park or other 'hang outs', makes

The Cool a centre for mainly non-local users and that consequently has influence on the level of social interaction. When you are not socially connected with an area, your involvement tends to be little as well.





Images:

The diagrams show the functional construction of the adjusting neighbourhoods. As can be seen clearly all are more of a residential nature than the Cool. The Cool exists of mainly offices and shops. Dijkzicht has to fill the lack of green area's apparent in the other districts of the city centre.

Cool



Percentage Functions area	Percentage Public Functions
22%	66%
1,4%	4,2%
0,2%	0,6%
1,3%	3,8%
44%	
2,2%	
18%	
0,4%	1,3%
0%	0%
3%	8,6%
2%	6%
0%	0%
3%	9%
1,1%	
0,1%	0,2%
2%	

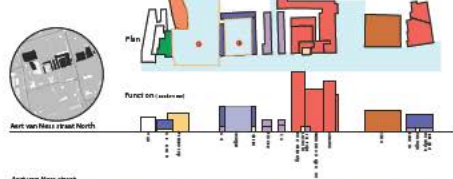
- ① Beursplein
- ② Stadhuisplein
- ③ Schouwburgplein
- ④ Joost Banckertsplaats
- ⑤ Johan Evertsenplaats
- ⑥ van Oldenbarneveldplaats
- ⑦ Binnenwegplein
- ⑧ VVV plein
- ⑨ Eendrachtspaleis
- ⑩ Skatepark Westblaak

## **USE OF PUBLIC REALM IN COOL**

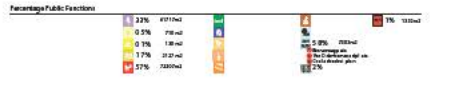
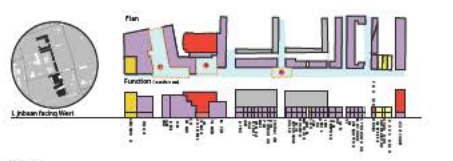
'Research by numbers'

Knowing some of the public functions the different cultures generally prefer, makes it interesting to look at how much square feet is actually offering those preferred public functions. We wanted to investigate this for the Lijnbaan and its surrounding streets. All present facilities were added up and divided by the square footage per street. Now we had a clear view of what each street functionally had to offer.

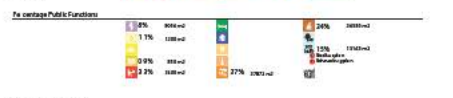
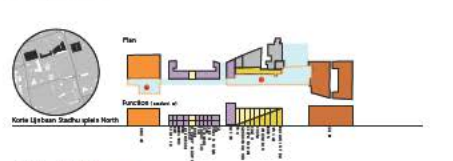
**Aert van Ness Straat North**  
 4 Research public realm Cool



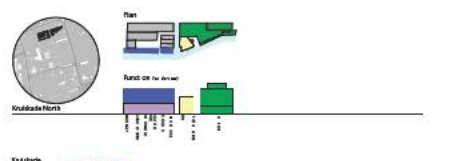
**Lijnbaan facing West**  
 4 Research public realm Cool



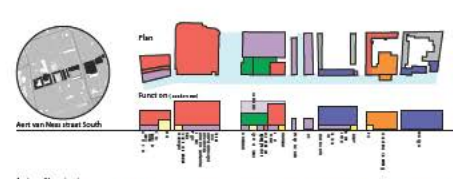
**Korte Lijnbaan - Stadhuisplein North**  
 4 Research public realm Cool



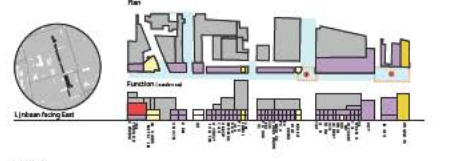
**Kruisgade North**  
 4 Research public realm Cool



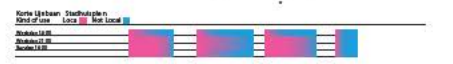
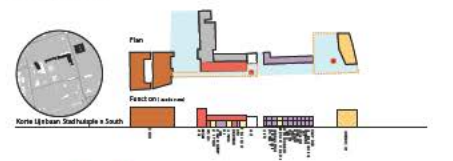
**Aert van Ness Straat South**  
 4 Research public realm Cool



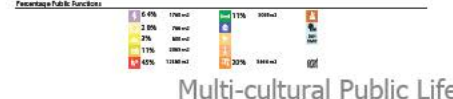
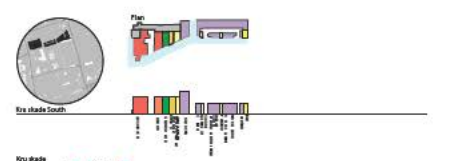
**Lijnbaan facing East**  
 4 Research public realm Cool



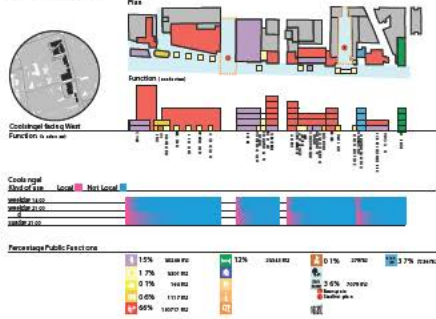
**Korte Lijnbaan - Stadhuisplein South**  
 4 Research public realm Cool



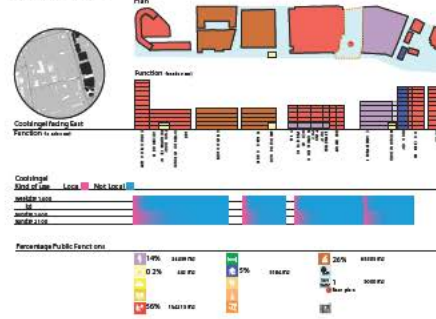
**Kruisgade South**  
 4 Research public realm Cool



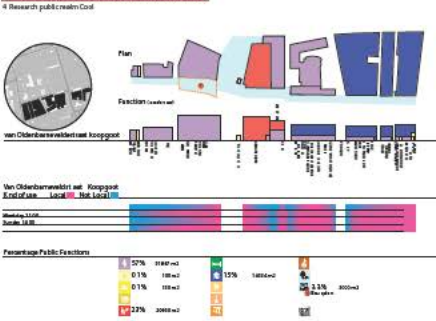
**Cooksingel West**  
4 Research public realm Cool



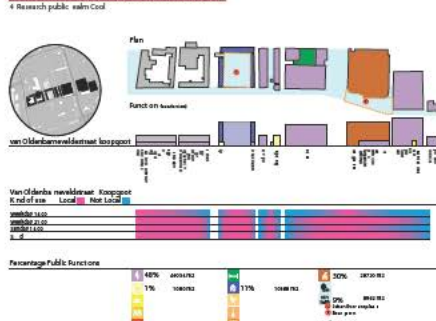
**Cooksingel South**  
4 Research public realm Cool



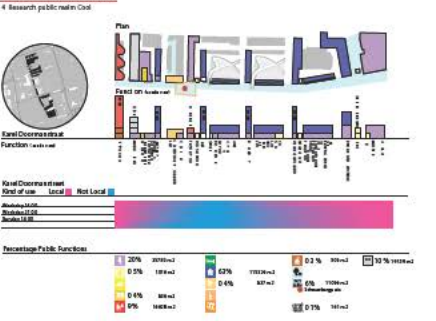
**Van oldenbarneveldstraat - Koopgoot South**  
4 Research public realm Cool



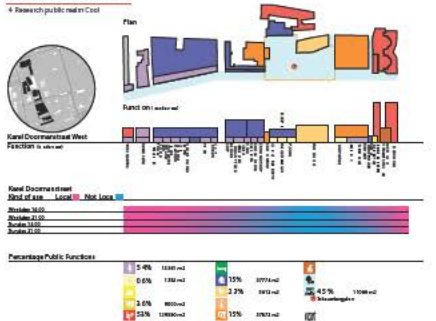
**Van oldenbarneveldstraat - Koopgoot North**  
4 Research public realm Cool



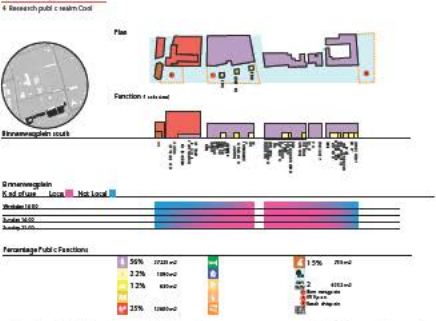
**Karel Doormanstraat East**  
4 Research public realm Cool



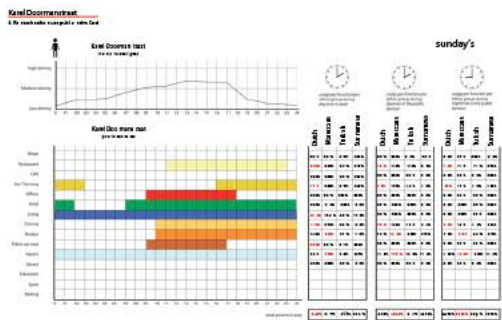
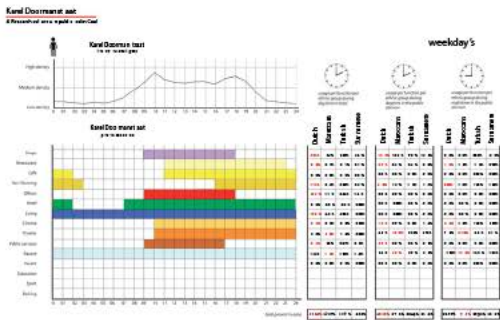
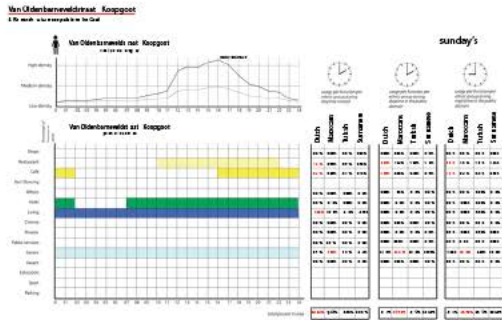
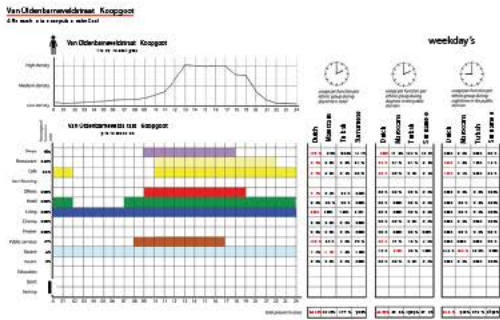
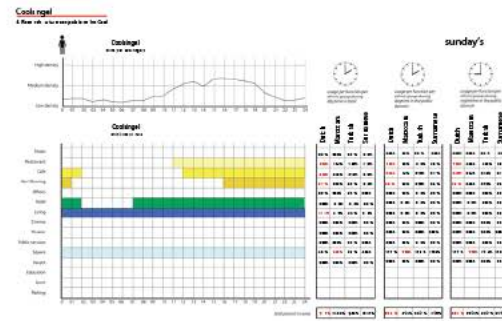
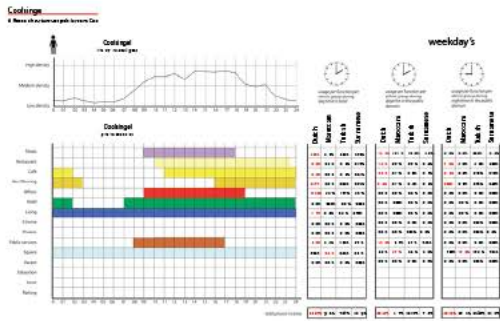
**Karel Doormanstraat West**  
4 Research public realm Cool



**Binnenweglein South**  
4 Research public realm Cool







## USE PUBLIC REALM BY CULTURE

At this point in our research, it became time to use all gathered data. From here on, we started our research by numbers. Taking the percentages from the study done on cultural use and combining them with the square footage of the cultural preferred functions and density in the streets, theoretically it would print out percentages of how many persons with a similar cultural background would be in a specific street at a certain time (see image equation). It's important to take into consideration that functions apparent in a street do actually generally operate conform the stated expectations used

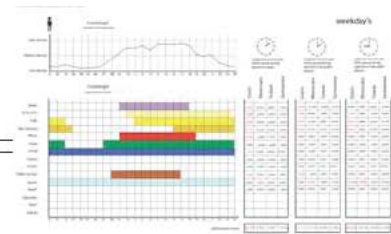
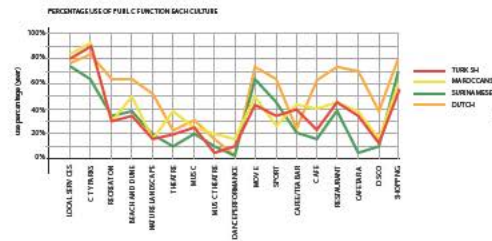
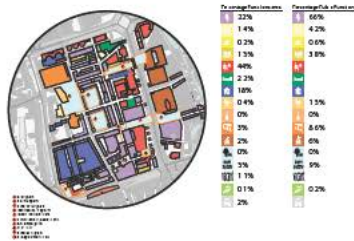
in the rapport. For example, when a street houses a park, the park must be accessible from that street in order to play its part in the equation. For this reason, opening hours are added; a specific function is only considered when open.

In our research, we primary looked at differences occurring during day-times versus nighttimes and weekdays versus weekends. In these four time sets the biggest differences appear.

The equation generates data that estimates the attendance of the various cultural groups (biggest four) per street. Any street obviously contains public and less public functions. In our case, it's interesting to restudy the numbers without the housing and office

function on. These particular functions mainly have a momentarily influence on the usage of a street. Put in the perspective of a complete day, it plays no role of importance. In doing so, the percentages of the autochthonous population decrease immensely and a more coherent mixture of cultures becomes visible. It becomes apparent what adding a specific function would do in stimulating a more gradual mixture of all cultural groups available. The same effect can be noticed when introducing more functions at night.

The introduced equation can show the cultural formation of the present population at any time, but not yet if it concerns local inhabitants or visitors.





Weekday 14.00



Weekday 14.00



Sunday 21.00



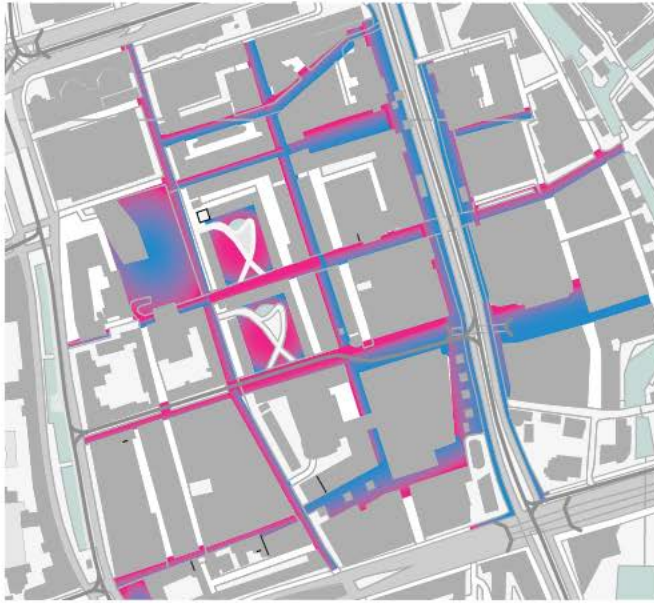
Sunday 21.00



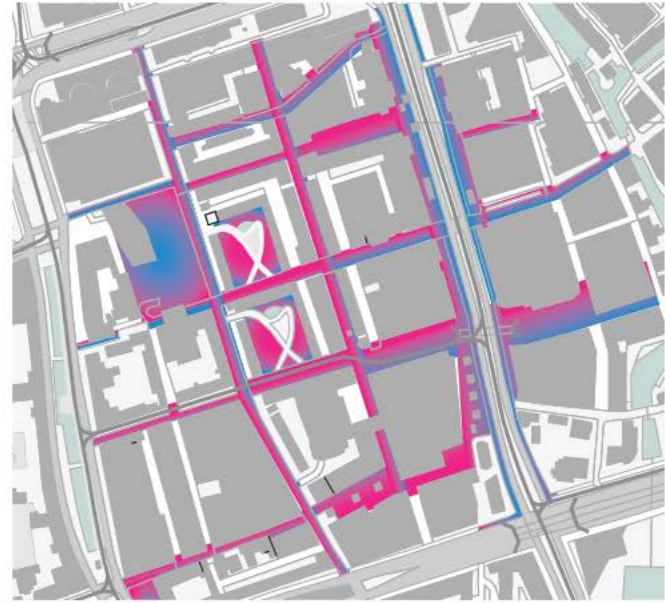
## **USE PUBLIC REALM LOCAL VERSUS NON-LOCAL**

So the next step was to investigate local use versus not local use. As stated before, the Cool area could benefit from a more local approach. It would help increase social involvement and thus social control. This will eventually also improve non-local use. When the residents show involvement with their places of habitat, others would prefer to hang out there as well. It would gradually turn into a place with a social destination. A hang out were things take place and people meet. Looking at the functional structure of the Cool, one can see that on its west side the existing functions become more of a local nature. Hairdressers, coffee shops, local stores and more dwellings, less leisure, less offices, smaller streets. This transition isn't gradually; it basically takes place on the Karel Doormanstraat and creates an extra border for local inhabitants to use de Lijnbaan and Coolsingel. There is no reason for them to go there on a daily basis and consequently makes them visit the Lijnbaan as frequent as any other non-local passer-by. This dominance of non-local use has resulted in a deserted city centre after closing hours. Which means less social control, higher crime rate and more unsatisfied residents.

Weekday 14.00



Weekday 14.00



Weekday 21.00



Weekday 21.00



## CONCLUSIONS

### General conclusion

Before we draw final conclusions, it is interesting to look at our starting question again. "How does the multi-cultural life of Rotterdam translate in the contemporary public realm of the city?"

The multicultural society is very present and can be noticed in several things. Mainly in use and in different cultural preferences but more importantly our research has shown that functional programming has great influence on cultural attendance. With our 'research by numbers' we are able to predict mixture of cultures by adding or taking away specific functions. This resulted in our main conclusion: one of the most important functions missing in the Cool area, even in the whole city of Rotterdam is a general central point. A real city centre, iconic even, a place to meet, hang out and dwell where there is always something to do, see or experience.

This new central point could help in optimizing a mixture of cultures; it would be logical to add functions to the square that are intensely used by all cultural groups represented. The different studies show that city parks, cinemas, music temples, shops and local services are the most universally used public functions.

It would be too easy to just state that introducing one or several of these functions would result in an

optimization of cultural mixture; as we pointed out before not all of these functions cause for improvement of social integration. A movie, for instance, is used by all different cultural groups, but is obviously not an interactive social event. Also cultures mix fine in shops, but it is still an individual activity. It's not ideal for integration, at least leisure isn't. Introduction of local orientated or specific cultural stores or shops could have a positive influence on the interaction and diversity of the public.

As concluded before, in an adjusting district (Dijkzicht) a city park is present, beside the fact that our designated location is too small for a city park as mentioned.

Most of these conclusions could also be made with logic, but using the introduced 'research by numbers' method it predicts what the consequence will be when a specific function is added to a certain street. In this way, we can investigate which added public function has the highest effect on cultural mixture on street level. Having to deal with four completely different streets, this would probably result in different recommendations for each street. We implemented these recommendations into the equation again to see that it also has influence on streets and squares not directly connected.

### Conclusions on street level

Beside the functional conclusions we also drew conclusions of a more specific nature, physical ones per street.

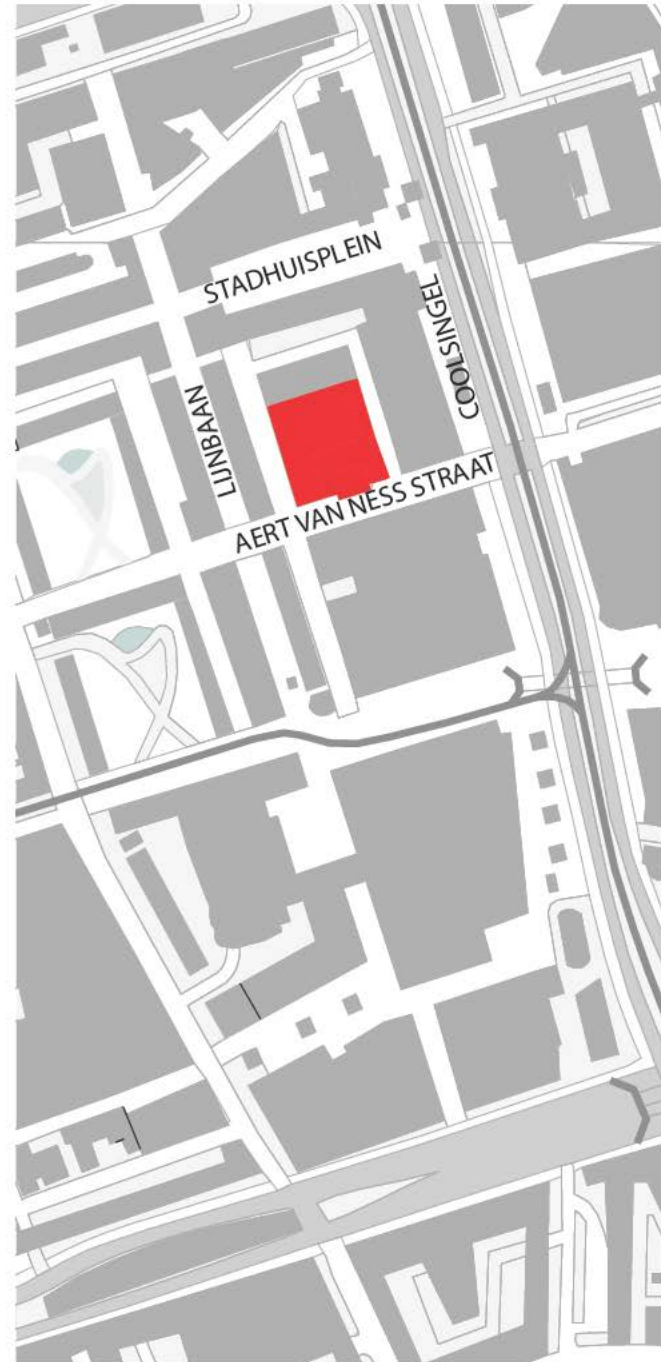
The Lijnbaan only has a daily function and is therefore deserted at nights, although some Moroccans or Turkish folks use the street to gather after closing hours. The emptiness unfortunately results in a hostile atmosphere, so nightly visitors feel unsafe. All cultural groups have the intention to use the Lijnbaan, but they hardly mix.

Stadhuisplein, This square becomes busy at lunch. It's the place to go out for a drink. However it is mainly used by autochthonous residents and only visited by a few people with another cultural background. The facades are 'grey' and have a negative reflection on the present atmosphere. The connection with the other streets is minimal.

Aert van Ness straat is actually a street without function. Even during the day, almost no one visits this street so obviously there is no cultural dominance either. Visually, highrise buildings and traffic dominate this street. It should be the connection between the Meent and the Lijnbaan, but the Coolsingel abruptly blocks this possibility.

### Opportunities

All these conclusions generated opportunities we could use as a grid for our Master plan. Improving the connections between the different streets would make the Cool area less fragmented, while in the process it would stimulate in creating our opted central point. As mentioned before, we believe that a new central point could work like a catalyst for the city. It gives identity, a main gathering point for locals, tourists and all others passing by. In combination with new functions it would stimulate a better mixture of cultural groups and thus better understanding. It would be the piece that completes the puzzle.







# Multi-cultural public life

"How does the multi-cultural life of Rotterdam translate in the contemporary public realm of the city?"

# Masterplan

Aad Demenint, Michael Schuurman, Kim Peeters





## **INTRODUCTION**

The results of our research form the grid for our ideas of the Master plan.

The Masterplan eventually turned our conclusion into opportunities and some ideological goals with the intention to improve the social and multicultural and local use of the Lijnbaan area.

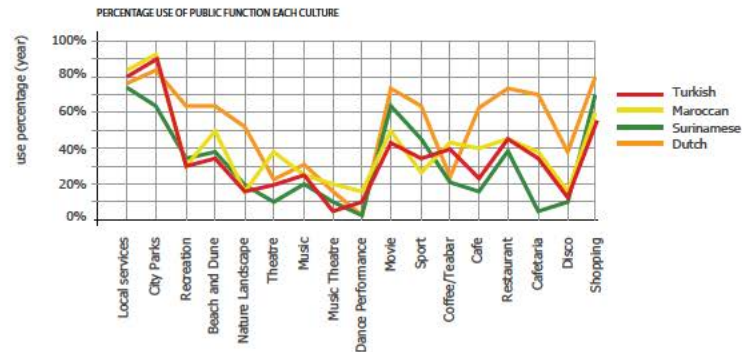
We divided our Masterplan in two parts: The functional program and its relations with its surroundings and the site itself.

## PROGRAM

In our research we did an investigation about the different cultures and their preferred use of public functions. There are five functions that the four biggest cultural groups intend to use with similar intensity. These public functions are: local services, city parks, music, the movies and shopping.

We investigated the public functions that are surrounding our assigned location in combination with the use of these public functions by the different cultures. With this information we could indicate at any specific time which specific street or spot (day/night) is dominated by one or more cultural groups. Secondly we were able to point out which spot is culturally mixing well and which one isn't. We could also see if this is caused by a specific functional offer or indeed by lacking one.

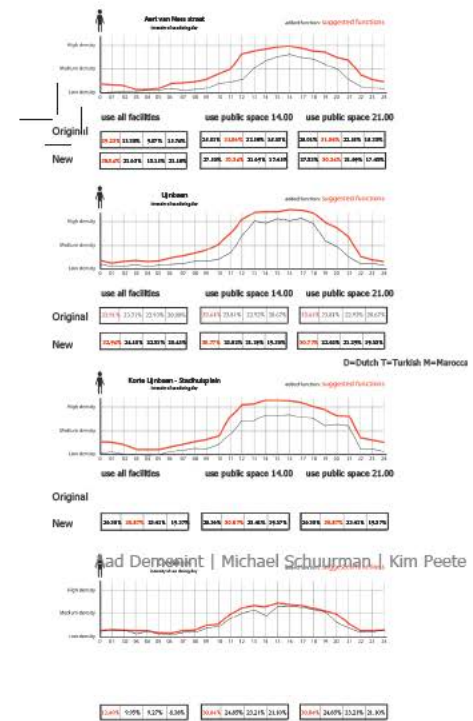
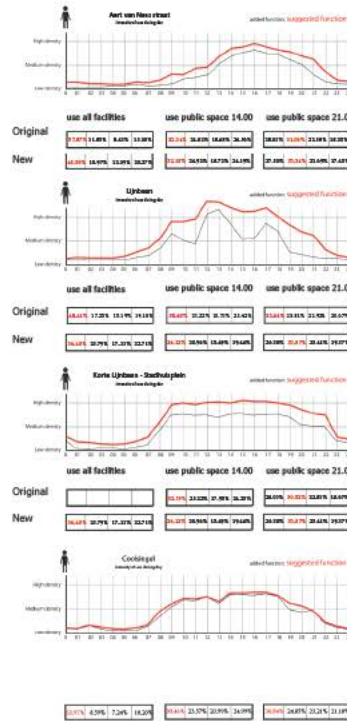
Rotterdam is a very multicultural city and, in our opinion, this should be interpreted as a positive thing. So a public function in the city center should be available for everyone. All should feel comfortable and welcome in order to make optimal use of the center. Therefore the lobotomy of the Lijnbaan area (Cool district) should stimulate interaction and cultural understanding; it should be a place of joy and fun for all inhabitants of Rotterdam, no matter which cultural background. The inhabitants should be proud of the city. It is their city!



Percentage use of public function each culture

So the first step of our Masterplan is functional: add different public functions (the ones that all cultural groups intend to make use of) to our site and see what happens with the use of the streets in and around the assigned location. We did so, to see which public function is the best for stimulating multi-cultural use for not only our site, but would also have a positive stimulation for the surrounding area: together they can create a coherent city center. We calculated all public functions both separated and mixed. Now we

could see which public function(s) is (are) the best in our pursued to mix cultures. (- See diagrams next page -)



## Public function

The best way to get a better multi-cultural mixture within the new Center is to design a Pop podium (music stage) in combination with other functions. Functions that stimulate a 24 hour use of the Lijnbaan area.

A Pop podium has the best positive influence for the site and its surroundings. Naturally, it will attract local residents, but it will also be used by not local people from other parts of the city, no matter what cultural background they have. All

cultures can perform, watch and enjoy the multi-cultural Pop podium.

A Pop podium will cause for more life at night and on Sunday's and thus have a positive effect on the existing atmosphere.

A Pop podium on its own won't be enough (it only functions at evening and night time), so the second public function we want to introduce is a square with different kind of facilities, facilities that also work perfectly for our cultural city: an outside pop stage, a playground, a

green area, a movie, shops, office space and some apartments. The square will connect the site with all the surrounding streets, give people a place to be, stop and interact. The mix of different functions gives the spot a lot of attractiveness, atmosphere, 24/7 facilities and it will co-operate with its surroundings. These streets will even get more identity and character, because now they all work together to create a recognizable central point for all city users. A place to be and dwell.

## SITE

As mentioned before, in our research conclusion, the focus is to create a central point for the city of Rotterdam. Currently there isn't a recognizable city center, at least not a functional one. Choosing the right program was the first step.

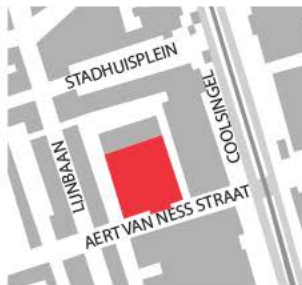
The second step is how can we create a central point not only for our site, but also to the advantage of the whole city center. In achieving this, we made sure to zoom in on our site but never without a close look at the influence of this on a

wider urban scale.

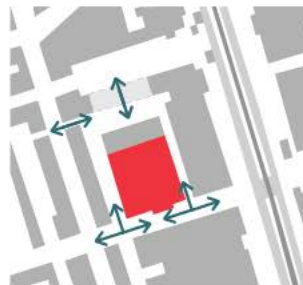
### Site focus

Creating a tangible, recognizable city center. The next images explain the different steps we took to create this.

Current situation

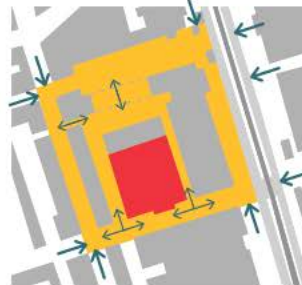


Creating centralpoint



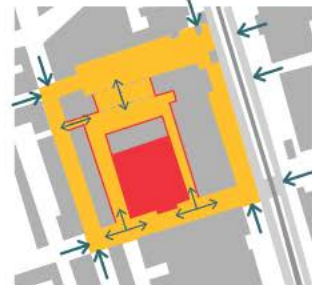
1. Connection with surrounding streets
  - Emphasize current street openings
  - Make possible (more) openings

Creating centralpoint

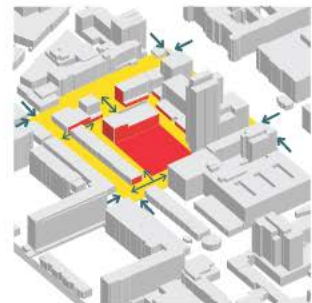
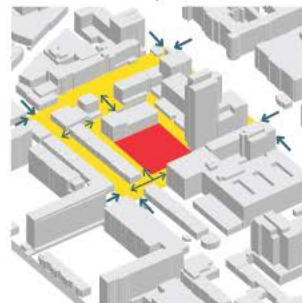
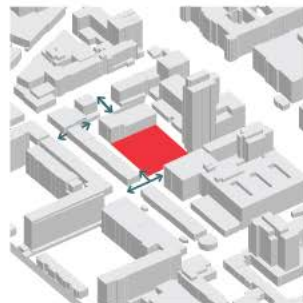
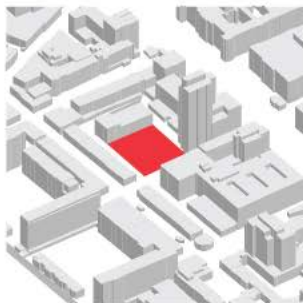


2. Emphasize central point
  - Make 'new' square visible
  - Connection with surrounding streets
  - Central point better visible

Creating centralpoint



3. Attraction to central point
  - Make 'suctionpoint' out of site
  - Speak one language with the site and his surroundings



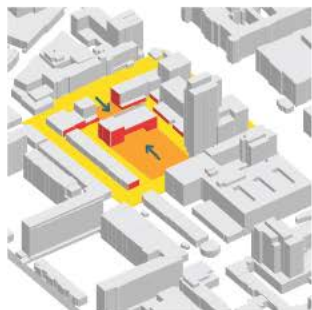
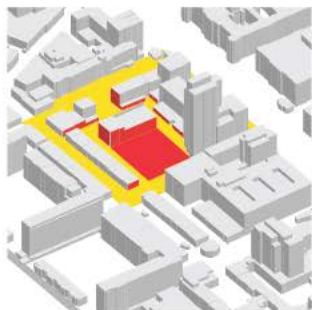
## Current situation



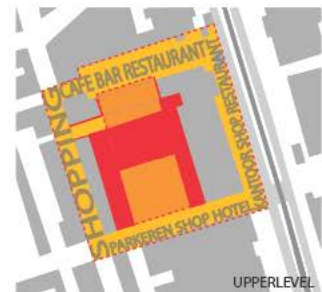
4. Connection with surrounding public functions  
 - Adding public functions which support and cooperate with each other

5. Add new public functions  
 1. Poppodia  
 2. Main square with: - outside poppodium - playground - green Area - outside cafe - movie - shops

6. Creating main squares  
 - Main squares makes connection with surrounding facilities  
 - Main squares will be the place to stop, relax and interact  
 - Opening in monumental building:  
 Squares cooperate together



- General square
- Main square



7. Position public functions  
 - Around the squares  
 - Coherent with surroundings

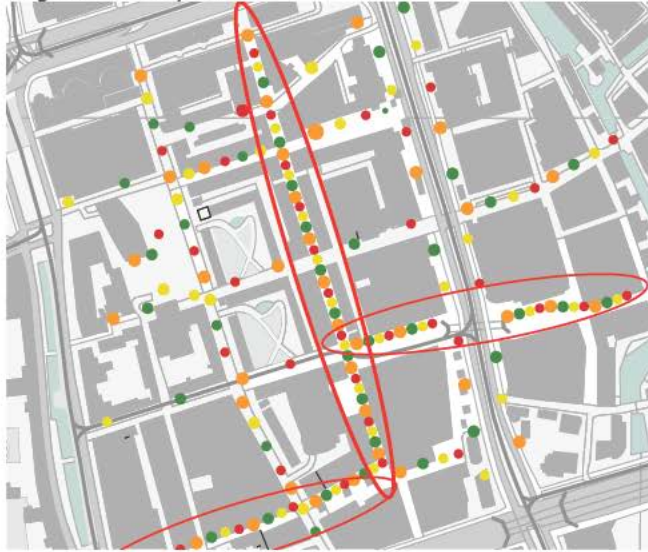
### Site scale test

We just explained the steps (public program and design rules) we had to make to create a central point inside the city. If we add the suggested function to the assigned lo-

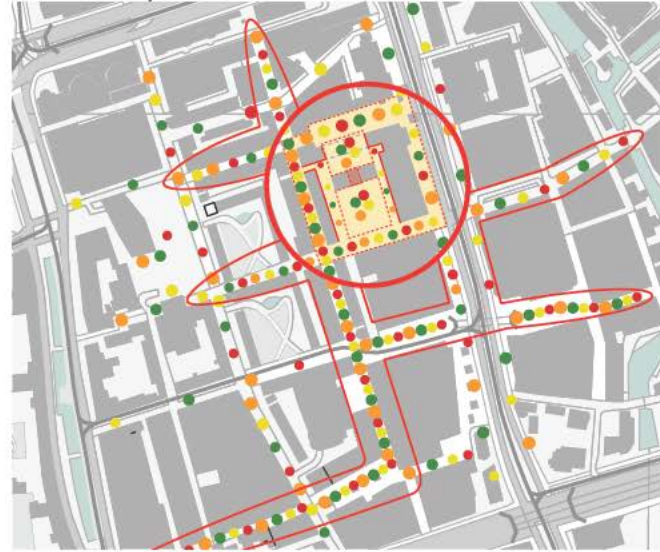
cation, we can calculate with our equation if this results in more optimal multifunctional use and if it really stimulates a central point after the intervention.

In the next diagrams you will see the comparison between the 'old' (how it was before) and the 'new' city center.

Original weekday 14.00



New weekday 14.00



Original weekday 21.00



New weekday 21.00



Original sunday 14.00



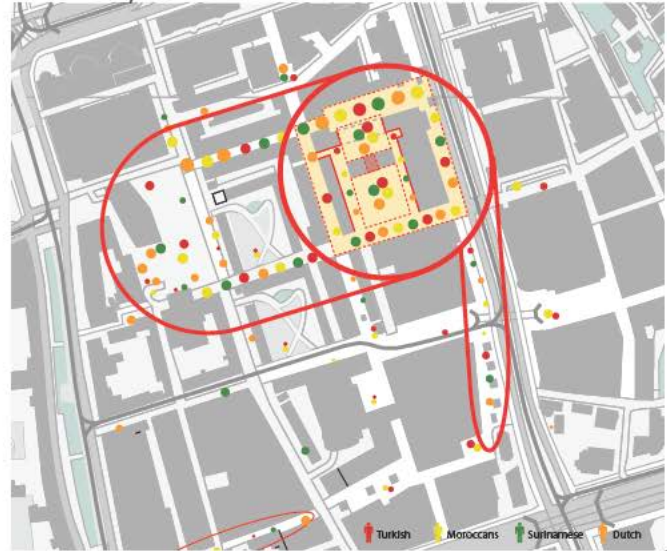
New sunday 14.00



Original sunday 21.00



New sunday 21.00



Original weekday 14.00



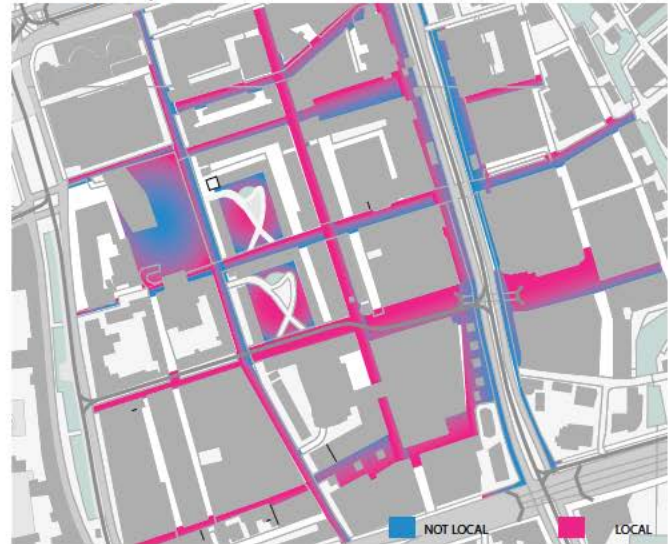
New weekday 14.00



Original weekday 21.00



New weekday 21.00



### Conclusion

It becomes clear what the influence is of our program and site approach in relation to the city center of Rotterdam. You can conclude that with our approach the city center of Rotterdam will always be more recognizable as a city center at daytime,

nighttime, weekday's and Sunday's. The central point is operating differently at different times, because all surrounding streets are dominant at different times, but it will always function as the missing piece that makes the city complete.

It will guarantee that the density will increase, there will be less fragmentation, better connections with the surrounding streets and eventually it will even connect people, improve the atmosphere, increase social control and stimulate a better



Original sunday 14.00



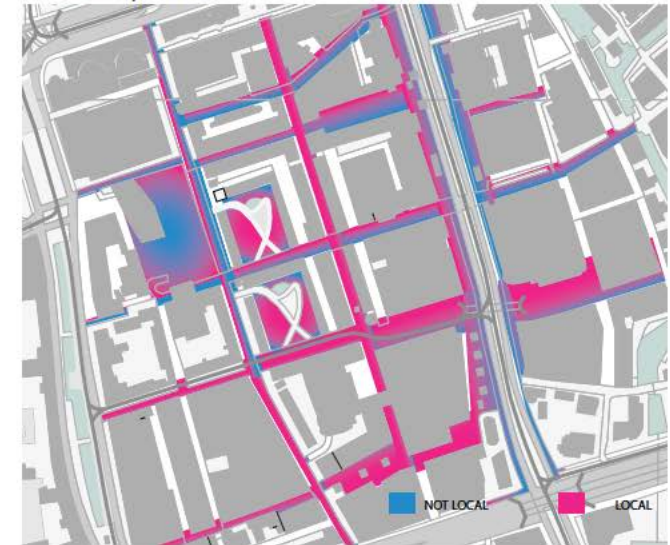
New sunday 14.00



Original sunday 21.00



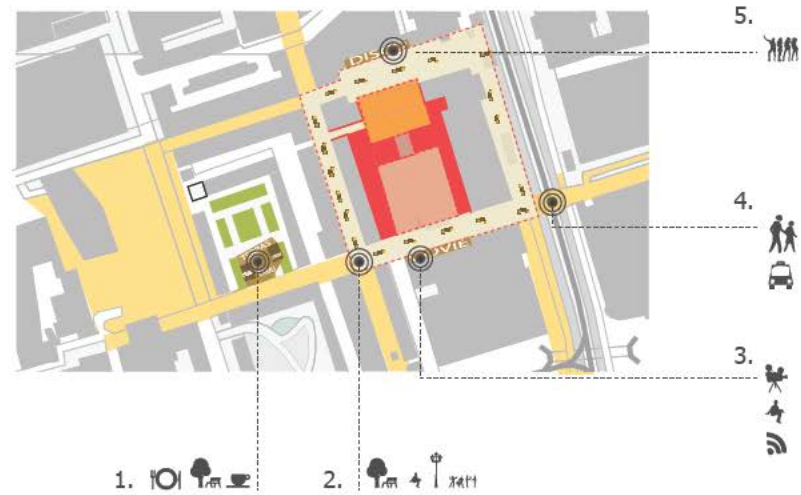
New sunday 21.00



mixture of cultural use of both local and not local users. In conclusion: A real coherent and recognizable central point.

## URBAN SCALE

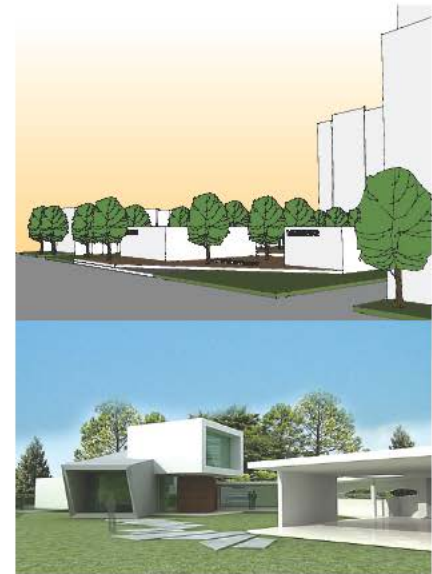
The site scale test told us the influence of a 'new' central point in Rotterdam. Different surrounding streets will get a transformation in use with our approach. To stimulate this use and make sure it will operate positively we made 5 different changes to the urban scale, which will support the city center.



### 1. Green area

The green area at the Aert van Nesstraat should be used more optimal, in order to function better. It is just in between our site and the Schouwburgplein. By increasing the intensity of use in the area, more people will see this 'hidden' green spot and will consequently stimulate the intensity of use of it. At the moment the green area between the dwelling slabs is not attractive, so visitors make no use of it. To optimize the use of the existing facilities, we want to keep the character and identity of the green area but upgrade its attractiveness. If the density gets higher in the city, the

green spot could function as a small catalyst for the city center. It's a unique place within this area with a different character compared to the rest of the city center; it is nice to find a quiet and green resting spot just parallel to the shopping streets. That specific characteristic of the spot stays the same, but in order to make it more appropriate for the 'new' city center, we add a function. A little restaurant based on the concept: green – nature – relax – lounge will stimulate the use but still respects the green quality. It will be the green relax spot of the city center of Rotterdam.



Orchid House

Multi-cultural Public Life | *Masterplan*

## 2. General square

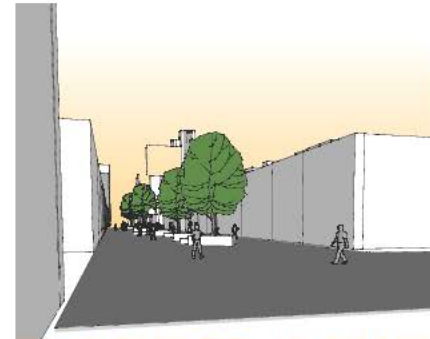
In order to make our site the central point of Rotterdam, we have to make sure people notice it as such. Four completely different streets surround it and in order to connect those streets we want to create a general square. The four streets will be partly integrated into the square; they will be the borders of the square as well as the entrances. Once present, you will feel that they are operating together and the central city point becomes more recognizable. In doing this, the people from the Coolingsingel will also be more attracted to go to this new city center. Momentarily the Coolingsingel itself acts like an end zone of the city center; a massive border. We can make people more aware of this general square, by just adding a different pavement in com-

## 3. Add information point for Rotterdam

To make a better connection with the inhabitants and also the tourists of Rotterdam we will add a movie screen on the façade of the Bijenkorf Parking garage, which can present all kinds of information on Rotterdam, but it can also entertain. It functions as a city promoter. News, events, movies or other important or fun facts are shown on this screen. By showing information about the city and entertaining the viewers, it gives reason to stop, look, sit down and talk with their neighbors (possibly a stranger). A movie screen could promote the city of Rotterdam immensely.

ination with a sit/tree/lightning – elements. This could also improve the atmosphere, but it primarily will help in making the city center more recognizable.

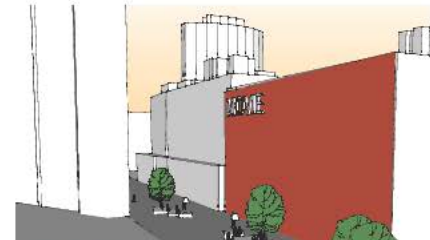
We suggest a city center without cars to optimize all pedestrian flows. So the cars will go underneath the Aert van Nessesstraat and in the future the trucks will deliver their goods to the shops on the Lijnbaan through an underground system. In this way the back of the shops will be facing an important city center and will get several functions in order to participate with that square.



Called Streetwalk



Benches



Federation square

#### 4. Walking bridge

The 'new' city center should get a better connection with the Meent, which is the busy spot on the other side of the Coolsingel. But unfortunately, because of the Coolsingel, there is a disconnection between the Meent and the Aert van Nesstraat. The Coolsingel is too dominant and actually primary designed for cars. It divides the city center in two.

The Meent is an older part of the city center and we want to make a connection between the old part and the new suggested square. A connection made by a walking bridge. Connecting the Aert van Nesstraat and the Meent will establish a better flow of people. The pedestrians can easily walk from the Aert van Nesstraat to the Meent. The Meent will now be, again, part of the city center.



Walking bridge Chicago

#### 5. Add Discotheke

The Stadhuisplein should be the 'going out' area of the future. Momentarily everything is designed on street level with the upper levels being vacant and empty. We want to connect the newly planned square with the Stadhuisplein both visually as well as functionally.

The movie screen is planned on one side, the pop podium in the middle and a disco will be added to the functions on the Stadhuisplein. All sides have a nightly agenda now.

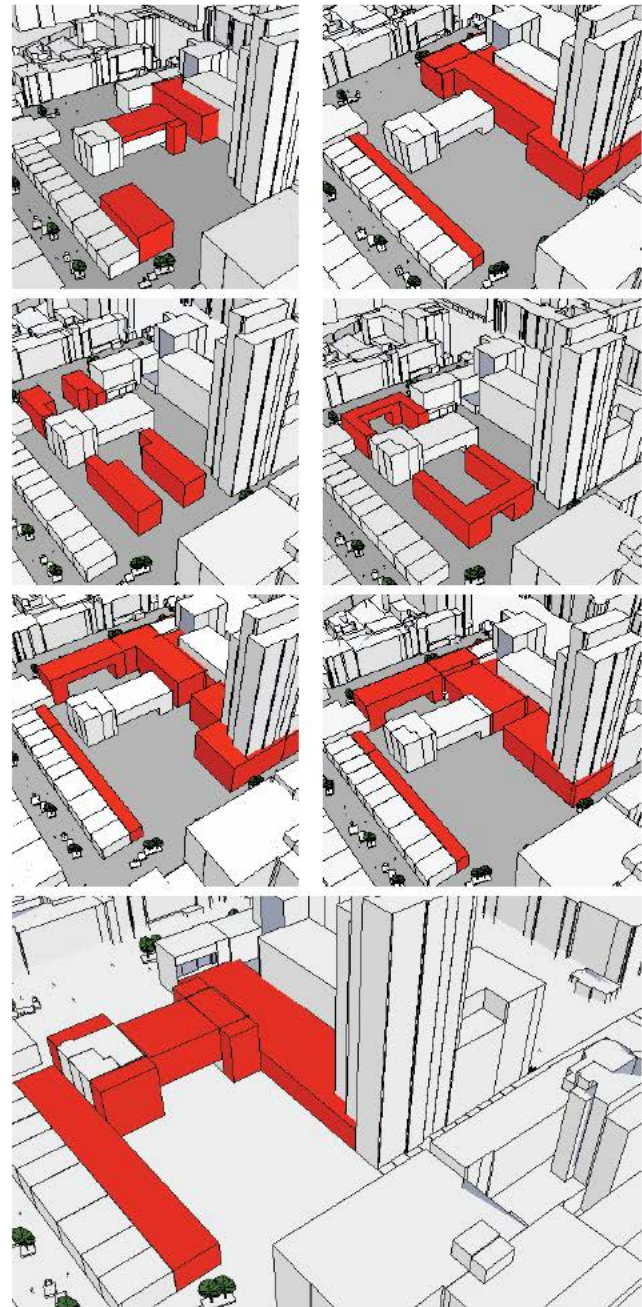


Deka Showroom

## MASS STUDY

To create a real center point out of our site, we did a mass studie, to see which position of mass works the best to create a center point out of or site.

The final one will make a center point and a connection with the existing streets. The monumental building will be the 'center point' and putting mass around it, will put the focus on this building. To be sure that the monumental building really works like a central point, it has to make a connection with both sides of the new square. A hole in the monumental building will connect both sides and make it the central point of the main square. It makes the connection between Stadhuisplein and Aert van Nessesstraat.



## DEGIN RULES

In the next images we will explain the design rules of our site.

### 1. General square

We want to create a physical tangible square, which will connect the surrounding streets and sets the site in the heart of the city. Both streets and square will cooperate and represent the 'new' center point of Rotterdam.

### 2. Creating central point

The monumental building will be the central point of the site. The monumental building will get the primary central function: the Pop podium. The other functions will be located around this main central function.

The main entrances to our site will be located at Stadhuisplein and Aert van Nesselstraat, from here the Pop podium will be immediately visible and accessible.

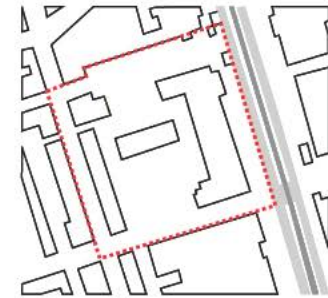
### 3. Connection surroundings

The building mass of the other functions are located on the edges of the squares and following the existing building blocks. To make sure that our site cooperates with the surrounding streets we have to make a connection with the existing building blocks and functions.

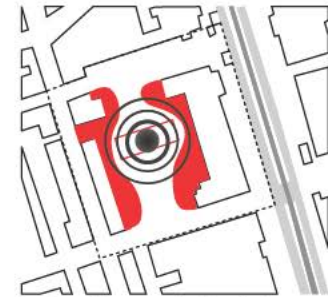
### 4. Connection squares

The main square will be divided by the monumental building but should also connect the two. Both sides will have their own distinct characteristics but with respect for each other.

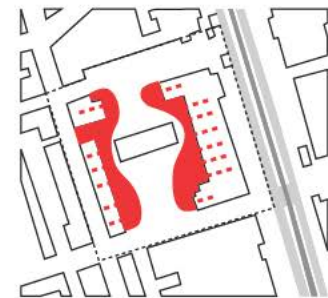
The connection will be constructed by a 'cut-out' hole in the building, which is



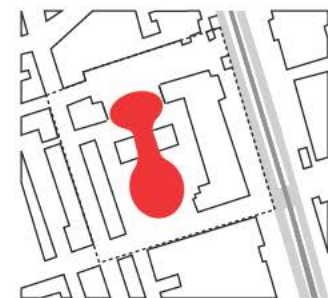
1. General square



2. Creating central point



3. Connecting surrounding



4. Connecting squares

therefore an open-air performance area.

### 5. Dividing squares by type

The two distinct squares should have a strict separation of different functions. If the squares would be the same, they would be competing. So both squares need to have different functions, but will be connected by the Pop podium and its surroundings. One square will facilitate the connection between Stadhuisplein and Pop podium, the other one between Pop podium and Aert van Ness straat.

### 6. Traffic underground

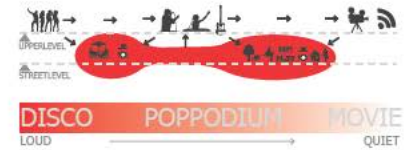
The backsides of the existing buildings isn't that beautiful anymore and in order to let the square be a representative place for Rotterdam, the backsides need to be rearranged. The logistic part of the Lijnbaan moves to an underground load and unload garage. Also cars aren't allowed anymore and are moved underground the Aert van Nesstraat.

### 7. Building height

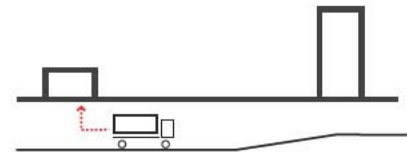
To respect the surroundings and the earlier design rules of the area, the building heights are regulated to the heights of the Lijnbaan and Coolsingel.

### 8. Public organisation

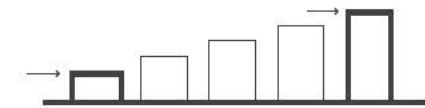
The squares are public but the more you get to the backside of the building mass, the more private it gets. In height the main level is public, in between is private, and the roofs are public again.



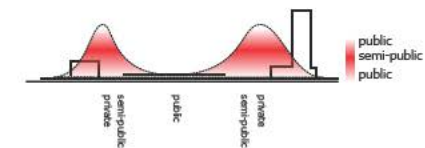
5. Dividing squares by type



6. Traffic underground



7. Building height



8. Public Organisation

## THEME

### 1. Main square

Both distinct sides of the main square are connected with each other by the hole in the monumental building, which facilitates the Pop podium. The square will be elevated underneath the pop podium to put emphasis on the different squares and make them more recognizable. In the process it marks the Poppodium; puts in on a stage as the main function.

### 2. Themes

Two squares next to each other will need different facilities to function optimal.

Also they will have to make a connection with their own surrounding buildings and facilities, that's why we divided the squares in two themes:

#### - Going out & Shop

The square connected with the Stadhuisplein will be the going out and shopping square, because of the good connection with the Lijnbaan, the existing bars and the Pop podium. Together they will be the representation of Going Out & Shop in the city centre of Rotterdam

#### - Relax & Enjoy

The square connecting the Aert van Nesstraat, the surrounding facilities and Poppodium will get a more relax and enjoy atmosphere, because of the more silent character of this side of the site.

### 3. Multi-cultural

The new functions for our site came

fourth from our research in combination with the themes just mentioned before. The second theme is Multi-Cultural Rotterdam. All the different facilities of the themes will have a multi-cultural twist to it (sushi-bars, Vegi-bar, thea houses e.d.).

In order to get optimal use of all new planned function, it is essential that the Cool area becomes more residential in the future. In achieving this we therefore recommend to add several dwellings to the site.





## Going out & Shop

The Stadhuisplein is already a place where people go out and have a drink. On one side a few bars determine the look of the square and on the other side a 'grey' and characterless facade forms the border. In order to create our multi purpose square we need to open the Stadhuisplein up towards the Aert van Ness. To realize this, a large part of that grey facade will be removed.

In doing so, the new square gains square meters, which is important to house all new planned functions, while in the process it also takes away the dominant direction currently present. It immediately psychologically becomes more a place to end up and stay then to follow that determined direction which was previously subconsciously leading you onwards

The SKVR building will on the one hand separate both parts of the new square, but on the other also be the connection between the two. A large hole makes it some sort of gate, that will add to the feeling of entering a different atmosphere. The hole will be elevated which will make people curious to see what is 'offered' on the other side. It becomes a stage, which it literally functionally also will be. The SKVR building becomes a pop podium and the hole going through can be used for outdoor performances. The square itself becomes the stand.

To improve the nightlife on the

Stadhuisplein we decided to add a disco. However this offers an opportunity to be more than just loud music. It could also be a representation of the city itself. Rotterdam is multicultural and shouldn't deny that. The program of the disco will regard several themes, which represents the varied ethnic groups that dominate the morphology of Rotterdam. One will be able to see what nightlife means to different cultures.

As stated before, the Stadhuisplein should not only be 'operational' at night, it's important to be a destination any hour of the day.

To realize a more daily purpose, we introduce some daily functions. A large coffee/ tea bar has to attract residents and tourists to stay and relax for a while. A dance school and a music store will result in attracting people that mean to go there and thus add to the diversity of users of the square.

Some other important parameters we came up with in order to achieve the goals of the master plan are adding dwellings. To improve social control and social awareness it's important to have people living at the site. It would en passant help with increasing the density around the new square, which is another goal of the master plan. A higher density attracts more users and it's like the saying: "the more, the merrier."

## Relax & Enjoy

The square at the Aert van Nesstraat will be the relax and enjoy area. Here you will find different kind of facilities: informationcenter, moviescreen, shops, café, restaurants, poppodium, wellnesscenter, sportfacilities, office and living. All in the theme of relax en enjoy.

Lijnbaan shops, Coolsingel shops and offices will get a connection with our site.

All facilities will immediately be visible if you enter this area. There will be a lot of different kind of 'stimulations' when you are on the square. We are doing this, to create more freedom for the users and a better connection with building and

square. The 'threshold' to enter a building is reduced. This will create a more open and nice atmosphere. If you are walking on the square you will have the feeling that you want to walk and take a look everywhere, a sort of open-air cultural experience.

By doing this, not only all (cultures, local and not-local) users will be attracted to the site (by different kind of facilities) but also there will be a better connection between the facilities on the different streets, they will co-operate and eventually the multi-cultural society will get more connected.

## Designrules Relax&Enjoy

### 1. Program ground floor

The public square gives access to shops, restaurants, cafés, playground and apartments. Also the main access to the Pop podium will be situated on ground level. All facilities have to be easy accessible.

### 2. Program upper levels

The upper levels are dedicated to sport and wellness facilities, offices, and dwellings. Within these hybrid functions, public areas are located throughout the scheme.

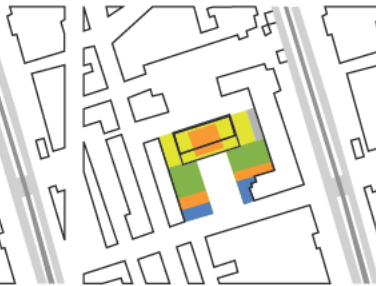
### 3. Timetable

A 24hr function-scheme should provide more social control on the square. Different kind of facilities

PROGRAM GROUND FLOOR



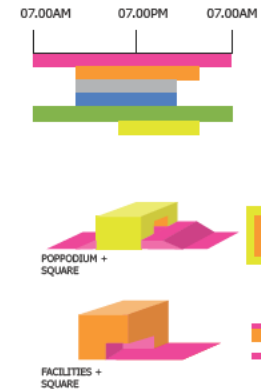
PROGRAM UPPER LEVELS



FUNCTIONS

- Public space\_Square
- Public space\_Inside: Facilities
- Private\_Inside: Facilities
- Public space\_Outside
- Private\_Living
- Private\_Inside: Poppodium

TIMETABLE



will guarantee this 24 hour set up and thus the 'natural' social control. People will feel more safe, there will be more interaction and it will improve the atmosphere of the city center.

#### 4. Program relations

The square is connected to every function. The only special relation is the one where dwellings interacts with leisure and public facilities. This way the people living there will interact with what is happening on the site.

#### 5. Program

- Living: Looking out over the square, social control is optimal. Also people living there get the full advantage of living in the center of Rotterdam.
- Playground: This leisure activity is

located on a visible spot inside the project. Accessibility for everyone who uses the square.

- Square: Will give access to all functions and providing a place to stay and interact with people (Moviescreen, terrace e.d.). You can find the entrances to the different functions on several locations on the square. This will stimulate a mixture of people on the square.

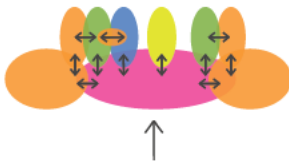
The Pop podium will be the link between the two squares. The square cuts through the building en passant providing a performance area.

- Pop podium: Located within the monumental building it creates a typical exterior which will be a visual representative. The public area of the Pop podium is located directly on the square. The Pop podium will be easy accessible and from the moment you go through

the building, you will immediately understand its inner structure.

- Facilities: Several different 'multi-cultural' facilities are located on the site. They interact with all other functions.

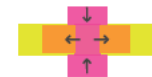
PROGRAM RELATION\_Verical



OPEN SKY MUSEUM  
Display windows:  
\_Shops\_Art\_Restaurant

#### PROGRAM

- LIVING  
TYPE: 2 Pers household  
M2: 20 app. (150m2) = 3000 m2
- PLAYGROUND  
TYPE: Basket playground  
M2: 1 field (28x15m) = 420 m2
- SQUARE  
TYPE: Basket playground  
M2: 1 (30x60m) = 1800 m2
- POPPODIUM  
TYPE: Poppodium  
M2: 1 (80x30x 4 levels) = 9600 m2
- FACILITIES  
TYPE: Shops: Flowershop, Artshop, Infopoint, Videotheek  
Restaurants: Bakery, Soepbar, Saladbar, Bazaar  
Cafes: Grandcafe, Chocolatebar, Loungebar  
M2: 1 (60x20x2 levels) = 2400 m2





## Appendices

### Literature

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### Images

Subtitel	Name	Author
Urban scale	Orchid House	<a href="http://www.treehugger.com/files/2008/12/green-architecture-buenos-aires-argentina-orchid-house.php">http://www.treehugger.com/files/2008/12/green-architecture-buenos-aires-argentina-orchid-house.php</a>
	Called Streetwalk	<a href="http://www.iransdesign.com/streetwalk-collection-outdoor-stools-by-charlie-davidson/">http://www.iransdesign.com/streetwalk-collection-outdoor-stools-by-charlie-davidson/</a>
	Benches	<a href="http://www.indesignlive.com/articles/projects/project-news/seating-solution-for-students-and-trees">http://www.indesignlive.com/articles/projects/project-news/seating-solution-for-students-and-trees</a>
	Federation square	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/pics-or-it-didnt-happen/4048378648/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/pics-or-it-didnt-happen/4048378648/</a>
	Walking bridge Chicago	<a href="http://www.bigsoccer.com/forum/showthread.php?p=17598137">http://www.bigsoccer.com/forum/showthread.php?p=17598137</a>
	Deka Showroom	<a href="http://www.architecture.com.au/awards_search?option=showaward&amp;entryno=20064079">http://www.architecture.com.au/awards_search?option=showaward&amp;entryno=20064079</a>
All other images are made by our own research group		Aad Demenint, Michael Schuurman, Kim Peeters





# *SUPER intentions*

The SUPERMALL as 'commercial' parochie inside the Multi-cultural city structure.

Essay

Michael Schuurman 4022556





## PROLOGUE

The public domain today has taken a special place in western society. The transformation of the public atmosphere in the early 19th century with the establishment of the bourgeoisie to the 21st century technology age is clearly visible in the use of the public domain of today's historic cities. However we see a change of public realm from these 'romantic' public spaces into a enclosed public realm which is more programmed than before.

If we go back to Paris in the 19th century at the beginning of the Haussmann Boulevard we see the development of a richer class who wants to express themselves into society. They claimed themselves a spot into society in order to see and to been seen. Philosopher Hannah Arendt states that spaces for sharing opinions and statements as an entity of representation and appearance are needed in order to provoke attention. It is this history that makes the western public entity so interesting, especially the European. In this time the emigration was little, colored people in Europe was little and countries housed mostly native people.

## MULTI-CULTURAL SOCIETIES IN A MODERN ZEITGEIST

The first time that a country used the word 'Multi cultural' was Germany in the mid 19th century. Germany was strongly nationalistic and had to deal with non-German inhabitants who caused revolutions. It grew even more after the second world war, and during the 50's and 60's east European 'workers' stormed west-Europe because their hands where cheap and we didn't wanted to do work that requierd low education or dirty hands.

During these times our country started to get more and more involved with next generations of ethnic inhabitants. Also colonies from the VOC period caused a stream of people from Africa, South America and Indonesia. Before we knew the consequences, the

ethnic workers who worked here, called there families and brought them over. We now have to face the fact that these people live here and, in worst cases, barely speak the dutch language or even know our habits. But how generations grow, we are now used to a multi-cultural environment which grows every day also the etnic society is used to our habits even more and more. Cities get more and more multi-cultural and native inhabitants are more curious for other cultural habits.

In that same period, architectural zeitgeist is heading towards an episode of deleting the ornament [Adolf Loos, Ornament und Verbrechen; a.o.] by using functions and as less as possible interventions to create architecture. LeCorbusier 'invented' reinforced concrete architecture and by making a new kind of material standard, a new kind of public tendency is born. Where before in the early 19th century public space for the bourgeoisie turned slowly more inside buildings. Passages where public spaces which located them selves between two dominating facades and where coverd by (in most of the times) a glass roof. This typology changed the public realm from an outside space into an more convenient and controleble inside space.

This modern Zeitgeist of creating a better public environment is also seen by Constant in his essay. He says: The romance of today's public realm is gone and only the older buildings are to be seen as culture legacy or are found as a romantic atmosphere. "In the older neighborhoods the streets have degenerated into freeways, leisure activities are commercialized and denatured by tourism. Social relations become impossible here."(Constant, Architectural Positions, P.233). "Faced with the necessity to build whole towns quickly, cemeteries of reinforced concrete are being constructed in which great masses of the population are condemned to die of boredom. " "... to respond to a dynamic conception of life, creating our surroundings in direct relation to incessantly changing ways of

behavior. Our conception of urbanism is therefore social." Constant is also saying that it is ignorant to say that the ongoing possibilities with telecommunications are eroding the social public life because then you don't really know the needs of people. In this way he is right. People need each other to survive, public space is offering this social connection. It is impossible to think that a 'computer' can take over human emotions.

### **THE 'NEW' AGE..**

However though, this development of technology is creating a subconsciously stimulation of 'individualisticism', and there for the isolation of people in a public environment. During the 70's and 80's the Personal Computer came into our lives. Before, computers were used to do hard and fast math in order to relief human brains from overdrive. But when Microsoft and Apple introduced their people friendly software packages, computers where soon to be found in every home and every family that could afford such kind of luxury. This soon evolved into an explosion of personal computers and a network of interconnected 'connections' around the world, which created the Internet. The Internet quickly evolved into a worldwide media full of possibilities to show ourselves en find others. This tendency of exploiting our 'personal profile' on a global media that is popular and easy. Because of this easiness and somehow self-control of what people want to show from their selves influences the public domain in a sense that it becomes platonic. On the other hand it becomes more specialized for each of us. Public functions are used when needed, appointments are made through the Internet and local (or maybe even worldwide) updates are within seconds by hand. This creates a personalized public realm that could be positive, but on the other hand, the -used to be-spontaneous interaction between people becomes less spontaneous.

When finally entered the modern public 'stage' the first thing we notice is the overwhelming public

interventions made by billboard and selling adds. 'Commercial Propaganda' entered the 21st century in a vast and deadly way.

Deadly in a way that for people entering a public entity, they will be influenced by commercial advertising. The influence of this advertising on the people within the public realm are percieving it sometimes in low intensity and other more in high intensity. This doesn't count for the more intimate public spaces that are often smaller and harder to enter. As Rem Koolhaas is provoking in his essay about the 'generic city' the future public entity is the one without history and constantly providing the inhabitants of the future with their needs. Isn't it that then in some way choices are made for us? What do we want to see? And with what kind of mindset do we enter this public realm?

### **HETEROTOPY OR ISOTOPY....**

The use of the city by inhabitants can fluctuate according to the demands and whises of the people. In this way there are spaces used by people more often than others and one can imagine that places are used with different mindsets on different hours of the day. Closed public entities have often their own public rules and tend to enter a kind of 'Thematic' approach on the public realm. Semi-closed public entities like Amusement parks have a strong thematic public approach but here counts, people choose to pay entrance into a themepark to enjoy the atmosphere. In this way it has an unformal character. A shoppingmall for instance is a fysical semi-closed public space, here creates the architecture of the building the theme of the mall. Let this be the evolution of the passage. From middle age square via the parisian passage to the american shopping mall.

Public space within the morfology of the city is more or less also unformal, but has to have a kind of 'formal' character. Formal in a way that actually nobody is paying for a kind of 'theme'. The expactation is therefor



Michael Schuurman

much more standardized than it is in a theme park. Public space should be however 'designed' to function for the inhabitants or maybe just 'happen' inside the morphological structure of the city. In this way we can counteract two differences. The shopping mall as a controlled closed themed public space as a more heterotopy space and the unexpected public space which often is also designed but lets the users to be free in a kind of isotopy way. How does this entity which stands on its own, the supermall, connects with the city? How is this Heterotopic threshold of the mall open to the public?

The American version of controlled boxed-in spaces contain a very much endless repetition of simulations of 'tend to be' historical artifacts in order to get the connection with their environment. Infact what they don't know, is that the same volume, with the same function works in a paradoxical way. In a way The Hilton hotel functions in accactly the same way in Downtown New York, as it does in the middle of nowhere. The city becomes a function of production and selling and lets the human connection (the 'working' public space) suffer on this function.

Maybe this is the thing that makes the modern city a non-place for public interaction. In the most European historic cities we see that the morphological location of public and private spaces are percisely located. The center of the city is dominated by a church and a marketsquare where goods are selled, also law is spoken here and important public announcements are made on this center location within the city. This centerpoint creates a social order in the city. Modern cities tend to forget this social neccesity by building big entities that combine Public space with private space and therefore neglect the building next to it. The space inbetween is the public space that is neglected and let this be the space people are using every day!

## JAKARTA, INDONESIA... TOWN OF MILLIONS

During my stay in Jakarta, Indonesia for 3 weeks, I observed and investigated the intense diverse and viber network of this 'town' of millions. Jakarta is the biggest and most important city of Indonesia and all of the government and other important organs are located in here. Also Jakarta is known for the big 'slum' areas where people live in poverty. The social public realm was only at the highest at places which were dominated by slum areas. Just as easy as by crossing the road, mega supermalls are providing the upper class for their needs in huge artificial public spaces. Spaces which are created out of good marketing and real estate values rather than out of the good social

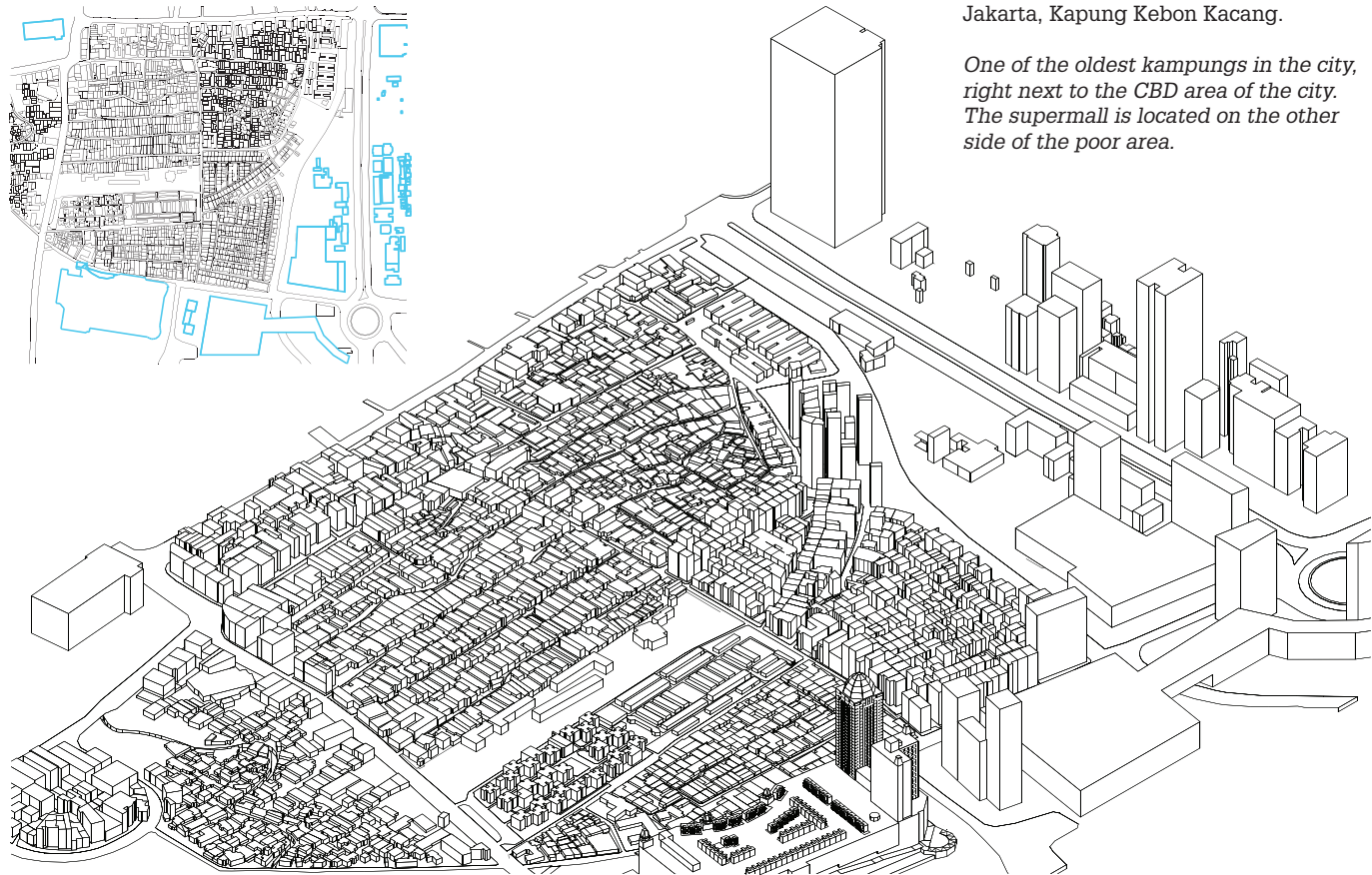
qualities of the area. In that way you have to buy yourself the comfort of having a coffee at Starbucks because it is provided just for you.

However, it may seem a pity that 'we', as western civilization, created these terrible megacities within cities, but it seems that, if we want it or not, it is the ultimate multicultural experience. As a counter argument: the best social areas are the ones that are dominated by one single culture. This is because of many reasons; social trust issues, religion, habits or political background. The multi-cultural experience in the way that the whole world is boxed into a 100.000m<sup>2</sup> square box is how the nowadays modern western civilization is heading with their commercial public space. At least in Asia, for every super mall, a



Jakarta, Kapung Kebon Kacang.

*One of the oldest kampungs in the city, right next to the CBD area of the city. The supermall is located on the other side of the poor area.*



little bit of western civilization is added to the city. In Jakarta, they remember the very day that the president allowed the city to build the first Mall in the city. For the Indonesian inhabitants, this is one big step into a better world. For us, at least for me, it is the death of authentic and historic Indonesia.

How do these malls interact with the city? Are these SUPER malls really just enclaves of western civilization or do they interact with the city as a whole? Do they occupy functions that are useable by every layer of the society? Or maybe as Koolhaas wanted (in his essay: Generic City), are the layers of the city visible in the enclosed public area? Or do they combine several layers and neglect others? The vast increase of the Asian economic vitality made big steps forward and maybe therefore missed a few important ones that the western countries did make. This can explain the fact that they feel like enclosed parochies inside a very humble environment. In Jakarta, the malls are only providing the upper class. People from the Kampung (slum area's) are not allowed to enter these malls. And even more extraordinary example is the way that the city uses their own people. Big western clothing companies are providing the inhabitant of these slum area work in return of a small salary or maybe even a place to stay. In this way, local people work for the bigger malls that sell these expensive clothes but in an anarchistic way. People don't feel that they are part of something. If it is just as easy as crossing the road, it should be beautiful to see these people work and sell their own products and let them be part of the profit as well!

However the fact that we can criticize the way that people are living there and that it always could be better, we can also acknowledge the fact that maybe these people are happy with their habits. They are satisfied with much less than we, as western civilization, are with things. In fact, if I may provoke, the western civilization is very driven by what we own. And that is the very thing that divides the two extremes from each other.

## **ONLY...11.337 KM**

Back in Europe we are more used to the use of big 'all covering' city within city structures. Our social life is adjusted to an 'on demand' behavior. Where in The Netherlands people live in great prosperity and actually have good hygiene and health (care), sometimes the public space is excellent, but it is the lack of users that make it a failure. And so I doubt that the 'loss' of public life is only a cause of the modern movement which erased the ornament or an affect of prosperity. As Juhani Pallasmaa is saying in his essay that it is also a "sociological, psychological, psychoanalytical, perceptual, semiological etc." problem. In this sense architecture is the embodying façade of the public entity and is influential on all these topics.

In The Netherlands we find also traces of the popular Supermall. Not as infiltrated as in for example Chicago or New York, where you walk by and don't even notice the immense mall that is behind the subtitle front façade. But more infiltrated as a autonomous object within the morphology of the city. Even these 'cities of consumption' are created in the very borders of the city where they attract people who like the comfort of everything in one place because it is. In a way the strongest shop is the one which gets to open their store there, this is the perfect example of the commercial propaganda which I want to call 'Commercial Parochies'.

But do these entities still host the real multi-cultural aspects as I said they did in the beginning of this essay. Or is it going to be a western interpretation of the (multi-cultural) reality which sounds, to me, more obvious. When entering a 'parochie', boxed-in inside a building or spread out in the open air, the question could rise by seeing all these many cultures together, where am I? The only connection with locality is the 'special' local meat that they use in your multinational restaurant burger. It is according to this question that I can address the multi-cultural experience within a

commercial parochie.

When we look at the time that different cultures entered the western civilisation we notice a development. The first and second generation of the ethnic society had some influence into the western society. The colonial roots of the dutch created a kind of curiosity towards the unknown cultures that had different habits than the dutch. So more and more different cultures were mixed into the commercial public space of the western civilisation. For so far, this is noticeable within the realm of shopping and eating. These are the functions that within the public realm are dominating factors which are easy to grasp for the user. But probably there are more functions that are shared by different cultures? The Supermall has caused a combined multi-cultural experience for every layer of the society. Also in Dutch cities, many malls are used by (almost) every layer of this multi-cultural society. Malls are able to attract big companies to be tenants in a busy stream of potential buyers and therefore create work for many salesman and employees.

## **COMMERCIAL PAROCHIES**

In any case we can say that the most Western-Europe countries are multi-cultural or in a way are becoming to be. In The Netherlands, Rotterdam is the perfect example of this Multi-cultural society. It is far more noticeable because of the mid-class that is dominating in this city rather than in Amsterdam which is dominating by the upper-class and tourists (there are more factors to take into account, but for this essay I would like to provoke this one).

Then as we can conclude that the western civilization is rooted in an progression of comfort and that most of the time, decisions are taken for them, we can sketch a perfect intervention inside the urban structure of the modern western Multi-Cultural city. As I said earlier, with architecture you can establish much more than only a nice looking space, but it can affect the use of the space and it can have effect on the people using it and their condition.

Also in a big city as Rotterdam, there are traces of the 'Commercial Parochies'. Big buildings with many public functions available for the visitor of the city. The tendency of the modern hybrid building stimulates this use of combined functions within an area. These areas have their own identity and rules according to opening hours of shops and working days. The threshold of these buildings within the city of Rotterdam is noticeable, the lijnbaan area houses more single shops and has an open character. Further to the Beurs area there are 3 big malls which absorb the square in front of it. Here we find a public schizofrenia of two spaces which are hungering for people to use it. They both need people to function, however if the mall is filled with people, the city isn't noticing anything of this use. When opposite to this, if the square in front of the mall is filled with people it starts to get cozy and people get curious.

So how does it look like if we need a space with the comfort of a shopping mall, the social interaction of the slum areas in Jakarta and the romance of the Middle-Age market squares?

The current situation in the Rotterdam center of Cool district is the distinction of very diverse streets. These streets have their own identity and function. The center one, the Lijnbaan, is dedicated to shopping, the Coolsingel is very more a big boulevard of cars and the west side of the Lijnbaan is more local and dedicated to city living. And in fact we can say that these streams of 'congestion' need to be cross-fertilized in the same way that it has to happen in Jakarta in order to let the people be part of the city and not only be the engine of it.

In this way, re-asking the question: 'where am I?' can go in different directions. Do we have to notice people that they are in Holland? Or maybe in a Multi-Cultural Western environment? Therefore the structure of a parochie is changing into 'labeling' cultures by their most noticeable habits. And in a way, we as western civilisation already did that by making those world Supermalls.

So if we can cross-fertilize the good quality public space with a multi-cultural experience and let public space 'happen' and not design everything, we should be able to get rid of the standardized enclaves which mounted themselves into society. The openness of the public territory should be able to let people use it and breathe in the same rhythm as the city. Let there be no threshold within the public realm!

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## Pictures

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# The heartless city

The failure of Modernism to restructure the city of Rotterdam

Essay

Aad Demenint 9178224



## **'A CITY WITHOUT HISTORY'**

Rotterdam is a unique city. It differs from other Dutch cities in almost every aspect. Architectural, socially, functionally and even politically, but one thing makes Rotterdam truly stand out from all others; it has one of the oldest and most colourful histories of them all, but unfortunately almost invisible to the eye. It's a 65 year old city with a history that goes back to the dark ages. In retrospect, Rotterdam shows how important buildings and architecture are in telling history and showing us our own past. The bombing of the Second World War wiped a complete representation of several hundred years away over night and left nothing but a void. However terrible this historical event, it also meant a new beginning. But how does a city start all over again? You can't rebuild all of the historical buildings and pretend nothing has changed. It would be like ignoring it ever took place. No, you must go on. Move forward. So, despite everything, the risen void offered opportunity. It enabled changes for the better in creating the infrastructure and organizing a city conforming to future standards. To take a lead in improving our standard of living even. This immediately raises the question of whether or not the once in charge of the reconstruction were successful in their attempts and what part Architecture played in rebuilding Rotterdam. Perhaps it would help to first picture some of the historical background city planners had in those days. What were the ideas before the war? What kind of ideology was dominating society then? Because, it's as they say, you only have the past as a source of inspiration. Every movement is a reaction to its predecessor and never free from its influence.

## **THE PAST IS WHAT YOU ARE**

In the first half of the twentieth century a movement started in Western society that was referred to as Modernism. In literature, art and architecture the movement wanted to break with traditional values. Ornaments were seen as irrelevant and a certain

feeling of necessity was introduced. Those were the days of functionalists and minimalists. Placed in its period in history, it's an understandable phenomenon. After the First World War all around Europe, countries had to be rebuilt and political changes were initiated: socialism, communism and even fascism found opportunities to plant their seeds. A combination of discontent and a fresh start sparked paved the way for these new ideologies. Established orders either didn't return or were replaced. It was a time of substantial change. It was against this political background that men like Picasso, Yeats and Le Corbusier introduced new approaches in their own fields of expertise. 'Less is more' and 'form follows function' are well known expressions from the early Modernists days. Like any other '-ism' Modernism presents a sharp contrast with its predecessor, and this time with material consequences. One of the reasons for this more dramatic impact on Western society is that Modernism also focused on a different and substantially larger scale more than any past trend ever did. It's true that in the Roman era and also in the days of Napoleon plans for a more structured city were introduced, but those were more of a reactionary nature. A sudden need occurred and the city reacted to it. In Modernists times, it was a little different. Besides reacting to contemporary problematic situations, their philosophy also had more of a visionary origin. Modernists analysed cities and purported to have solutions for problems foreseen to occur in the future. The big Western cities started expanding on a large scale by building complete new neighbourhoods to measure up to expected growth. For the first time large dwelling blocks were built. These blocks were practical in every sense. The architecture was of a sober kind, functional. They were easy to reproduce, which made it cheap and fast to realize on a large scale. This planning had great influence on the future morphology of great Western cities and also on civic behaviour. The plans weren't only buildings and streets; in a way they also gave direction on how to live your life. Recreational spaces were determined and dwellings were ordered according to daily routine.

The neighbourhoods surrounding the city centres started showing uniformity and repetition. It was the first time architecture unintentionally neglected the individual and focussed on the mass. It resulted in areas with a more impersonal atmosphere while on the other hand it manipulated life on a personal level. No doubt that the intentions were to improve life, but to standardize habits and personal routines is ignoring differences in personalities. It's stating that within the set parameters one is allowed to be different, but on a larger scale one should live according to the new set rules. Almost like a doctrine. This is where, in my opinion Modernism failed. It had the audacity to want to control life. It is understandable that architects have great influence on one's daily routine. They are after all the ones who determine where the kitchen will be, where the users of their houses will sleep and where those users suppose to hang out. This is nothing new; this is not a typical Modernists phenomenon. However doing so on city scale makes it remarkable. It calls for typical behaviour. It means that a large amount of people are forced into the same routine and directed into similar behaviour. Creating neighbourhoods that offer a large amount of similar dwellings attracts people with a similar social-economical background and thus results in a less varied place. Although based on good intentions and well thought through ideas, it lacks "inner" development; it's without a history of use.

## **PREDICTING THE FUTURE**

It would probably be too simple to state that Modernism as an ideology alone has failed in creating successful city expansion in Western society. There is usually more than one cause behind phenomena of this magnitude. Financial reasons for instance, globalization and socio-economic drivers also contributed to a large extent to these neighbourhoods without 'soul'. In the beginning of the previous century, when most of the biggest European cities started expanding rapidly, city planners introduced city expansion on a large scale. For the first time, they sought to cast their vision far into the future

and plan for generations to come. Because of the large scale, these expansions were financed by national governments, developers or the cities themselves and this is not without consequence. Governments create dwellings from a societal point of view. There is a need to house inhabitants, so it wants to do just that. In almost any case, it would mean housing for the financially 'lower' and working classes. It resulted in mostly social housing or cheap dwellings for starters, funded with taxpayers' money. The problem with this is that these projects generally started out housing people with a similar socio-economic background and were realized for low cost. Serial manufacturing made it possible to cut costs to a minimum on a community scale, but resulted in basically cheap housing on an individual scale, which unfortunately also consequently meant shorter sustainability. It has created a paradox in contemporary Western society cities in our days. Time has made most city centres more livable and adapted society as a part of its identity. They even change gradually and sort of organically through time. On the other hand, time has decreased the living atmosphere of the early 20th century city outskirts and made it only represent only a monolithic part of society. These developments weren't invented and calculated in advance by the Modernist planners. This is where theory and reality start drifting apart. Practical use is often hard to predict although architects and city planners hold the key to that more than anyone else. In theory the plans looked future proof and fulfilled the demanding wishes of society and politics of those days, but that proof appeared to have an expiry date.

## **ROTTERDAM, A PRODUCT OF AN ERA**

Now project this perspective on Rotterdam. Having the insight on how well or poorly the post-war dwelling areas achieved their stated goals and having all this empty space at your disposal to create, organize and restructure the city centre of the 21st century, one would believe Rotterdam would be an example for ideologies, city plans and social city behaviour, but

disappointingly it isn't. Even far from it. It did result in some memorable architecture, but mainly iconic, not pinned to its position or evolved from its surroundings and historical setting. Just stand alones. Recent studies show that of the main four cities of The Netherlands, Rotterdam has the biggest safety issues, extremely high residential orbit and the highest dissatisfaction level among its population. How is this possible? Could it be that these problems are mainly caused by naive city planners and poor architects? Has time still not yet healed the wounds caused by the bombing of the Second World War? It certainly has left its mark on Rotterdam since then, without doubt. Lacking tangible and visible history for instance. Today there are just a very few buildings that refer to 'existence' of before the war, but, as a result of the bombing, there is something even more important current: the city centre of Rotterdam has no old houses. As mentioned before, a city should be a mixture of everything. Traffic, cultures, leisure, squares, city parks, facilities but also houses for all kinds, rich and poor, young and old, female and male and for all cultural backgrounds. A variety of residents make a city dynamic and evolving gradually with time. Without such a mix, progression is like a city expansion from before the War. Equal a suburb without soul. Could it be that the flaws of post-war extension areas, as mentioned before, didn't come to light at the beginning of the reconstruction of Rotterdam? Whatever the reason, in the city centre of Rotterdam today, it's apparent that a supply of housing for various social classes is absent. More and more office buildings are made which causes for even more 'local' emptiness. Residents become scarce and the ones that do live there do so in outdated dwellings. In short it has become an area from which inhabitants prefer to leave rather than come to. Remarkably enough, in a way this was even deliberate. The Modernistic philosophy behind the plans for the Lijnbaan was that it would become a shopping and working area. The residents would live in the suburbs and would visit the Lijnbaan to shop and work and at the end of the day return home via the new planned

infrastructure. From this perspective the original philosophy should be examined more closely to see if it remains valid. To do so, we can compare Rotterdam to cities with a similarly dramatic historical background, cities that were also bombed down during the Second World War. Cities like Berlin, Middelburg or Munster. Comparing cities is always difficult, but in a sense it's still interesting to look at these examples, especially the last two. The post-war history of Berlin is so unique that decent comparison seems impossible with the German capital, but the way the other two cities were rebuilt gives the opportunity to do so. Both cities are rebuilt in a traditional style. In the case of Middelburg, also a Dutch harbour, supervisor ir. P.Verhagen was a follower of the Delftse school and thus by definition a traditionalist. He made sure that every new house would coexist with the existing surroundings. Furthermore there was an additional aspect that in my opinion helped in regaining some of the old atmosphere of Middelburg and is memorable in the comparison with Rotterdam. Not one of the new houses built is the same as the next, so every house has a unique character. This seems to be the biggest difference between Middelburg and Rotterdam; A traditional approach versus a Modernistic one. Whether it was meant deliberately or not, in doing so for Middelburg it resulted in a diverse city centre that offers a housing supply for various people. In Rotterdam we find the big dwelling slabs in its city centre that in other cities are located in the post war expansion areas, and which may consequently possess the same problems for those cities. It's these big Modernistic housing projects that lack a fundamental characteristic which, in my opinion, is much needed in a contemporary city's centre or even its suburbs: doing justice to individuality. A city is created by its inhabitants; by all of the individuals living in it and even those visiting it. They are the soul of the city, the blood that turns a city into a living organism with all its vitality and growth, a true heart. In contrast to a philosophy that determines how to lead your life and puts the mass in front of the individual, a more organic point of view would give a city space

to evolve from within versus controlling it. I believe that in recognizing every individual, those individuals would have a more intense feeling of involvement with their own neighbourhoods. Having an emotional bond with one's living area improves the atmosphere and makes people tend to stay longer or come more often. Furthermore, the way the city centre of Rotterdam was organized resulted in fragmented bits, which also has a great influence on the intensity of use. Functions were planned next to each other, not in a mixture. The streets for suppliers at the back of the shops of the Lijnbaan make the separation of the specific areas even more apparent. The Coolingsingel cuts the centre through the middle and has the Beurs traverse as the only poor attempt to connect the two. All this fragmentation causes one-dimensional use. A shopping district is just for shopping, offices just for work. Those fragmented bits are only in use when its function is operational. When not, the area becomes deserted and leaves an unpleasant void behind. Social cohesion decreases and the atmosphere becomes more hostile.

## **BACK TO THE FUTURE**

How can this tragic decay be stopped? Even turned around? It is probably too easy to state that simply mixing functions would immediately improve the atmosphere in the public domain, but it would presumably result in a less fragmented use of specific areas. It gives a variety of reasons to go to any given neighbourhood at different times and in achieving more diversity in functional use, it would attract more diversity in users and consequently a more diverse evolution, which is in my opinion, should be the basis for solving the problems. Adding houses, for instance, would also help in making the area more useable 24 hours a day, improving social life and getting more people psychologically connected. Even better: implementing a more varied housing supply would stimulate more diversity in the social, economic and cultural mix of the residents. Preferably, this integration would happen on a more human scale than

apparent nowadays, because a city may sound big and a structure on urban scale is certainly relevant, but the users remain people and thus a human scale is equally important. Modernism has failed to do what it ideologically intended: structuring life to make it more pleasant for humanity. In an attempt to redefine daily routines for society it neglected the individual components of that society. It got lost in scale. I am not saying 'all was better before', but different times cause for different problems and solutions. For instance, before the industrial revolution buildings had a smaller scale due to the lack of constructional possibilities. Cities had less inhabitants and therefore logically less problems. Different era's are practically unfair to compare, it's just that in rebuilding the city centre of Rotterdam, one decided to put emphasis on the larger scale with the mentioned consequences as an additional result. So size does matter. As mentioned before, a city needs to be a mixture of many things, because in the end, its main purpose is to fulfill the needs of its residents. They are the city. They determine the look and usage of its architecture. True, architects have a leading role, but should never forget who the clients are. The people are the sources of inspiration and should be treated as such. Introducing different levels of scale and increasing the mixture of functions into the city centre of Rotterdam would restore the balance. Most important thing has to be the de-fragmentation of the central district. Combining functions has its advantages, but a city centre should be a meeting point for all. A place people want to go to and hang out. Making the Cool a city centre in which people want to live again and where people want to go to for both cultural reasons as well as pleasure or professional ones should be the goal for the nearby future.

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Today's public realm becomes *non-place*

Essay

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## INTRODUCTION

Today's public realm is becoming more and more programmed and used as a money(making)-machine. Developers and architects are creating big constructions where multiple public functions are integrated within one single building. They are creating a whole new city within the traditional city. These 'new' cities' are losing the connection with the traditional city, they don't tell a story and have no real identity, it is a *non-place*. The public realm of these *non-place* is moved from the street to an inner-street. These buildings are not inviting for people to visit spontaneously, they only go there when they need to, because these buildings are signed for special target groups. In a way there is a selection of people who are supposed to go to these places where they are able to interact with their 'selected' group. The consequence is that there are less encounters with people from all different types of backgrounds in the past you would meet these people in the streets unplanned or coincidentally.

Underneath a resume of the idea and meaning of some architects and philosophers concerning "non places" is outlined.

Marc Augé used the term 'non-lieux' to describe the gap between new spatial spaces and the traditional space. Augé says that the new spatial spaces are *non-places*, because they don't tell their own story. Traditional spaces tell us their history and give us and the city identity and strength. New spaces like the new monofunctional spaces: iconic buildings, shopping malls and recreation parks are *non-places*. Supermodernity produces these *non-places*. *Non-places* do not integrate with the existing places; they are not anthropological places, they are interrupted, don't tell a story and are living on their own. (Marc Augé, Non Places. Introduction to Supermodernity, London 1995)

Michael Sorkin used the term 'theme-park' to describe

today's city. Today's city doesn't have any real centre anymore, it's like there are more centres within the city. Cities within the city, growing like high-rise buildings. This new form of urban structure doesn't have a connection with its surroundings, there is an extreme obsession for safety and control and they are losing the connection with the cultural network of people. It works like a theme park. (Michael Sorkin, Variations on a theme park, New York, 1992)

Rem Koolhaas talks about a 'Generic city'. A city where the streets are dead and the public realm has been 'evacuated'. The streets are only in use to get to the 'generic city'. A city without identity, history and centre, a *non-place*. (Rem Koolhaas, The Generic City, S,M,L,XL, New York, 1995)

What is the reason that today's public realm often becomes a *non-place*? What kind of effect does this *non-place* have on the society within today's city? I would like to gain insight in the development of today's public realm and try to find out what kind of effect it has on today's society.

Today's public realm, which positions itself as a *non-place*, is a result of the transformation within the idea of modern cities. Today's city is transformed from traditional to super modern. What is the effect of this transformation? What is the character of this new super modern city? In order to understand the background of this change of today's public realm, we will focus on the reason behind the change of the traditional city into a super modern city.

### **THE CHANGE OF TRADITIONAL CITY INTO A SUPER MODERN CITY**

The world is continuously developing. In the beginning of the twentieth century this development is growing tremendously and has a big influence on the traditional city. Different technical developments offered great construction and building opportunities for the traditional city. These developments caused the change from the traditional city into a super modern city.

To make it more clear; a traditional city had its own character with a distinctive identity, which is exclusive for the city. For example Paris, Rome, Barcelona are all famous European and well know cities, but completely different from each other. Each of these cities has its own specific character. Expressed by its buildings, atmosphere, etc. and inspired by its own specific culture, habits and needs.

The traditional city had an specific morphology: the most important buildings where all concentrated in the 'heart' of the city; the city centre. The 'heart' of the city was special and important for economical and social aspects. Here you often found squares, market places, shopping streets, boulevards, restaurants, café's and all different kinds of city buildings. These various facilities made it possible to connect people and give the inhabitants (of the city) a comfortable feeling (feeling at home and welcome). The city

centre collected and connected all the city users in a natural, pleasant, planned and unplanned way. In the traditional city, the 'heart' of the city was the 'place to be'. It told us a story about the specific culture, habits and needs of the users. A super modern city used the 'heritage' of the traditional city and transformed it into a generic city. By doing so, the generic city loses the coherence of the specific (traditional) city. There is a lack of attention to the morphology and construction of that what already exists in the 'traditional' city. The 'heart' of the city got ripped open and damaged by the generic rules of a super modern city. The super modern city is built according to innovations, technologies and marketing perspectives. It transformed the 'place to be' (the traditional city centre) into a *non-place*. A generic city will grow or shrink as its function for supply and demand for the super modern rules and not because of the anthropological growth or needs. The general city is therefore losing its connection with its inhabitants and also with it's culture, habits and needs. Examples of super modern cities are Manhattan, Dubai, but also cities like Rotterdam and Shanghai. It feels like you can't find the history and identity of the city anymore, it has lost it's unique character, it becomes more general. You can find these kinds of cities more and more all over the world now; they are very alike and general and are being transformed into a *non-city*.

### **A SUPER MODERN CITY WANTS TO BE PART OF THE METROPOLIS**

Historic cities used to be build near places which where good trading spots. If a city had a location near water, it was easier to exchange products and communication. The more a city could offer in combination with it's good accessibility, the more important, famous and grand a traditional city was.

The technical developments - airplanes, trains and the internet - made it possible to bring the exchange of products, communication and information network to

a higher level. A city is able to exchange with countries and cities all over the world. They could be a part of the world-network, a part of the metropolis. A metropolis, like the dictionary tells us, is 'the capital or chief city of a country or region. A very large and densely populated industrial and commercial city' (Oxford American Dictionary). Metropolis cities are located worldwide and are important hubs for regional and/or international connections and communications. These metropolis characteristics give the traditional city a lot of new (economic, political and cultural) opportunities.

The traditional city needed to be changed if it wanted to be a part of the Metropolis, it had to improve its accessibility. Facilities like airports, train stations and (main) roads was very important. These facilities in itself became even more important than the existing (traditional) city. They have the best spots in the city. This means that some parts of the existing city (without thinking) would just get demolished or ripped open to create space in order to improve the needed accessibility. A good example where this happened is Paris. In Hausmann's plan several houses (of inhabitants) were taken down to improve the accessibility of the town (centre) and the various districts. These developments improved on one hand the accessibility and attractiveness of a super modern city enormously, but on the other hand it often caused more fragmentation and contributed to disconnection and loss of its (historic) roots.

As I stated before, a super modern city doesn't have a typical character. Every super modern city looks the same. Theoretical speaking you can build a super modern city everywhere. For example: Dubai. It became well known and famous in the last twenty years. Architectural buildings are constructed because they could be financed by a huge amount of oil dollars, not because of the history of the country and its main city. So this city is built with the rules of a super modern city, and therefore part of a metropolis. It seems that differentiation of a super modern city

nowadays is primary based on the attractiveness of technical facilities, modern buildings etcetera, instead of human anthropological backgrounds. That's why a super modern city becomes more general. It is generic, without an identity.

## **THE NEW SUPER MODERN BUILDINGS IN A SUPER MODERN CITY**

Not only traditional cities changed into a super modern city, also the traditional public buildings changed from traditional into super modern buildings. The technical developments changed the determination of new super modern public buildings. Like Rem Koolhaas describes in his book: *Delirious New York*; the elevator caused a change in architectural thinking; how a contemporary (super modern) building should look.

The elevator gives the new super modern building a lot of new opportunities. You can build much higher and create more functions within each building (multifunctional). The elevator makes it possible for people to move easy and quick to different levels within a building. The super modern buildings express themselves as big and high multifunctional buildings, in which you will find all kinds of coherent functions and facilities, like:

1) The super modern office building, where employees can find everything they need. The building facilitates not only their workplace, but also possibilities for lunch, leisure, sport and entertainment. The only thing they have to do is leave their home in the morning, catch a train, car or plane and go to their office building. There is no reason to leave the building anymore, except when it's time to go home. Everything is there.

2) The shopping mall. A shopping mall is specifically focused on a certain group of people, who have more or less the same interest, belong to the same social class and have the same shopping behaviour. They find everything what they need in just one spot. The travel time is because of this fact, exceptionally improved.

A super modern building expresses its self as the 'place to be'; they are functioning as a city within a city. In a traditional city you can find different public facilities (located in different buildings) mostly located in the 'heart' of the city. The city centre (in a traditional city) was the 'place to be'. The place that connects it's inhabitants and city users in a natural way. The super modern building functions more or less the same, but this time you will find the city centre inside the building. You will use the outside (the streets) only to travel from one 'city' to another. The super modern buildings have taken over a lot of the attractiveness and functions of the traditional city centre. Therefore there is no typical city centre in the super modern city anymore. There are several city centres within the super modern city.

The location of the super modern buildings in the super modern city are less important. Really important is the building's attractiveness (well know, famous) and accessibility (car, public transport). New super modern buildings are often just 'dropped' somewhere in the existing city. It seems that they pay little or no attention to the value of the urban context of the existing city.

The look of super modern buildings is iconic. The super modern building has to be spectacular to gain interest, be well known and attract people. It's like a competition between all the new super modern buildings: Which is the most spectacular? The most famous? Which attracts the most people? In a way architects like to be part of this game. They go to extremes to make themselves more famous. Like putting their brand on the market. The end-result is often big, iconic, screaming architecture, like attractions in a Theme-park (super modern city). These super modern public buildings are selfish, living on their own. They don't have any kind of character and miss any identity.

On the opposite the traditional public buildings where all very specific, they where designed and based on the needs of their inhabitants and city users. The shape

of the building was specific and could already tell you which facility was located there. Take a look to the earlier theatres, libraries or government buildings, the shape and design of the building already told you what kind of building it was. Every traditional public building had a value and was built in a specific, important area in the city centre, connected with all the other important facilities. By doing so, coherence was created within the city centre and became the obvious 'place to be'. The super modern public buildings wanted to create all those facets in their buildings, but this didn't work. It seems that the super modern public buildings are more built for the needs of money-makers (economic reasons) and fame of architects, then for needs of (city) users. These selfish reasons contributes to a disconnection with the cultural network of people. A super modern public building doesn't tell you its specific facilities just by looking on the outside. You have to go inside to find out. This means that a super modern building can have every look and shape. The specific character and identity are gone; a super modern public building becomes general. A general building, which can be built everywhere, which has no connection with the existing city and with other super modern public buildings. It's just me, myself and I. It fragments the existing city even more. It's a *non-place*.

## **HOW DOES PUBLIC REALM LOOK LIKE IN THE SUPER MODERN CITY?**

I just described how the city and buildings transformed from traditional into super modern. What happened with the public space, because of these transformations? How does the public realm expresses itself in a super modern city?

Rem Koolhaas describes perfectly how the super modern city and his public realm expresses its self: 'A city where the streets are dead and the public realm has been evacuated. The street is only in use to get to the 'generic city'' (Rem Koolhaas, The Generic City,

S,M,L,XL). This is exactly what happened. Traditional cities, which wanted to be part of the metropolis, transformed into generic, super modern cities. A city where transport is priority number one. A city that is divided into all kinds of little cities, which are connected through big roads.

Big roads used to be a nice and calm street in the traditional city. The street was the place where people walked, meet, talked, connected, socialize and where seen. A place which every inhabitant uses. A place where everyone feels welcome; social class and religion doesn't matter: the streets are for everyone. You could say that the street was a perfect place for public realm. The traditional street has been transformed into a racetrack. Only used to travel quickly from one point to another; one of the 'qualities' of a super modern city, but this quality also caused no time and room to stop, talk, socialize and relax. There is only one goal: 'I have to go as quickly as possible to my destination'. My destination will be the place where I stop, have time to talk and socialize.

- What is this destination? What does this destination look like? -The destination is a choice between different kinds of big super modern multifunctional buildings; the little cities within the city. - Do these little cities have a street function? - Yes, they have, but their super modern streets are not functioning as the traditional streets. First: their streets are built inside in vertical layers instead of outside built in horizontal layers. Inside means, you have to plan to go there, there is no spontaneously, unplanned meeting. Second: their streets are not for everyone, like the traditional streets used to be. The super modern multifunctional building (a little city) is programmed for a certain target group. People with the same interest, age, social class and religion. Economic motives were the drivers for this development. They can offer non-stop attractiveness with all their facilities. It is all at one location, it's easy and user-friendly. They are creating more or less a fake world, where everything looks perfect: same kind of people, no treats/violence/demonstrations, no rain/wind,

but it is not perfect. By setting up super modern multifunctional buildings, society gets divided into different groups and makes it less possible for people to connect spontaneously and naturally like the traditional city used to do.

Every individual is getting less unique, they are "forced" to function as one group and become more general. The "separated" groups do not interact and communicate anymore. Therefore there is less understanding of other 'groups' and the super modern city gets more and more divided. That's why the public realm is losing the connection with the cultural network of people and becomes a *non-place*.

*Is there no place where you could meet different kind of new people in a spontaneous and natural way in this super modern city?*

There are only a few good places left where people can meet in a spontaneous and natural way. Most likely these are places like train stations or airports, where all kind of people (without cultural differentiation, religion etcetera) make use of in order to travel to their destination. But you cannot describe this as a perfect public realm, because they are only used as a travelling and not as a socializing facility. People use it to go as quickly as possible to their destinations. There is no or little time to stop and interact with "strangers". So these places where people are interacting in the super modern city are not the perfect places for public realm.

The technical developments also causes loss of the connection with the cultural network of people. It leads to a situation in which we become more individualistic, people who are living on their own in this super modern city. Technical developments (like internet) give us all kinds of opportunities. But these opportunities also cause the fact that we don't need other people anymore; we can do it on our own. The camera takes over the safety and social control. We can walk safely on our own; we don't need to walk in a group anymore.



Internet will give us all the information we need; we don't have to go to a library or ask other people for knowledge. Machines inform us where to go, what to do (rules) and how to use the facilities etcetera. We don't have to go to an information desk; we just follow the signs. These developments make daily life easier and offer more possibilities, but on the other hand it results in a decrease of interaction and socializing of every individual in the super modern city. This will transform a public space even more into a *non-place*!

### **HOW CAN WE IMPROVE THE PUBLIC REALM (HOW IT SHOULD BE) IN THE SUPER MODERN CITY?**

We just described how the public realm changed from a 'place to be' to a *non-place*. A *non-place* loses its connection with the cultural network of people and with the coherence of the traditional city; it is not social and is transformed from specific into generic. People become more individual and scared because they live in their own world and don't connect and socialize with other people in a spontaneous way anymore. Should we do something about it? How can we improve the public realm so that it becomes the 'place to be' in this super modern city once more? A place to stop, interact, socialize, see and be seen. A place that collects all the different kind of city users in a natural, pleasant way. A public place where social class, cultural background, religion etcetera doesn't have any influence. A place where understanding and the way of living in a super modern city is improved. A place where every individual counts again. A place with character, identity and a story.

Connection will be the main goal. Connection between the traditional city and the influence of the super modern city. A connection between all the different parts of the city. All parts have to cooperate together. They all have to preserve their own specific character and still relate to each other. Together they will 'present'

again one city, instead of more cities operating within 'one' city. This will not only improve the coherence and identity of the city, but it will also support contact, interaction and understanding between every individual. City users will again be collected around one spot, instead of being spread out into different kinds of spots.

It's like Michael Sorkin said: What's missing in this city is not a matter of any particular building or place; it's the spaces in between, the connection that make sense of forms. (Michael Sorkin, Variations on a theme park, New York, 1992). Connection will create a 'place to be' again.

### **HOW DOES THIS ALL RELATES TO A CITY LIKE ROTTERDAM?**

Rotterdam is the perfect example of a super modern city. Rotterdam has a great history but a lot of its historical buildings were destroyed during the Second World War. The city had to put itself on the map again and saw the opportunity to become a part of the metropolis.

Rotterdam is redesigned after the Second World War. The urban plan was based on cars. Wide roads mark the inner city. These wider roads are designed for the accessibility of several working class districts and facilities of the city centre.

Nowadays Rotterdam is still busy putting itself on the map. The city is continuously building, improving their transport opportunities and creating big iconic buildings, in order to put Rotterdam as a kind of 'brand' on the metropolis market. But they forget their inhabitants, the human beings who have to use this 'machine'. According to my previous comments about modern buildings, the new developed buildings in Rotterdam tend to be also selfish and autonomous. Take a look at Markthal and Stadskantoor; they just plot themselves in the city, without noticing the value of the existing city. They don't make a connection with

the 'heritage' of Rotterdam and wants to function as a 'city on its own'.

Rotterdam is a city that needs structure and consistency, but it seems that being part of the metropolis is the only thing that matters. Rotterdam has forgotten the people. Walking on the street is complicated. If you walk, you have to pay attention so that you are not hit by a car, bus or tram. It feels like you are not allowed to walk 'outside' anymore and that you are forced to use other transport facilities. Even the 'city centre' of Rotterdam - the Lijnbaan area - is a mix of pedestrians and car streets. This does not contribute to a coherent and attractive city centre. The city centre is more a 'crossing' area, instead of a 'stopping' area. There is no recognizable 'central' point to stop, relax and socialize.

The big super modern buildings, which were added to Rotterdam, give you a uncomfortable feeling, they don't have a balanced scale and make you feel very small. Therefore the atmosphere on the street is almost gone. It's like you are forced to go inside the buildings. These buildings fragmentize Rotterdam even more.

Rotterdam is very multicultural; it has a lot of different kinds of people with different ethnical background. This makes it even more a necessity to offer connecting facilities, otherwise Rotterdam becomes a city in which people are getting less integrated, getting more individual, probably stimulating more violence and aggression.

Rotterdam has to find a balance: on one hand, creating the right (connection) facilities for their multicultural inhabitants and on the other hand putting the town on the map to be attractive to live, work and conduct business.

Rotterdam is becoming more general and getting more well known as a super modern city. It's hard to find something of its history. It seems that the only thing that counts now is giving Rotterdam a modern image. All kind of new modern architecture is used to attract

more and more tourists instead of facilitating their city users. This architecture is known as Rotterdam-architecture, but it can be built perfectly in another city. Rotterdam is just 'lucky' to have it. The super modern buildings of Rotterdam, are exactly working as described earlier: selfish, living on there own, without making a connection with the surroundings. More and more *non-places* are found in Rotterdam. And this has to be avoided, otherwise it will lose the connections (as we earlier described) with the cultural network of it's own people.

## **OPPORTINITIES FOR ROTTERDAM**

Establishing this is not a total utopia. We have to get rid of the big roads in the middle of the city. Then we can create traditional streets, squares and an identifiable city centre again. Traditional streets and squares provide a connection with all the surrounding areas and facilities of the super modern city. It will also contribute to a better accessible, identifiable and main city centre. This city centre will collect and connect all city users, with all their cultural, needs and habits. Everyone feels welcome again; no one will be excluded in this 'centre' of the city. A tangible centre point, will provide a place to go, stop, talk, interact and socialize. This all will give Rotterdam more character and identity.

Connection will also influence atmosphere and safety. If the different facilities cooperate with each other, they can strengthen each other. For example street s containing shops open from 9 till 5 are crowded during the day, but will be abandoned at night. If there is a theatre in the same street, there will still be people on the street in the evening and with some pubs/clubs you are probably able to create 24/7 lifetime on the street. With this kind of connection you can create atmosphere and social control in a natural way. You don't need hundreds of cameras to secure your safety.

Another step, which should be taken, is for the

architects. If they want to put a new design into a specific spot in the city, they have to study the surroundings and set up an overall plan in which all the facilities give synergy to each other. That makes it easier to transform their often selfish, iconic, screaming *non-place* buildings, into buildings that are in balance with all of the surrounded facilities and buildings. They will give extra support to create a 'place to be'.

The perfect 'place to be' is not the perfect building or the perfect street, but it will always be a combination of it. The connection is still the main goal; it will make each others position stronger, give each one extra character and more identity. Together they will tell a story, be a part of the city. A special connection, the 'place to be'!

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# Rotterdam Events.

mapping all events in Rotterdam by season

## Research

## ROTTERDAM EVENTS

### INTRODUCTION

*"Cities are increasingly using cultural events to improve their image, stimulate urban development and attract visitors and investment. As part of its event-led regeneration strategy, Rotterdam staged the 'Cultural Capital of Europe' in 2001."*

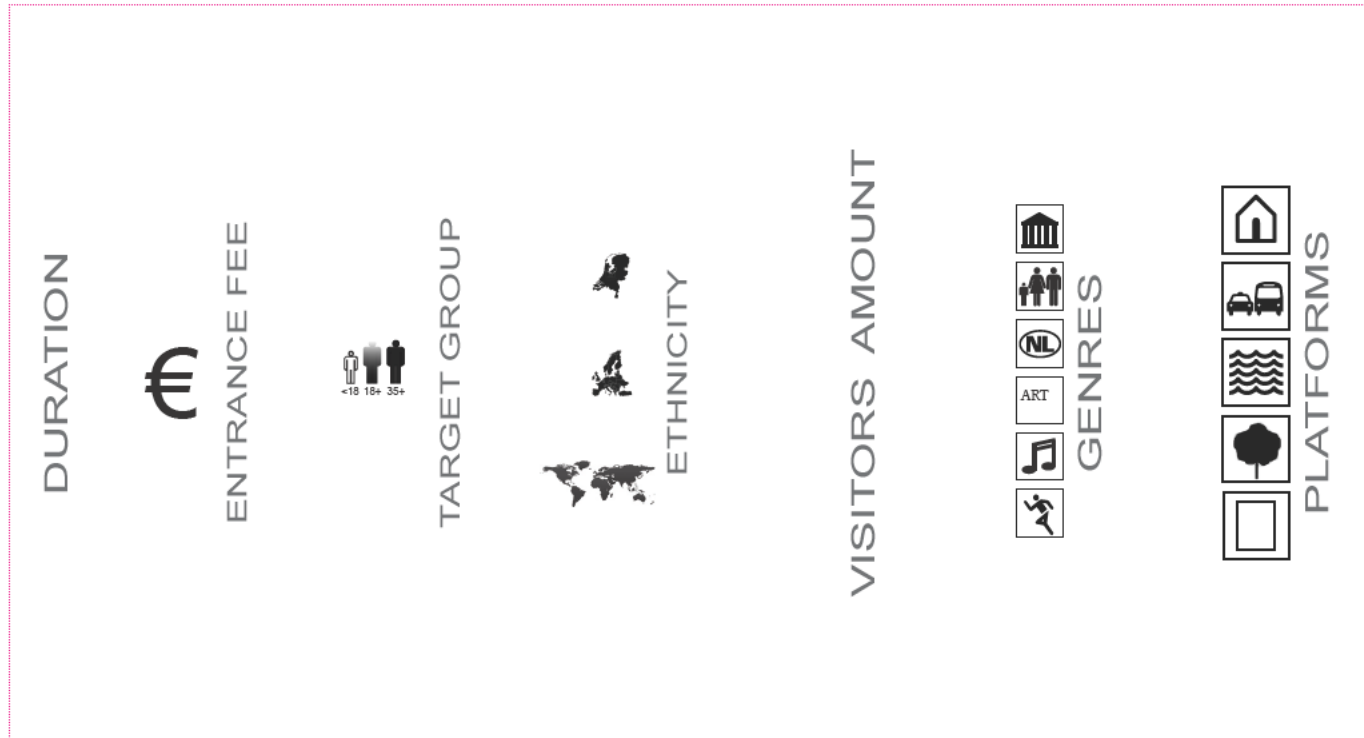
Cultural events in Rotterdam are characteristic for the city. It shows the multicultural faces with Rotterdam's international ambitions.

Therefore this research topic for this graduation studio is to collect all of the events and mapping them by seasons and location.

From the research we have drawn interesting conclusions which had led us to develop a clear concept **SML**. This concept has led us to work further on the masterplan and develop in our project.

Greg Richards, Julie Wilson, [The impact of Cultural Events on City Image: Rotterdam, Cultural Capital of Europe 2001](#), (2004)





## RESEARCH

Events are made possible by two main subjects focused on the genres and platforms. These two subjects in relation to each other add a certain quality to the events.

The genre is the type of event that is taking place. An event can have a combination of genres and this attracts a wider public and a mix of social groups. There are 6 different genres to categorize:

- culture
- family
- holiday
- art
- music
- sport

Platforms are necessary to support an event. As for the genres, a combination of platforms can be used. One of these platforms can be recognized as a starting point. There are 5 unique platforms for Rotterdam events:

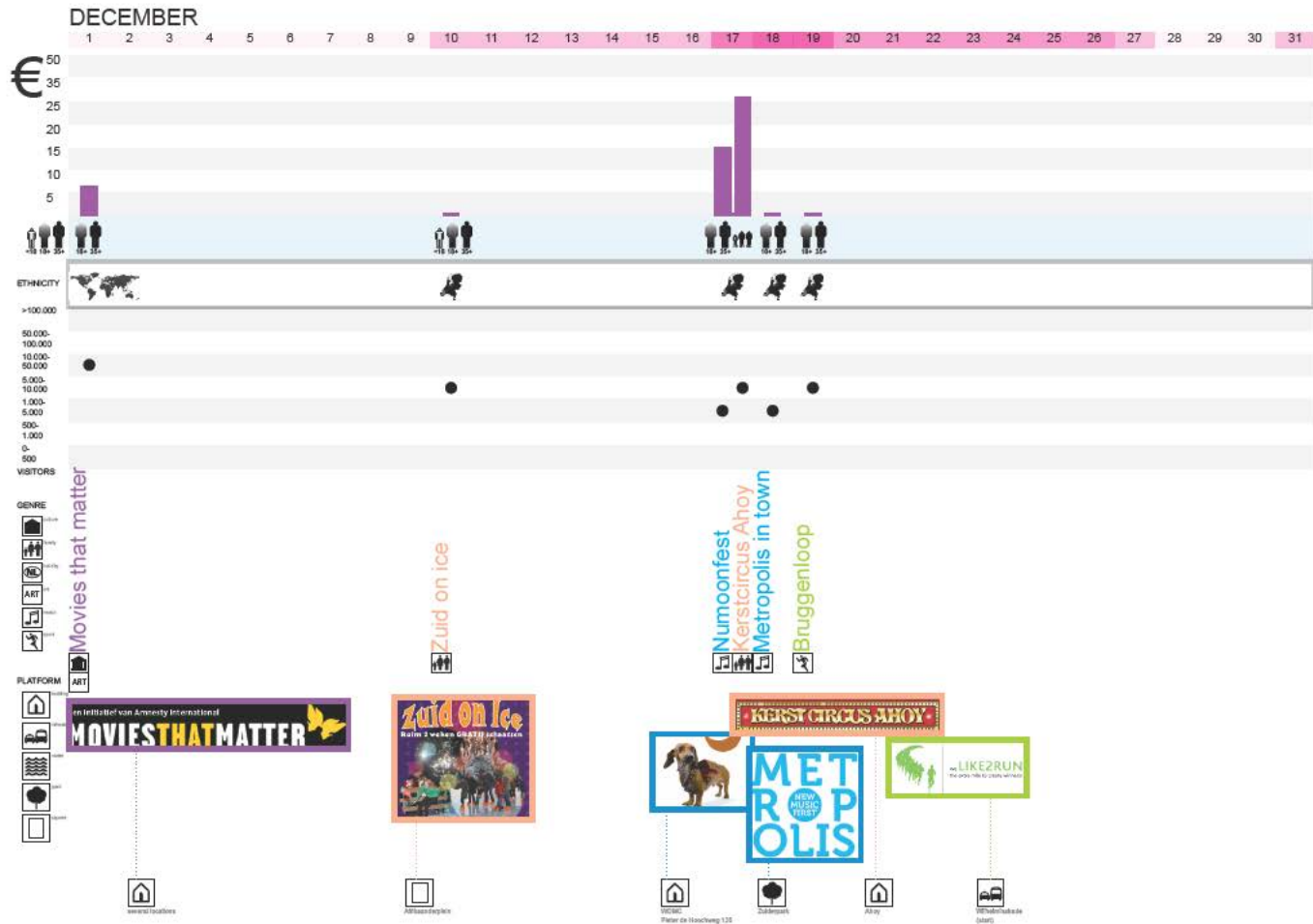
- building
- infrastructure
- water
- park
- square

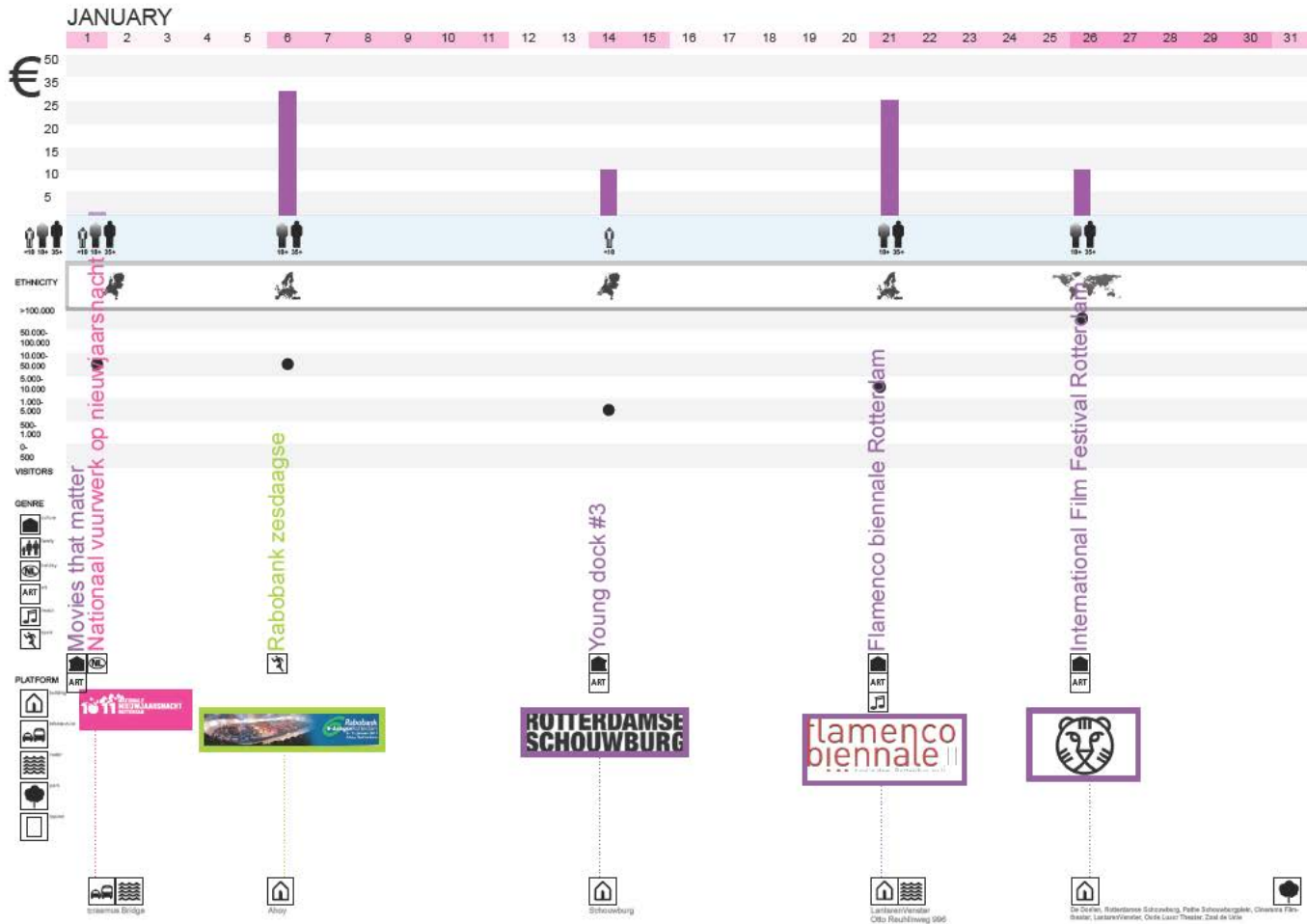
For the research we have collected data information including the genres and platforms of all of the events that is taking place in the

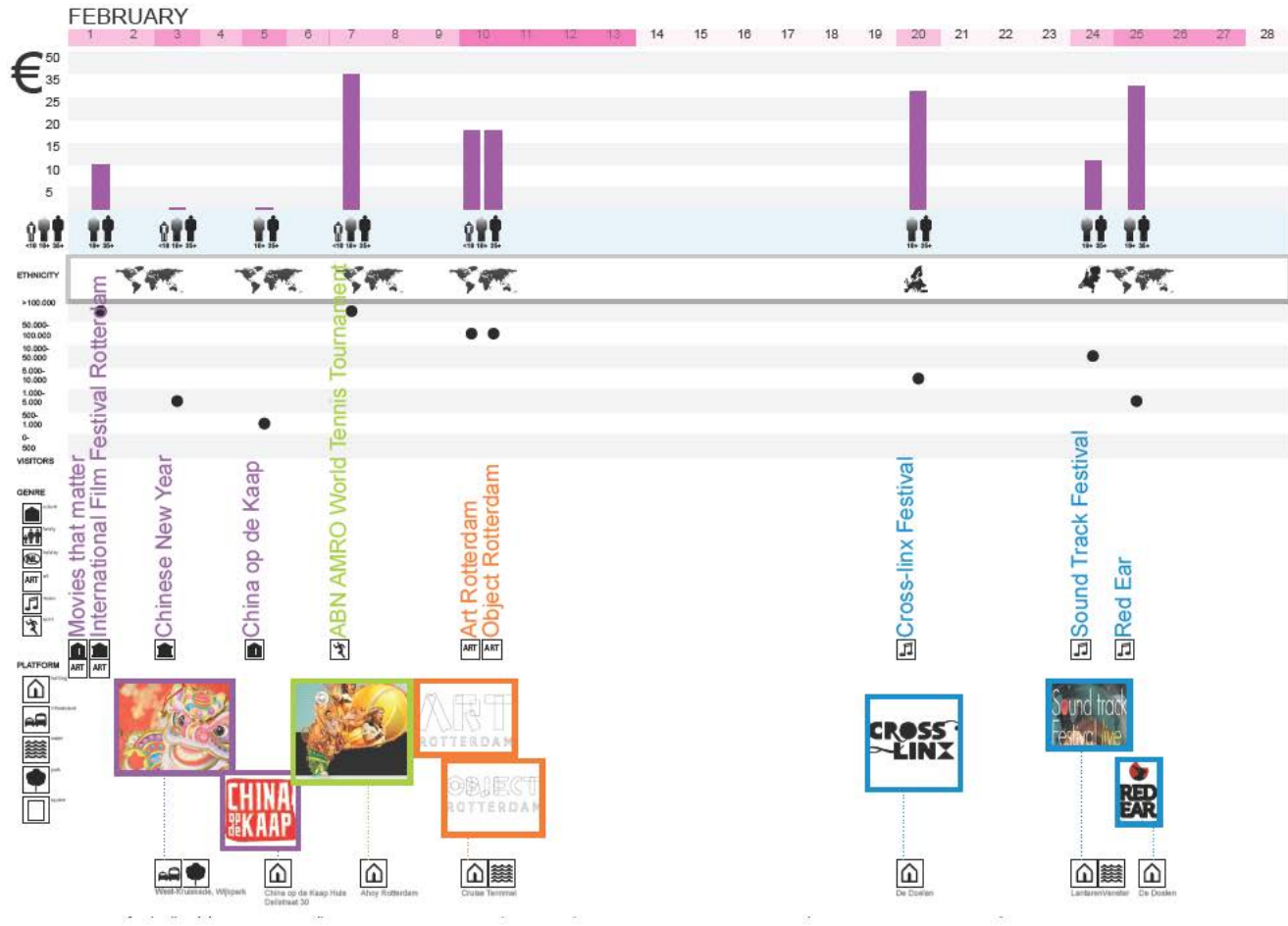
city and arranged them by season. The data information includes the following: the duration of the event, entrance fee, target group, ethnicity, amount of visitors, genres and platforms. By organizing the data information in a timeline gives it a clear overview of the characteristics of a specific event. By doing so the events can be compared to each other.

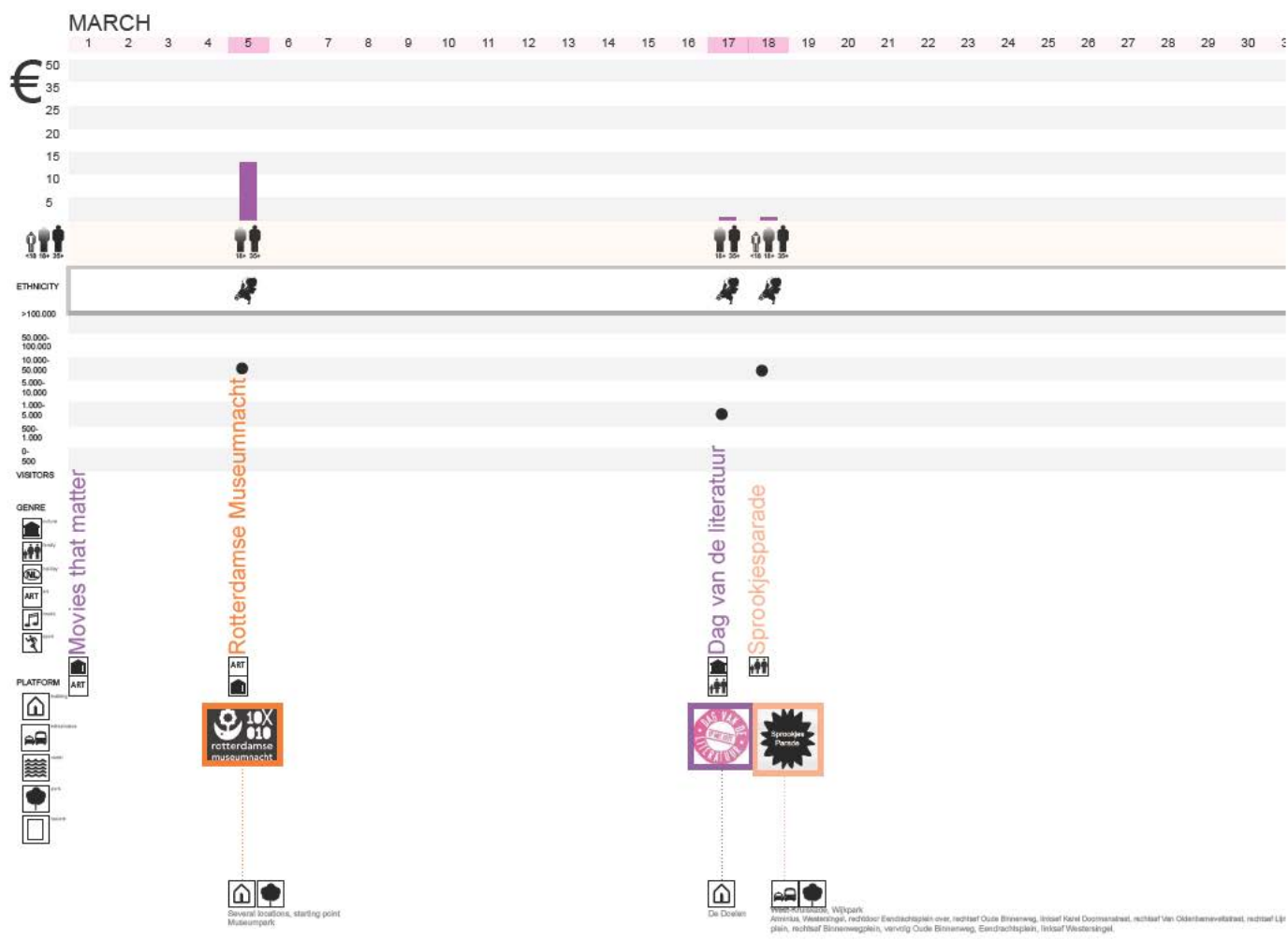
As an addition to the research, all events are geographically mapped by season to see how the events are spread over the city.

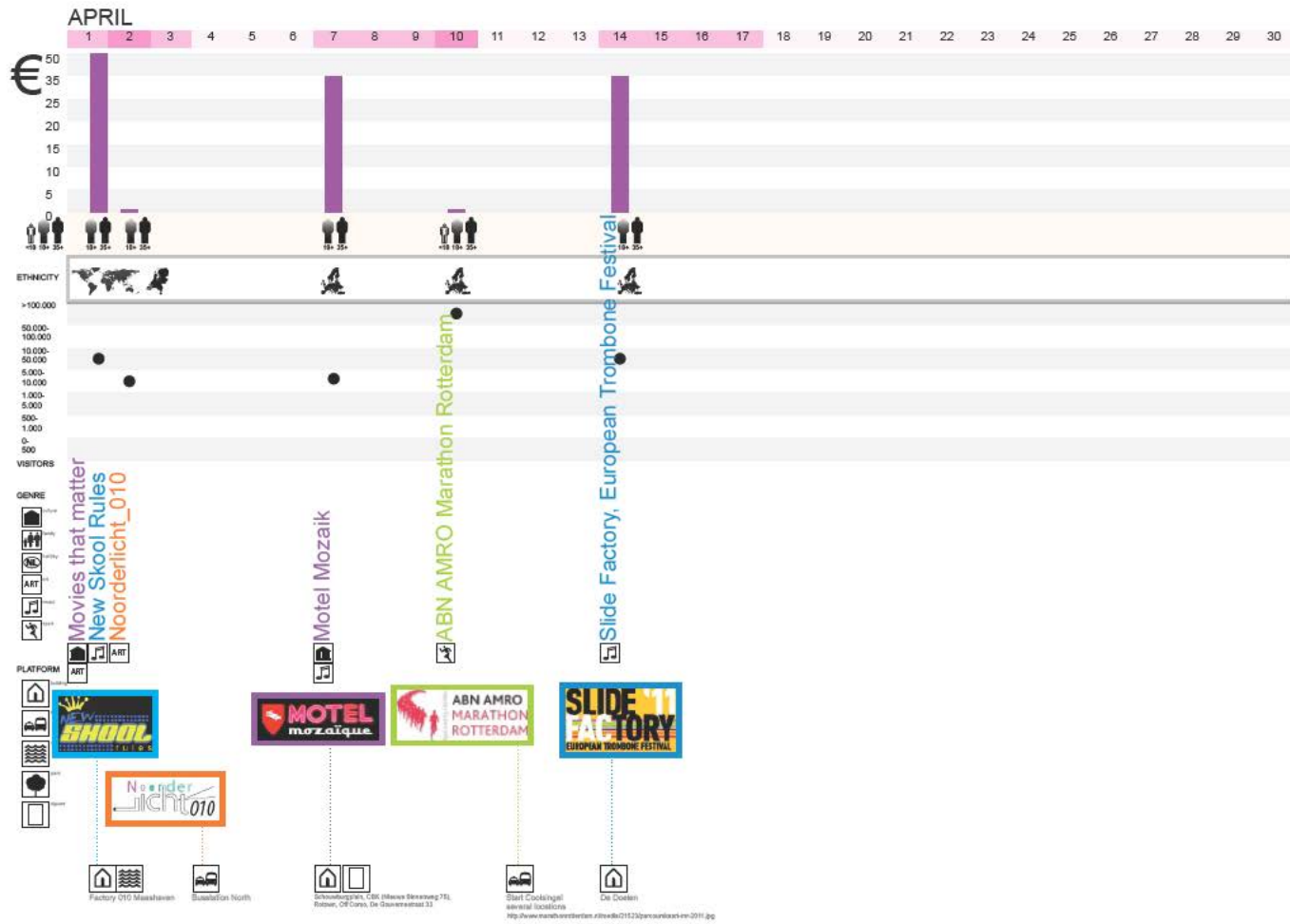


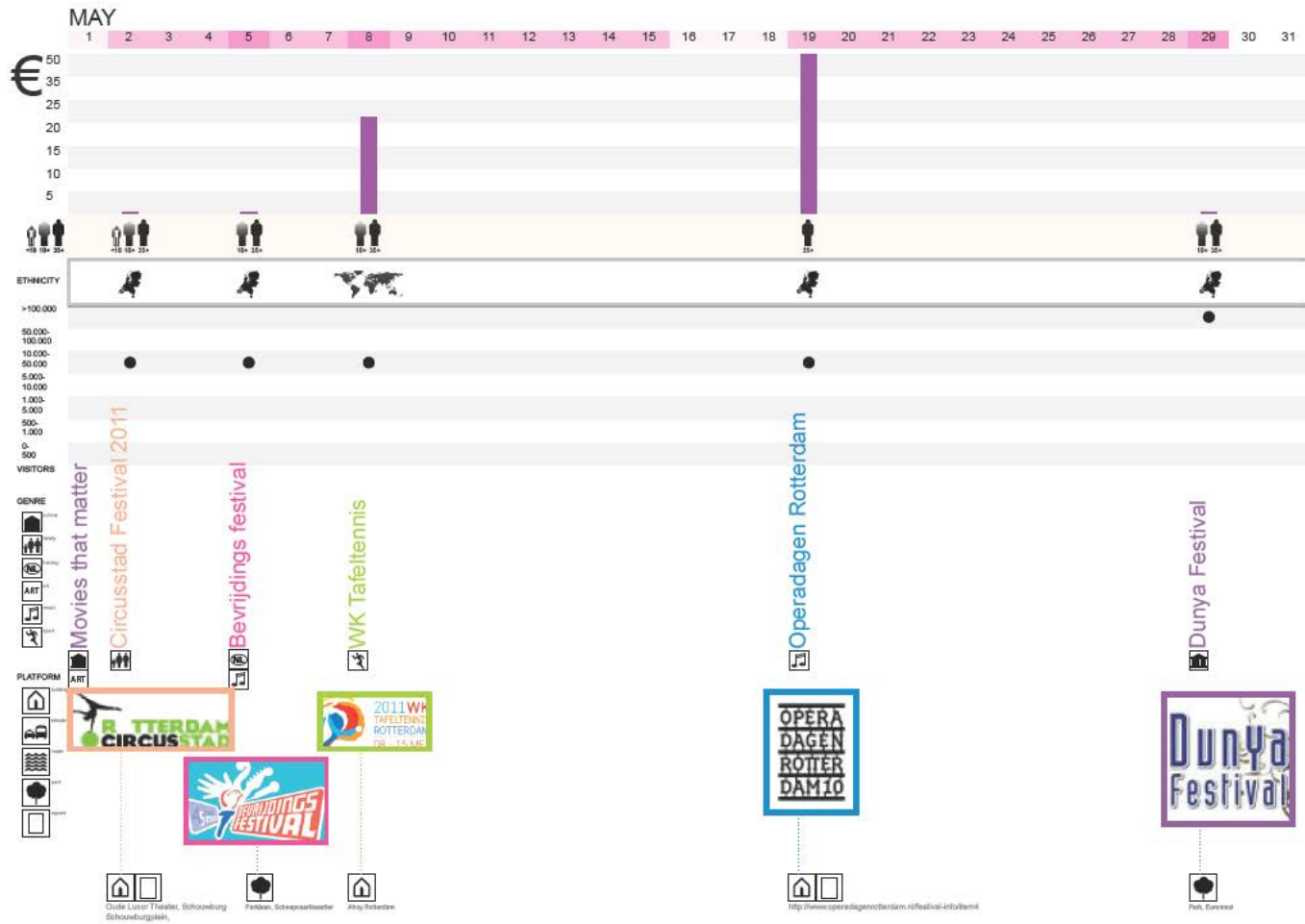


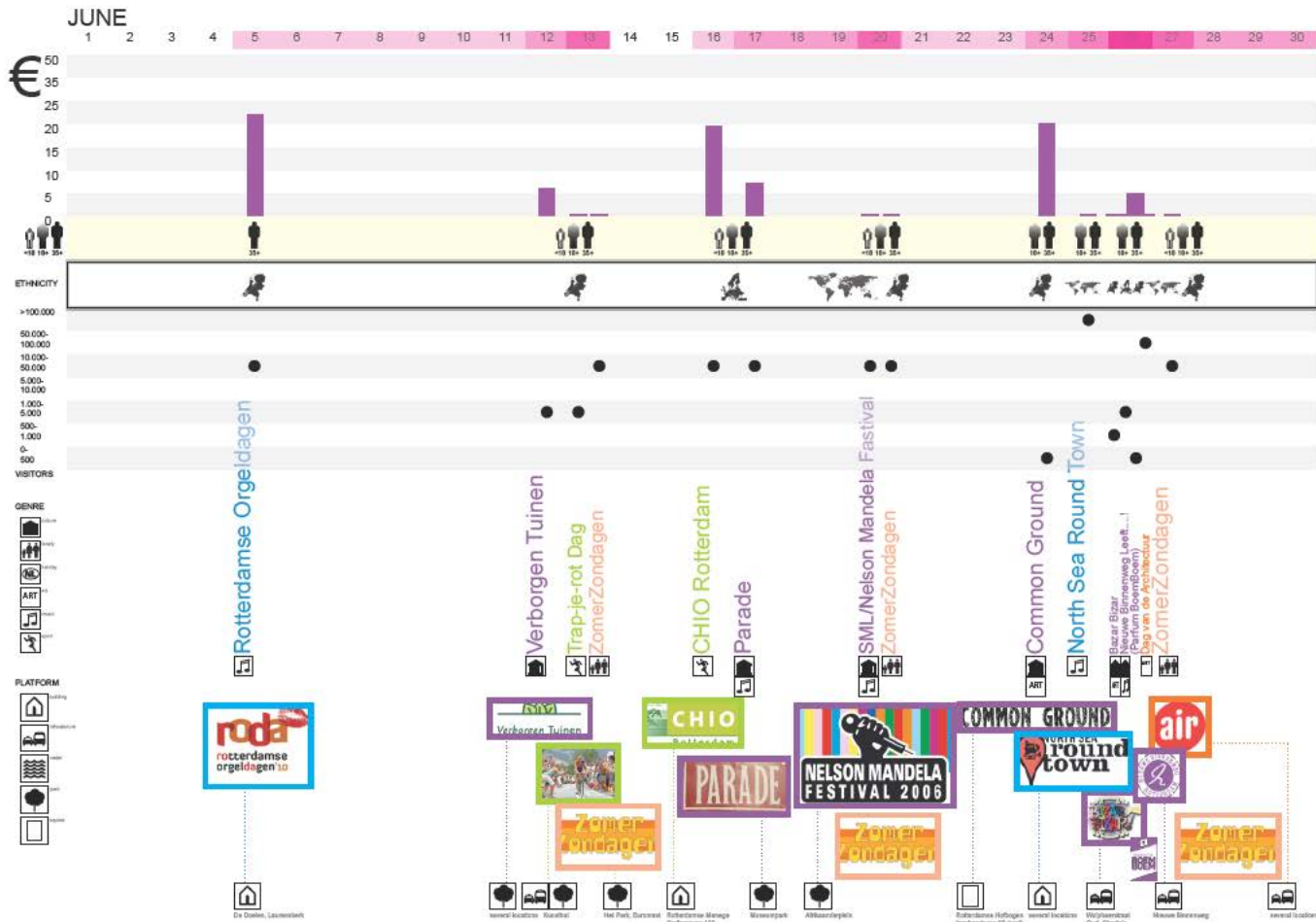


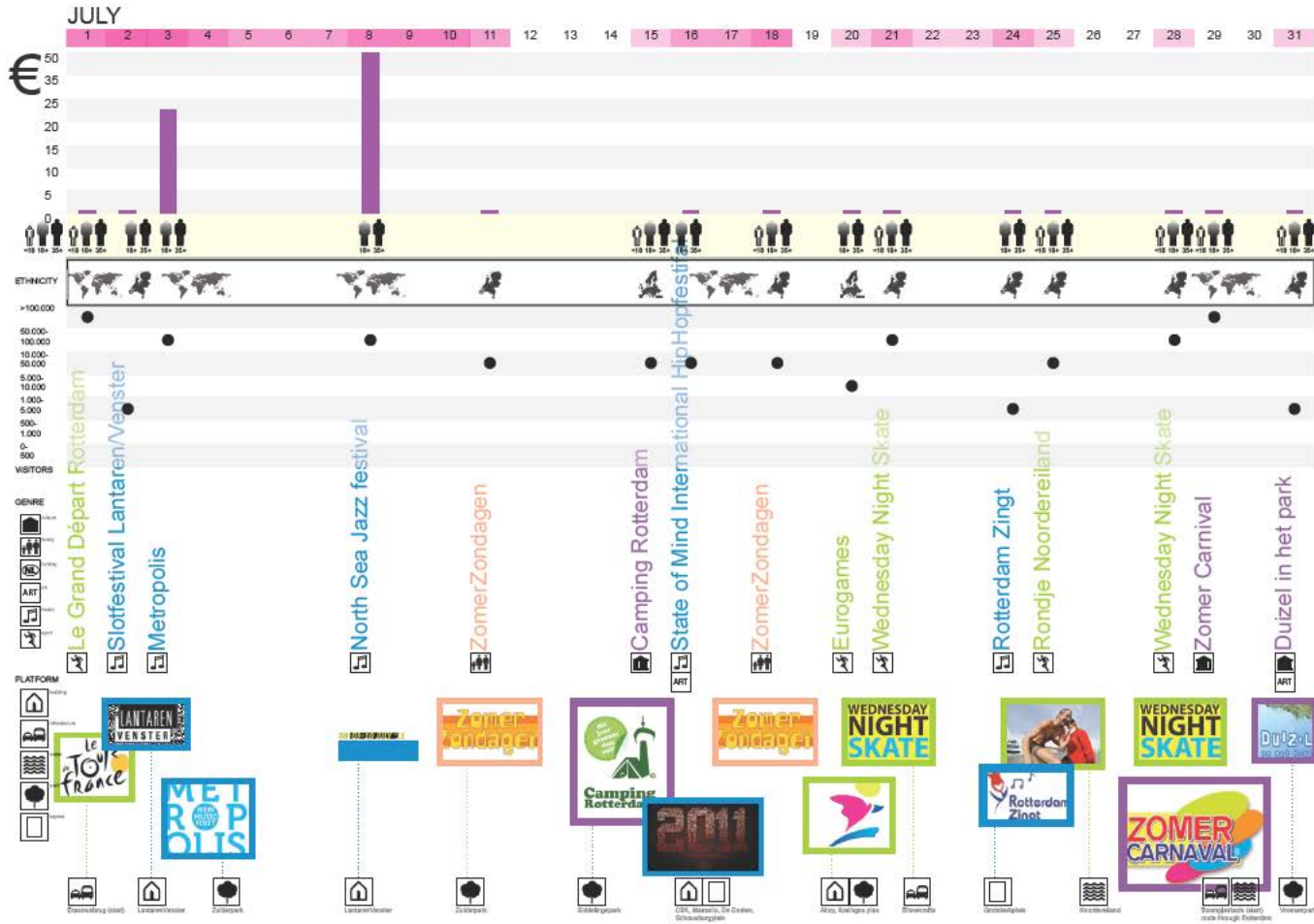




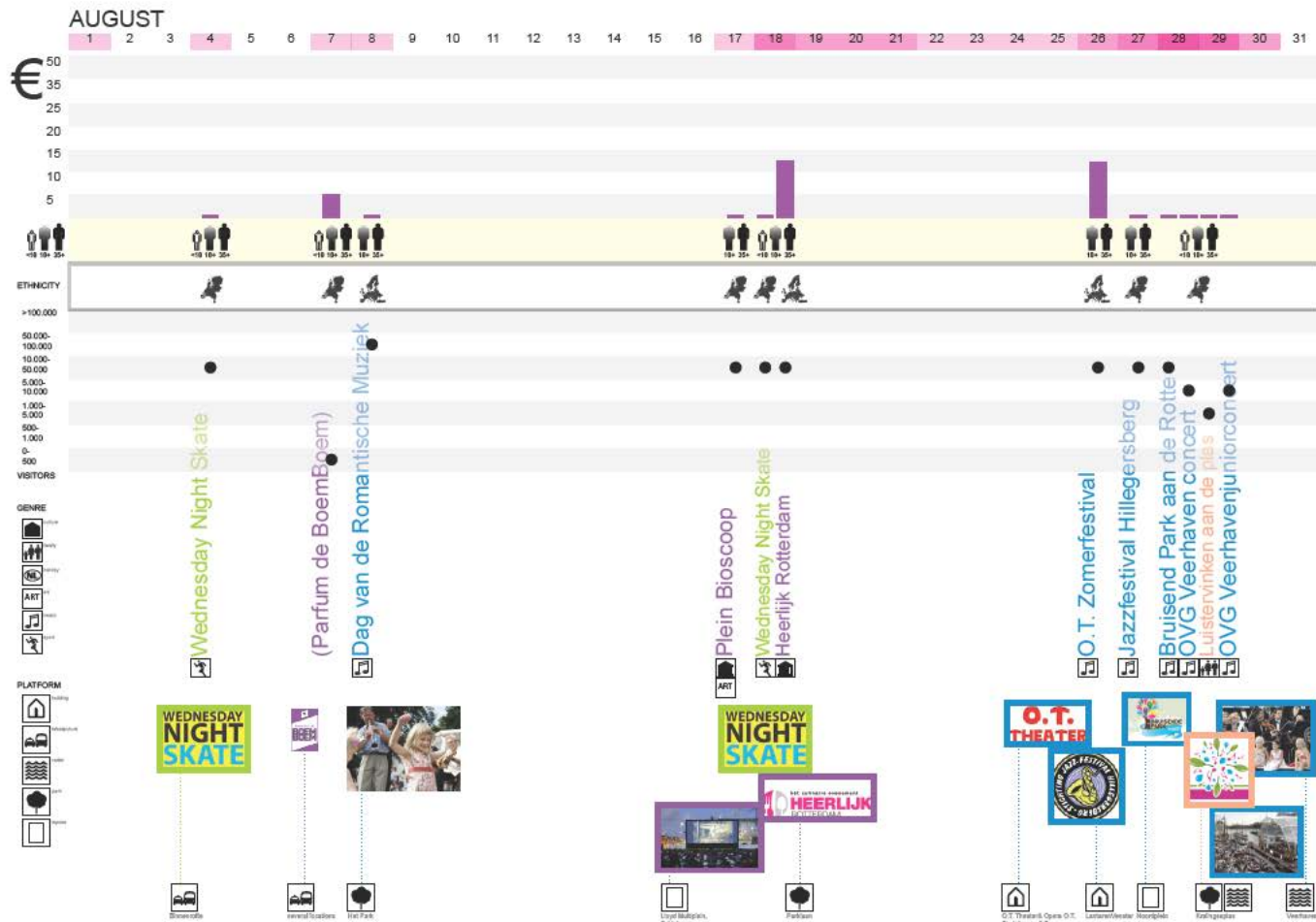


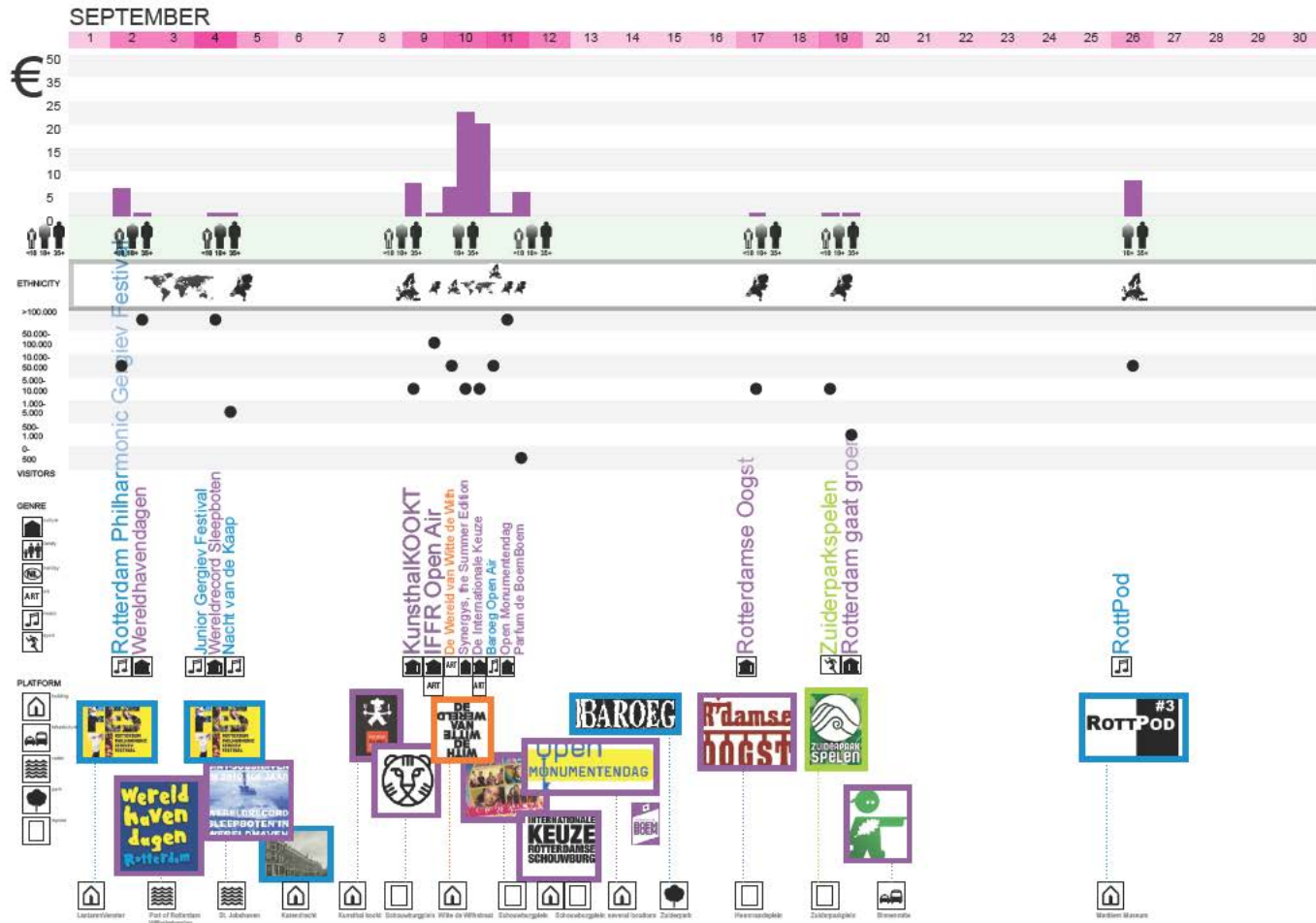


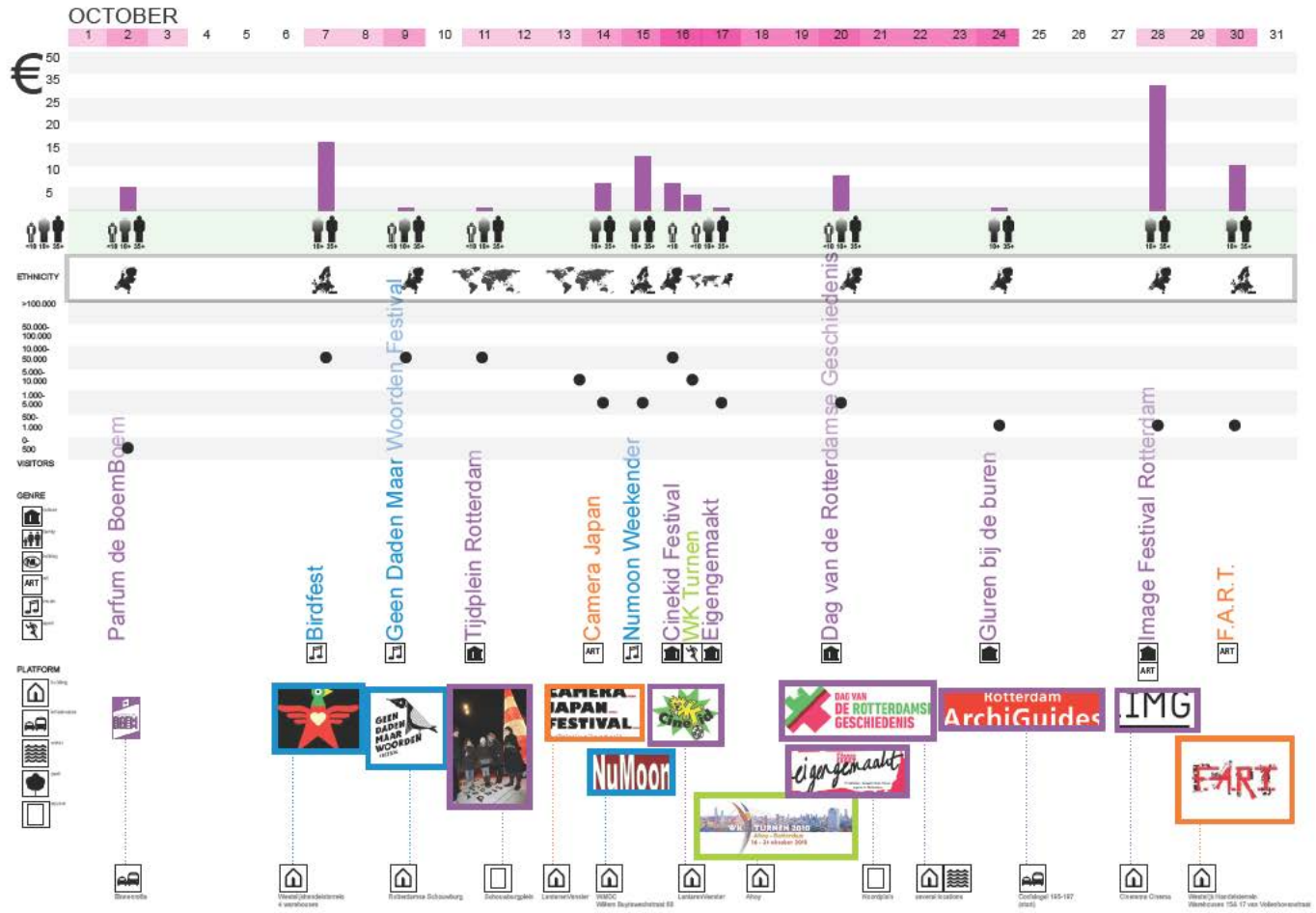


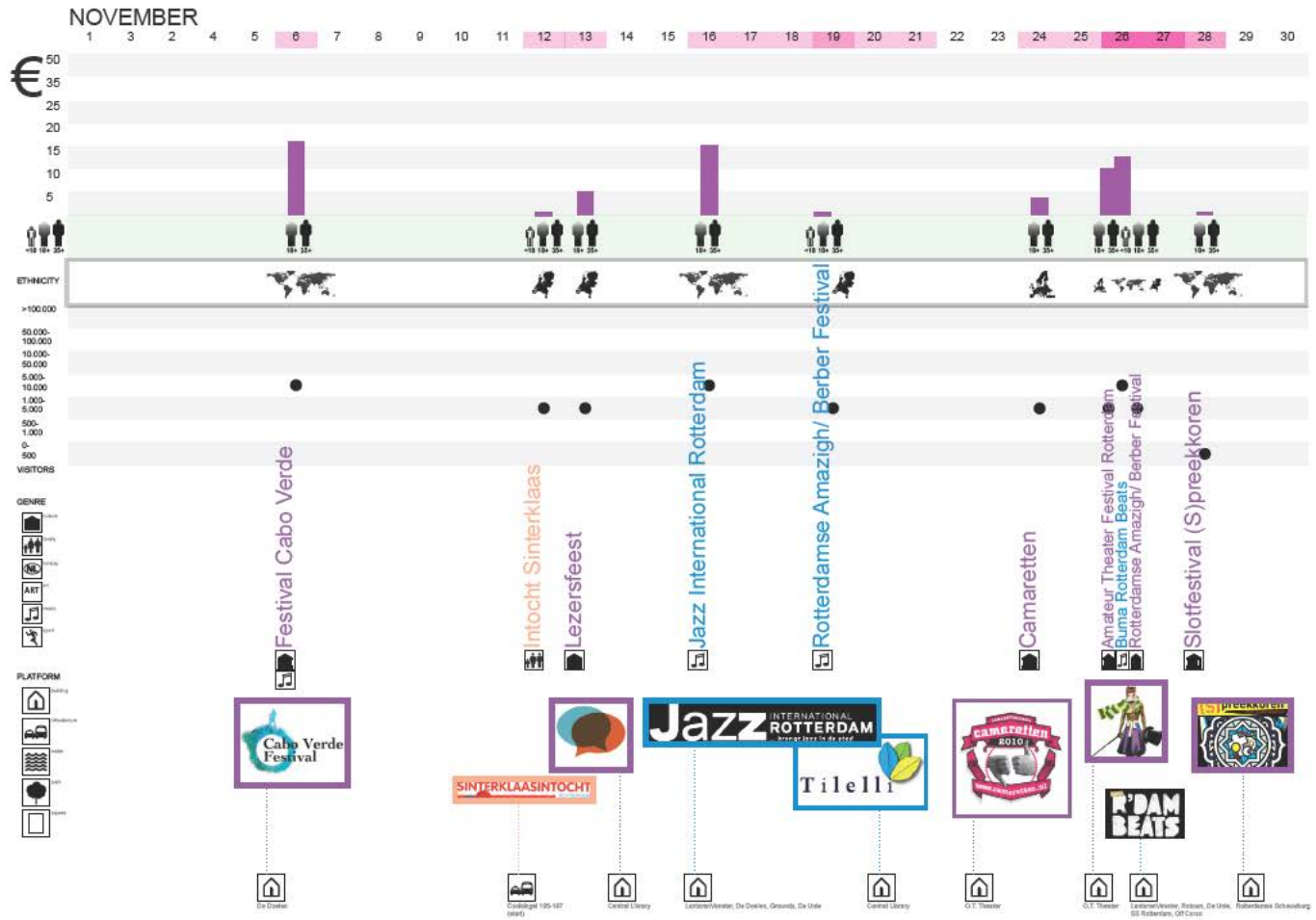














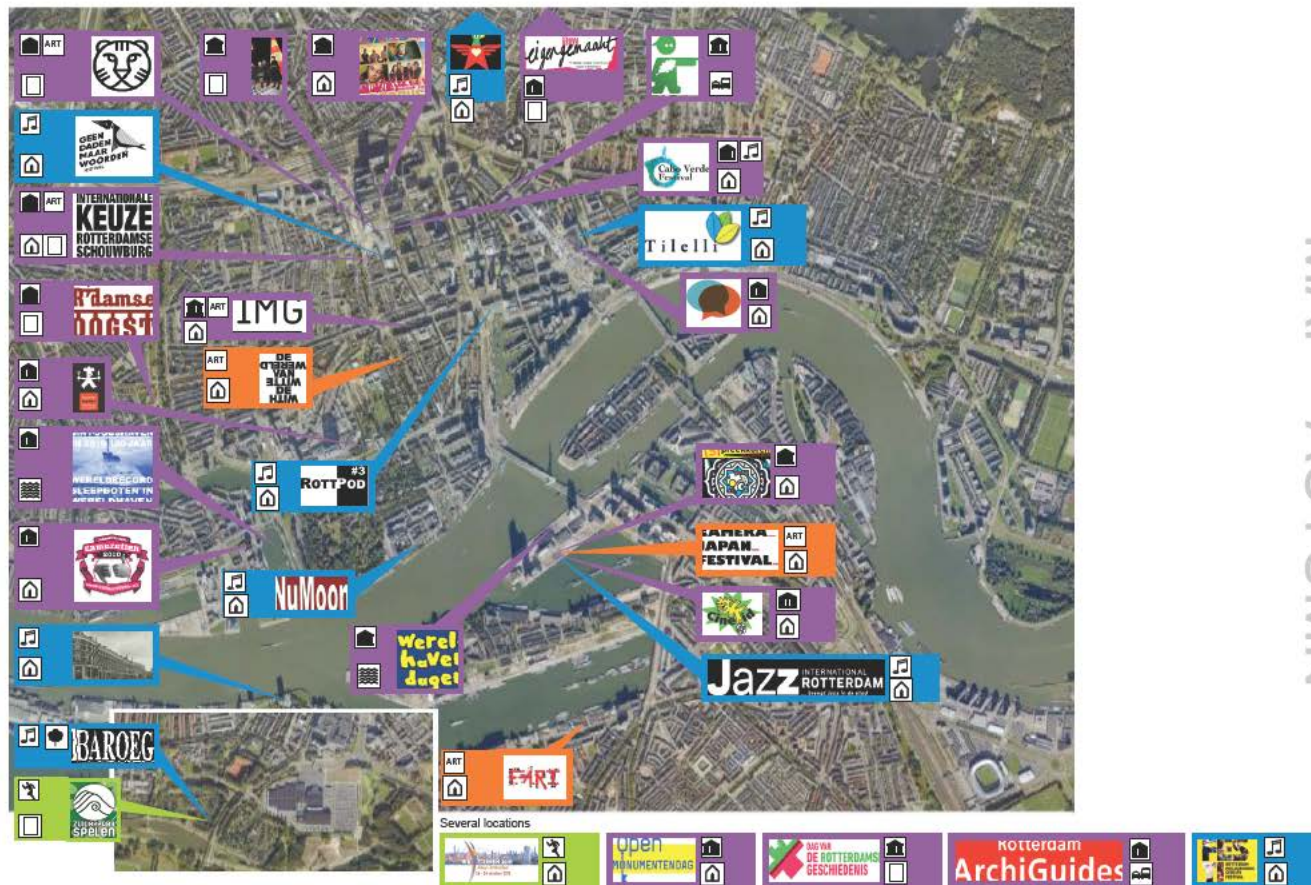
MAP - WINTER



MAP - SPRING



MAP - SUMMER





🏠 GENRE	PLATFORM				
SEASONS	🏠	🚗	📊	🌳	📺
winter	5	-	1	-	-
spring	5	-	1	2	2
summer	-	3	1	8	2
autumn	12	2	3	-	6

👥 GENRE	PLATFORM				
SEASONS	🏠	🚗	📊	🌳	📺
winter	1	-	-	-	1
spring	2	1	-	1	1
summer	-	-	1	4	-
autumn	-	1	-	-	-

🎮 GENRE	PLATFORM				
SEASONS	🏠	🚗	📊	🌳	📺
winter	-	1	1	-	-
spring	-	-	-	1	-
summer	-	-	-	-	-
autumn	-	-	-	-	-

🎨 GENRE	PLATFORM				
SEASONS	🏠	🚗	📊	🌳	📺
winter	6	-	3	-	-
spring	1	1	-	1	-
summer	2	1	-	1	3
autumn	5	-	-	-	1

👤 GENRE	PLATFORM				
SEASONS	🏠	🚗	📊	🌳	📺
winter	3	-	-	1	-
spring	1	1	-	-	-
summer	2	5	1	1	-
autumn	1	-	-	-	-

🎵 GENRE	PLATFORM				
SEASONS	🏠	🚗	📊	🌳	📺
winter	5	-	2	1	-
spring	4	-	1	1	2
summer	7	1	2	5	2
autumn	9	-	1	1	-

AMOUNT SEASON	GENRE						PLATFORM				
winter	9	2	1	9	3	6	13	3	4	3	1
spring	6	36	13	4	2	5	3	4	1	4	3
summer	11	611	-	6	9	16	9	9	4	13	5
autumn	22	1	-	6	2	12	24	4	3	1	7
total	48	12	2	25	16	39	54	19	12	21	16

## TIMELINE - AMOUNT GENRE - PLATFORM - GEOGRAPHICAL EVENTS MAP

### CONCLUSION RESEARCH

The conclusion can be divided in multiple aspects. We have focused on these specific aspects to further develop our project.

#### • Location

most of the big festivals are held in The Park next to the Euromast

Schouwburgplein is frequently used as central point and is the most diverse square

#### • Seasons

winter

area frequently used as platform what is probably to attract visitors

spring

there are fewer festivals, probably due to the amount of national holidays

summer

are frequently used as platform for big festivals and events like Summer Carnival and sport events like marathons

autumn

platforms, large amount of events and festivals mostly focused at Schouwburgplein and Wilhelminapier compared to other seasons

#### • Amount

largest amount of events and festivals during the year, mostly as platform

#### • Data

events focused on as platform with a large number of visitors by event and festival € € €



SML.

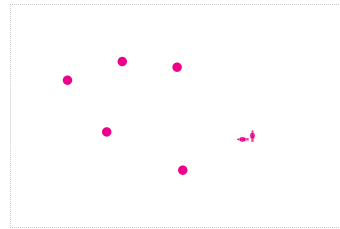
**Small, Medium, Large**

# Masterplan

Roxsen Schwengle | Petty Tang



S



M



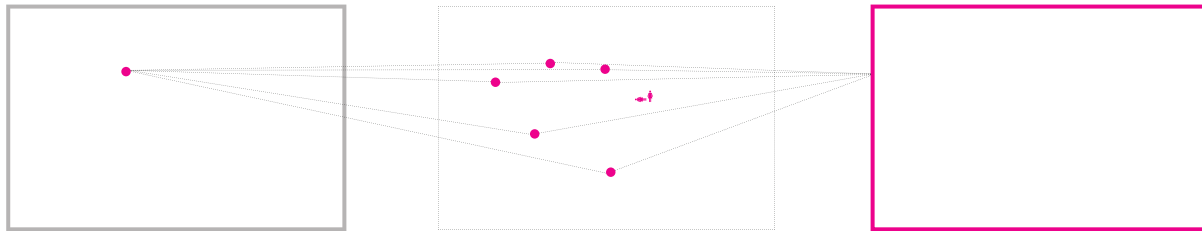
L

### CONCEPT SML

We translated the conclusion of the events research into a clear concept, **SML**. It stands for small, medium, large.

**L** is the city Rotterdam. It offers different platforms to support the events. The platforms are necessary to make those events successful. Rotterdam has different platforms spread all over the city.

**S** is the location where **SML** will be developed. **SML** translates the platforms in the city, **L**, into a smaller scale. **M** works as a network to connect **L** with **S** and vice versa.

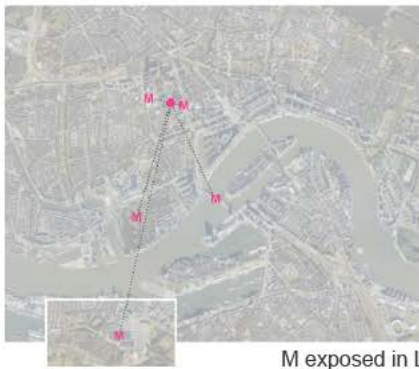


SML ..... 'confetti effect' ..... rotterdam

SML as a smaller version of L

M works as confetti spread through the city to expose and link.

L all the event platforms in Rotterdam.



M exposed in L

## URBAN SCENARIO

- Large, medium scale

The urban scenario is a strategy developed by the concept idea. Our aim is to add a value to the city in our urban scenario. We want to provide from the existing qualities that the the city has to offer and implement them into **SML**. The qualities are the platforms and the public realm. These are used to expose and link.



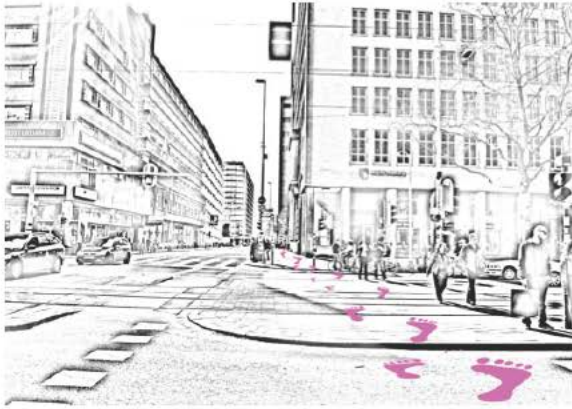
**M works as confetti to expose and link**

... is easily recognizable as a part of **SML**

... **SML** is the curator for the M

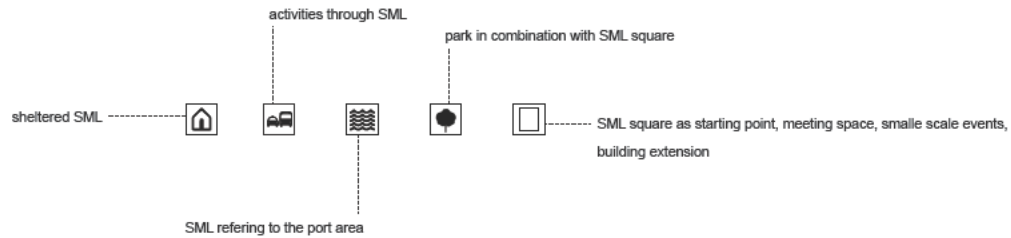
... is permanent or temporary

...*the sky is the limit!*





“translation platforms to **SML** scale”



**S**

**M**

**L**

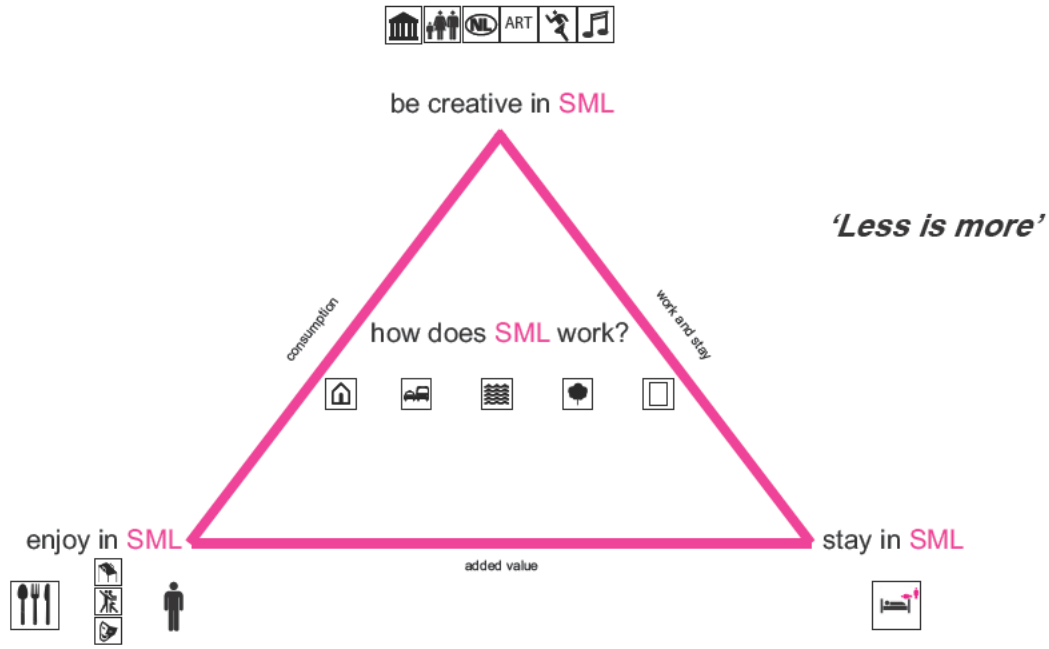
- Small scale

**S** is the translation of **L** into a smaller scale. In the urban scenario the medium and large scale is Rotterdam.

**SML** scales down the platforms from a large scale to a smaller scale. It is an approachable multicultural and multifunctional location for creatives.

**SML** has everything to do with art and culture. It is a place where creatives and those interested can meet, express, exchange and inspire their creativities.

Rotterdam = large scale **→** **SML** = small scale



### be creative in SML

SML offers flexible workspaces for a young diversity of creatives and providing different platforms to expose their work.

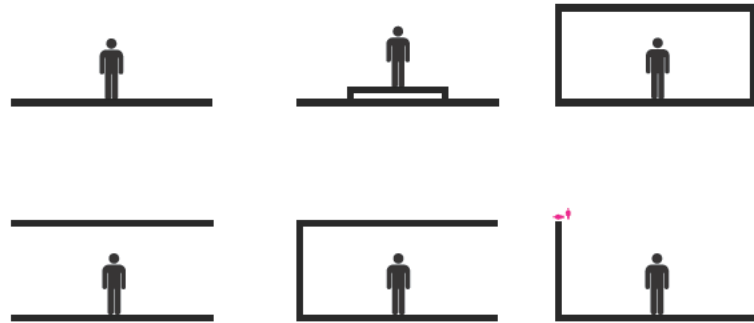
### enjoy in SML

Enjoy is the consumption of SML, everything has to do with what SML has to offer. Attractiveness and transparency is created by SML grand café. The transition from genre (be creative in SML) to function takes form in exhibitions, shopping and performances.

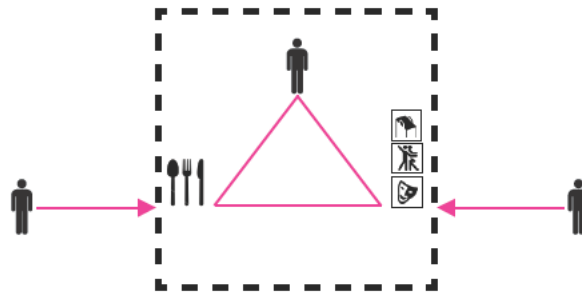
### stay in SML

SML hostel attracts a young diversity of creatives due to the activities. SML hostel is a starting point to the platforms.

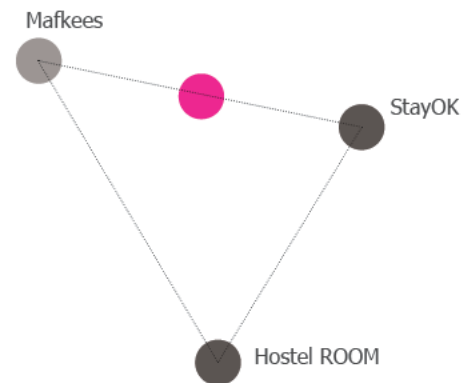
be creative in SML



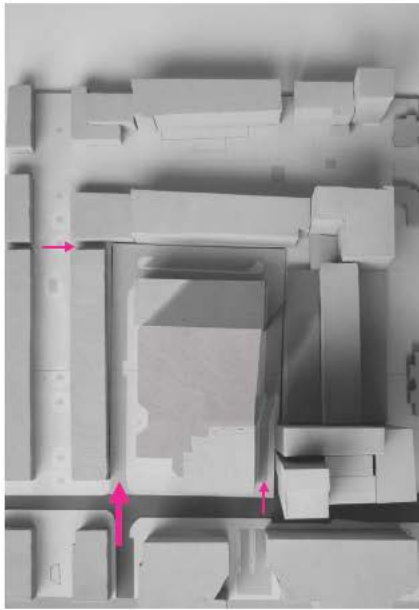
enjoy in SML



stay in SML

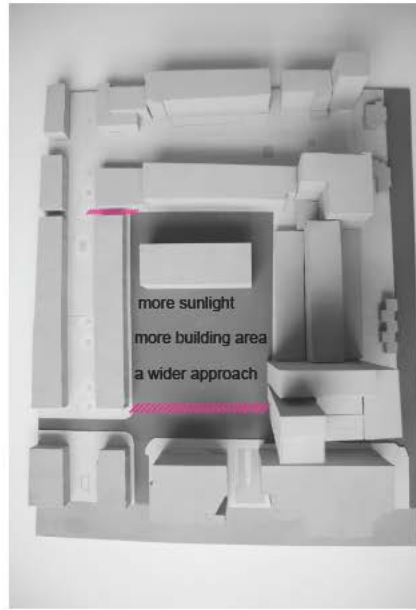






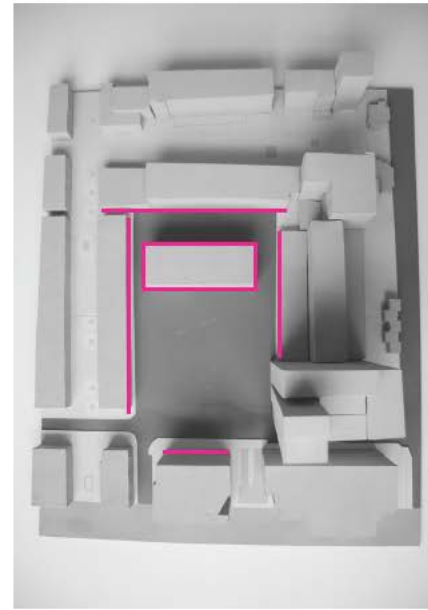
- Existing location

The existing location has three unattractive approaches. The buildings on the location have a high density compared to the Lijnbaan without any relation.



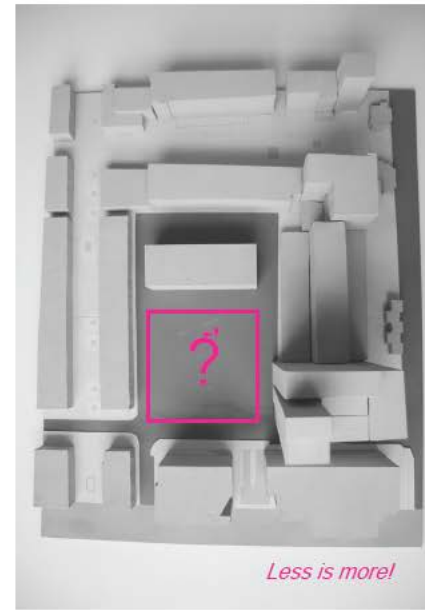
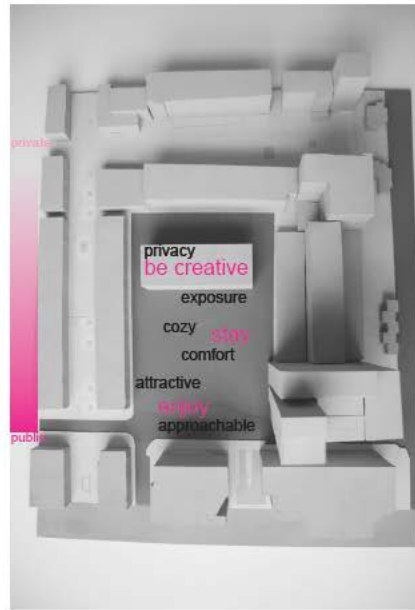
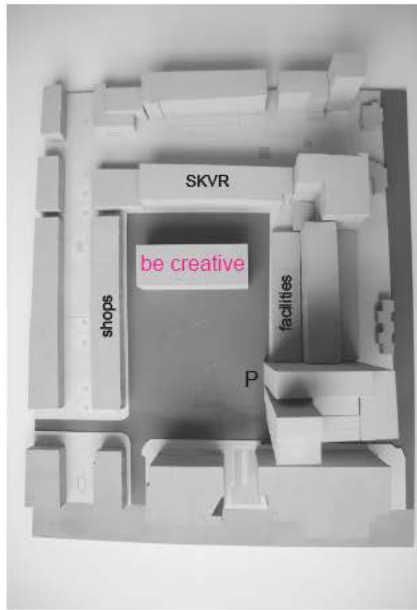
- Create a wider approach

We removed part of the building block to create more building area with a wider approach and more sunlight.



- Keep as much as possible

We treated the surrounding building blocks based on 'Less is more!'. Giving them new functions or a new facade to create a good relation to the new location.



- Give function to the existing

The proposed functions to the existing buildings complement each other. The existing SKVR building will house the 'be creative' SML. The SKVR will be relocated to the building on the Stadhuisplein, to keep them as a part of the SML creative atmosphere.

Another function is to offer facilities (printing, art shop, laundromat) to the users of SML. The shops on the Lijnbaan will be extended to the SML location. Parking and delivery will take place underground.

- SML program

The SML program is arranged in strips, with a gradient from public to private. 'Enjoy' in SML gives the location an approachable character.

- Create density

The SML program gives back the density with a relation to the surroundings. Adding a creative quality as a 'small creative city' and reviving the location. Keeping in mind 'Less is more!'



55x55x35m

create density with **SML** program



**SQUARE**

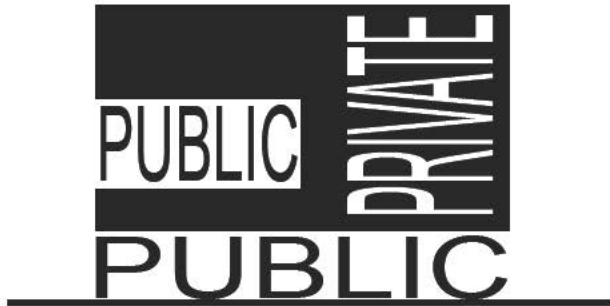
lift up the volume to create a square



hollow out the mass to create a second square



layered functions



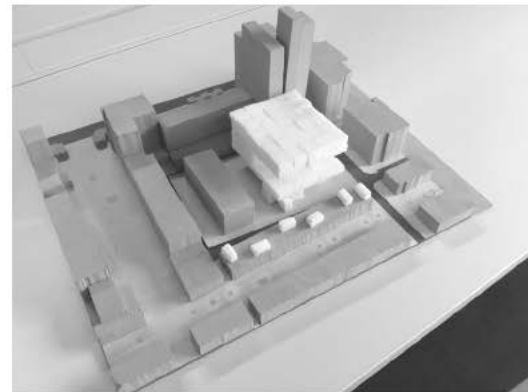
there is a clear distinction between public and private



escalators brings the people to the raised 'enjoy' square. From here on they can proceed to 'stay' and 'enjoy'

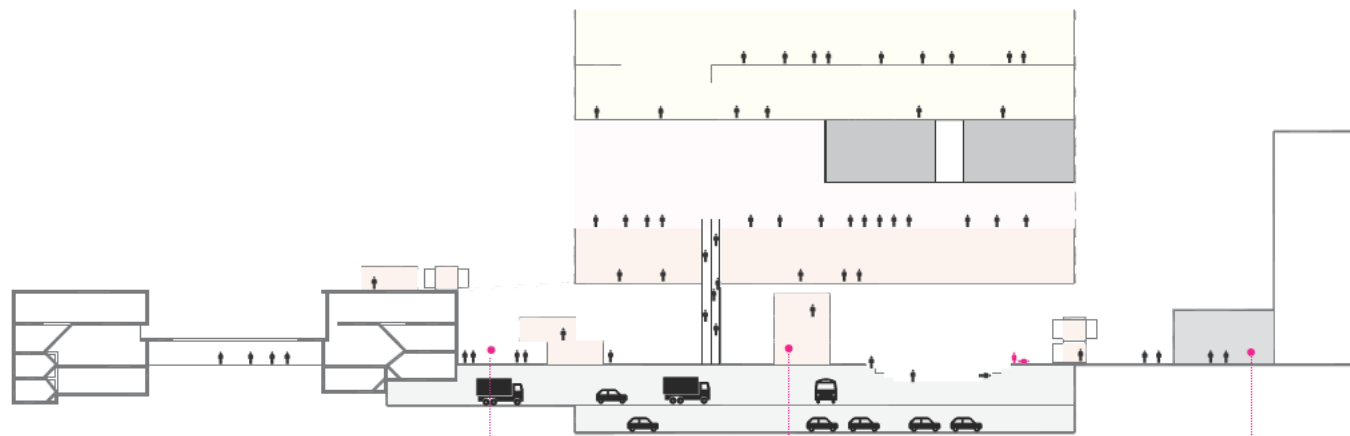


concentration focused on the two squares





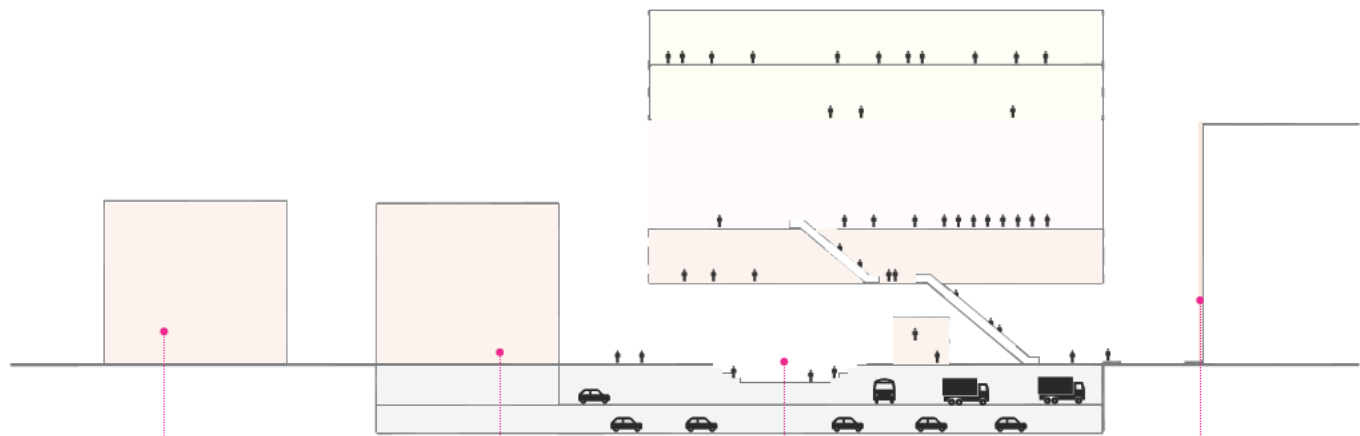
SML program in section with its relation to the existing surroundings



the Lijnbaan shops get an attractive facade in relation to SML location, delivery will take place underground.

sea containers as shop-atelier for the 'be creative'

main facilities are available for SML users



SKVR moves into the building facing the Stadhuisplein

the existing SKVR building will house the 'be creative' in-between the creative surroundings

the parking facade is used as M to expose by 'be creative'

the stage gives a clear function to the program combined with the 'be creative' program



# City image Rotterdam.

THE INFLUENCE OF EVENTS AND FESTIVALS & CITY MARKETING

Essay



## INTRODUCTION

Greg Richards and Julie Wilson write in 'The impact of Cultural Events on City Image: Rotterdam, Cultural Capital of Europe 2001' (2004): "Cities are increasingly using cultural events to improve their image, stimulate urban development and attract visitors and investment. As part of its event-led regeneration strategy, Rotterdam staged the 'Cultural Capital of Europe' in 2001."<sup>1</sup>

Ten years later, Rotterdam is still offering varieties of cultural events and festivals. However, to improve their city image, it has to do with more than cultural events alone. City marketing is another important aspect that contributes to the city image. City marketing points out four activities to improve the city image. By adding a continual stream of events and festivals to the city, the city becomes a stage. How do citizens and businesses act in a city like this?

This essay explains two aspects of city image and defines how those events and festivals are related to city marketing. Or in the other case do not need city marketing to support that aim at simply guarantee quality to local life.

## EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

Events and festivals have important roles for the city image by organizing them on national and international level. Rotterdam has many annual events and festivals that vary from season to season. Thereby the organization can fulfill the specific requirements of the city.

### *Motive*

For the analysis of the Public Realm Studio we organized Rotterdam events and festivals and take conclusions about the theme, cost, target, visitors, location and ethnicity related to the seasons. An important notice

is that popular events include the International Film Festival Rotterdam (winter), Museumnacht Rotterdam (spring), Summer Carnival Rotterdam (summer) and Wereldhavendagen (autumn) are equally spread during the year. In 'The impact of Cultural Events on City Image: Rotterdam, Cultural Capital of Europe 2001', (2004) Greg Richards and Julie Wilson clarify: "Events may also encourage people to visit a place more than once and, by hosting a series of different events, a city may profile itself in a number of potential markets."<sup>2</sup> Conclusion is that each festival responds to each specific purpose. By spreading them during the seasons, the city attracts visitors during the whole year. In this way the city feeds itself and shows the different city images during the seasons. The aim is to attract a variety of visitors from all over the world and stimulate cultural consumption among residents, while positioning Rotterdam as a cultural destination.

### *Multicultural society*

A characteristic event during the summer is the Summer Carnival Rotterdam. It is a melting pot of various cultural and musical genres where 23 different countries participate during the closing event. It represents the city as a multicultural society during two days. "In 1984 the Summer Carnival was founded by a group of Antillean on the model of the carnival in their homeland. Carnival is a celebration for the whole community, across all social layers, far from origin, color, education and position. It is a national opportunity to forget the worries, to de-stress, to forgive and strengthened friendships."<sup>3</sup> Because of its easy approachable character it makes this festival that popular. In 1988 a new board was created and the word 'Antillean' name removed from the foundation to attract a wider audience. It was necessary because Summer Carnival quickly proved to be more than one Antillean party. The current Summer Carnival attracts Surinamese, Cape Verdeans, Brazilians, Turks, Moroccans, Africans, Dutch and many more nationalities. In this way this event promotes itself to a wide audience because of the participation of a

variety of nationalities. Allen quotes festivals such like this in 'The impact of Cultural Events on City Image: Rotterdam, Cultural Capital of Europe 2001' (2004); "In such a climate, cultural events in particular have emerged as a means of improving the image of cities, adding life to city streets and giving citizens renewed pride in their home city. This enhancement of community pride and destination image following an event has been referred to as the 'halo effect' (Hall, 1992), the 'showcase' effect' (Fredline and Faulkner, 1998) and the 'feel-good effect' (Allen et al., 2002.)"

#### *Halo, showcase and the feel-good effect*

All understandings are exactly what the Summer Carnival Rotterdam aim for. The 'halo effect' can be explained as a phenomenon with a certain quality what suggest to more qualities. The Summer Carnival is known as an international annual event for the whole community and because of its 27th edition this year, it suggests that this event already became part of the city and accepted by the city since Rotterdam is known as a multicultural city. The Summer Carnival works easily with the showcase effect where the main purpose is to make a city better. During this two-day event the city becomes a stage to expose the different layers of the society. It attracts about 900.000 visitors yearly from all over the world. The feel-good effect stands for the social aspect of the city. It brings local and non-locals together in a non-forced way. Each year a certain group of organizers and sponsors come together to organize this big event. And because streets are used as a platform for the parade, retailers and residents in this route will automatically be part of this event. By adding events and festivals to a city it promotes the city itself. For the Summer Carnival it shows the multicultural society of Rotterdam in a positive way.

### **CITY MARKETING**

City image has different aspects to define. Events and festivals mentioned in the previous chapter is the most obvious and is used as starting point to explain

how it influences the city image. Focusing on another aspects, city marketing has an important role for Rotterdam. The city offers unique developments in the last couple of years and upcoming years.

All cities have their own way of city marketing to promote their city and improve their city image. Cities therefore need to find new ways of distinguishing themselves from their competitors. 'The impact of Cultural Events on City Image: Rotterdam, Cultural Capital of Europe 2001' (2004) includes Paddison's (1993) quote about city marketing: "City marketing is often directed at the delivery of private capital to support infrastructural developments. For example, signature buildings frequently feature in urban strategies to develop an image or 'brand' and create competitive advantage, often at great financial cost."<sup>5</sup> The development of Rotterdam central district and the Wilhelminapier illustrates Paddisons' explanation about city marketing initially.

#### *City marketing= four activities*

In 'Marketing places Europe' (1999), Kotler supports Paddison's quote about the infrastructural development in a city: "City marketing is an instrument for the development for identity and image"<sup>6</sup>. The new station and the development at the Wilhelminapier create the identity and image of Rotterdam. Kotler explains four activities for the development of identity and image in a city.

1. The city needs a good infrastructure  
Rotterdam central district with its new station is very important in this city marketing issue. This is the first activity what Kotler mentioned in his approaches. A good infrastructure is essential to offer efficient and accessible products and services for locals and

non-locals. A high level of facilities and new attractions and events for new activities maintain public support and to attract new investors. Beside this the Wilhelminapier also needs to be easily accessible with public transportation because this part of the city has an important role for the city image and identity of Rotterdam. It offers a wide scale of services for a wide public.

#### *Central Station*

The main purpose of the new central station is a contribution to the Randstad and to integrate the city into the European network. Surrounded by a mix of multinationals, local businesses and housing, this part of the city becomes a unique city entrance. With its High Speed Railway connection, Rotterdam Airport and the Port of Rotterdam close by, it results in a top location for international business service offices. Wilhelminapier gets a strong connection with this central district. As mentioned in Paddison's (1993) quote: "For example, signature buildings frequently feature in urban strategies..." This aspect refers to how the central district is being related to the Wilhelminapier. Signature buildings will be built in the upcoming years including high-rise buildings with an international allure.

#### *Five assignments*

To obtain the relation between the central district and the Wilhelminapier there are five assignments according to the municipality of Rotterdam, used in the lecture by Hans van Dijk about 'Binnenstad Rotterdam'. The present situation is underachievement and the inner city is too far away from the water. There is not enough use of the potential of the waterfront. The five assignments are:

1. Main streets have to go to the river,
2. A clear water-program
3. A clear land-program
4. Designing the public space
5. Promotion, marketing and city events

All assignments have an important role for the city image because in most of the cases it works on a social level. The land-program focuses on the existing and new public-program along the axis. The program is to attract people and is indicated as 'mixone', what offers services and facilities, infrastructure, showcase, meeting points and recreation. The studio research about events and festivals in Rotterdam results in an interesting conclusion for the last assignment, marketing and city events. Rotterdam events and festivals are held in different parts of the city where the Wilhelminapier is used in different occasions for mainly international ones. This is a certain way for mapping the waterfront. The Wilhelminapier developed into a favored location with endless possibilities with its signature buildings. This part of the city, developed into an image. National and international names includes Foster+Partners, Alvaro Siza, Renzo Piano, Mecanoo and OMA will realize their buildings.

#### 2. Strong and attractive positioning and image

The second activity of city marketing is developing a strong and attractive positioning and image for the city, starting with choosing a number of unique and characteristics of the city what enlarge the quality of the city. By positioning the city in this way a certain amount of ambitions can be realized. The waterfront is characteristic where the water offers added value everywhere. By connecting this area to the new development of the central district it leads to this part of the city itself. However, there are five assignments mentioned above where the waterfront has to become part of the city, creates a pleasant route through the city with its new program and activities.

#### 3. Promotion and communication

Promotion and communication is to achieve identity and image and most important is to get a better city image. The city promotes itself by telling 'who' the city is and 'what' the city has to offer. This means promoting characteristics for visitors, beware of the distinctive advantages. Events and festivals are



initially used to attract visitors during the seasons, their international allure and multicultural society.

#### 4. Involve citizens and businesses

Citizens and businesses are iconic for the city and help to determine the identity and image. It is therefore important that they convey the positive feeling for the city to the new target groups.

### CITY AS STAGE FOR EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

There are different platforms to make events and festivals happen and unique. This is the main conclusion of the studio research about Rotterdam events and festivals. The five platforms, building, infrastructure, water, park and square can be seen as the 'stages' in the city. In 'The impact of Cultural Events on City Image: Rotterdam, Cultural Capital of Europe 2001' Harvey, geographer and social theorist, (1991) writes about this: "Cities and their hinterlands have become stages for a continual stream of events..."<sup>8</sup> These stages are public spaces for human and social interaction.

- *Producers and consumers*

In the previous chapter the four activities are explained for city marketing according to Kotler approaches. The activity that will be elaborated in this chapter is; involve citizens and businesses into city marketing since they are iconic for the city and help to determine the identity and image to the city. On the one hand they are the spectators in the city and on the other hand the actors. In 'The practice of everyday life' (2005) Michel de Certeau, a French scientist, called them as the 'producers' and 'consumers' in the city: "Certeau links 'strategies' with institutions and structures of power who are the 'producers', while individuals are 'consumers' acting in environments defined by strategies by using tactics."<sup>9</sup> The people who actually live in the city named as the tacticians, who constantly resist and undo this imposed order

from the producers. By moving through the city and using the different stages these tacticians transforms, displacing and improvisationalize the stages in different ways. Everyday life changes constantly because it is repetitive but unconscious.

Adding events and festivals to the city it gives positive influences for the city as well for the producers and consumers. At this certain time where cities try to promote their city it is flooding by an amount of events and festivals during the whole year. The positive effect of them to citizens has to deal with the liquid life where we are living in according to Baumann, a Polish sociologist and philosopher. He writes in 'Liquid life' (2005): "'Liquid life' and 'liquid modernity' are intimately connected. 'Liquid life' is a kind of life that tends to be lived in a liquid modern society. 'Liquid modern' society in which the conditions under which it members act change faster than it takes the ways of acting to consolidate into habits and routines. Liquidity of life and that of society feed and reinvigorate each other. Liquid life, just like liquid modern society, cannot keep its shape or stay on course for long."<sup>10</sup> As mentioned before, the city consist stages where different events happen during the seasons. Supported by the studio research a stage is used for just a very short time and in most of the cases for one or two days. This supports Baumann's quote where he explains a liquid life in a liquid modernity. People are not able to shape the city as well the stages into a certain way because all as stages changing constantly during different uses. People are not able to think about what actually happen in their city. For citizens this way of life depends on their tactics according to Michel de Certeau.

## CITY MARKETING VS. DAILY LIFE

Events and festivals can be distinguished in those who are linked to city marketing those who aim at simply guarantee quality to the daily life of Rotterdam. Events and festivals on international level need city marketing to support them while national events do not necessarily need to make it successful and add a better city image to visitors because they mainly focus on the local people.

- *City marketing*

As case study, The International Film Festival shows how it needs city marketing to support according to Kotler four activities.

1. The city needs a good infrastructure

Visitors from all over the world will visit the city during twelve days. It needs a good infrastructure to get the people to the city and move people through the city. It is remarkable that a big event such as this is held during winter. About twenty to thirty locations will be used to expose and to promote the city during the winter. In this way the city shows its city image during this season.

2. Strong and attractive positioning and image

The second aspect refers to the waterfront of Rotterdam. All locations for this festival are located in the city center, mainly around Schouwburgplein pointing out the platforms for this specific festival as De Doelen, Pathé and Rotterdamse Schouwburg. During these days one music program is added in LantarenVenster at the Wilhelminapier every night. In this way Rotterdam's unique waterfront is shown to visitors.

3. Promotion and communication

The organization of this festival exists participants from all over the world. The international participants promote it to a wide public and the festival promotes itself in their countries.

4. Involve citizens and businesses

In this case a citizen react on the visitors in an indirect way, using their 'tactics' in how the city works. During these days visitors will move through the city during day and night.

- *Daily life*

City marketing is not always necessary to support events and festivals. Those who focus on the local people in the city do not need the same quality as for international events. National events just need one platform to support compared to international ones that need one or two platforms on several locations to succeed. To illustrate, Rotterdam Museumnacht uses two platforms: (square) Schouwburgplein as starting point for the event and (buildings) several locations are used for all activities.

In one case the festival used one of the city marketing strategies to promote the city mapping the waterfront. But during the last edition it was held on another platform that connects better to the purpose of the festival. Bevrijdingsfestival was held at the Parklaan this year, a unique location for this festival because of its cozy surrounding. In the previous years it was held on the north side of the Erasmusbrug. This location has totally another atmosphere compared to a park. This national festival does not necessary need to show the waterfront to their mainly local visitors. A park as stage reflects better to the purpose of this festival. During the day it offers activities for the whole family.

## CONCLUSION

Events and festivals are necessarily needed to promote the city image of Rotterdam. Since the city staged as the 'Cultural Capital of Europe' in 2001 the city tries to preserve this character. This is due to the developments of Rotterdam central district and the waterfront. This historical part of Rotterdam developed into a new attractive area for the city that features Rotterdam city image. The waterfront is used more and more for international events and festivals.

Mapping the waterfront is one of the activities in the city marketing strategy. It is a clear strategy to contribute to the city image. This city offers unique qualities to stand out from other cities with its waterfront. The city marketing strategy focuses only on certain parts of the city and attracts particularly non-local visitors. A distinction can be made between local and non-local visitors. This explains that events and festivals supported by city marketing focus on international visitors and the ones that do not need city marketing and is adding quality to local life without specific strategies. The purpose of these events and festivals is to show different qualities of the city to their citizens. Unfortunately some characteristic platforms moved to new platforms at the Wilhelminapier what improve the city marketing strategy. For instance Lantaren Venster. This theater established in 1949 lost its historical character. The new and old locations are far away from each other and have two different atmospheres. Another theater, the new and old Luxor theater illustrates this aspect. The city image of Rotterdam needs to keep attention of the historical aspects when featuring their characteristic and unique waterfront.

## APPENDICES

### Footnotes

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# Languages of the Public Domain.

## Essay

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## INTRODUCTION

For ages architects and urban planners have been designing different stages for the public spaces. From the bourgeois period with the wide boulevards, to the modern city where cars seem to have taken over the public streets. The fact is that planners and architects try to solve a problem by planning and designing (that is what they do) which doesn't always workout as they have anticipated. This is when the newly designed public spaces are left deserted and unused. But why doesn't this workout all of the time? And what hinders the development of the public domain?

There have been multiple studies on this topic, Hajer and Reijndorp concluded after an assessment in their report 'In Search of New public domain': 'Perhaps it is not parochialization that hinders the development of public domain, but in fact an overwrought idea of the public space as a neutral meeting place for all social groups regardless of class, ethnicity or lifestyle'. What if this hypothesis is true? What if the uses of public spaces have really been pushed to speak the universal language? Instead of accepting that there may be different types of public spaces necessary, speaking different languages. Just like there are different kinds of people in a society, there are different types of public spaces.

The use of a public space is a crucial point in what makes a city center a well functioning and successful city center. City centers of today require great attention to maintaining and or gain the acknowledgement of a well functioning city center. The city must converse with the people; some public spaces speak the universal language while the others only speak only two.

Public spaces are in fact utterly important for the city and the society. It's where people can express themselves and observe other's expressing

themselves. Juhani Pallasmaa wrote in his article 'Inhabiting Space and time- the Loss and Recovery of Public Space' that "public space is a space for human and social interaction, a rich spatial instrument to see and to be seen, to participate and to withdraw, and to be the actor or the spectator in the theatre of social interaction at one's will." If architecture can contribute by setting the stage as a positive stimulus for the social cohesion, than architects can have some kind of big influence and responsibility in the social development of a society. But architecture is only one factor in this complex formula to achieve a well functioning public domain.

In this hypothesis will be discussed the important role of understanding the language quality of public spaces, by analyzing the theatre of social interaction. There are different aspects that play an important role when analyzing a public space. Some of these aspects are economical, political, historical, location, weather, social and architectural. No public space is alike, so every public space has a specific formula. All of the different aspects have to be taken into consideration when analyzing public spaces. In this hypothesis will be discussed two important aspects that play an important role being: the social aspect and the architectural aspect. For the social aspect there will be an analysis of the so-called 'urbanites' (people who use the city) as the 'actors and spectators'. And for the architectural aspect there will be an analysis of the public spaces as the 'The stages'. These two aspects play's an important role in understanding the language quality of the public space in the city. Therefore will this be a contribution help to understanding what makes a well functioning public domain.

## THE URBANITES

To understand the language of the use of public spaces, there will be a brief orientation on the users and how they are using the public spaces: the social language. The users of the city are the actors and spectators or



the so-called urbanites. The urbanites use the city and make part of this act of social interaction. Cities need urbanites to function, the urbanites are what keep the city going, without the spectators or the actors the play can't go on. If we take the city of Rotterdam for example, we can say that Rotterdam is the theatre, the buildings and public spaces are the stages and the urbanites are the actors and spectators.

#### Rotterdam's urbanites

Rotterdam is a moderate big city. Not only is Rotterdam one of the biggest cities of the Netherlands, but it's also one of the most multi-cultural cities of the Netherlands. There are 592.939 people living in Rotterdam, consisting of approximately 55% Dutch, 9% Surinam, 8% Turkish, 6% Moroccan, 3% Antillean and Aruban, 3% South European, and the rest of other non-industrialized nations. This means that almost half of Rotterdam's population has another background which makes Rotterdam a multiethnic city. Being a multiethnic society has a big influence in the community and social cohesion of a city; it has its qualities and lesser qualities. But of course not only the people living in Rotterdam use the city, there are big numbers of people coming from elsewhere, such as people who work in the city, people who are visiting the city, e.g., for shopping or attending events and festivals, students and tourist. People can apparently still be urbanites while not necessarily residing the city. All of them contribute in making the city what it is, they all experience the city, they all consume and make the city come to life.

#### Journey and destination

Being such a dynamic multicultural city most of the time means that there are people with different classes, lifestyles and interests. All of them are using the city in their own way. They create patterns of their visits in the city and most of the time they

follow this same pattern. This also means that they tend to appear at some places in the city with more frequency than other places. People who are living in the city use the city differently than people visiting the city. For example someone who lives in the center of Rotterdam takes a specific route to go buy his or her groceries and most of the time using the shorter route. Someone who takes his or her dog walking, takes a completely other route, most of the time going to a park or somewhere where the dog can run more freely. For someone who is visiting the city center of Rotterdam for the purpose of shopping or leisure, takes the more pleasurable route like the Lijnbaan. So whatever the purpose is for visiting or using the city whether it's shopping, going to school or work or attending festivals there are different routes people take and different ways that people use the city. This is what makes a city multilingual, more dynamic and more divers. The more the city has to offer, the more people visit, the more dynamic it is and the more dynamic a city is, the more successful it is. It's like a chain reaction, the one affects the other.

#### Mobility

How people move in the city is of course another factor in the complex formula for the social cohesion. It's important to keep in mind that the more mobile the people are, the easier it is to move throughout the city, this also has an influence on how dynamic the city is. Transportation whether it is by foot, biking, driving a car, using the public transportation or some other kind of mobilization mode they all make a difference in how the people move throughout the city and how the opportunity presents itself for people to have a possible moment of interaction with each other.

#### Seasons

The city transforms throughout the different seasons and the weather has a relative influence on how urbanites use the city and the public spaces. People react to the weather and the temperature and choose to stay warm and dry. For example during the summer

or a nice spring day they sit on terraces and try to be outside as much as possible, the result for the city is that the outside public spaces are being used more. During the winter they prefer to stay inside where the temperature is more regulated, which for the city has the result that the buildings are being used more. If it's raining they move as fast as possible to avoid getting wet but if the sun is shining they slow down and try to catch the warm sun rays. Not only the use of the city is different but the urbanites behave differently. The different seasons and the weather have a direct influence on the people's behaviors and how the public spaces are being used.

#### 'Bio-cultural beings'

As already mentioned above the urbanites of Rotterdam are very diverse, multicultural and with different interests. This means that it's a play with a wide range of actors and spectators who are using the city in different ways. All of the urbanites have their specific role in the city. Their role contributes to the complete play of the city center. But their act isn't completely scripted and predetermined. The final act of the urbanites is a reaction to the conditions that are presented to them, following the specific purpose for using the city. Juliani Pallasma wrote in his article 'Inhabiting Space and time- the Loss and Recovery of Public Space' that "we are bio-cultural and historical beings. Our basic survival and existential reactions are still hidden in our genes and the countless layers of our collective memory." This means that human behavior is caused unconsciously; it's in our genes and memories and cannot be erased or manipulated, but the basic survival reaction is embedded in our genes. So every human being behaves differently in certain situations because of their own memory and own recollections.

The reaction of a human being to certain spaces and conditions is a result of the knowledge they have gained throughout their journey in life. Humans can also be defined as 'spatial objects' as they react to

spatial situations. As Marianne Krogh Jensen Mag. Art, PhD wrote in her article 'Space unfolded-Space as Movement, Action and creation' in the book 'Mind your behavior', that "man could be defined as a contradictory, open and situated entity, an aggregate of perception, cognition, memories, experiences, feelings and much more. Someone who is always defining and redefining himself in accordance with the surrounding space". This human characteristic which is individually constructed should not be neglected, it should be celebrated. Richard Sennett wrote in his book 'The Design and Social life of Cities' that: "The only thing we have in common is perhaps the fact that we are different". So it's important to understand this inevitable social aspect and the way public domains are being used. Like stated before: While the use of a public domain speaks the universal language, the use of other public domains speak only one or two and this has an immediate impact on the meaning of a space.

#### The social language of the public space

The different languages of space use can transform the meaning of a public space. This is why it's important to understand that the quality of a public space is a result of the different languages of space use, how the urbanites use the space and what meaning they give to the space. Also important is how well these people with different backgrounds and classes and with different purposes for using the city, interact with each other. The interaction between people lies mainly on a physiological level such as how well integrated and how flexible and adaptable people are to accept their co-urbanites and live in a harmonious coexistence. This is truly important for the social cohesion of the society and for a healthy and well balanced city. The next question is then: Can architecture have an influence on this play of social interaction? If it does, then the architectural language of a public space has an influence in this play of social interaction and by doing so giving a meaning to a public space.

## THE STAGES

The previous chapter is about the social aspect of the public domain. It has been stated that the urbanites of Rotterdam are real diverse, multicultural, with different interest and that they all use the city in their own way. The following will be an analysis of the architectural aspect of the public domain. The architectural aspect or the architectural language of a public space is the stage where the play of social interaction is taking place in the city. The different stages in the city are the different public spaces and buildings where people can see and be seen by others. Where they can encounter each other and have the possibility to interact with each other. Architecture creates the stage that makes the play of social interaction possible.

### Architectural language

The design of the stages or the architecture of the public spaces provides different situations to which people can subsequently have different reactions to. As already mentioned above, humans are 'spatial objects', unconsciously they are constantly repositioning themselves and reacting to a space. This is what we call the architectural language of the public spaces. All of the different public spaces have a different architectural language to which people can relate to. This also means that certain urbanites can have a better affinity to certain kinds of public spaces than others.

According to Nicola Marzot to define the architectural language of a public space the language has to be analyzed and broken down into 4 different categories or subfields which are the syntax or the logic of space, the pragma or condition of space use, the expression or the material quality of the space and the semantic or the meaning of the space. These 4 different categories are to architecture as linguistic is to language. And these 4 categories define the quality of a public space. It's a complex formula that is different for every situation.

Public domain = good communication

When urbanites become acquainted with a public space, visit it frequently and create memories, when it becomes a preferred destination or the preferred route to the destination and most importantly when they have a relation to a public space and give a meaning to a public space, then it becomes a 'public domain'. A public domain is where urbanites can relate to a public space in any way. Good communication is the key. But good communication between an urbanite and architecture isn't the only factor that of what makes a public space a public domain; it also has to do with the communication and social exchange between the urbanites (social language). Maarten Hajer and Arnold Reijndorp wrote in their book 'In Search of new Public Domain' that: "We define 'Public domain' as those places where an exchange between different social groups is possible and also actually occurs." The quote clearly states that when the exchange is possible and occurs between different social groups then its a public domain. This means that not all of the public domains have to have to speak the universal language. Not all of the public domains have to have the same effect on all of the people all of the time to be defined as a public domain. A public space can speak two languages and still be a public domain. This is why the language qualities of public spaces can be categorized into 4 different types of language qualities public spaces.

The 4 types of language qualities of a public space  
The language quality of the public spaces can be divided into 4 main types and all of them have 4 different kinds of communication skills. The 4 different

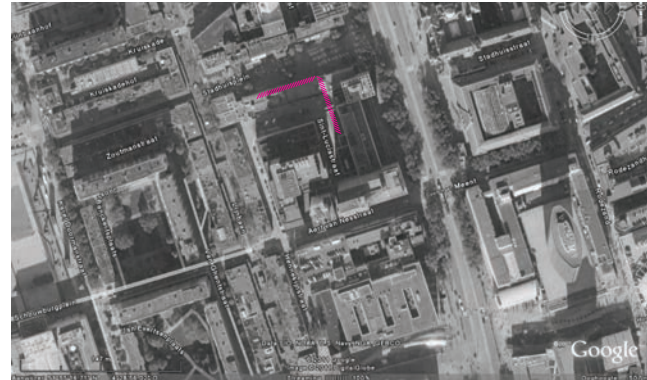
types of language qualities are the: (1.) Little or no communication public spaces, (2.) Single language public spaces, (3.) Multi-language public spaces and the (3.) Universal language public spaces. What qualifies a public space to be categorized in one of these 4 different qualifications of language quality are the 4 categories previously mentioned according to Nicola Marzot: the syntax or the logic of space, the pragma or condition of space use, the expression or the material quality of the space and the semantic or the meaning of the space. To further refer in this essay to these 4 categories they will be named S.P.E.S. It is the individual and combined quality of the S.P.E.S. that defines the language of a public space and the way the public space manifests itself in the urban fabric. The following will be an explanation of the 4 different types of language qualities of a public space. Each of the qualities will be have a short case study which will be analyzed by the S.P.E.S. qualities of the space.

- Little- or no communication public spaces

Case study: Sint-Luciastraat in Rotterdam.

The Sint-Luciastraat in Rotterdam is the location for the graduation studio at TU Delft Public Realm (Rotterdam) 2011. The Sint-Luciastraat can be qualified as a little- or no communication public space. The space is lacking communication skills, because of the low S.P.E.S. qualities. The French anthropologist Marc Augé also calls these places 'non-places'. Even though being in the center of Rotterdam this space is unused. The syntax quality of the space is poor and undefined. None of surrounding buildings have a relation with each other and there is no relation with the open space. Non-of the less the dark portal-entrance to the Sint-Luciastraat is uninviting and forms a barrier to the street. The pragma quality of the Sint-Luciastraat is also poor. The space is mostly used for parking, delivery, back entrances and fire-exits and it doesn't have any other public uses. The only evidence of urbanites is the parked cars. People seem to avoid the space and don't use it during their visit in the city.

The street doesn't really have any expression. The material quality is poor and doesn't seem to be doing anything to the space. There's no semantic quality of the space, the urbanites don't have any relation with the space. The space is meaningless, such places become deserted and unused.



Sint-Luciastraat, Rotterdam

### Single language public spaces

Case study: Skatepark Westblaak, Rotterdam

Single language public spaces are public domains that mostly attract one type of social group. The Skatepark Westblaak is such a place. The combined S.P.E.S. quality of the space is moderate. The syntax quality of the space has an isolating effect. The skatepark is surrounded by 4 streets and therefore becoming an island. The park is fenced and has only two entrances on each end reinforcing the isolating effect. The pragma quality is good: the design of the skatepark suits its purpose and functions accordingly. The skatepark is used mostly by 'skaters', mostly between the age of 10 and 20. Other types of social groups don't go there and if they do they will stand

out in the crowd. It is as if to get in this zone you almost have to join the 'cult'. The skatepark expresses hardedge urban life. The material used for the ramps are aluminum sheets and the floor is asphalted. The semantic quality of the Skatepark Westblaak is given by the 'skaters'. The 'skates' seems to own the space and they give a certain value to the space.



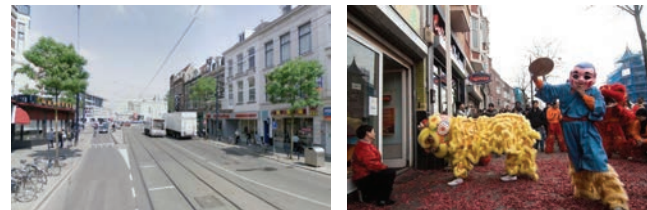
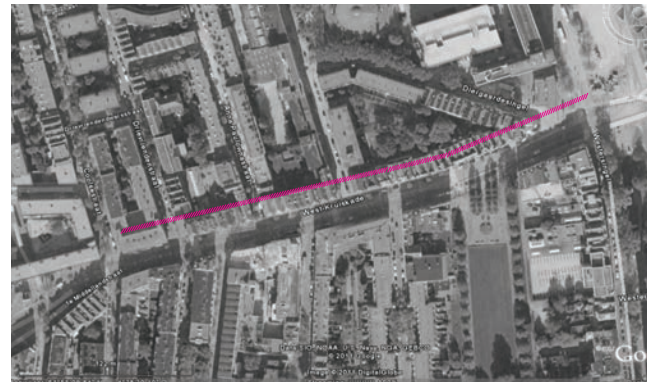
Skatepark Westblaak, Rotterdam

- Multi language public spaces

Case study: West-Kruiskade, Rotterdam

Multi language public spaces are public domains that attracts two ore more specific social groups. Unlike the Skatepark Westblaak the West-Kruiskade isn't isolated. The street is known for its multicultural stores and events, especially Chinese. This is why it's also called the 'China-town'. The syntax quality or the logic dimension of the space is good and well dimensioned. The street is centrally located in Rotterdam next to the central station. The West-Kruiskade consists of two car lanes, a tram track in the middle and pedestrian sidewalks on both sides. The street is on both sides aligned with 3 story high buildings with different

shops on the plinth. The pragma quality of the space or the condition of space use is for the purpose of shopping for special international products and to access the houses which are on top of the shops. The street expresses a multi language quality, consisting of a collage of materials and with attention seeking billboards written in different styles and languages in front of the stores. The urbanites who often visit the street give a special meaning to the space. They have a strong relation to the street because of its multicultural quality.



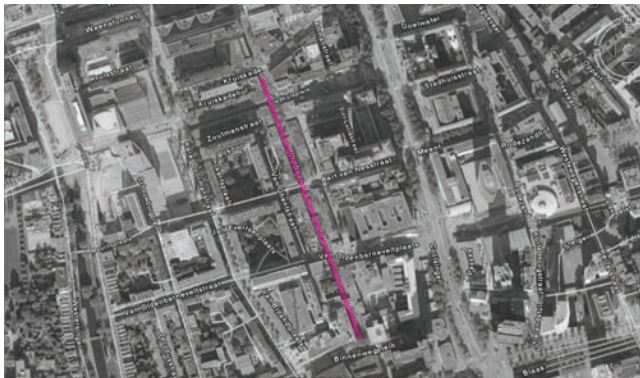
West-Kruiskade, Rotterdam

- Universal language public spaces

Case study: Lijnbaan, Rotterdam

A universal language public space is a public domain that communicates with all of the urbanites. Its combined and individual S.P.E.S. qualities are high. An example of a universal language public space in the Rotterdam is the Lijnbaan. The Lijnbaan was designed as a new shopping concept for the city center of Rotterdam, after a big part of the city was destroyed by bombings during the World War II. It has been recognized and criticized, but still the Lijnbaan remains a

Universal language public space. The syntax quality of the Lijnbaan is high. The pedestrian street is well dimensioned and at a human scale. The shopping buildings are in good relation with the public space. In contrast to the high surrounding buildings in Rotterdam the Lijnbaan becomes an entity on itself. Nicely dimensioned cantilevers aligned along the whole Lijnbaan gives the pedestrians the option to walk under a protecting cantilever protecting the urbanites from either rain or the harsh sun. The cantilever also has an inviting effect to the stores which are on both sides. As for the pragma quality, the Lijnbaan is largely visited by all kinds of social groups. It's mainly used for the purpose of shopping and as a meeting point. The Lijnbaan is mostly used during the day when the stores are open and at night time when the stores are closed people use it as a part of their route. The expression of the Lijnbaan is modern city life. The Lijnbaan has cohesion and a clear identity because of the material used. In the semantic sense, the Lijnbaan has a true meaning of space. Urbanites acknowledge and value the Lijnbaan and they can identify themselves with the space.



Lijnbaan, Rotterdam

## CONCLUSION

Public spaces are an important part in the urban fabric and contribute to the social cohesion of a society. Trying to figure out what makes a well functioning public space is done by analyzing the theater of social interaction. When comparing a city with a theatre, there are two main aspects that have to be taken into consideration to make the play a success. There are the urbanites as the actors and spectators and the public spaces as the stages. The public spaces (the stages) are where the social interaction (the unscripted act) is taking place in the city (the theater).

Coming back to more architectural terms this essay which is a contribution to help understand what makes a well functioning public domain, was divided into two main aspects: the social aspect (urbanites) and the architectural aspect (the stages). For the social aspect I have analyzed the urbanites of Rotterdam (mainly because of the TU Delft graduation studio: 'Public Realm Rotterdam'). As for the architectural aspect has the language qualities of public spaces been analyzed.

The analysis of the social aspect has stated that the urbanites of Rotterdam are of different social groups, multicultural, real diverse, with different interest and they all use the city in their own way. This is because of the difference in human behavior that is caused unconsciously; it's in our genes and memories and cannot be erased or manipulated. So every human being behaves differently in certain situations because of their own memory and own recollections. Further in the essay was the effect that the architectural aspect has on the social aspect also been called the pragma (or the condition of space use) and the semantic (or the meaning of the space). These aspects are the way humans use a space and relate or give meaning to a space.

For the architectural aspect was the language quality of public spaces analyzed. Every public space has a

certain atmosphere and a certain quality to them. And they all communicate in a certain way in their own language. This is why a public space speaks a certain language. In this essay has the language of the public spaces been categorized into 4 different language qualities: (1.) Little or no communication public spaces, (2.) Single language public spaces, (3.) Multi-language public spaces and the (3.) Universal language public spaces. The four language qualities are based on the S.P.E.S. qualities which stand for: the syntax or the logic of space, the pragma or condition of space use, the expression or the material quality of the space and the semantic or the meaning of the space. These 4 different categories according to Nicola Marzot are to architecture as linguistic is to language.

To clarify this complex system of the language quality of public spaces where 4 short case studies presented and individually analyzed. Each case study had a different qualification of language quality. The case studies where all located in Rotterdam. If we compare the case studies to each other for example the Sint-Luciastraat and the Lijnbaan, we can notice the language qualities are the complete opposite of each other, because of the S.P.E.S. qualities. Even though the two case studies are located next to each other they have their own language quality.

The qualification of the language quality of public spaces is a tool to help analyze public spaces. Personally I find that it works well when analyzing public spaces, especially if the public spaces have to be compared to each other. It is a systematic manner and that can be used in every context.

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4 Maarten Hajer, Arnold Reijndorp, In Search of New Public Domain (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2001), 56.

5 Julliani Pallasmaa, "Inhabiting Space and time- the Loss and Recovery of Public Space" in Architectural Positions, ed. Tom Avermaete (Amsterdam: SUN Publishers, 2009), 127

6 Marianne Krog Jensen Mag.art, ph.d, "Space Unfolded- Space as Movement, Action and creation" in Mind your behaviour (Copenhagen: Dansk Architectuur Center, 2010), 81

7 Richard Sennet, "The Design and Social Life of Cities" in The Conscience of the eye (London: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1992)

8 Maarten Hajer, Arnold Reijndorp, In Search of New Public Domain (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2001), 11.

9 Idem, 41.

#### LITERATURE LIST

Julliani Pallasmaa, "Inhabiting Space and time- the Loss and Recovery of Public Space" in Architectural Positions, ed. Tom Avermaete (Amsterdam: SUN Publishers, 2009)

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Publiekszaken, Bewerking COS, "Bevolking van Rotterdam naar etniciteit (CBS-definitie), op 1-1-2000 t/m 2010" COS Rotterdam 19 May 2010, <http://www.cos.rotterdam.nl/smartsite229.dws?goto=2264831&style=2033&substyle=> (accessed 30 Feb. 2011)







An aerial, black and white photograph of Rotterdam, Netherlands, showing a dense urban grid with a prominent canal system. The image is used as a background for the text.

# Fragmented Rotterdam.

bringing back coherence

## Research

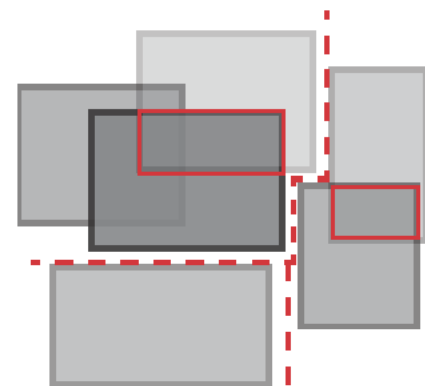
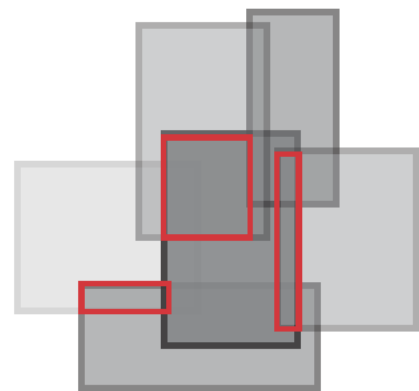
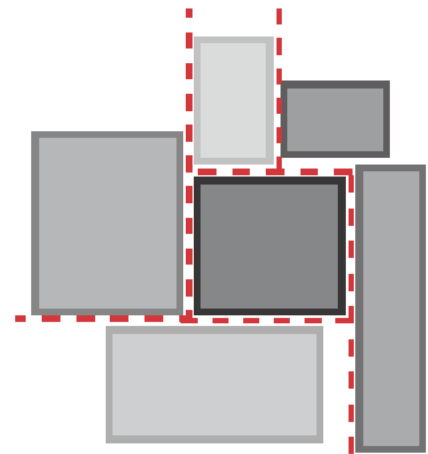
Florian Jasper Nugteren | Wing Jim Yick



## FRAGMENTED ROTTERDAM

The city of Rotterdam has a long historical background; after the WWII the former inner city has mostly faded away. During the reconstruction period there was a desire for renewal and modernization, this meant that damaged buildings were not recovered but demolished to make place for new architecture. The city became the experimental arena for new modernistic concepts and ideas. Nowadays many places in the inner city of Rotterdam remind us of the prewar city and also the modern interventions. This mixture

of different places and atmosphere is one of the most characteristic of Rotterdam. Despite these qualities and different characters the coherency of the city is poor. With this in mind the research question was developed, namely: How is the configuration of the fragments in the inner city of Rotterdam?

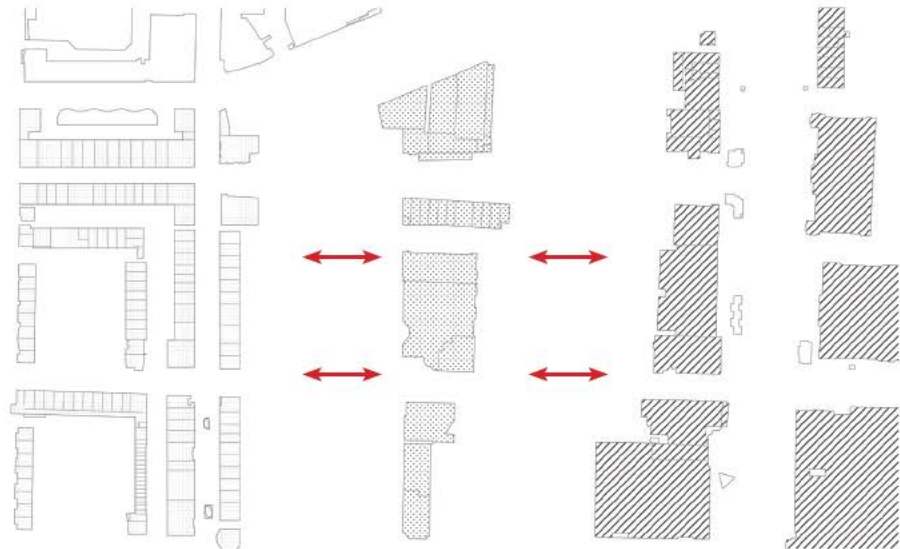


scenario's

## Fragments

To research this subject a model has been used. In this model three scenarios of fragmentations have been distinguished. The first scenario is where different fragments have a hard border. There is no overlapping or coherence between fragments. In the second scenario the fragments have a overlapping between each other. We will name this overlap the "grey area". In this "grey area" interaction between fragments could occur. The "grey area" itself has not a specific identity. The last scenario is the sum of the first two where the two different scenarios occur.

In our design location we can experience two prominent fragments. One is the Lijnbaan and the other is the Coolsingel, with the design location in between. The design location is a typical "grey area" where the other two fragments should interact with each other, but instead of a lively space, the location is overruled by the backsides of those fragments.





1832



1932



2000+



1832



1932



2000+

## Historical analysis

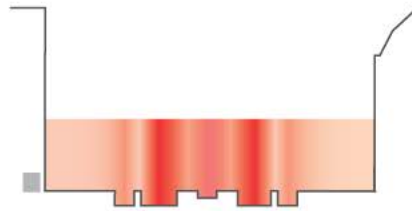
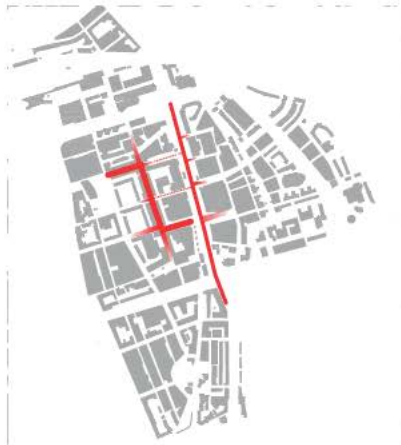
To understand how this area became like this we started a historical research on the inner city of Rotterdam.

The growth of Rotterdam is very comparable with a lot of Dutch cities. The morphological development is dominated by the polder structure and its waterways. The fragment "Coolsingel" has already played an important role in the 1832. In 1832 the Coolsingel functioned as a city border. The influence of the Coolsingel was inwards to the city. At that time the Binnenrotte was the center of the city.

## Coolsingel

In 1920 the Coolsingel was partly drained and became a main street of the inner city. The street became an important boulevard and had a great influence on the side streets of the Coolsingel. The bombing during the war damaged the Coolsingel heavily. After the reconstruction period the Coolsingel never regained the city center boulevard status. Instead of a boulevard it became a very important transportation route between the North and South part of Rotterdam. The core of the city shifted to the modernistic Lijnbaan. The change of role of the Coolsingel

has caused different physical changes in this fragment. Through time traffic became faster and also the border became sharper. The increased thresholds have led the former boulevard into an unfriendly fragment for the pedestrian. The Coolsingel nowadays mainly accommodates car traffic.



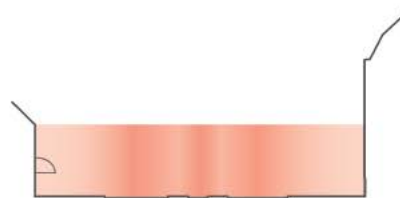
2000+



1932



influences



SLOW  FAST

thresholds

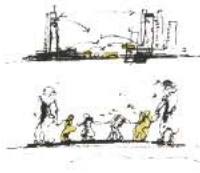
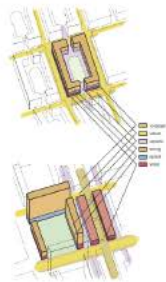


1832

## LIJNBAAN

The history of the Lijnbaan on the other hand is much shorter than the Coolingsingel. This fragment is very important and interesting for the design location. The Lijnbaan is designed by Van den Broek & Bakema architects. In the scheme "concept Lijnbaan" you can see how they re-interpreted the building block of the city architect Traa. The architects separated the program in such a way that every function had its own place. Due to this modernistic concept a lot of these fragments had a very mono-functional character like the Lijnbaan. This mono-functional character of these fragments can still be experienced nowadays. Despite the fact that the Lijnbaan had a mono-functional character the atmosphere of this fragment was much softer and friendlier in the past. If we look at the original plan of Lijnbaan we can see several aspects which had changed over the years.

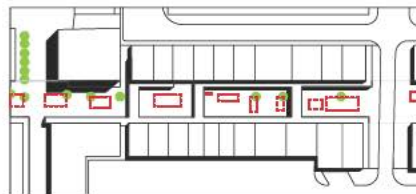
There were various places that can be appropriated by people such as greenery, benches and other. The materialization of the Lijnbaan also



concept Lijnbaan



Lijnbaan 1953

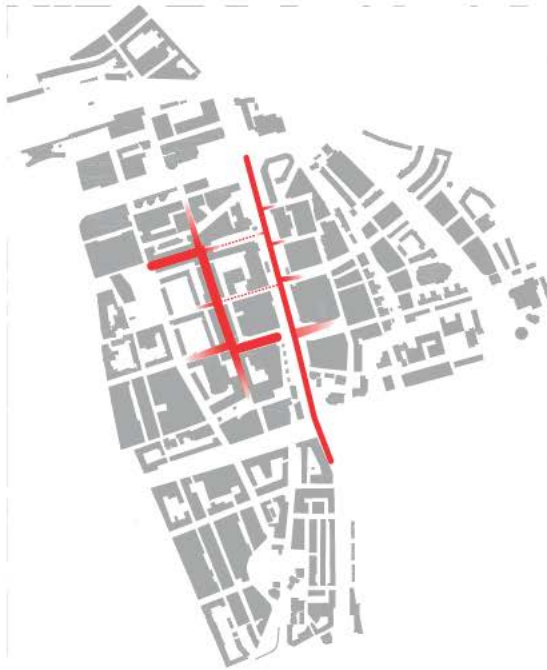


Lijnbaan greenery



Lijnbaan materialization





influences 2000+

changed over time. The path of the Lijnbaan became more accentuated with dark pavement. This change of materialization has caused a sharp distinction between the Lijnbaan and its surroundings.

### CONCLUSION HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

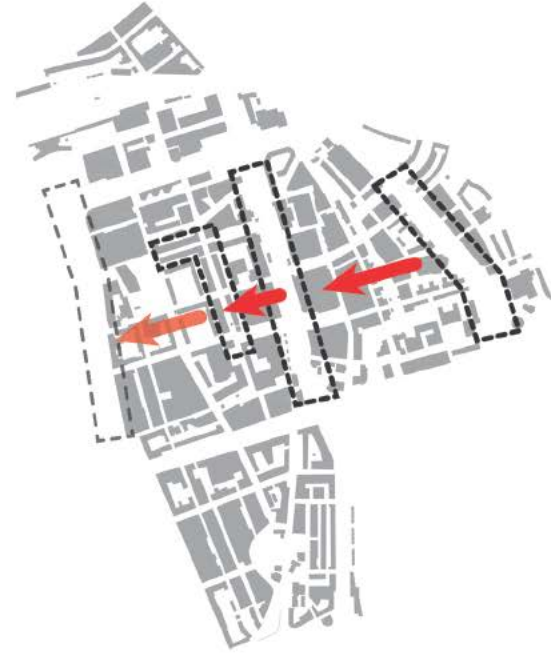
There are several conclusions we can draw from the historical analysis.

Firstly we can see that due to the introvert character of the two fragments (Lijnbaan and Coolensingel) and the sharp borders they got over

the years, the influence on the side streets became much lesser. So the design location which is in the grey area has become an undefined place.

The second conclusion we can draw from the historical analysis is the tendency of shifting of the center. If we look at the scheme "shift center" we can see that the core of the city has slowly shifted from the Binnenrotte to the Lijnbaan area. After the completion of the new Rotterdam Central Station, we expect that the city core will shift from the Lijnbaan to the Westersingel.

The fact that the core has shifted is



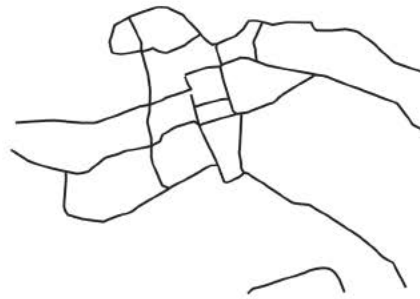
shift center

one thing but the negative impact on the former city core is the other thing. For example, when we look at the Binnenrotte after the shift, it became a desolated space for a long time. Only recently it has slowly regained some city character. The same can be said for the Coolensingel, a lively boulevard transformed into a traffic road which became very uninviting for pedestrians. If the hypothesis is true that the Westersingel will become the city core, the mono-functional Lijnbaan could face the same problem as the Binnenrotte and the Coolensingel.

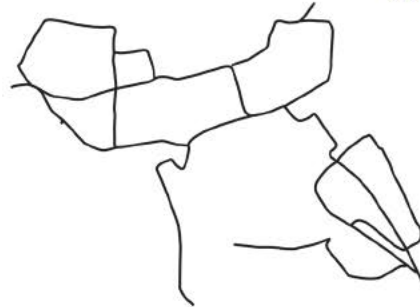


## Analysis of the current situation

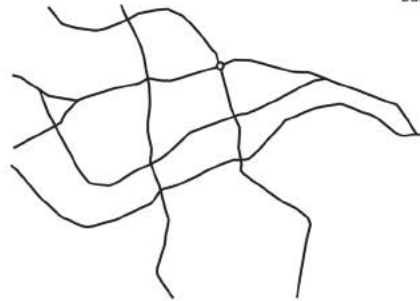
To have a better understanding how to deal with the fragmentation of Rotterdam an analysis of the current situation is made. In this analysis different subjects like greenery, public spaces, program, infrastructure, flows, architecture and other aspects have been worked out. Every subject has a particular influence on the city and also on the fragments itself. The quality of every fragment depends on the location and the different input of these subjects. For example, the Lijnbaan is a well working fragment because of the retail, architecture and the big amount of shoppers walking through this place. Due to this mono-functional program the place is desolated after the shopping hours. After analyzing these subjects we can conclude that the quality of a fragment depends on many factors. The borders and qualities of the fragments are difficult to define because the fragments are depending on every single factor. It's not only a couple of subjects which determine the borders and quality of a fragment, but the whole configuration of all the inputs. Instead of analyzing the different subjects we decided to use another methodology to have a better understanding for this problem, which is the phenomenological way.



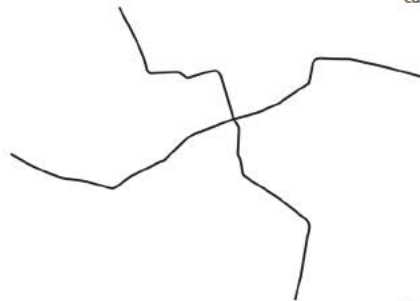
tram



bus



car



metro



culture day

culture night

catering industry

retail

clusters



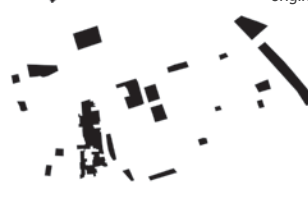
structure



morfology



original plan by Traa



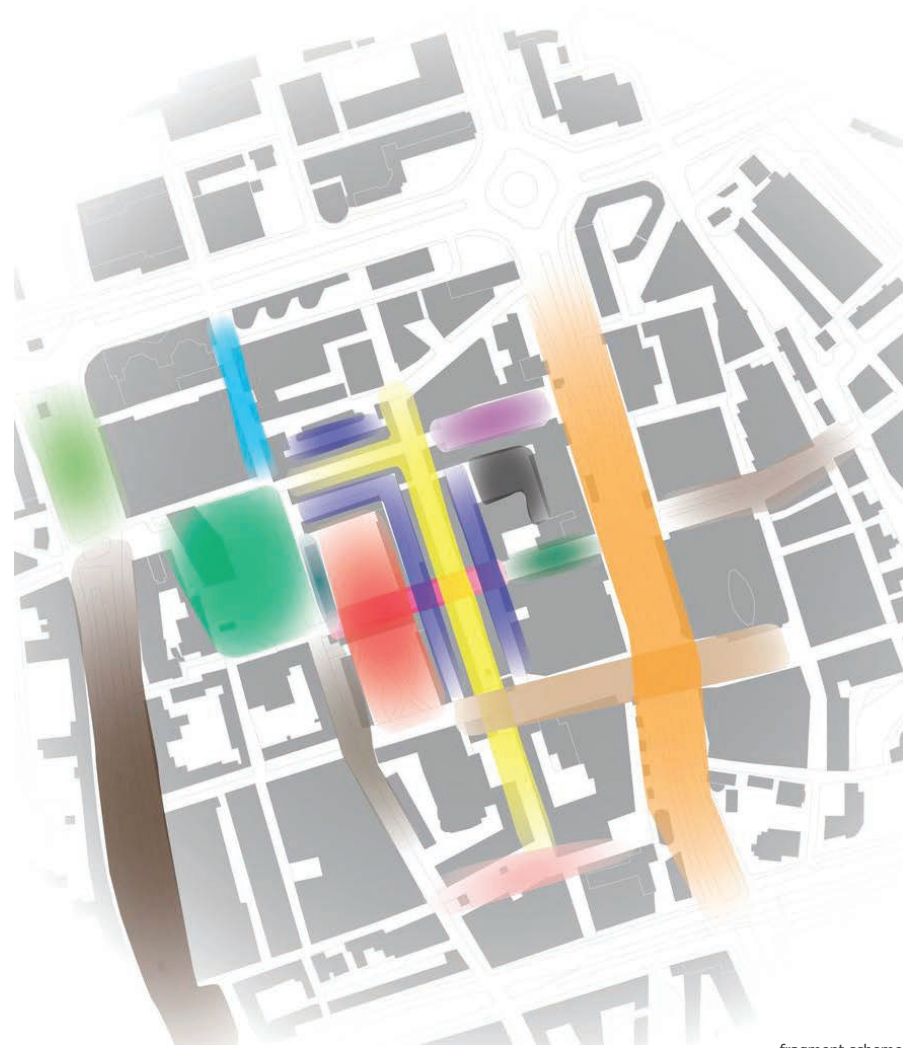
public spaces



flows



use



fragment scheme

The different colors in the scheme "fragment scheme" represent the different fragments we determined by our own personal experience. In this scheme we can see many different fragments in a small part of the inner city. These fragments have different qualities and identities. For the most important

and influential fragments we made a SWOT analysis. In the SWOT analysis we determined the qualities, the weakness, the opportunities and the threats of these fragments.

# Stadhuisplein

Stadhuisplein characterizes itself as a recreational centre of bars and cafes for mass public culture. The physical backdrop of the square is formed by the facade of the town hall creating with its tower a visual axis across the square. The enclosing buildings create an adequate scale for human activities.



## Strength:

- Long opening hours
- Accommodates Lijnbaan visitors
- Place for leisure
- Good sun orientation

## Weakness:

- Terraces obstruct the main passageway and sight line.
- Provisional appearance bars
- Bars are introvert
- More street than square

## Opportunities:

- A well functioning square accommodating city centre
- Positive outdoor space
- Connecting Lijnbaan and Coolsingel

## Threats:

- No relation between bars and surrounding publicspace.
- No attraction
- Not functioning
- Consumption square, not a public space

# Schouwburgplein

Schouwburgplein characterizes itself as an elevated smooth plane. The immense scale of the square is accentuated by the smoothness of the steel industrial plate and concrete surface

- Main public square



## Strength:

- City stage
- Spacious
- Place for leisure
- Location
- Parking garage
- Elevated square
- Well defined borders

## Weakness:

- Materialization
- Un-human scale
- Un-social arrangement

## Opportunities:

- Appropriable square, human scaled
- Accommodating city centre
- Permanent facilities
- Attracting public life

## Threats:

- Total abandon
- Useless space

# Hennekijnstraat

The Hennekijnstraat functions as a service street and access for office buildings. The street is mainly throughout the whole day. It characterizes itself by its anonymous back entrance of the lijnbaanshops and entries of the office buildings.

- Narrow two way street
- Two narrow pavements



## Strength:

- Unity
- Parking in city centre
- Street profile
- Supply route for Lijnbaan

## Weakness:

- Monofunctional
- Anonymous character of the street
- No function in plinth
- No liveliness
- Undefined
- Not appropriatable

## Opportunities:

- Extension of Lijnbaan / design location
- Keyrole between Lijnbaan & Coolsingel

## Threats:

- No go area
- Abandon space

# Lijnbaan

Lijnbaan characterizes itself by a pedestrian shopping walkway stretching from shopwindow to shopwindow. Although the materialization of the street and facade is repetitive and monotonous. Various street furniture have been place to break with the axiality of the street.

- One broad public route



## Strength:

- Human scale
- Uniform appearance
- Pedestrian connection street
- Walking area
- Big platform
- National attraction
- Everyday lively
- Historical value
- Well-functioning shoppingstreet

## Weakness:

- Monotonous appearance
- Opening hours
- No city centre scale
- Hard to appropriate
- Dominated by franchises
- One side orientation
- High rent
- Monofunctional
- Introvert

## Opportunities:

- Activities other than shopping.
- Stimulate liveliness to its surroundings
- Longer opening hours
- International attraction
- Appropriatable public space

## Threats:

- No locality
- Monofunctional
- Monument doesn't allow extension
- No-go area after closing hours

## Nesstraat

This is the part of the Aert van Nesstraat perpendicular to the Coolsingel. The breadth of the street is narrowed by the tallness and the closeness of the buildings adjacent to it.

- Broad street
- Two Lane car
- Bicycle lane demarcated
- Footpath
- Entrance parking garage



## van Aert

Strength:

- Connecting flat, Lijnbaan & Coolsingel
- Entrance to parking garage
- Broad streetprofile

Weakness:

- Uninviting plinths
- Anonymous character of the street
- Non-space
- Less liveliness
- Undefined
- Not appropriatable

Opportunities:

- Livelier passageway
- Opportunity for redefinition
- Extension Lijnbaan
- Connection route

Threats:

- Empty street
- No go area
- Breaking up Lijnbaan
- Flats not accessible

## Green courtyard

The greenpatch adjacent to the Aert van Nesstraat is fully publicly accessible. It has a residential character. The size is considerable as a green patch but too small to be a park.

- Residential public greenpatch



Strength:

- Green
- Location
- Resting space for Lijnbaan visitors

Weakness:

- Attracts bums
- Un-safe impression at night
- Un used
- Un attractive
- Un defined
- No sitting facilities

Opportunities:

- Implementing green to Lijnbaan
- Attractive green area
- Temporal activities
- Public space between shopping functions
- Accommodating green for city centre
- Appropriatable
- Combination with Jan Evertsen-plaats

Threats:

- No-go area
- Neglected

**I** Coolsingel characterizes itself by the prominent position of the road and the tramline. The breadth accentuates the division of the boulevard into two sides. As a result the passageway for pedestrians has no link between them.

- g**
- Fourlane car
  - Asphalted road
  - Two lanes tram
  - Two broad footpaths



**S** Strength:

- I**
- Accomodate cars, tram, metro, bikes and pedestrians
  - Prominent axis
  - Main connection between North and South
  - Makes Rotterdam centre reachable

Opportunities:

- O**
- Enhancing city's accessibility
  - Highrise boulevard (expension)
  - Heart of Rotterdam centre
  - A pedestrian-friendly street

Weakness:

- O**
- Dangerous for pedestrians
  - Cuts off surroundings
  - Fast traffic
  - No clear street character
  - Not a human scale
  - Cuts through the city centre

Threats:

- C**
- No public activities.
  - Cuts city centre in two
  - Area dominated by fast traffic

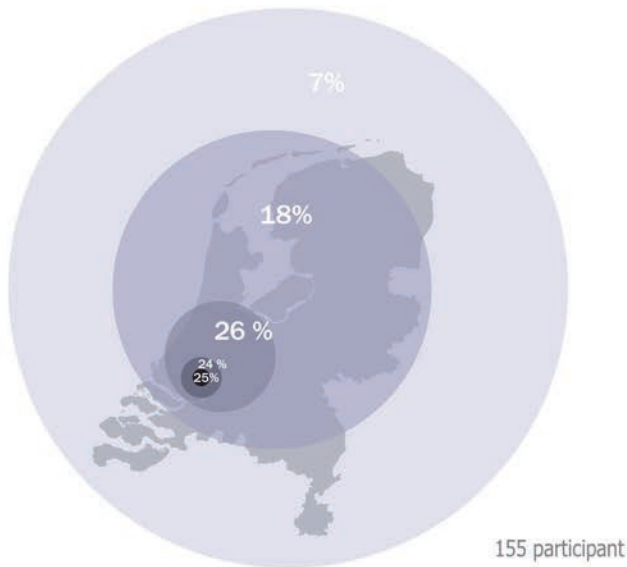
After defining all the properties of every fragment a scheme had been made.

On the scheme on the rightside, we colored the fragments in red. The more intense the color is, the more we wanted to change that fragment to improve the coherence of the inner city.



gradient SWOT

### Platform



### Group distribution



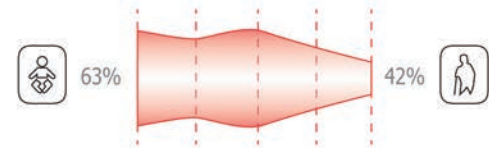
## SOCIAL RESEARCH

Next to the general research we have also done a questionnaire in Rotterdam centre. In this research we attempted to find fragmentation inside the social context. During this research we asked different questions related to the social

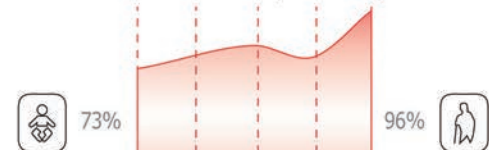
cohesion.

The most interesting results are showed above. For example, the age group in the city of Rotterdam, we can notice that about 50 per cent of the participants are in the range of 18 to 30 years old while children are underrepresented.

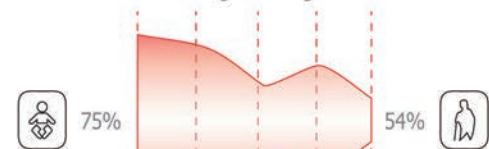
### Come across familiar people



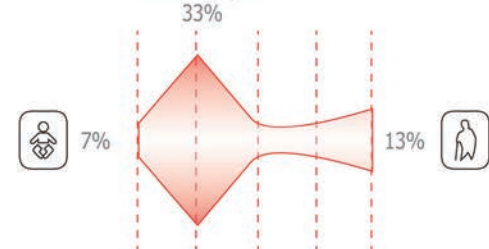
### Satisfied with the public transport



### Not talking to strangers



### Public transport



Another part of the questionnaire covered the social interaction in the Lijnbaan and the level of satisfaction with public transport. Through this social research a better understanding of the relation between people and the inner city was given.







An aerial, black and white photograph of Rotterdam, Netherlands, showing a dense urban grid and a large harbor area. The text is overlaid on the image.

# Fragmented Rotterdam.

bringing back coherence

## Masterplan

Florian Jasper Nugteren | Wing Jim Yick



shifting center

## URBAN SCENARIO

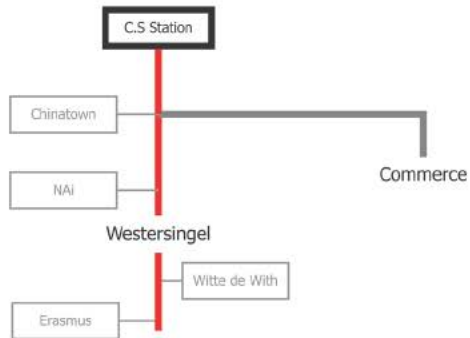
A significant conclusion of the analysis is the tendency of a shifting center core. In the urban scenario the center core will shift from the Lijnbaan to the Westersingel. The commerce routing from Westersingel through the Lijnbaan, Koopgoot and the Hoogstraat will still remain its importance. To maintain this, the road should be defined clearer. Our design location and other different fragments like the Stadhuisplein, the Schouwburgplein, Oma building, B tower and the Markthal will have a supportive function to

this hardcore shopping promenade. This hardcore shopping promenade runs from the Central station to the Station Blaak. The stations itself are a part of the bigger Randstad network.

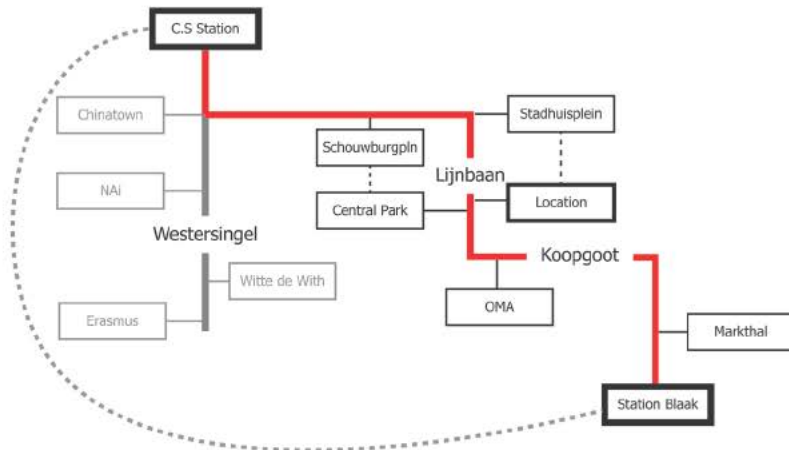
From the Westersingel we also introduce another routing which is the soft-core route. This route connects different public spaces that accommodate leisure activities. It starts from the Open theatre, to the Schouwburgplein, the central park, crossing the hardcore route to our design location, the new OMA city hall and the church square. This route will go on till the Binnenrotte. With this overall vision and the

conclusions we have drawn from the analysis a basis had been laid out for the master plan.

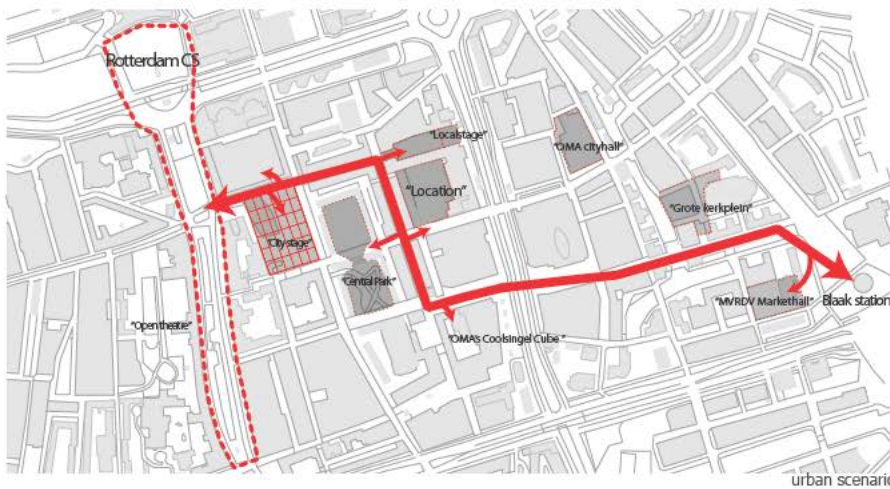
The city center itself consists of different fragments with their own specific identity and qualities. Many of them are valuable for the city which we want to maintain, but due to the incoherency of the city most of these qualities are not fully exploited. By introducing the two routings and redefining the different fragments we can create a coherent inner-city where these fragments can enhance each other.



new Central Station plan



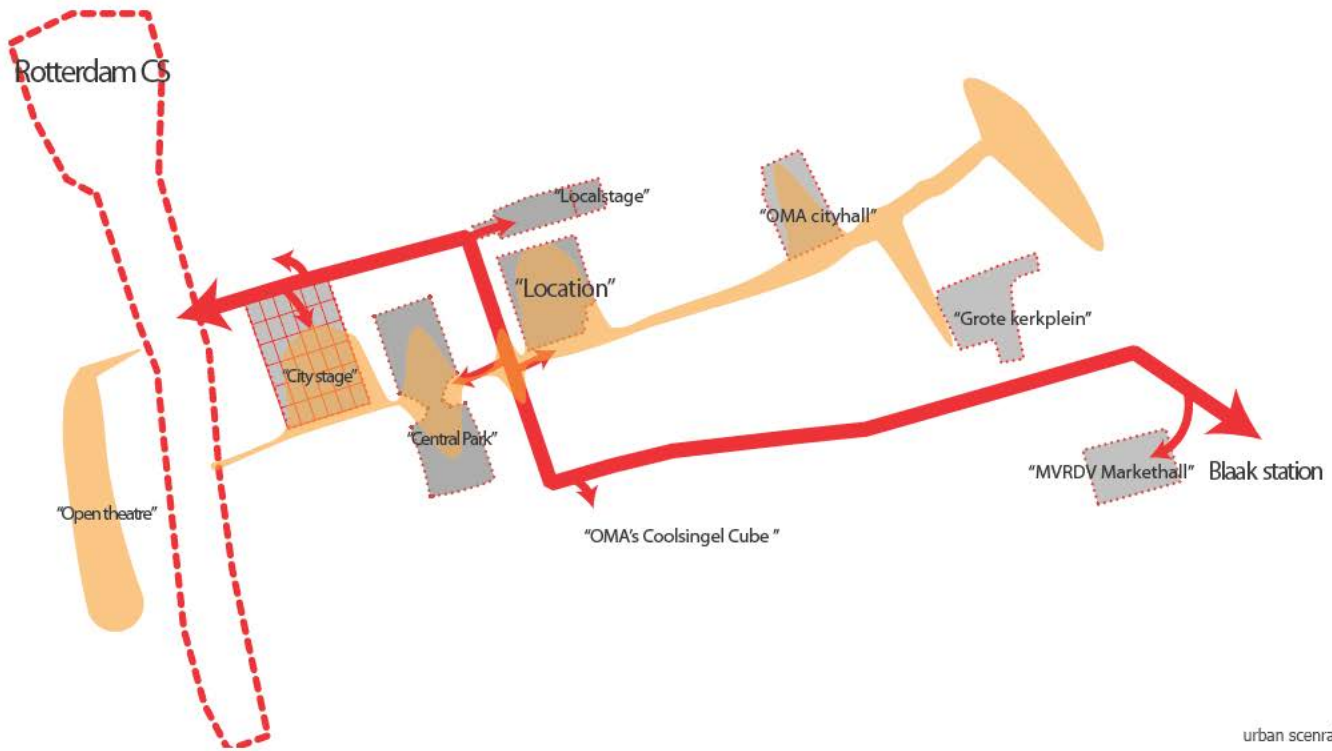
new Central Station



urban scenario

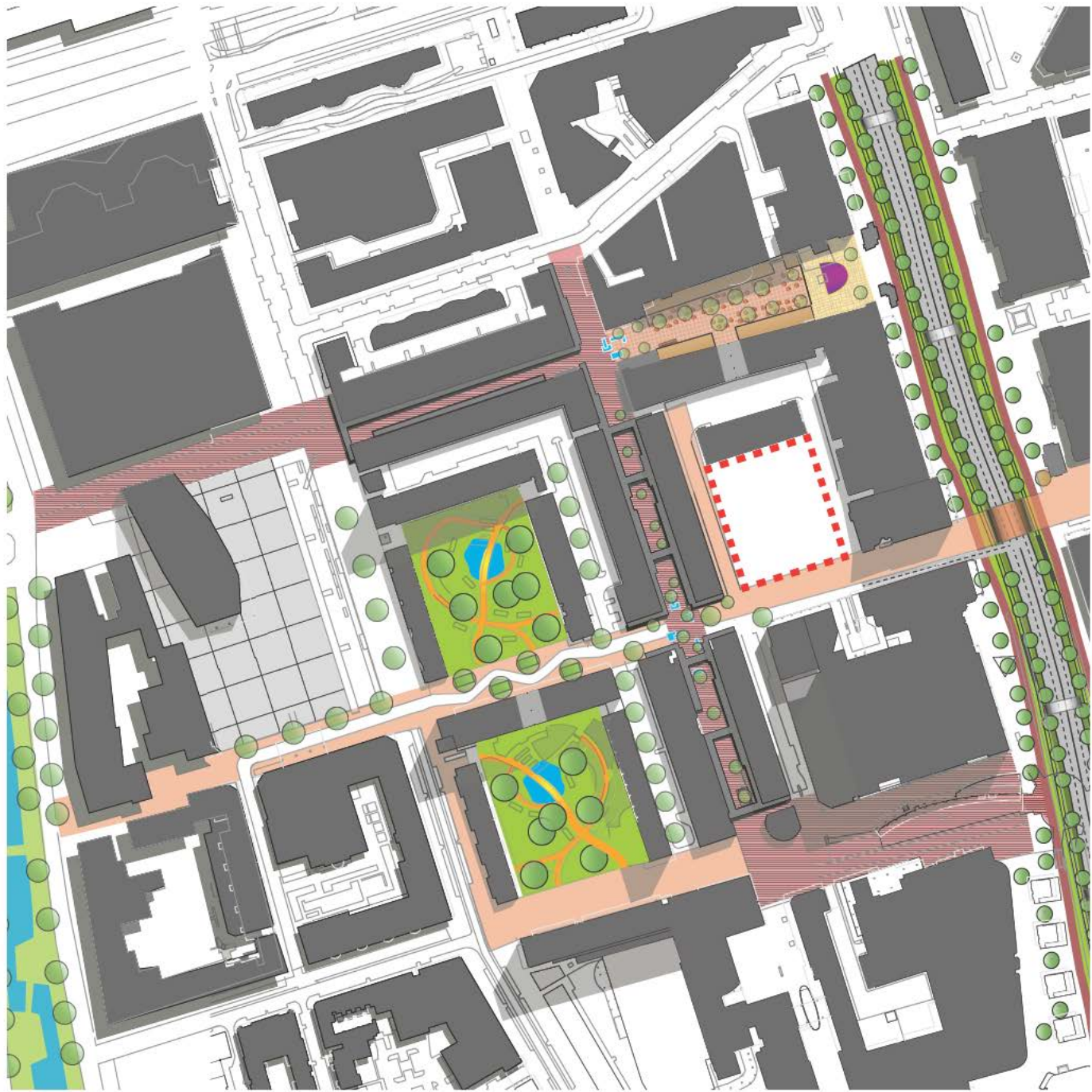


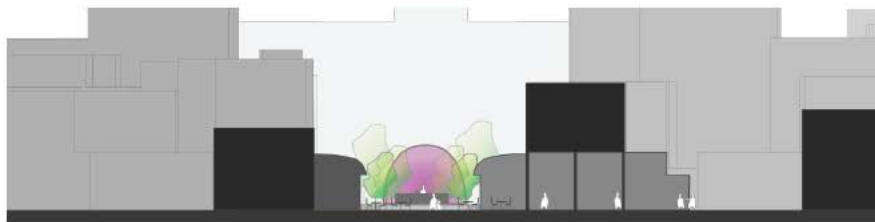
B-tower



urban scenraio







## MASTER PLAN

The Master plan follows the general vision from the urban scenario. Around our location there are fragments where we want to keep the main character but improve where needed. In the following chapter the four most important fragments we want to improve will be explained in detail. There are also several fragments where the identity will be changed, for example the Hennekijnstraat. This will be discussed in our building proposal.

## Stadhuisplein

The stadhuisplein is a fragment with a lot of potential. The square in this fragment is now only used on one side. However this could be changed and improved so the whole square is evenly occupied. The atmosphere could be the same as the Grote Markt in The Hague. In this fragment commercial leisure such as cafes and restaurants will support the hardcore route. The interventions are as follows; first of all we want to draw the city hall closer to the square by making a visible connection. This will be done by splitting the bars

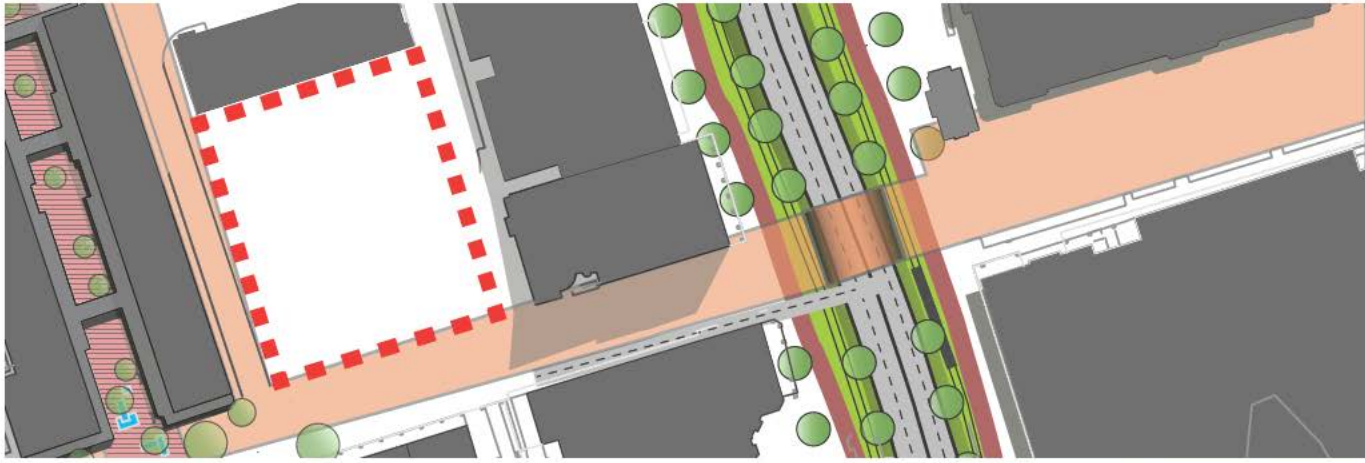


festivities Grote Markt



Grote Markt The Hague

to both sides. The middle part can be free of obstructions and thereby creating a visual sightline from the Lijnbaan. The terraces of the bars are now restricted to the fences that surround them. To improve the square we propose a free arrangement of the terraces like the Grote Markt in The Hague. This will create a lower threshold to enter one of the terraces. By doing so the fragment will be easier to appropriate this will result in a livelier square. The elevated parts at the end of the Stadhuisplein will perfectly functioning as a local performance stage or for other small festivities.



impression bridge

## Coolsingel

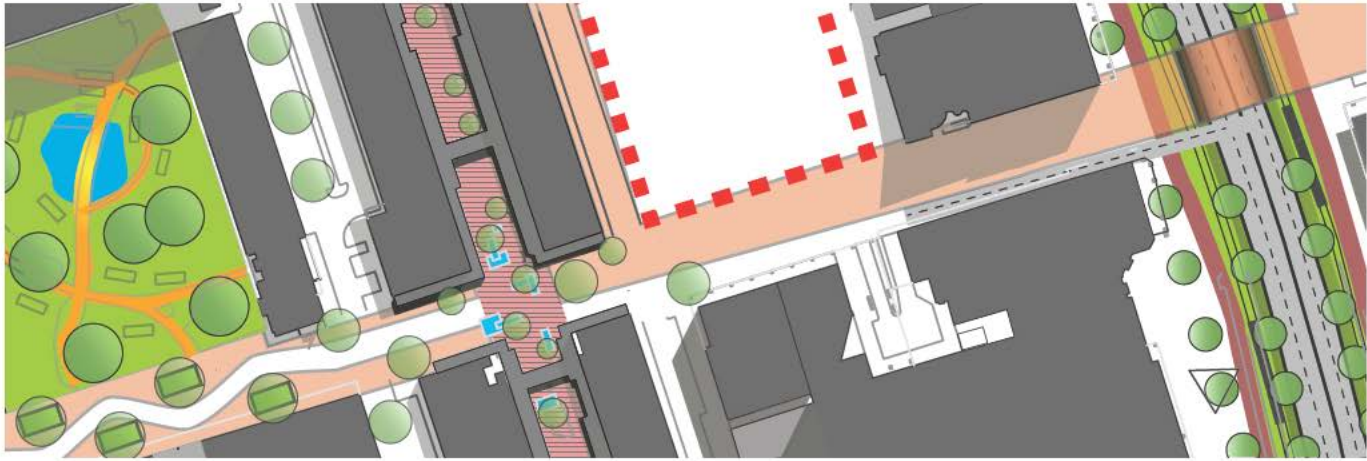
The Coolsingel is the second fragment we want to change. There is no intention to regain the city core status. In our proposal we redesign this area in a more accessible place for pedestrian and slow traffic which will attract more liveliness. The function as the most important connection road between North and South will remain and be emphasized. To realize this we decided to lower the car traffic just a bit below to the ground level. Several bridges will be introduced where pedestrian and slow traffic can cross. This intervention

references to the previous old canal structure with bridges. Due to this intervention the fast traffic will be separated from the slower traffic. The tram has an important role in public transportation. In contrary to the metro in the tram one can experience the city. Now the tram is closed off in the middle of the street. We suggest relocating the tram closer to the slow traffic and the pedestrian for creating a friendlier environment. By applying these interventions there will be more potential for the Coolsingel future developments.



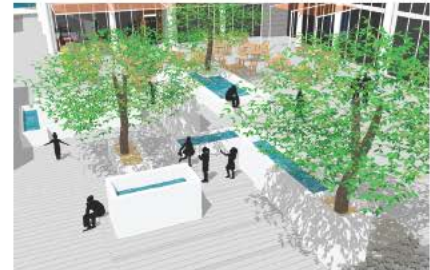
Coolsingel around 1900





## Lijnbaan

The Lijnbaan is a functioning fragment as a part of the hardcore route. Because this fragment is functioning well, we decided not to change the main character. We want to reintroduce spaces where appropriations can occur. This will mainly occur on cross roads. For example the renders on this page by putting different furniture objects. We decided to remain the mono-functional program. Instead of changing the function of Lijnbaan we decided to use other fragments to support the Lijnbaan.



impression appropriatable furniture



impression street



cafeteria in park

## Centralpark

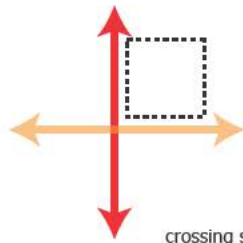
The last fragments we want to explain are the two green courtyards on both sides of the Aert van Nesstraat. In our plan we want to connect these two green courtyards to create a bigger park which will accommodate the city center. First of all we will make a hole through the flat on the Aert van Nesstraat to connect these two green patches. Secondly the street will be redefined. The street will still be accessible for cars but the pedestrian will have the priority.



Central Park New York



playground



crossing soft -and hardcore



## BUILDING PROGRAM

The design location is situated on the intersection of the soft and the hardcore route. This fact gives us the opportunity to create a building which fits both of the routings. To fit the aspects of both soft and hardcore the building program should have a semi commercial leisure function. The program will consist of the following functions: a foodcourt, cafes and restaurants, sport and wellness center, a roof garden and a supermarket. These functions will be attractive on a local and national scale.

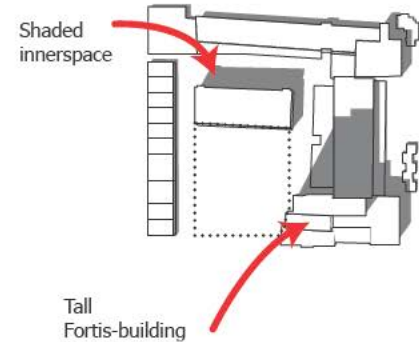
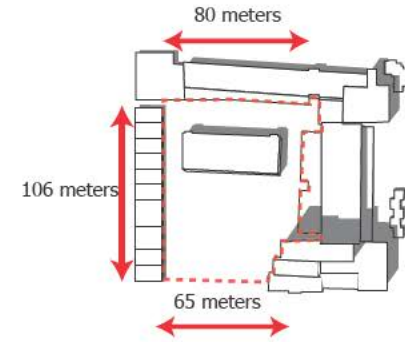
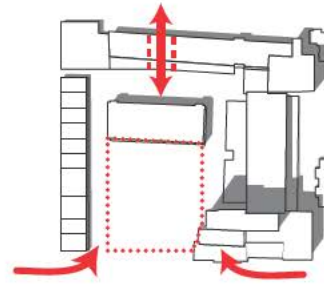
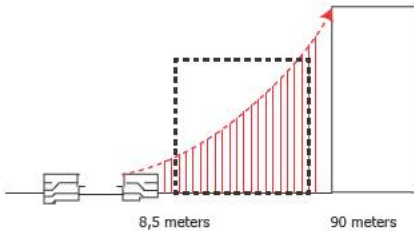
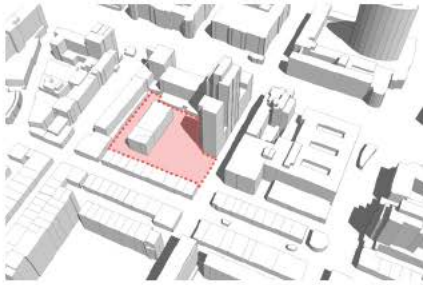
Besides the additional functions we also want to implement an extra performance room for the SKVR cultural center. In this room cultural performances can be held. To densify the inner city functions like dwellings will also be implemented in the program.

In the Lijnbaan area there is a shortage of dining places. A foodcourt will accommodate the shoppers from the hardcore route, who will visit the building for a quick bite. This function will also be attractive for people from the leisure route. The same idea goes for cafés and restaurants. One thing that should be mentioned is that

the cafes in the building are not comparable with the cafes from the Stadhuisplein. These cafes mainly have a supportive function to the building program. For example a sports bar or a coffee corner in the foodcourt.

We also decided to introduce a supermarket. This supermarket will contain smaller specialized shops under one roof. The supermarket is sufficient for daily groceries, but is also specialized for luxury products such as fresh fish, special olive oil, a butcher, and so on.

The sport and wellness center will mostly be accommodating the leisure route visitors. One of



parameters

the facilities the building offers is two multi-purpose halls for indoor sports such as basketball, tennis, badminton, table tennis, etc. This facility is missing in the David Lloyd sport center close by. The David Lloyd sport center mainly consists of fitness facilities and a swimming pool. To ensure the occupancy the sport halls are combined with a clubhouse. Besides the two big sport halls the clubhouse will contain a wellnesscenter. The wellnesscenter will have facilities like a spa bath, massage, steam bath, sauna, pedicure and so on.

### Parameters

The design location has several parameters and limitations. Firstly the size and the location of plot are very specific and determined (see parameters). Secondly Van den Broek & Bakema set up a principal for height limitations surrounding the Lijnbaan. We will follow in this principal. This means our building height should be in the range of 30-50 meter.

The Aert van Nesstraat is a part of the soft core route; thereby the main entrance should be on the Aert van Nesstraat. Because we

see the Aert van Nesstraat as a soft core zone the entrance will be in the middle of the street.

## BUILDING ANALYSIS

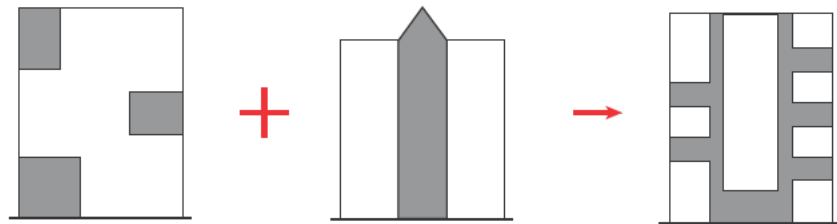
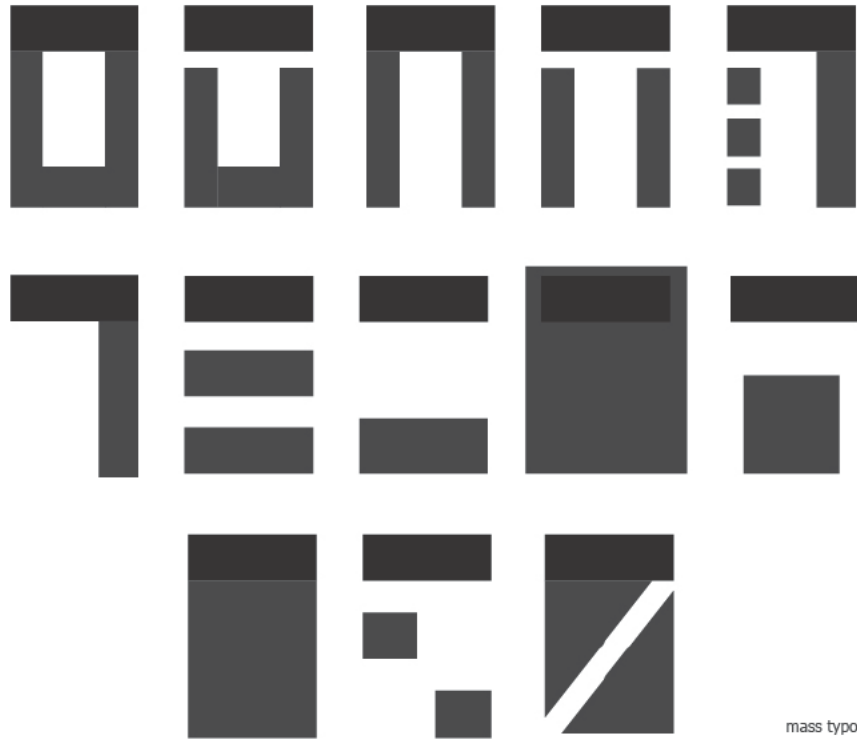
To find the proper building mass for our design, different researches have been done.

We made different building typologies to find out which one fits into our perspective and program. Within these typologies we have chosen several types. These are the atrium, courtyard and the solid typology.

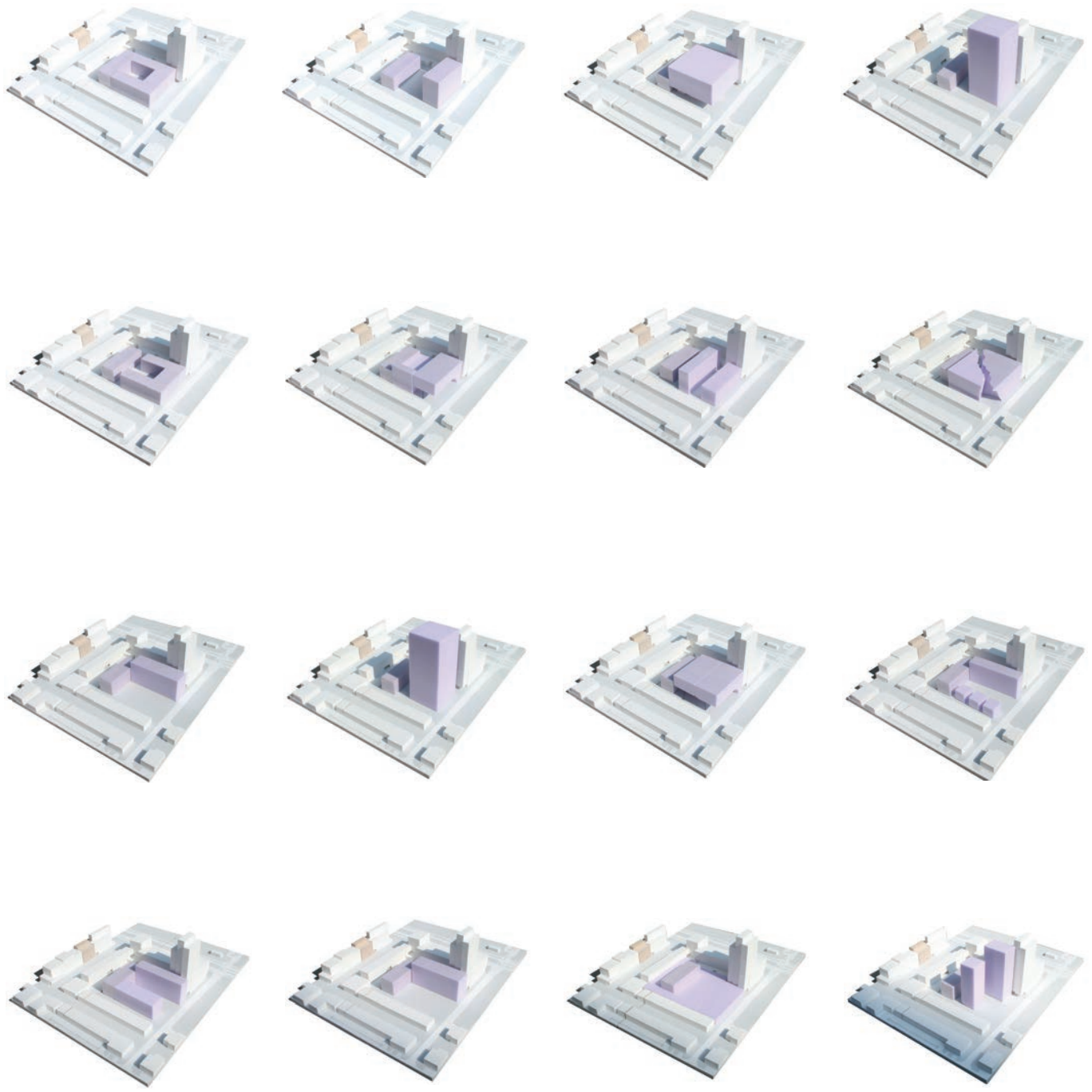
The soft-core route contains mainly outside public spaces like, the Schouwburgplein, the central park or the Binnenrotte. With this taken into account we wanted to create a public space inside our building. To have a better understanding how to create a proper inner public space we have done two types of analysis.

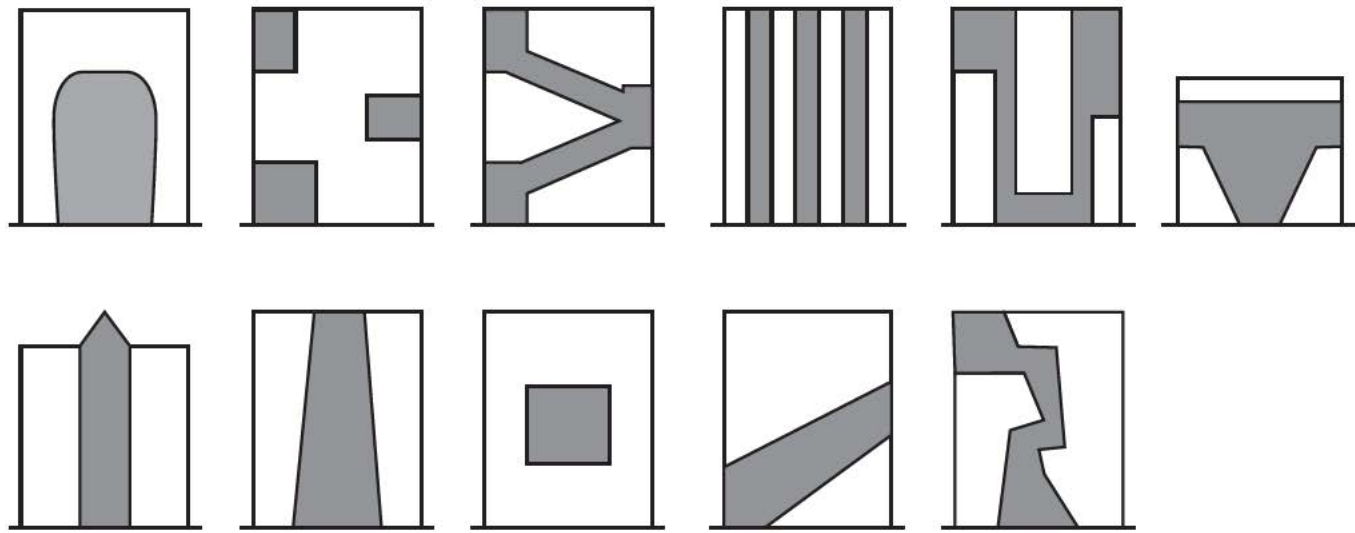
Firstly we analyzed the relation between the public space and the generic space inside a building by analyzing different existing buildings. Through this research we found out that the atrium variant combined with volumes in the middle fits the most to our idea.

Because we want our public spaces to be inside our building, an analysis have been made about the relationship between people on the street and building. There are many ways to attract people to the building. For example by changing the shape or lifting up the building mass. You can also change the street profile or the materialization of it. Almost every variation can be implemented into our design location. Therefore the decision could be made in a

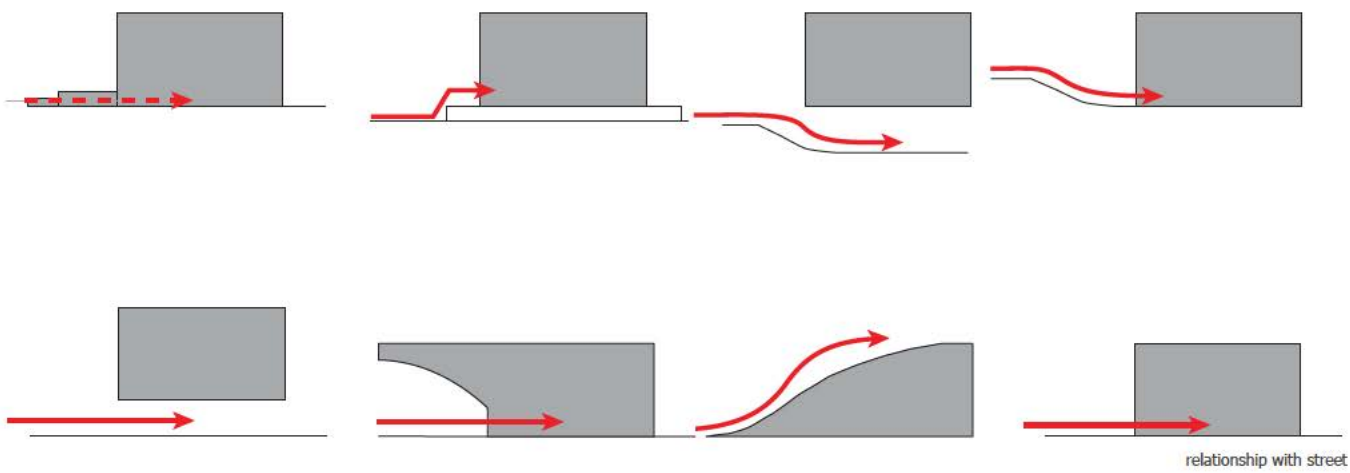


later stage of the design process  
when more parameters are fixed





typologies

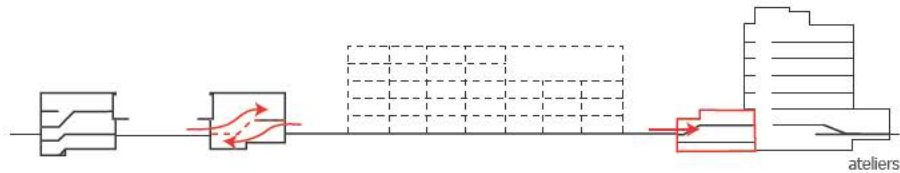


## CULTURAL ZONE

The edges of the location mainly consists of backsides of the buildings. In the current situation the location is mostly used for distribution and parking. Secondly there is a modernistic building present which is a monument. This monument is now occupied by the cultural center SKVR. This building has to be maintained. The cultural center gives us the opportunity to exploit this function to a bigger cultural zone. This will be done by transforming the garage boxes in the surrounding of the design plot and a part of lijnbaan, into ateliers for the creative class. (see creative zone) By doing this we create a condition where creative class can express themselves. This place could have the same atmosphere like "Place du Tetre" where painters gather to sell their paintings or even do a portrait on the spot. Despite Place du Tetre has become a big tourist attraction and is very commercialized through time, it is a prior example for our location.



creative zone

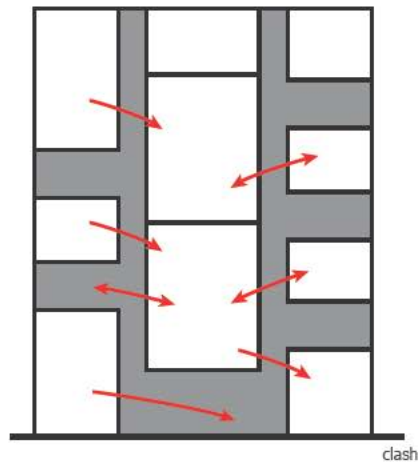


ateliers

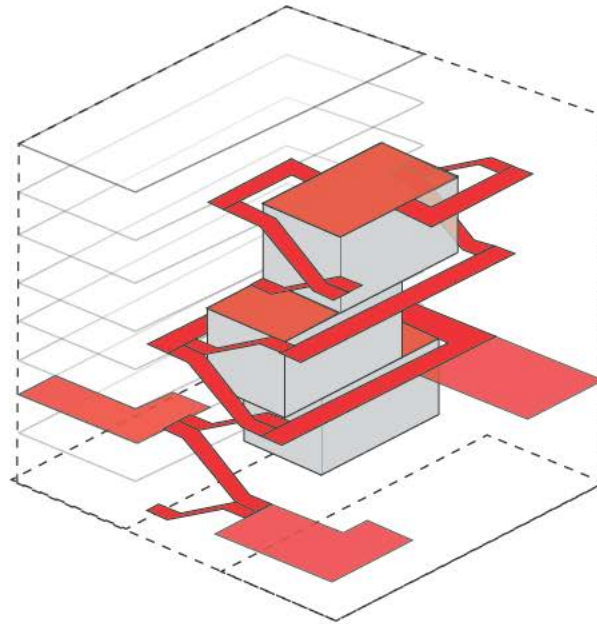


Place du Tetre





clash



main routing

## BUILDING PRINCIPES

Being part of the leisure route, the building will have different public spaces inside the volume. The public spaces will be divided throughout the building in a vertical matter. These public spaces are supportive to the different functions inside the building. For example we can think of a public terrace supporting a restaurant or a tribune for watching sport games inside the multipurpose sport hall.

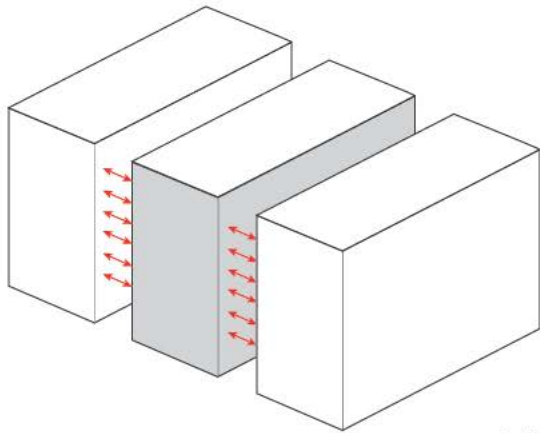
The building can roughly be divided into three volumes: the outer two and the middle. The functions

with the most public and display character will be located in the middle of the building. These functions are the multi-purpose sport halls, the performance hall for the SKVR, and the roof garden. Due to the public character of this volume, the most formal and theatrical routing of the building will be placed in this middle zone too.

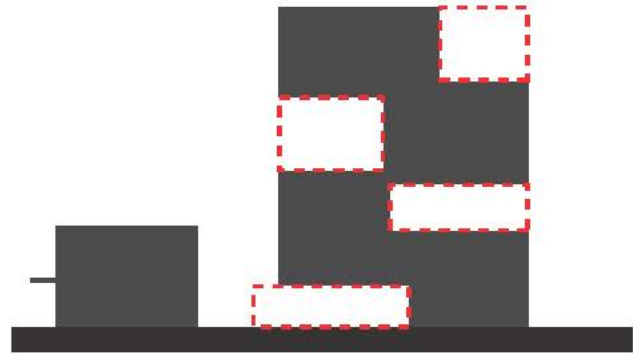
The two outer volumes will house the more generic, private functions. The functions with the most private character like the dwelling will be placed on top of the building. The food court with its most public character will be placed

below ground level. In between the other programs we will place them in an order from public to private character. The programs' characters are defined by different aspects like accessibility, mental thresholds, the duration of a visit etc. For example a food court has a relatively short stay and is very public while dwelling can be seen as a permanent and private.

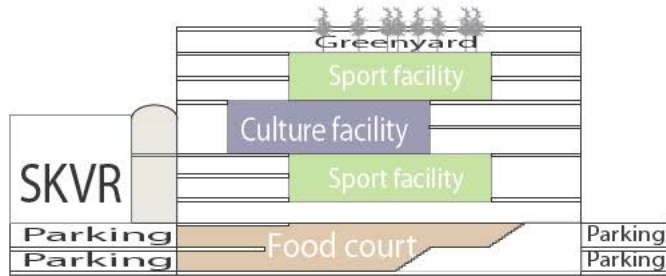
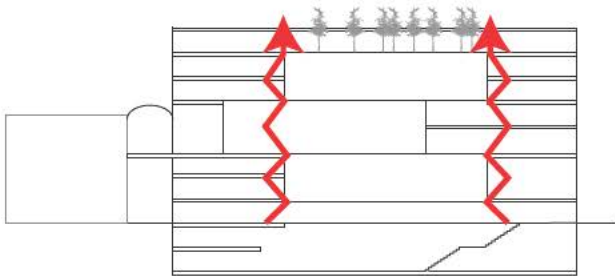
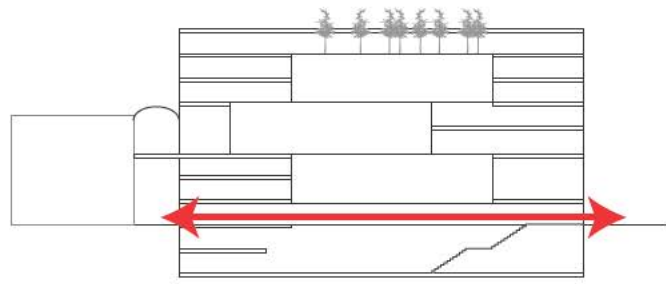
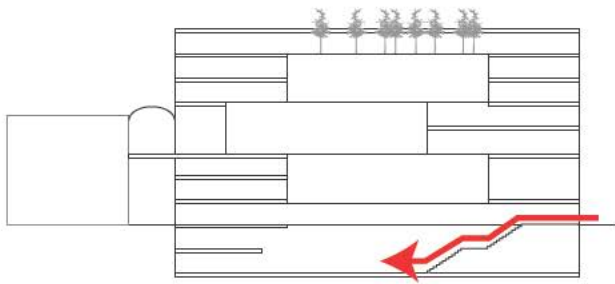
A clash will appear when the different functions meet each other. For example when people are dining in a restaurant they can see basketball matches in the multipurpose hall on the background.



building volumes



public spaces



building principles



# The digitalized inhabitants

the new public domain



Essay



*"Cities are the places where people meet to exchange ideas, trade or simply relax and enjoy themselves. A city's public domain – its streets, squares and parks – is the stage and the catalyst for these activities." (R. Roger)<sup>1</sup>*

Around fifty percent of the world population lives in the urban area and this number will only increase even more in the future. With this amount of people urban life and urban spaces are becoming very important issues for the cities and for architects to deal with. However nowadays cities are overruled by introvert buildings and car traffics instead of public urban spaces. Jane Jacobs pointed in her book "The death of Life of Great American Cities in 1961" that ideology of modernism that separates the uses of the city and the increase in car traffic would put an end to urban space and life which result to a lifeless cities devoid of its people. The book of Jane Jacobs played an important role for the changes of ideologies of urban planners and architects in the past decades. The pedestrians get more priorities and in many places cars are banned from the inner city. However there are more issues to deal with besides the traffic, separation of function, introvertness of buildings and other physical aspects, which are the "virtual space" and other technology.

The importance of the virtual space has increased enormously in the past decades in comparison with the urban space. This is mainly because of the invention of internet and new technological innovations. This virtual space becomes a part of our daily life, especially the younger generation has adapted to this virtual world. It became a part of their lives. One growing phenomena next to the virtual gaming world are the virtual social networks. These networks became a very strong tool to show and profile yourself. It became a way to interact with people just like a public realm in a city center. This phenomenon has a big influence on the way how people interact with each other in physical places and so also has an influence on the

traditional public realm. Where public spaces are more and more controlled and limited by the government with security camera, fences and rules, the internet on the other hand offers once again spaces for discussion and interaction.

In this essay the relation between virtual and the physical realm will be discussed. The essay is in general divided into two parts. Firstly I will define the phenomena of virtual world and the impact of technological devices on people and the physical spaces. In the second part I will go deeper into the relationship between the virtual and physical space and the possibilities connecting these two realms.

## **VIRTUAL WORLD AND TECHNOLOGY**

Starting with the virtual world we should go back to the 90s when mobile phone influenced the mass's lifestyle. In the end of the 90s mobile phone had been a common shared device. Since then we were able to call everybody, anywhere and everywhere in the world. This device had influenced the way how we keep in touch with friends and family. Keep in touch didn't have to be physical anymore. Since that moment the way of communication has changed dramatically, but the real change in our way of communicating is the internet which became also widely used around the 90s. Since the 1990s the traffic on the internet grew by 100 percent per year and the users with 50 percent. The estimated population using the internet is nowadays 1.97 billion users.<sup>2</sup>

The internet which started as a source of digital information, changed into an interactive and dynamic realm where people could communicate with each other. The profiles of people were shown on the internet and you could interact with each other. One of the most influential developments on the communicating behavior is the social network on the internet, like Facebook, Twitter or My space. Danah Boyd described four properties in social network which are fundamentally different with face-to-face public life; persistence, searchability, replicability, and

invisible audience. These two public realms are so called the unmediated and the mediated publics.

*1. Persistence: Unlike the ephemeral quality of speech in unmediated publics, networked communications are recorded for posterity. This enables asynchronous communication, but it also extends the period of existence of any speech act.*

*2. Search-ability: Because expressions are recorded and identity is established through text, search and discovery tools help people find like minds. While people cannot currently acquire the geographical coordinates of any person in unmediated spaces, finding one's digital body online is just a matter of keystrokes.*

*3. Replica-ability: Hearsay can be deflected as misinterpretation, but networked public expressions can be copied from one place to another verbatim such that there is no way to distinguish the "original" from the "copy."*

*4. Invisible audiences: While we can visually detect most people who can overhear our speech in unmediated spaces, it is virtually impossible to ascertain all those who might run across our expressions in networked publics. This is further complicated by the other three properties, since our expression may be heard at a different time and place from when and where we originally spoke.<sup>3</sup>*

Due to these properties social networks' interaction became more dynamic and complicated than in the physical public one. The action of an individual could have a much bigger impact on the public sphere in the virtual world than in the physical. Especially the speed and the dynamic of the social network on the internet has influenced the way how we interact with each other.

## **PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPHERE**

Social media and social network from the internet

has blended into our private life. People are sharing their private life inside the public social network. Technology like smartphones brought this virtual realm even to a next level. It enables people to bring their social network with them all the time and anywhere. Besides the smartphones there are other trends which influence the public space. These trends I will mention later on. To understand the seriousness of the influences of the virtual world we should take a closer look on the theory of the public sphere. One of the most well-known philosopher and sociologist who dealt with the theory of public sphere is Jürgen Habermas.

Jürgen Habermas develops the normative notion of the public sphere as a part of social life where citizens can exchange views or matters of importance to the common good, so that public opinion can be formed. This public sphere comes into being when people gather to discuss issues of political concern.<sup>4</sup> The concept of Jürgen Habermas has similarities with the ancient public building Agora. Agora was a dynamic public space which housed different functions. Agora was an open place in the ancient Greek and it was a place where citizens gather for public assembly. Later on the Agora also served as a marketplace where merchants kept stalls or shops to sell their goods. The duo function of the Agora makes this place a very nice example of a public domain. However the definition of public sphere from Jürgen Habermas goes beyond physical appearance like coffee houses, marketplace or saloons.

One of the conditions Habermas described for a working public domain is the clear distinction between public and private sphere which is the key issue if we

1. J. Gehl, 2011, "Cities for people", p.IX

2. Internet World Stats, 2010, "Internet usage statics", available at : <http://www.internet-worldstats.com/stats.htm> [accessed on May 2011]

3. Boyd, D., 2008, "Why youth love Social Network Sites: The Role of Networked Publics in Teenage Social Life", available at : <http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/dmal.9780262524834.119> [accessed on May 2011]

consider the influence of technology. The technology makes the separation between the real world and the virtual world and the distinction between public private relations blurry. People are being public behind the computer at home by interacting on social media or being private in an internet café. In public spaces people are able to work and focus on their private activities with these devices. In fact people can be private or public almost everywhere. This fact had influenced the way how people interact with each other. A nice example is when I travel from my hometown to the university by train. I see a lot of people focusing on their smartphone to keep in touch with the network or listening to music on their own. I hardly see people chatting with strangers. People nowadays are like as a participant said in a questionnaire we hold "*Social on the social network but asocial on street*" (questionnaire 2011). This trend raises the question whether we can still have a traditional public domain in the inner city despite the public and private sphere becoming so unclear.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND THE PERCEPTION OF A CITY**

There are many examples of technologies which has influenced the city and our daily life. Traffic lights, electronic cards, security gates, security camera and different sensors are examples of them. We have adapted to these technologies and most of them are fully integrated into our daily life. We don't even notice it anymore. One specific term for these small sophisticated devices and information processing is ubiquitous computing. Adam Greenfield pointed out a nice example of ubiquitous computing where design has dissolved into behavior.

In Hong Kong they introduced in 1997 a contactless stored value smart card, called "Octopus", used to transfer electronic payment for public transport. It works by tapping the smartcard on the reader. The range of these readers worked so well that a new human behavior has emerged from it. Women

would leave their card in the bottom of their bag. When passing the reader they would merely swing their handbag over it and the gate opened without slowing down their walking speed. Behind this little swing-movement there is a sophisticated information process going on in a third of a second. In this third of a second the smart card is powered up by radio signal, it transmit its unique identifier back to the system, the network validates whether there is still enough money on that account, debt that account and send a signal back to open up the physical gate for the access.<sup>5</sup> This is a nice example where a very complex technological information process transformed in a simple human movement. Ubiquitous computing will affect the human behavior like this and we can expect more unforeseen changes in the future.

One other example of the influence of technology on the city public space is the "Telectroscope" in London and New York. This device positioned at a spot near Tower Bridge allows people to see their counterparts in New York, peering through an identical scope near the Brooklyn Bridge.<sup>6</sup>

Despite this device being just a nice artwork with real-time video connection, it actually changes something in our perception of a city. The clash between these two cities brings a lot of funny experience to the people by just seeing other people in another space and time. There are people in these two cities that meet each other by using this device. The two cities are somehow linked with each other between the physical and the virtual world with this device.



## AUGMENTED REALITY

Another interesting trend in the technology which will have a big influence on the physical realm is the augmented reality. Augmented reality is a layer of information on top of the real world. This layer shows extra information upon the physical world.

One nice example is the Nike+ runner device. It is a chip in a runner shoe. In combination with a receiver it can show you where you are running, the distance of it, the speed, steps, burned calorie, heart rate and you can even map your run and share it to the runners' community. This layer of extra information gives another dimension to the way we run, the physical space and the way how we look at the surroundings. However the technology of augmented reality is in the middle of its innovation and exploration but we can imagine that the city will get an extra layer of information by using some technological devices. We can see extra information about the city, the buildings, program or even our location compared to our friends nearby. Another nice application is one from the NAI which calls the SARA (Stedelijke Augmented Reality Applicatie). This application make it possible to see how the built environment looked like in the past, how it looks like nowadays and how it will look like in the future through smartphones.<sup>7</sup>

Augmented reality is a very powerful tool which will change our perception of how a city looks like and work and will also influence its architecture. Till now we have discussed the virtual and technological aspect of urban life. In the next part I want to focus on the physical aspects of the city.

## SHIFTING OF PUBLIC REALM

Next to the relation between public and private sphere we can see another upcoming trend considering the public realm in the inner-city. Urban spaces and city life formed one of the most important features for the cities to let people meet, interact, protest or

discuss with each other. However these public spaces are nowadays overwhelmed by negative sounds like criminality, vandalism, etc. Traditional squares, parks and streets which used to be the public realm are now slowly being taken over by shopping mall, plazas, theme park or other privatized spaces.

Instead of the traditional green parks, parents rather take their children for example to the "smalland" in IKEA. Parents feel that the IKEA is a safer place, because it is controlled by security cameras and other safety measures, enclosed from the street and protection against illegal activities. People feel more secure about these places and like to gather in these quasi-public spaces. The owners of privatized spaces in the city will also not allow people to demonstrate on their spaces and they can even exclude particular target groups like beggars.

So these quasi-public spaces can never be the new public domain for the city, because of the limitations in its nature. However the influence of privatizing spaces on the traditional public spaces is evident. People rather choose for private and secure spaces than traditional public spaces.

*"Social network sites allow publics to gather. At the same time, by serving as a space where speech takes place, they are also publics themselves. The sites themselves also distinguish between public and private, where public means that a profile is visible to anyone and private means that it is Friends-only."*  
(D. Boyd)

4. Velibeyoglu K.,1999, "Realm in the information age", available at : <http://www.angelfire.com/ar/corei/cyberps.html> [accessed on April 2011]

5. Greenfield, A., 2010, "The City is here for You to use", available at : <http://cartographer.tumblr.com/post/47977780/adam-greenfield-the-city-is-here-for-you-to-use> [accessed on May 2011]

6. Khan, U.,2008, "The Telectroscope, London's window on New York", available at : <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsttopics/howaboutthat/2009641/The-Telectroscope-Londons-window-on-New-York.html> [accessed on May 2011]

7. NAI, 2010, " Zien wat er niet is", available at: [http://www.nai.nl/content/597441/zien\\_wat\\_er\\_niet\\_is](http://www.nai.nl/content/597441/zien_wat_er_niet_is) [accessed on April 2011]

## CONCLUSION

There are several conclusions which we can draw. First there is a tendency in shifting of people from traditional public spaces to privatized buildings or spaces. But due to the nature of these privatized institutes the traditional public spaces like streets, squares and parks will still remain important for the city and its people. These places will still be the public domain where people can express their ideas, protest or discuss. However as architects we should design public spaces or redesign existing spaces in a way so that security elements and a human friendly environment has been taken into account. Unhuman-scale like the Schouwburgplein in Rotterdam should be changed into a more human friendly square which people can use and enjoy in a pleasant and save way.

Another aspect is that technical devices like augmented reality can add another dimension to the traditional public space by adding layers of information in the public space. So even if this technology is in an exploration face, we can still expect that there will be an extra layer on top of every public space where history, stories, reviews, photos or even schedule of events could be showed. Another conclusion which we can draw is that technology without any doubts has influenced our way of interacting with each other and our perception of space. The public and private relation has changed and in the future there will be a new balance. Our network is not limited anymore to our own neighborhood or the direct surrounding. The internet has tremendously enlarged our range in network. There could be someone at the other side of the world which is part of our private network; the range to connect to people is actually unlimited and is over the entire world. Despite our network being unlimited it's also more specific. We might have friend and contacts in every part over the world but at the same time we might not know our own neighbor.

In fact this tendency has a negative effect on the social cohesion in the physical area. The introvert parochial will increase misunderstandings between each other.

Despite this we as designers can't force people to change their habits. We are only able to give more quality to public spaces and create a better condition for public domain.

In the end we still live in a physical space and we are more a less attached to our surroundings. To have a save and trusted surrounding we need to understand and participate with people in our surrounding. A tide community is a must for a lively area. Camera's, fences and rules are just little tools to prevent illegal activities and it can add some security, but these tools will not create a trusted area without the community itself.

In the case of Rotterdam we can see that there are enough public spaces to work with. Especially, in the city center of Rotterdam where the public spaces are badly defined. Also these public spaces are rather too big in scale. So the task will be to transform these spaces into a more human scale area and to add extra function to it so people can appreciate it more. Only then these public spaces can regain their public function and become the key element for the city and the city life once again.



View on the future Market hall in Rotterdam Photo: [http://www.nai.nl/mmbase/images/639200/SARA\\_screenie.jpg](http://www.nai.nl/mmbase/images/639200/SARA_screenie.jpg) [online] Date: May 2011

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# Iconic Rotterdam

in search for monumentalism

Essay

Florian Jasper Nugteren 1169351

Once I was alone, standing out from a thousand miles away  
Life flowered inside these walls, the streets were drained  
There was no need to see the sun, there's enough light inside  
I felt immortal  
When life bursted out of me, new ones arrived  
Now there are many, clustered where I once ruled  
Visible from a million miles up, together we became one, an icon

Florian Nugteren 2011

## INTRODUCTION

The perception of a city is much done by its design. In the 19th century streetlights were placed in the streets. This established a tremendous change in the life style of its inhabitants. The streets could now be used in the dark with the safety of light. The lifespan of a city day grew, giving the city opportunity to a more public and commercial life. Now, shops, warehouses, museums, café's, discotheques dominate the city centre. One could say that public buildings define the identity of a city. The public domain tends to shift more and more into these buildings. First boulevards were the heart of the public domain, now it seems that only shopping malls accommodate the public. The urban block first consisted of a low-rise typology where public functions were facing the street. With the development of the skyscraper these functions were stacked on top of each other, thereby making the building introvert. By doing so the street has become less appropriable. In the concepts for the first 100-story skyscraper, led by Theodore Starlett in 1911, they envisioned it to be a "city in itself". The 100-story building is a metropolis on its own containing cultural, commercial and industrial activities.<sup>1</sup> This development changed the representation of buildings dramatically. Rem Koolhaas writes about the exterior and interior representation in *Delirious New York*:

*"Buildings have both an interior and an exterior. In Western architecture there has always been the humanistic assumption that it is desirable to establish a moral relationship between the two, whereby the exterior makes certain revelations about the interior that the interior corroborates. The "honest" façade speaks about the activities it conceals. [...] In the deliberate discrepancy between container and contained New York's makers discover an area of unprecedented freedom. They exploit and formalize it the architectural equivalent of a lobotomy – the surgical severance of the connection between the frontal lobes and the rest of the brain to relieve some mental disorder*

*by disconnecting thought processes from emotions. The architectural equivalent separates exterior and interior architecture. In this way the Monolith spars the outside world agonies of the continuous changes raging inside it. It hides everyday life."*<sup>2</sup>

With buildings becoming more introvert, and the exterior less communicative to its surroundings, the question that arises: Can a building still communicate and contribute to the development of a city?

## THE BILBAO EFFECT

In present time Rem Koolhaas statement from *Delirious New York* mentioned before is debatable. I agree that public life shifts into the building, and thereby the interior becomes of more communicative importance than the exterior. Nevertheless in the last decades public buildings have the tendency to be iconic. By being iconic the exterior communicates with its surroundings. It doesn't reflect on the functions inside of the building, but it reflects on the city as a stage. Screaming for attention. These icons communicate on a worldwide scale, and thereby making the presence of the city known. Iconic structures have been created throughout the history, from ancient structures as the pyramids in Egypt, to the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona. In this essay I will only refer to the iconic architecture from the last decades. Social forces drive this iconic architecture, which demands for instant fame and economic growth. In the past important public buildings, such as a cathedral or a city hall, expressed shared meaning and conveyed it through well-known conventions.<sup>3</sup> In an interview with *California Literary Review* Charles Jencks describes an iconic building as follows:

*"The iconic building shares certain aspects both with an iconic object, such as a Byzantine painting of Jesus, and the philosophical definition of an icon, that is, a sign with some factor in common with the thing it rep-*



*resents. On the one hand, to become iconic a building must provide a new and condensed image, be high in figural shape or gestalt, and stand out from the city. On the other hand, to become powerful it must be reminiscent in some ways of unlikely but important metaphors and be a symbol fit to be worshipped, a hard task in a secular society.”<sup>4</sup>*

The need to be iconic should never undermine the quality of architecture and that of the public domain. Structures such as the Markthal by MVRDV emphasize and embrace the public domain with an iconic building. In this way an icon can communicate with the people and with the city. The iconic era is partly made possible by the advanced constructive methods, which created a freedom of architectural creativity. This developed in a state of mind where iconic architecture can be considered as a product for branding a city. Rem Koolhaas wrote about the demands of contemporary architecture in Building Design:

*“The idolatry of the market has drastically changed our legitimacy and status even though our status have never been higher... It is really unbelievable what the market demands [from architecture] now. It demands recognition, it demands difference and it demands iconographic architecture.”<sup>5</sup>*

When one thinks about Paris, one immediately thinks about the Eiffel tower. The same counts for Sydney and the Opera House or New York and the Empire State Building. One could say that a city is represented by its icons. Rotterdam wants to typify itself as the architecture city of Holland. The strongest icon in Rotterdam is the Erasmusbrug. Strong iconic structures can give a boost to a city. For example the Opera House in Sydney placed the city on the international map. Businesses now want to have their office close to that building because of its grandeur. This increased the value of the surrounding ground, giving the city an economical boost. The Opera House, the Eiffel tower and the Empire State Building fulfil an

international reference point, which breaks all boundaries. This relatively new phenomenon is something that has actually occurred for centuries, called the *Bilbao effect*.<sup>6</sup> The Bilbao effect occurs when one iconic building changes the identity of an entire neighbourhood or city.

The history of Bilbao, Spain, stretches back to medieval times, but with the completion of the Guggenheim museum, with its sculptural architecture, the city became internationally famous. The fame, however, was not just a coincidence; it was the result of a conscious move to reposition Bilbao on the world stage. The industrial city needed an iconic image comparable to the Eiffel Tower and the Sydney Opera House to symbolize its emergence in Europe and play a role in the globalized economy. Bilbao needed a monument. One building and \$110 million later, Bilbao became a world city.<sup>7</sup>

Holland doesn't have a real metropolis, but Rotterdam is striving to be the first. Although Rotterdam already has international allure, being a harbour city that functions as a gate to Europe, but one can't call it a real metropolis. Jane Jacobs describes a metropolis as:

*“Any settlement that becomes good at import-replacing becomes a city. And any city that repeatedly experiences, from time to time, explosive episodes of import-replacing keeps its economy up-to-date and helps keep itself capable of casting forth streams of innovative export work. [...] The process feeds itself, and once well underway, does not die down in a given*

1. Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York*, p91

2. Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York*, p100

3. Charles Jencks, *The Iconic Building*, p7

4. Paul Comstock, *California Literary Review*, <http://calitreview.com/70>

5. Charles Jencks, *The Iconic Building*, p101

6. Charles Jencks, *The Iconic Building*, p11

7. Joseph Giovannini, [http://www.acturban.org/biennial/doc\\_net\\_cities/the\\_bilbao\\_effect.htm](http://www.acturban.org/biennial/doc_net_cities/the_bilbao_effect.htm)

*city until all the imports that are economically feasible to replace at that time and in that place have been replaced. [...] The process vastly enlarges city economies as well as diversifying them, and causes cities to grow in spurts, not evenly and gradually.”<sup>8</sup>*

One could say that with this statement Rotterdam is a metropolis. The city underwent some explosive growth due to its successful harbour. The harbour creates commercialization, job opportunities and an international status. In my opinion a metropolis is more than just economics and growth. In my experience cities like Singapore, Tokyo and Hong Kong are true metropolises. These cities live 24 hours a day. The cities are always bustling with activities and people and they are internationally known for its modernity and economics.

In Rotterdam the bombing in the Second World War created a fragmentation city with a lack of identity. Without the homogeneity of the city, in its habitants, but also in architecture, Rotterdam became the playground for experimentation. The main structure remained, but the whole centre had to be rebuilt, with the exception for a few buildings. The common history of certain buildings vaporised and a brand new identity emerged. Rotterdam is a city that, after the bombings in the Second World War, strives for modernity. Striving for modernity is one of the key ingredients for the development of a metropolis. After the war the centre had to be rebuilt quickly and cheap. Due to that war and the reconstruction, Rotterdam gained the image of a cold, concrete city. This concrete jungle sets place in the commercial city centre. The Erasmusbrug became the icon of the city, but the effect wasn't as big as a Bilbao effect. Though this icon is of great importance, besides of international allure with economic benefits, a city needs its monuments.

## MONUMENTALITY

Monuments can create coherence in a city. They can represent a certain time spirit, monarchy or a religious history. These monuments represent the common history of a city and its inhabitants. Modern architects saw monumental architecture as palaces, churches and city halls as obsolete, but in the mid 1930 architects as Lewis Mumford proposed to reintroduce the concept of the monument into the modern dictionary. Instead of reinterpreting the concept of monument as 'memorial', they introduced a wider idea of a building that is representative rather than utilitarian.<sup>9</sup>

This representative architecture can appear as an icon. If iconic architectural is by definition monumental is debatable. Monumental architecture doesn't necessarily lie in its appearance. On the contrary, the creation of a monument is not always intentional. In 1949 Lewis Mumford wrote the following about the issue of monumentality:

*"It is by its social intention and not by its abstract form that the monument reveals itself.”<sup>10</sup>*

The German art historian Alois Riegl distinguishes two types of monuments in his study *The Modern Cult of Monuments. Its Character and Its Origin*, namely, the monument that is intentional and the one that is unintentional. The intentional monument is a "human creation", erected for the specific purpose of recognizing important human deeds of events and keeping them alive for future generations. Much more numerous are the unintentional monuments. The meaning of these monuments is not determined by its creators, but by our modern perceptions of these monuments, that is retrospective cultural memory.<sup>11</sup> James Stirling wrote about the importance of monumentality in a city:

*"In a city it's essential to have landmarks – a city without monuments would be no place at all. For me, monumentalism has nothing to do with style of size, but entirely to do with presence – thus a chair can be*

*monumental – I have several.*"<sup>12</sup>

In the reconstruction of Rotterdam city centre icons appeared to create the new monuments. Although it is clear that monuments not necessarily have to be icons. Nevertheless in Rotterdam they erupted as icons. Though these icons can shift through time. Something that used to be an iconic building can lose its meaning by building an even bigger icon next to it. Or the iconic aspects from a building can lose its sparkle through familiarity with the building. The Lijnbaan, in my opinion an unintentional monument, was iconic for a short period. Not in its appearance, but in its body of thoughts behind the project. The Lijnbaan, being the first pedestrian promenade, gained some international status. Unfortunately this status didn't last. One can ask himself; what is the time span of an icon and when does a monumental status arise? This question can only be answered through time.

## DEAD ICONS

To increase Rotterdam's status of architecture city, Rotterdam is constructing new buildings designed by world famous architecture firms. Two are done by OMA (Office for Metropolitan Architecture), the new post office done by UNStudio and the Markthal by MVRDV. These buildings are all highly iconic in its appearance. By doing so the city tends to increase its international status. In my opinion these buildings won't create a Bilbao effect in any matter. This is because they are simply not iconic enough in an area that's dominated with iconic architecture. With the construction of more and more icons in the city centre of Rotterdam, one could say that by doing so the iconic effect dies out. How can something be iconic in an iconic environment?

If one looks at a city like Las Vegas, and in particular The Strip of this city, it is an area that exists of copying the most famous icons from all over the world. The representation of this city is not done by picking out

one icon. One would rather see the city or The Strip as an icon in its whole. This phenomenon can also be seen in Manhattan, New York. The same could be applied on Rotterdam. Rotterdam would be iconic in 'the playground for modern architecture', and not so much iconic with a few particular buildings. In the mission to regain Rotterdam's a monumental status and in the attempt to grow into a metropolis, I personally think this is a good development.

## AUTONOMOUS CITY

One could say that by just placing iconic architecture in a city to create a monumental coherence, this city becomes too fragmented and individual. If one looks at a highly iconic city like Singapore, one could say that the city is fragmented and individual due its iconic city centre, like in Orchard Road, Marina Bay and the Harbour Front. Singapore can be considered as a true metropolis; a 24-hour, commercial city that lives from its harbour and is expanding everyday. Singapore is a tremendous city full of life and culture. It is a city where the west and the east meet. Singapore's architecture is generally more modern than that of Rotterdam, but also highly iconic. Great architects of our time are represented in this city. All this iconic architecture made the city to what it is today: world famous. This iconic centre has its reflection on the public sphere. Sennett describes the modern city's public sphere as:

*"..a space in which anonymous individuals interact."*<sup>13</sup>

This can also be said for Rotterdam. Iconic buildings, which are by definition autonomous and thereby individual, represent in a way the life we live today. Iconic buildings interact with each other, but there is no real

8. Jane Jacobs, *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*

9. Tom Avermaete, *Architectural Positions*, p166

10. Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings*, p112

11. Tom Avermaete, *Architectural Positions*, p166

12. Tom Avermaete, *Architectural Positions*, p207

13. Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man*. P29'

connection. In an iconic city centre like that in Singapore and Rotterdam, one could see this is a reflection on society today: a place full of anonymous individuals. This way of constructing a city didn't have a negative effect on the development of Singapore, rather a positive effect. The effect is like the Bilbao effect, but on a bigger scale. Rotterdam could use Singapore like a precedent for its future developments.

## CONCLUSION

The development of the skyscraper led to a shift of public life. The building could be considered as a city by itself. The interior became of more communicative importance than the exterior. Although public life shifted into the building, a building can still communicate with and contribute to a city's development. The quality of the architecture and that of the public should always be taken in consideration when building an icon.

A well-functioning city centre gives a city the opportunity to grow. Rotterdam, a city that is striving for modernity after the bombing in the Second World War, has the opportunity to grow to a real metropolis. To regain its monumentality lost in the bombing, icons emerged. Although monumentality doesn't necessarily lie in its size or shape, in Rotterdam this was the case. A city needs its monuments to create coherence in the city. The biggest monumental icon is the Erasmusbrug. A structure that is famous around the world. Iconic architecture, which is driven by social forces with the demand for instant fame and economic growth, can have a tremendous impact on a city. It can put a city on the world map with a single building. This can be seen in the so-called Bilbao effect. The Bilbao effect is something that has occurred for centuries, but after the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao by Frank Gehry the phenomena was born. Icons can shift through time or lose its meaning by familiarity. The lifespan of an icon or a Bilbao effect can only be

known through time.

Iconic architecture can be compared with the commercial branding of a product. In this case a building is used to brand a city. By building icon after icon one could say that the iconicity dies out. A group of icons can also be an icon, like The Strip in Las Vegas. One could also say that due to the iconicity a city becomes too autonomous. This development can also be seen as a reflection on today's society: a space where individuals interact.

Rotterdam should continue to be the playground of architectural experiments. This can have a positive effect on the city's development, as it had in Singapore. The city can grow into a real metropolis with international allure, branding itself through architecture.

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Picture on front cover, Florian Nugteren 2011





# Meet in Heterotopia

**Density and the everyday life**

## Research



## INTRODUCTION

The whole research is based on the notion of public domain.

By studying the notion in several books and texts, such as 'In Search of Public Domain', 'The fall of Public Man', 'Architectural Position', 'The Dutch Urban Block and The Public Realm' and 'Of other spaces' from Foucault, we grasp the definition of public domain. We understand that the decline in public domain is still ongoing, due to the transformation of social structure, media-driven society, etc. Public domain is no longer presented before us in everyday life. On the contrary, people keep more to themselves. When we visited Rotterdam centre the first time, we witnessed its lively scenarios in Lijnbaan Street: some people were shopping with friends; others were sitting on the benches in the middle of the street. However at the same time, we also saw the barren scenarios in other places in the city centre. This phenomenon intrigued us to analyse the centre. The following analyses made us understand why in some places in the city centre the density is much higher or lower, and which factors contribute to this.

## Research Framework--

1. literature/text of Foucault on Heterotopia

2. Analyse the density through daytime and nighttime in Lijnbaan area

- questionnaire
- interview
- visualise in graphic

3. Study factors that contribute to the density.

- function
- building heights
- accessibility
- street furniture

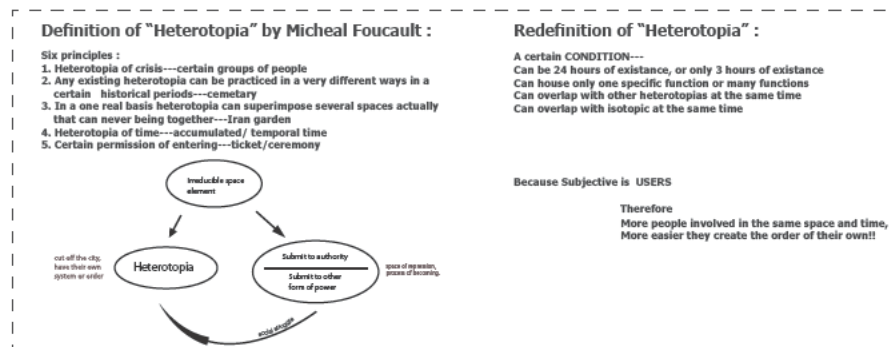
4. Study Site mechanism: know which groups of people to target and what kind of program to insert in the design task.

- main function zone
- small function (kiosks)
- circulation system
- unique object

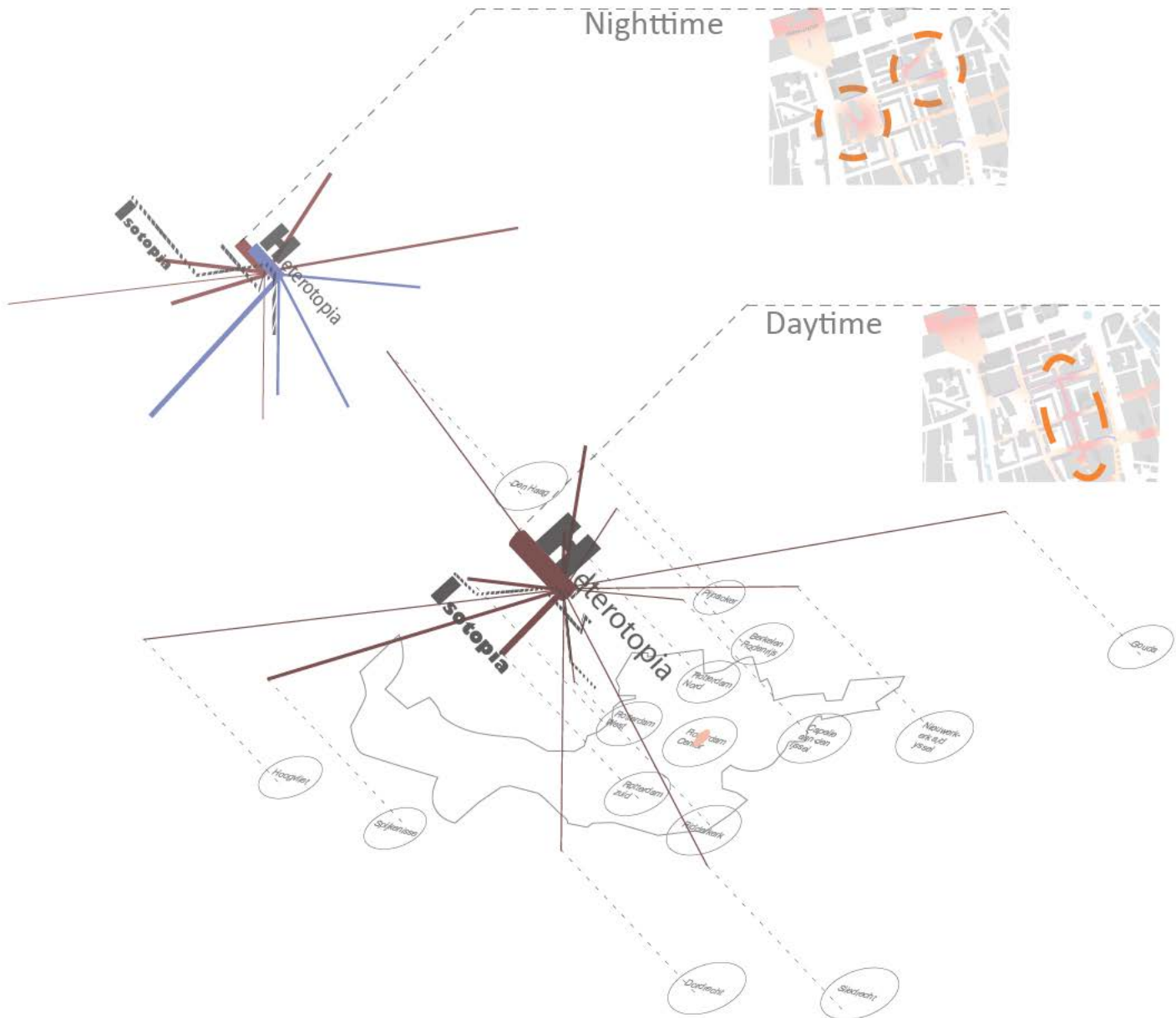
## 1. LITERATURE--REDEFINE HETEROTOPIA

To understand the density itself, we read the topic of Heterotopia by Micheal Foucault. He defines space as an irreducible element, which either submit to the power of authority, or regain its own system that is cut off from the society, which he called "Heterotopia". However, the "Heterotopia" that he defines is not enough to describe the condition in the current situation that we witnessed in Rotterdam centre. He explains certain situations well, there we can use it as our example to elaborate the certain condition that we see in city center.

precise functions allow people to create certain condition, the people exude certain atmosphere influencing others behavior. This whole process is the "Heterotopia" that we redefine. (See the explanation below)





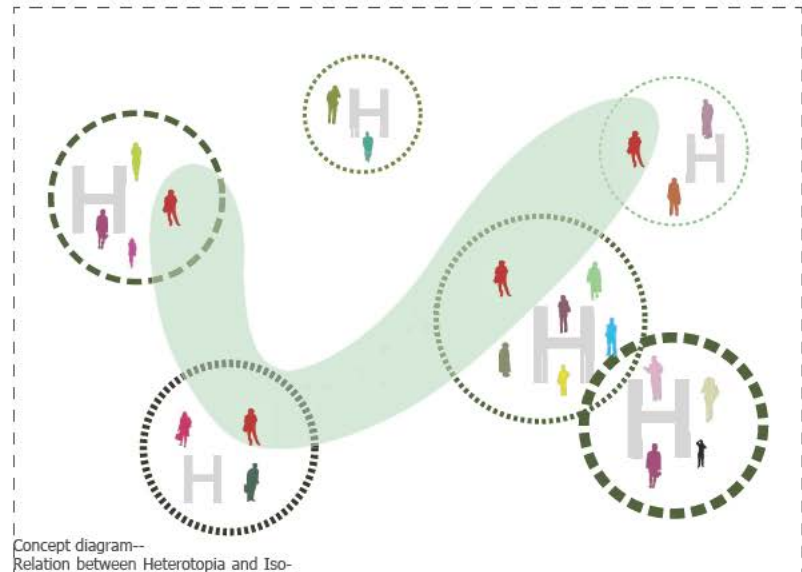
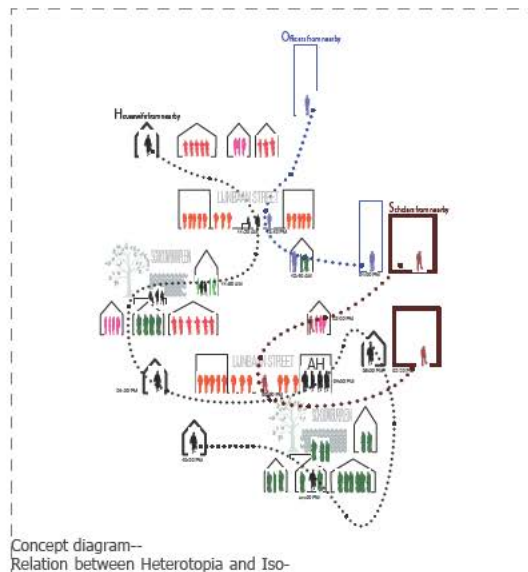


Density and the two groups H/I—  
 This is the result from questionnaire, shows Heterotopic and Isotopic groups constitute the density

The result from the questionnaire enables us to make the assumption that people who contribute to the density can be divided into two main groups. The first is the group who comes with strong purpose, such as shopping purpose. We define this group as the "Heterotopic group". The second group we define is the "Isotopic group". This group of people uses the area on his/her daily routine, this could be sitting down on the benches in Lijnbaan before heading on.

For example, the graphic on the previous page shows our interpretation on the questionnaire. From the diagram we can read that during the daytime people come to Lijnbaan Street with strong shopping purpose, while some people from nearby, like students, officers, housewife etc., come here for a short stay, and quickly move on to other places. The two different behaviours show that at the same place different conditions are provided in order to fulfill the different needs of people.

We made a definition for how people function in the city center of Rotterdam: there are two major groups creating two different conditions, Heterotopia and Isotopia. People who create heterotopic condition, sometimes overlap with those who create isotopic conditions (See graphic below). In this way, we can understand the potential of each place in the city center.



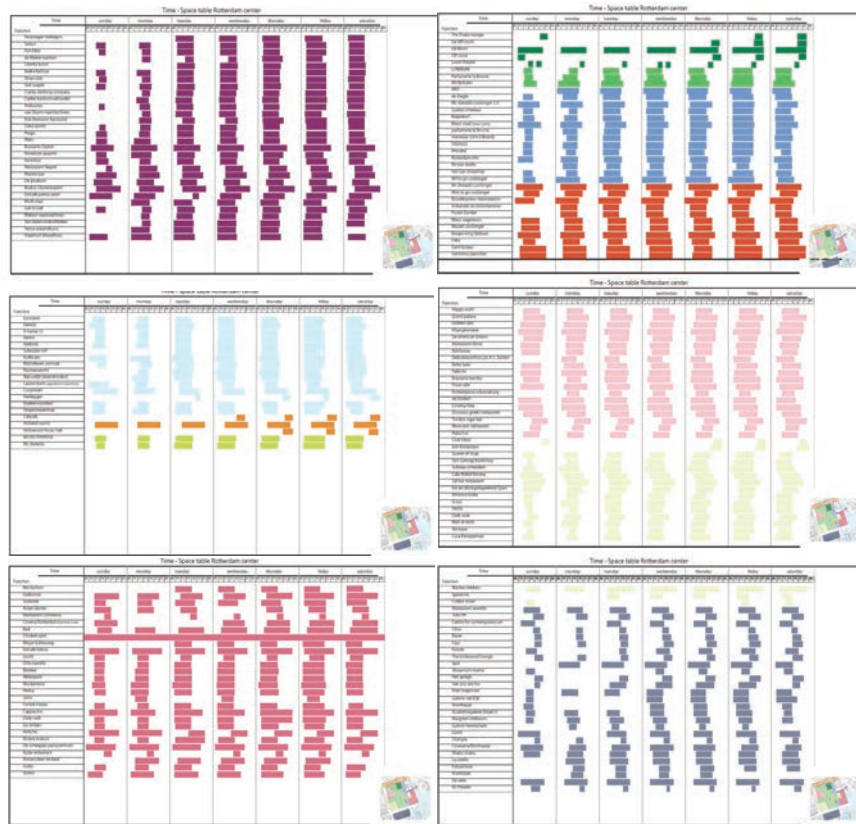
### 3. FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE H/I GROUPS

Now recognising two groups, the Heterotopic group and Isotopic group, we see who contribute to the density in the area. At the same time, also understand that the place itself can service people different needs. However, we still don't know how this situation happens. Therefore, we set some physical analysis in order to know the physical factors in the environment which may effect the two different groups of people.

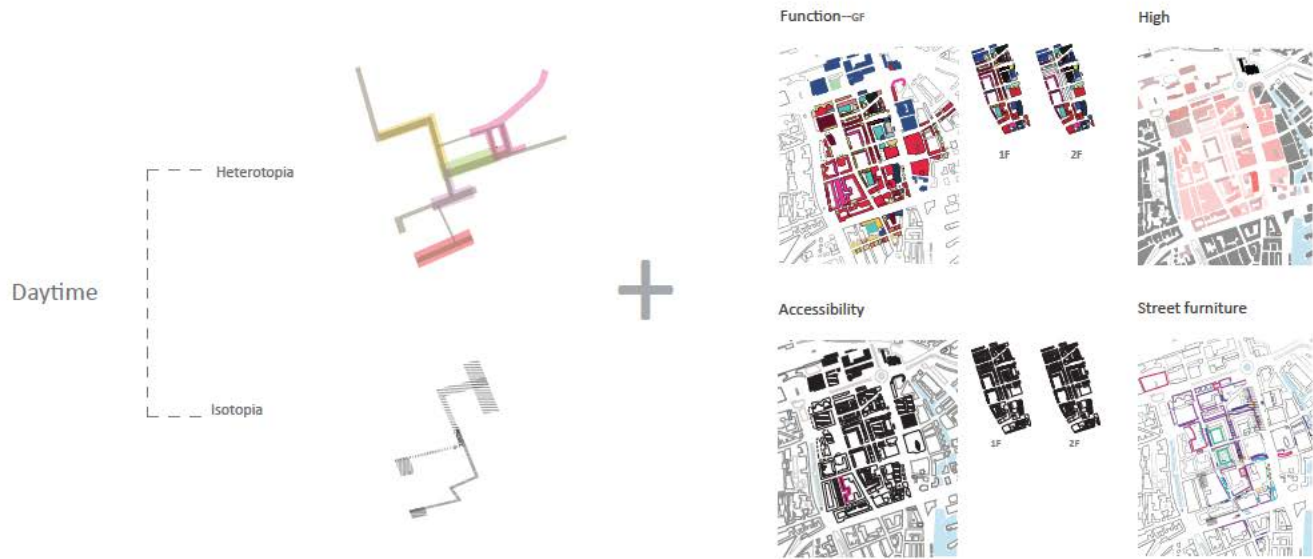
At the same time, we were also mapping the density according to the two different groups of people through daytime and nighttime in the city center. Together with studying the opening hours of the shops and which kind of functions there are in the city center, we came to know where the Heterotopic groups and Isotopic groups will appear. According to the maps, where it shows Heterotopic and Isotopic groups (see diagram next page), we superimpose all maps of function, height of the building, accessibility of each function, and street furniture.

We come to the conclusion that Heterotopia is mostly influenced by

the functions and their proximity. Where for the Isotopia the factors of influence are the proximity of street furniture and also the spatial quality present. An interest to a specific function can also attract people from this group.



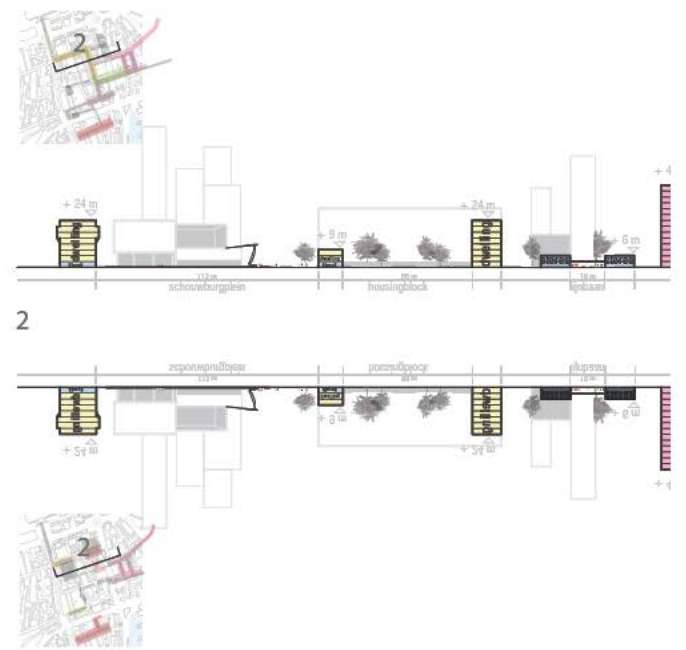
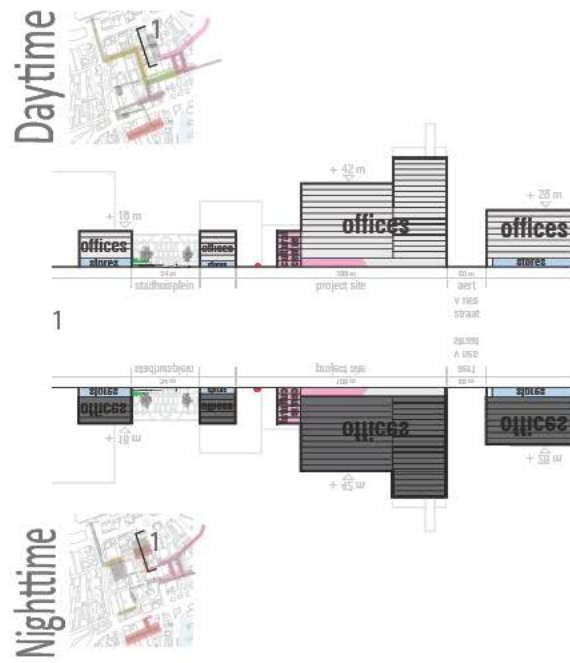
Opening hours of the shops in Lijnbaan area--



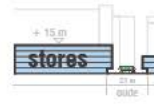
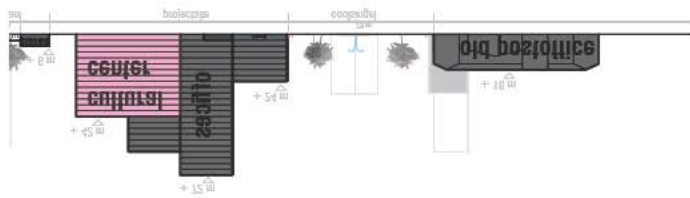
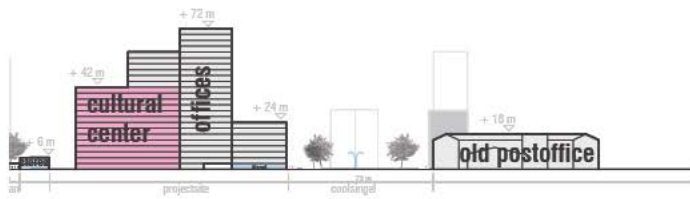
Diagram—Four factors that influence H and I group during daytime



Diagram—Four factors that influence H and I group during nighttime



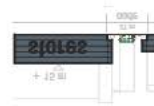
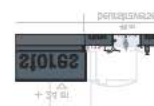
Section in Daytime and Nighttime



3

4

5





#### 4. SITE MECHANISM

To create or control the two conditions, we now know that with our design we can influence the scenarios. We can bring back the density to our site in the evening, which is currently dead at this time. Moreover, by investigating the site mechanism, we know which groups to target in order to facilitate the city center, and what kind of programs could be inserted in our design.

In general we divided the site into four layers. Each layer accordingly to two different groups, the Heterotopic group and Isotopic group, each to be discussed through time.

The first layer illustrates the main function zones in the city centre: multi-function zone, shopping zone, office zone, and residential zone. Multi-function zone features cinema and theater, as well as other creative shops like music studio and designproduct shops. Functions in this layer serve 24 hours mainly due to the long opening hours of cinema, theater, disco club, and bars. Also the square, Schouwburgplein and Stadhuisplein gives a lively nightlife in the area. Shopping zone features its shopping street that attracts many young people and people from nearby.

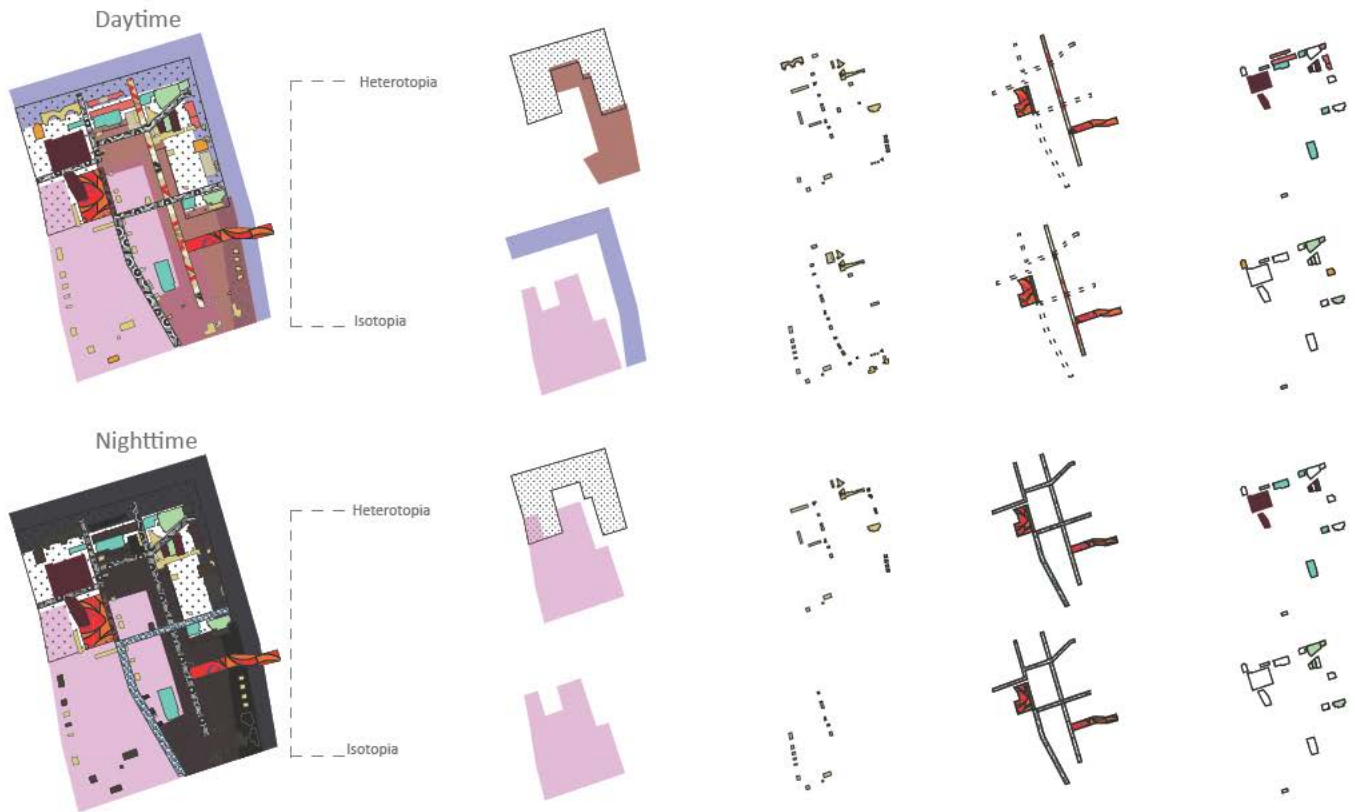
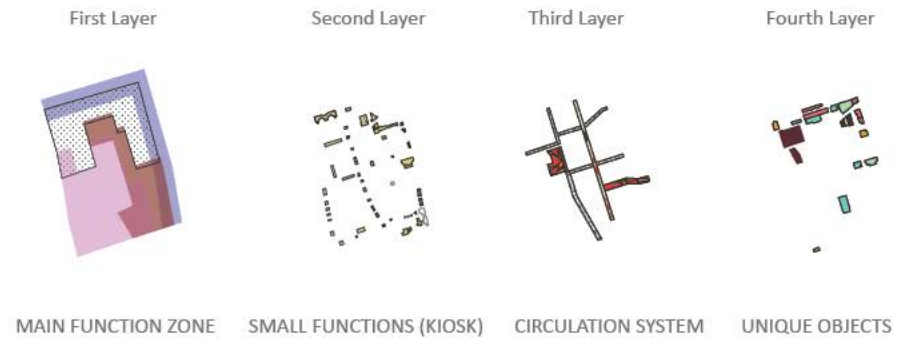
It also provides the block connection to the city via the Lijnbaan Street. However, this zone is totally dead at night. Office zone houses many officers from different places. In the future, it will also house more international groups. Normally they go to Lijnbaan Street during their short break. They constitute the density of Isotopic group. Residential zone, on the contrary, gives the density to both Heterotopic and Isotopic groups. It can function 24 hours in the city center, which means residents are the potential groups to facilitate the area, even at night.

The second layer shows the small functions (kiosks) in the area. Each single function can either attract people with strong purpose or to do their daily routine. The cluster of small similar functions can even create the same Heterotopic condition.

The third layer indicates the main circulation system of the area. There are two main roads that connect the blocks to the city: one is explicit road, Lijnbaan Street, which connects south to north; the other is implicit road that is formed by

two big elements, Koopgoot and Schouwburgplein. It links the block to the city in west-east direction. During the daytime, both the explicit and implicit road function well. However, during the nighttime, both roads are not active at all. Instead, the road 'Aert van Nesstraat', might become an important road, since it is the only road in the area that is able to access by cars to the residential zone.

The fourth layer marks the unique objects in the Lijnbaan area. This is the assumption layer according to what we think the certain functions are having significant impact in the area. Such as cinema and theater functions can attract people from more distant area; academic institution contains students who will go to the area during the short break; Hotels are the places where it brings various of people from different fields or even from overseas.



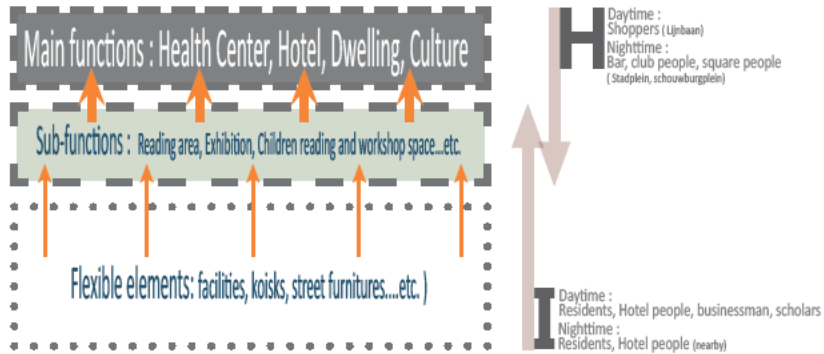
Diagram—site mechanism in four layers during daytime and nighttime

## CONCLUSION

The design task is to revive public domain in the city centre of Rotterdam, where it seems to decline at the moment. People go out mostly only when they have strong purposes and don't really interact with others. This could potentially create segregation as some people will never cross path due to fundamental differences in the purpose of being outside. The everyday life is thus becoming a rare scenario. We could say that it has become victim to places with strong functions.

To regain the scenarios of everyday life in the city center, we make out two categories from the density in the area, the Heterotopic and Isotopic group. Heterotopic group refers to the group of people who come to the places with strong and specific purpose; the isotopic group stands for people who come to the places on their daily routine. When the two groups emerge in space at the same time, there will appear public domain. Here anyone can enter and have unforeseen encounters created by spatial design. This requires distinction in function and hierarchy in function: main functions, sub-functions and the functions that relates to the

functions surrounding our site. People with strong purposes could be content in these programs. However, the most important is the setting of the small elements and small facilities. They play a gluing role that enable people to have surprising encounters, as well their functional use makes people go there on their daily routine.



Diagram—design strategy rules





# Meet in Heterotopia

**Density and the everyday life**

## Masterplan

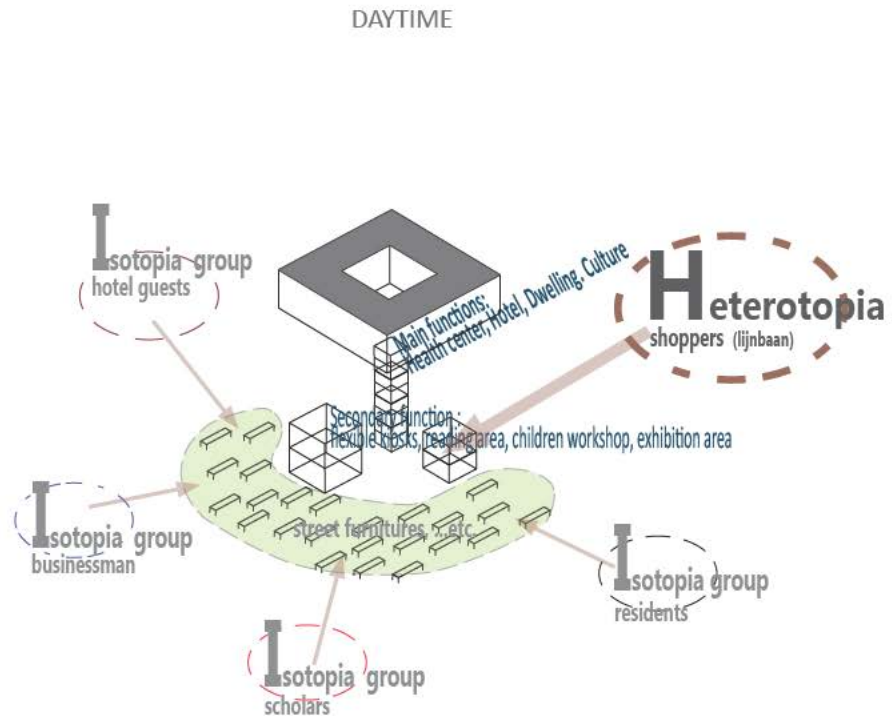
Gretha Kuurstra | Chen-I Wu

## INTRODUCTION

We have analysed the site by looking at the two main groups present, the Heterotopic and Isotopic. To understand who the people are, and which factors influence them in the public domain, we studied the physical elements on site.

From here we could elaborate the site mechanism what shows us the elements we have to deal with when designing in this area. Of course it's not just that we have to deal with the elements on site, they provide for us to create public domain in relation to the existing as well. We can see where the two groups are and with our design we can arrange for them to have unstrained interaction.

The people we find in the area who can visit the site during the day on their daily routine are; hotel guests, businessman, scholars and residents from nearby. The shoppers would be the group that can be attracted to stay on site due to a more specific function.

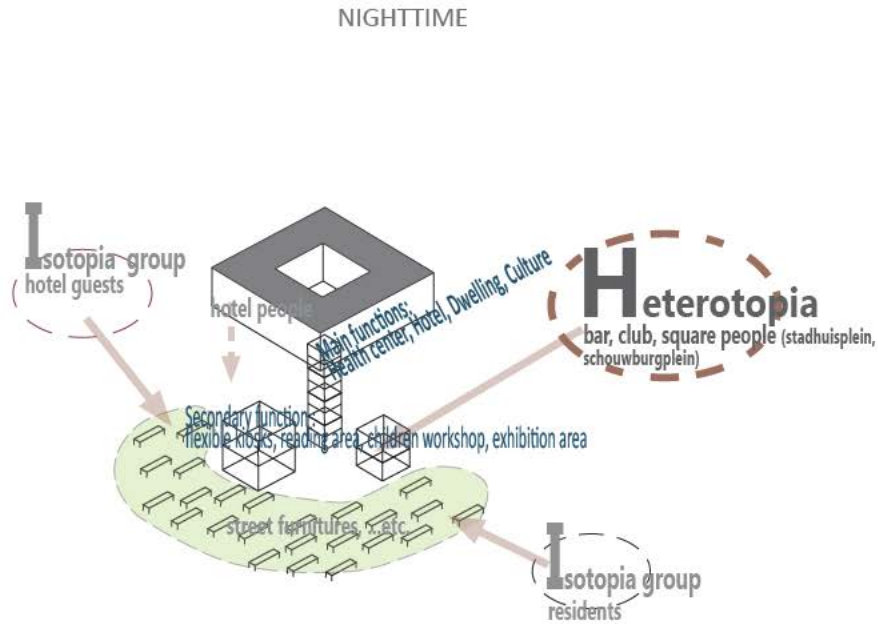


Concept diagram of rule (daytime)--

People who constitute Heterotopia condition, shoppers, are to be attracted by installing main and secondary related functions. Different typology of building installed will allow them to meet people who use the site as an Isotopia condition; People who constitute Isotopia condition, are to be attracted by placing various street furniture which invite them to use the site on a daily basis.

The different groups of people change through time. We know for instance that after closing time of the shops in the Lijnbaanstraat, the 'shoppers' group will disappear from the area. On other locations the density might get higher. We studied the conditions of the groups to know how to attract the certain groups which are already there at that time. At the same time with our design we can attract new groups and make a new scenario appear.

The people we find in the area who can visit the site during the night on their daily routine are; hotel guests and the residents from nearby. The main group who is in the area with a strong purpose during the night, are the people who go to the bar, club, square on Stadhuisplein and Schouwburgplein.



Concept diagram of rule (nighttime)–

At night, Hotel people which we inserted on site, will use the site on a daily basis. The shrinking groups of people who create Isotopia condition are still be attracted by installing the flexible elements on site which may shared with people from Stadhuisplein and Schouwburgplein.



## CASE STUDY

*The 21st century museum of contemporary art in Kanazawa, by Sanaa.*

This project of SANNA drew our attention because of the different layers it contains, where people with different attentions can visit and encounter each other.

We were curious about the building organization, circulation and visual relations. These can tell us the relation to the visitors.

The museum is located in the centre of the city on an open field with additional functions, like parking and playground etc. Around the site are roads determining the plot, making the area well reachable and, due to the glass facade, also well visible from all sides. But there are only three entree's to the building all positioned on the side of the residential district.

### Hierarchy

When entering the periphery of the building, it's like a circular foyer. It's the most public place of the building that is still visually and physical related to the public outside. Here the people are still inbetween the public outside and the enclosed main functions; gallery and educational institutions. Inbetween the enclosed

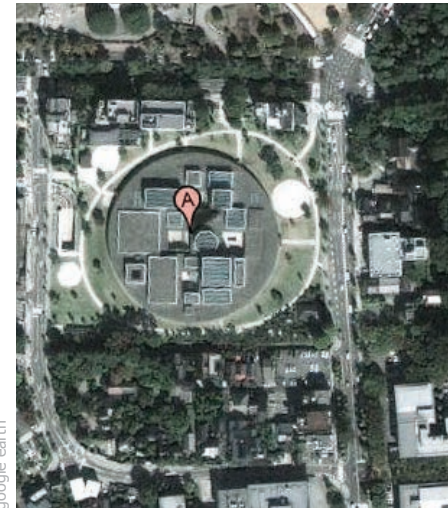
main functions are squares. More to the centre are void spaces connecting and attracting the public, leading them through the space.

The gallery function is positioned more to the centre of the building there people can walk more silently through between the boxes.

The educational function lays more on the outside, supporting the building with office function and supporting the main gallery function with library and kids studio.

The two main functions support each other and at the same time can attract their own audience.

The floorplan looks like an abstract display of enclosed functions and public spaces. But there is a clear grid positioning the enclosed boxes and leaving public spaces unbuilt. The hierarchy shows that in this very public floorplan, the centre of the building contains the gallery function that asks for a more serene space. And the functions attracting people from the surrounding area and gallery visitors' as well, are places more to the outside were. To make this encounter certain, encounter elements are put at the border between outer foyer and the gallery space. Here come to circulation systems together, encountering the biggest variety of people.



google earth

Site area: 26,000 square meters

Building area: 9,500 m<sup>2</sup>

Total Floor area: 17,300 m<sup>2</sup>

Completed: 2004



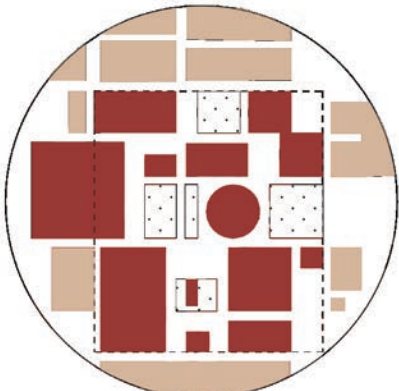
archiweb.cz



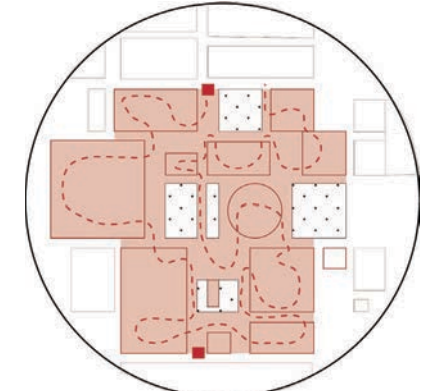
Floorplan



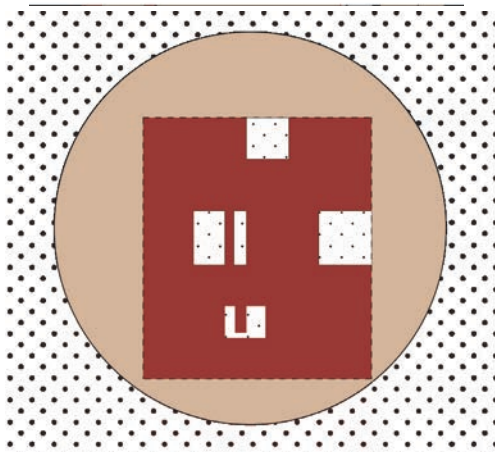
Circulation System



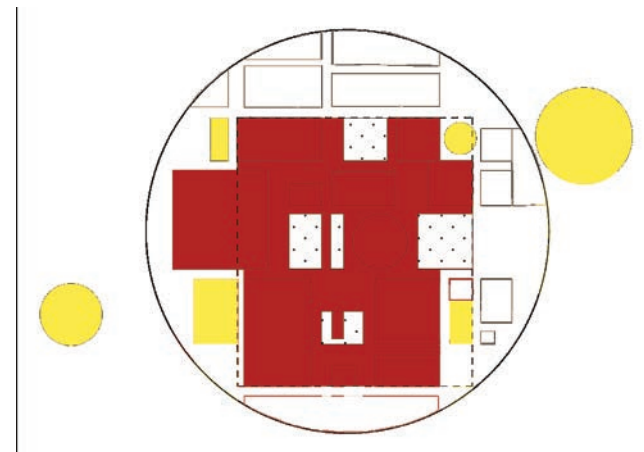
Grid System



sec. Circulation System



Program Hierarchy



Encounter Element

## CASE STUDY

*The music school in Lisbon,  
by Joao Luis Carrilho da Graca*

This project got mainly our attention because its circulation system, connecting public and private on its way.

The building site is situated inbetween the houses of an residential district. Its angle is parallel to the road and row-houses in the west. And the typical urban block with courtyard seems to relate to the big sized courtyard buildings at the east.

It's typical for the urban block with courtyard to see a enclosed space from the outside and inside become surprised with a wonderful garden space. Something similar happens also in this music school.

The entrance of the building is under the mass of the building but still in open connection with the outside. Moving from semi-closed space into enclosed space, you find yourself in a public courtyard surrounded by the school functions. For more privacy for playing your instrument, the upper level shows a public garden enclosed by the private study rooms. The Private moves among public when the school bell rings or a rooftop garden concert fills the air with music.

this case study show us how in an intentionally public facility 'school' with private functions 'studying', the two opposing spheres can support each other by spatial organisation.

The single entrance of the building, with its open spatial quality, leads to the public space inside. From here we can learn that because there is a single entrance, the public needs to be more certain to enter, comparing too many entrances which almost commends them to enter. The spatial quality of the entrance then confines the public to enter.

The case study of The 21st century museum shows us as well the spatial relation between public and private sphere. The spatial organisation of the functions inside, create space with more public or private sphere. Making clear with the many entrances, that the building is open to really everyone.

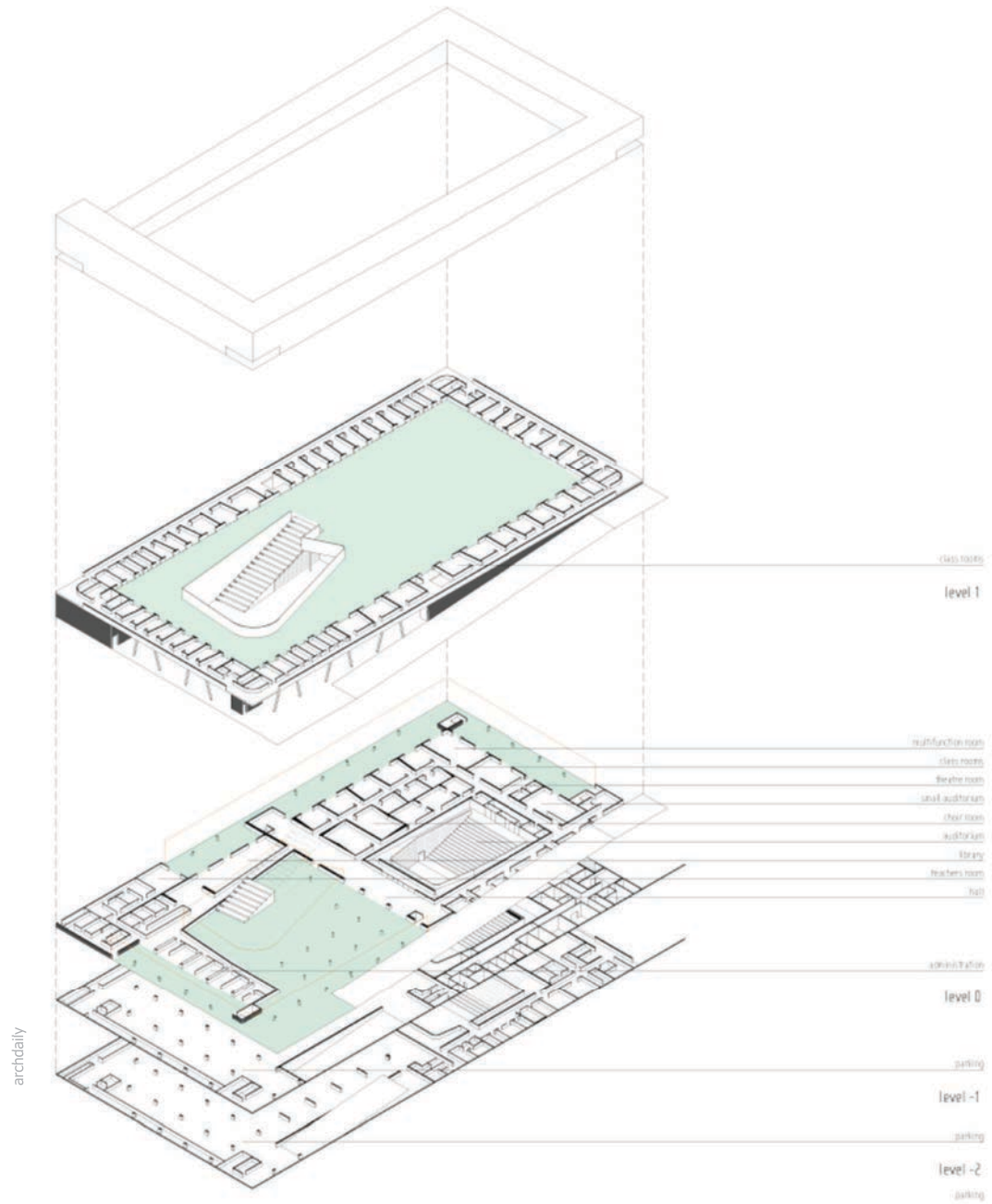


google earth

Site area: 26,000 square meters  
Building area: 9,500 m<sup>2</sup>  
Total Floor area: 17,300 m<sup>2</sup>  
Completed: 2004



archdaily



FLOORPLANS - PUBLIC SPACES

## HISTORY / MORPHOLOGY

Analysing the growth of Rotterdam from 13th century up to now, made us familiar with its strength and struggles of this city.

As the city developed next to the river Maas, the land had to be protected for flooding, and the groundwater had to be brought down. Therefore people made the water go inland perpendicular to the river Maas, building dikes and started to subdivide the land into parcels parallel to the Maas.

During the 15th and 16th century the city got permission to grow but unfortunately it needed to shrink because they couldn't protect it all. It left the east part of the city unbuild, and divided the city in a part above and the other part under 'Hoogstraat'.

Around 16th century Rotterdam water city florist due to the haring trade. The shipping business developed and Rotterdam became an international harbour city. The salesman got more power and made city growth possible, making the trade and shipping location move south-east (at Haringvliet).

Although the fortified city first served military purpose, the moment there was no treat anymore, building outside the city walls became possible. First the abandoned



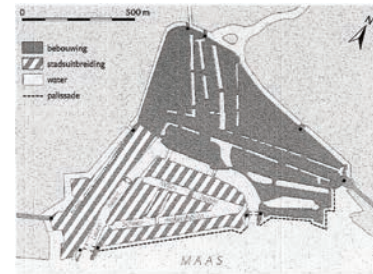
Rotterdamcity development 14th century

east part became build on. After that the VOC took position in the south-east, more luxurious buildings were build and the south-west part of the city became industrial area.

The subdivision of the land into parcels was due to the water, and it determined the city. The further growth of the city was because of the shipping industry, but only became possible due to excellent transport structure of waterways.

Interesting it is to see how water and transportation systems influenced Rotterdam lateron.

Laar.v.d. P and Jaarsveld.v. M, Historische atlas van Rotterdam - de groei van de stad in beeld, SUN publisher



Stadsuitbreiding in de zeventiende eeuw. Bron: Bonke 1996.

city development 17th century

At the beginning of the 19th century the Cool area was a rural area on the outskirts at the west of the city, nowadays west side of the Coolsingel. Here the land was still cut by ditches and lanes alongside. The parcels were run by landlords and the people of Rotterdam could rent ground to have a garden or put a summer hut. Because the growing industry at the south-west, this rural area had a lot of potential and too. Small businesses were build between the gardens, the Lijnbaan was a industrial building where they made rope. More to the end of the 19th century this Cool area became more urbanized. Garden became business, and business became housing. It turned the area into a maze of small streets attracting criminality and gave unhealthy situations.

In 1855 W.N.Rose came with a design proposal to revitalize the area. He designed 7 streets, each 20m wide, which run across the ditches and lanes. Only 5 of the streets where realised including 'Aert van Nesstraat'. New diged singles determined the area and made it look great. His plans of a sewer system for the city were not realized. His plan had great influence on the morphology of the area,

here closed building blocks arose and wealthy mansions were build. After the bombing in 1940, almost none of these building blocks were left, only the city hall, post office, hotel Atlanta, de Beijenkorf, stock exchange and the road structure were left. After the war the reconstruction of the Cool area started. Van den Broek en Bakema designed a shopping enter who carved the recognisable Lijnbaanstraat in the city scape, and becoming highly popular. A street only for pedestrians, with shops at ground level and office on top, expedition streets and housing with public garden behind it. The crossover road connecting Schouwburgplein and Stadhuisplein, and a road connecting from Coolsingel trough the Aert van Nesstraat to the other side of the city centre.

Through time the Coolsingel transformed from a main waterway into a important main road for car, train, metro and other traffic. This road became the face of economical prosperity, where the big building blocks that still stood after bombing are combined with high-rises and other officebuidlings.

Laar v.d. P and Jaarsveld v. M, Historische atlas van Rotterdam - de groei van de stad in beeld, SUN publisher



Around 1833



Around 1939

kaartenkamer TU-delft

## ACCESSEBILITY and SPATIAL EXPERIANCE

The questionnaire showed us that there were also allot people coming to the Lijnbaan street from other cities around Rotterdam. The accessibility of an area determines for a great part if it attracts many people.

Looking at Rotterdam transportation network, there are a view junctions in the city. Here all the available traffic comes together. These are the two stations 'Rotterdam Central' and 'Rotterdam Blaak' and the Coolsingel. This can also explains the outcome of the questionnaire, because the traffic connection goes from the city enter over the city border.

Our site marked with a black 'X' in the maps, shows also how good the accessibility is. Both stations are nearby and there are many metro-, tram- and bus stops in the area.

From the questionnaire we discovered that people walk from both stations or come by metro towards the site. If the people are from the surrounding, they take most often the tram. For the accessibility of our site, we can already see from where most of the public will enter.

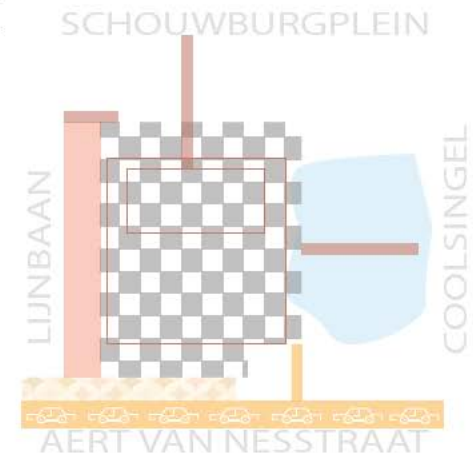
The people coming with the metro will approach the site from the Coolsingel. When coming from Blaak station the approach is also over the Coolsingel.

The people coming by train from Central station are a large group, and will approach from Lijnbaan or Aert van Nesstraat. For the tram and bus Aert van Nesstraat or Coolsingel are possible because they have many stops. Asumed for this moment that most people take the shortest route.

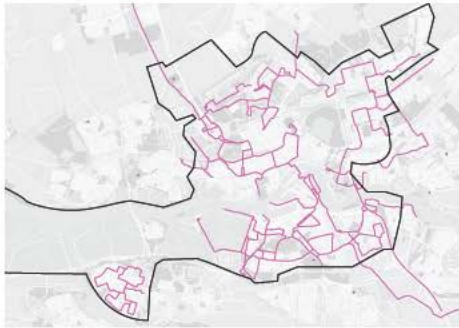
Because the Coolsingel is such a main street, it seemed also important to see if this street and other parts in the city centre would attract a lot of visitors, due to events. Therefore we pointed out all locations where throughout the year would be different events happening. In the whole city enter the bigger activity is mostly at Schouwburgplein, although there are also several big events on the Coolsingel.



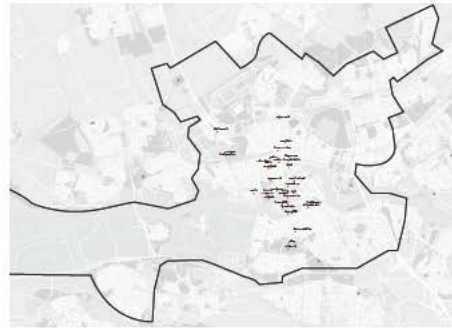
Road network



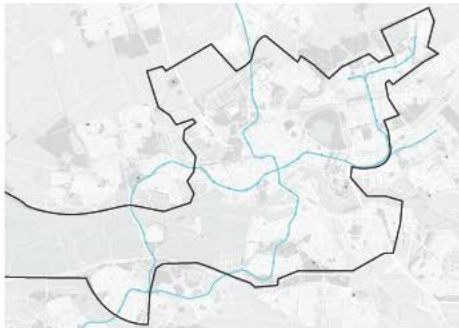
Traffic on site



Busline



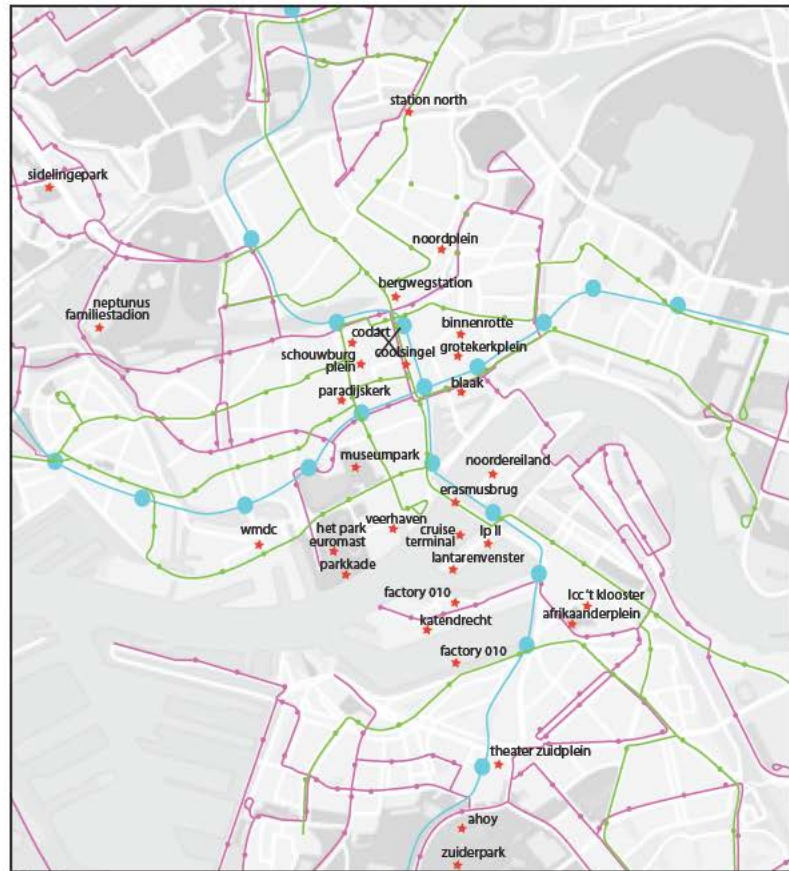
Yearly Events locations



Metroline



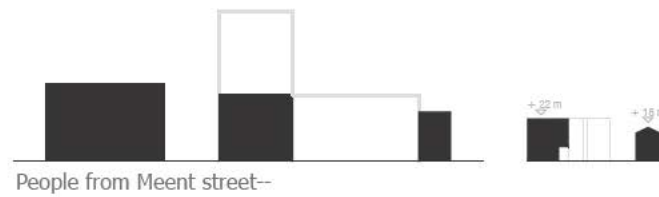
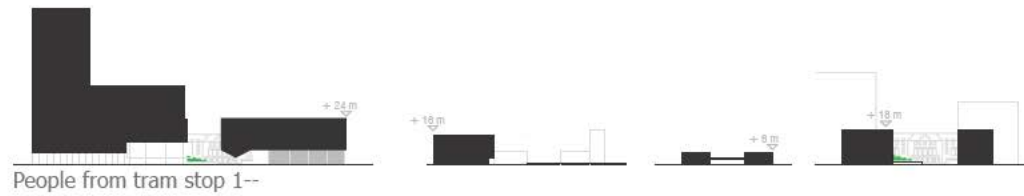
Tramline



Metroline



## Spatial experience



- bus stop
- tram stop
- metro stop
- - - people from tram stop
- - - people from Meent street
- - - people from bus stop (south)
- - - people from Coolsingel



Here are some scenarios according to methods of transit people choice and how they enter the site.

The first, second and third scenario are people who get off at Schouwburgsplein, residential area and de Beijnhof by tram, and then wandered around in Lijnbaan area. These groups of people see the most contrasting spatial sequence.

People from Meent street can feel the street with small scale shops, until they cross Coolsingel to our site. Here they encounter more formal, and huge buildings.

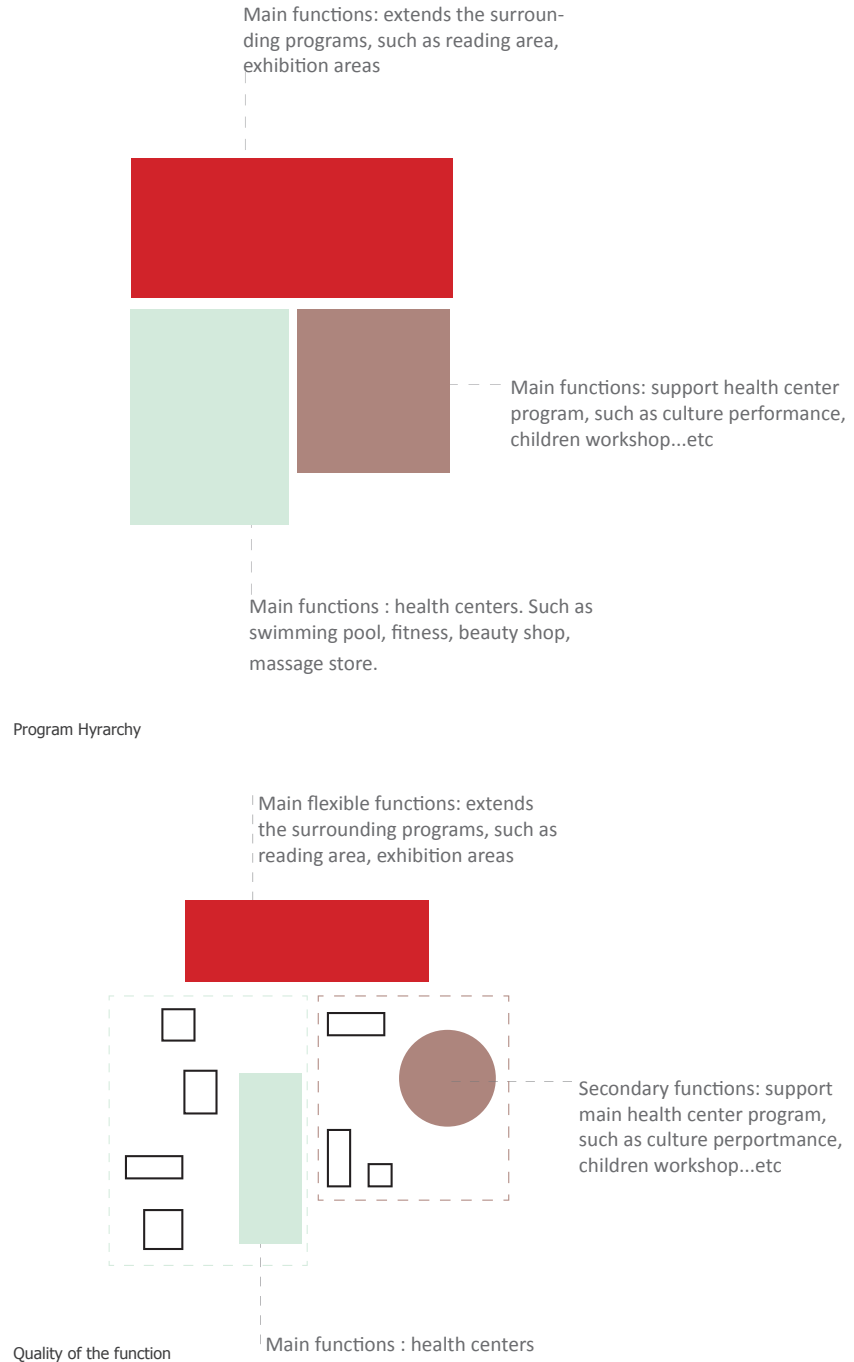
People get off from the bus in the south of the Lijnbaan area, will be surrounded by four to five buildings, then will see the contrasting scenario which is the open green field in residential area.

The last senario that people have is they get off the tram or bus along Coolsingel. By that time they immediately see the grand road with the tall and formal building around them.

## PROGRAM

By diving Isotopic and Heterotopic groups, looking at the site as well as the city Rotterdam, studying the building of Sanaa and Joao Luis Carrilho da Graca, we have all the ingredients to formulate our program. In our design we want both groups, Isotopic and Heterotopic to facilitate the space throughout the whole day. We want to provide conditions that are attracting these groups. The two case studies show typologies we find appropriate to our design. With the elements; grid system, hierarchy, circulation as we can see in both studies, we can achieve the right conditions.

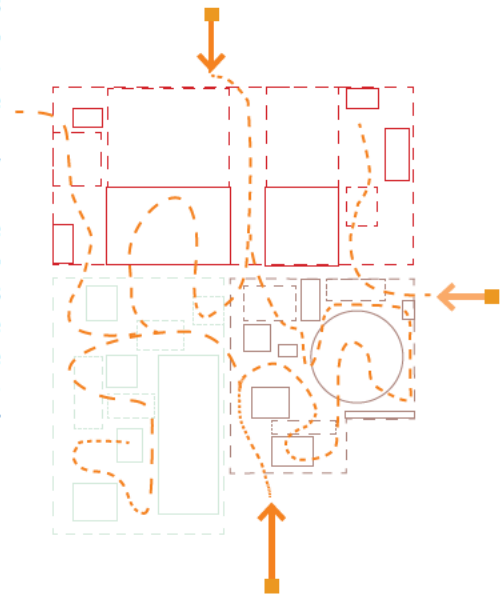
At the ground floor we have three main programs; physical health (bleu), mental health(purple), cultural(red). The mental health program is positioned at Coolsingel side, forming a connection with the bookshop and other shops. As for the physical health program, the health shops form a relation with the Lijnbaan bringing in the shopping stream. Here the swimming pool works as an element of relaxation and an attraction for public entering the site. The programs can support each other in this way. Bringing a diverse public together on the ground floor.



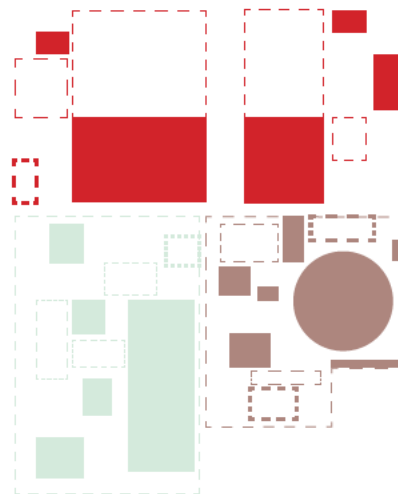
The cultural program in the monumental building forms functionally an extension of the two health programs, and is at the same time a mediator between ground level program and the upper levels. Attracting the public from the ground level into the building. The three different programs with different functions all have a different quality to it. The main function is the health centre which will be supported by the secondary function of the mental health program and extended by the cultural program. This last program has functions with a more flexible quality what makes it a good mediator.

As we discovered, apart from hierarchy, the Grid System, Circulation and Encounter elements are also important. At our groundfloor-plan the positioning of the functions provide a routing trough and among them, discovering enclosed space as well as open space. Within the programs the main function is also supported by flexible elements like kiosks. At the borders of the programs the Encounter Element has its gluing strength being able to attract public from all programs. In a sense voidspace, square or kiosk can have this same effect but with different quality.

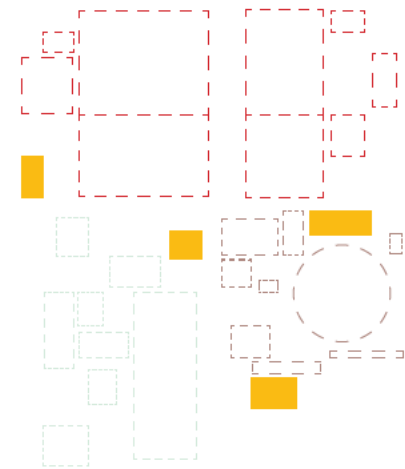
The three entrances leading to the programs all have their own quality as well. From the north it leads the public from the 'Stadhuisplein' to the monumental building with relating function, here the entrance is more function orientated. From the eastside the public is steady attracted by related functions and events as well. The main entrance at the south gives the possibility to enter the building directly or invites the public to wander trough the program without constraints. The element who contribute to the spatial quality; void space, square or greenery. we call the green element.



Circulation System



Grid System



Encounter Element

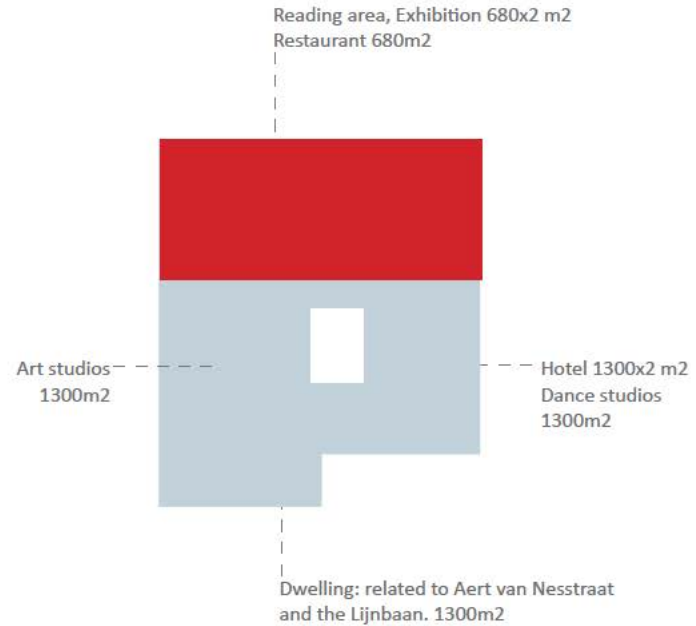
## CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

With the building typology in mind and an idea of the program, we started to model. We want the people to walk between the functions at the ground floor. Here we want the public to experience the public domain by encountering Isotopic and Heterotopic groups.

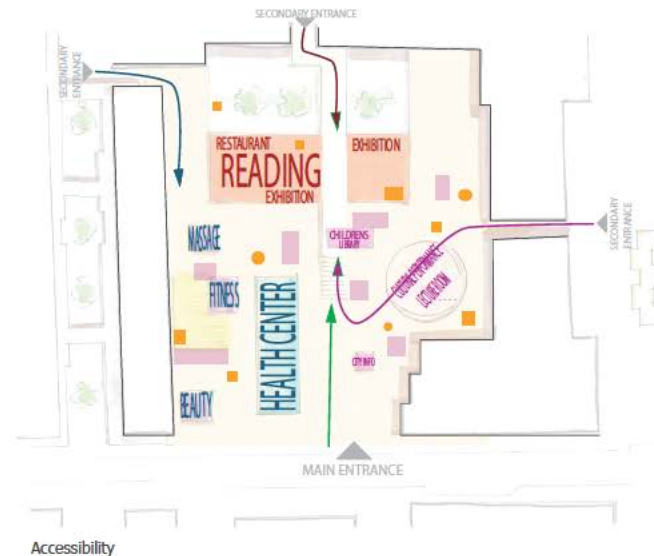
As has been explained, there are several elements at the ground floor. Besides the main functions and the supporting functions are there also the 'green' elements. In the design we want the void to form the connection between lower and higher levels. We want the Isotopic group to find the attraction at the ground floor, using it before they head-on with their daily activities. We want the Heterotopic group, which are the people with a strong purpose to be in the area, to be attracted by the functions in the building. The heterotopic condition of our design, contains art & dance school, a hotel and dwellings.

### *students scenario*

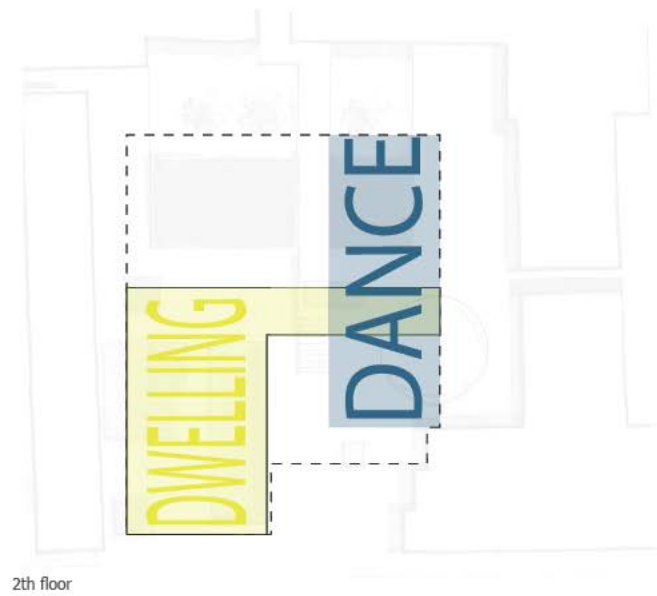
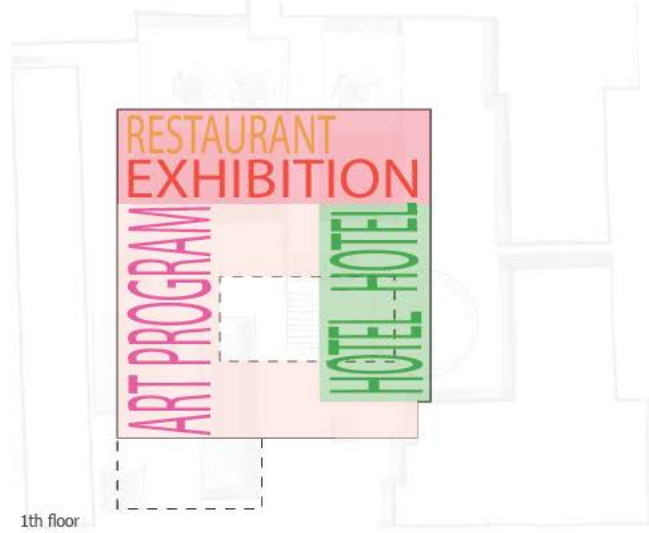
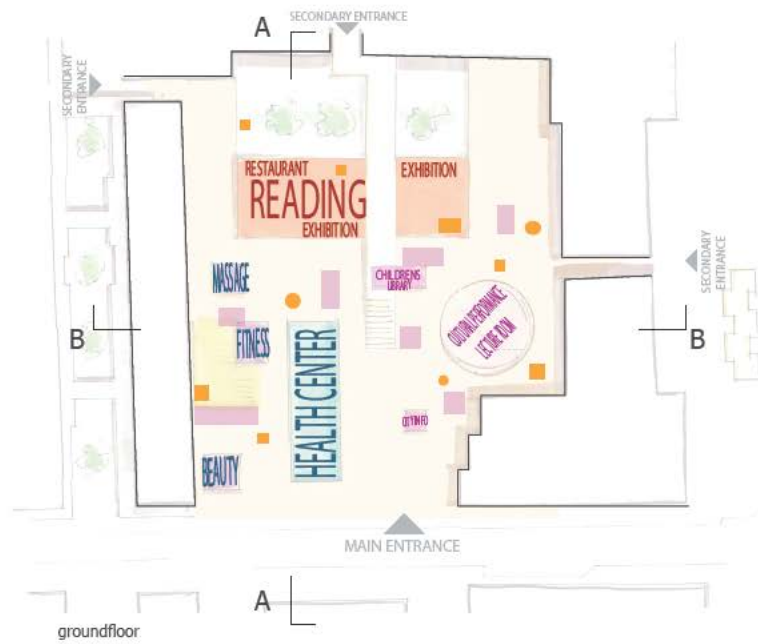
During the day students will enter the inspirational ground floor where a void space lightens up the main stairs leading to the floating building above. Going up from an extreme public space the public will sense the difference at the first level, which contains the strong



Program (a total of 8540m2)



purposes. Here the student has the choice to immediately go to their studio or read a magazine during a cup of coffee in the monumental building.



### *Hotel guests scenario*

The same route goes for the hotel people. When they enter the site from the Aert van Nesstraat, they encounter the Isotopic groups enjoying the ground floor facilities. In the morning this guests can have breakfast at the cafe where dwellers read their paper and shoppers have a coffee. Or in the evening a nice dinner at the restaurant, met them meet with people from the area.

### *Dweller scenario*

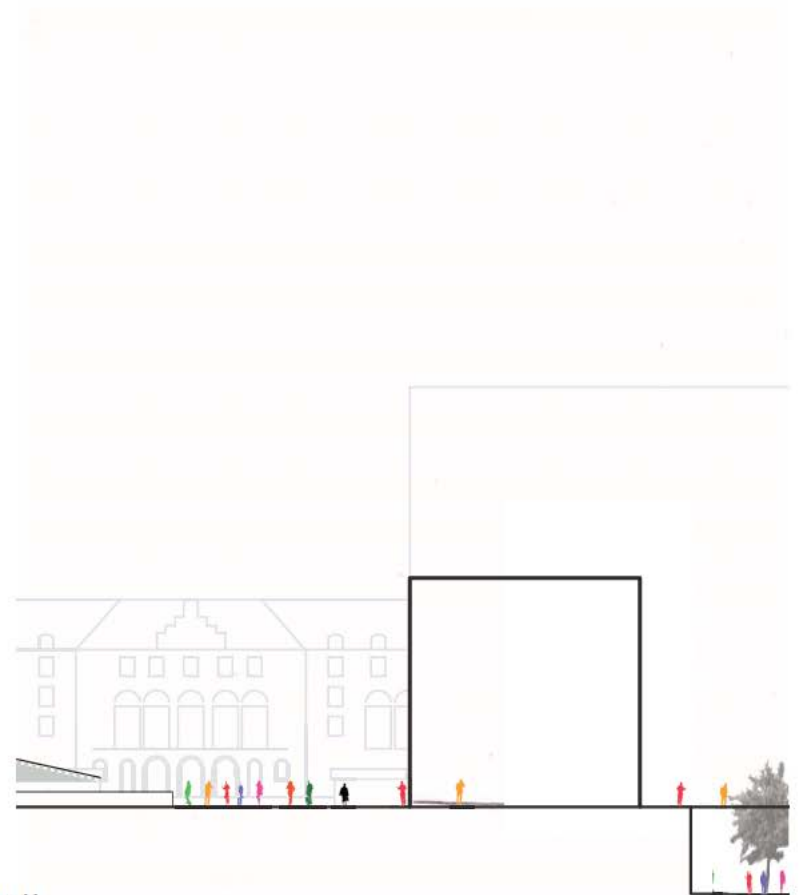
These people have their own staircase up to their homes and can always chose to be amongst the diverse public through the whole building. To them the liveliness and the artistic influences on the site could make them buy an apartment. Their apartments' overlook the Lijnbaanstraat and are visual related with the existing flats.

### *Unexpected visitor scenario*

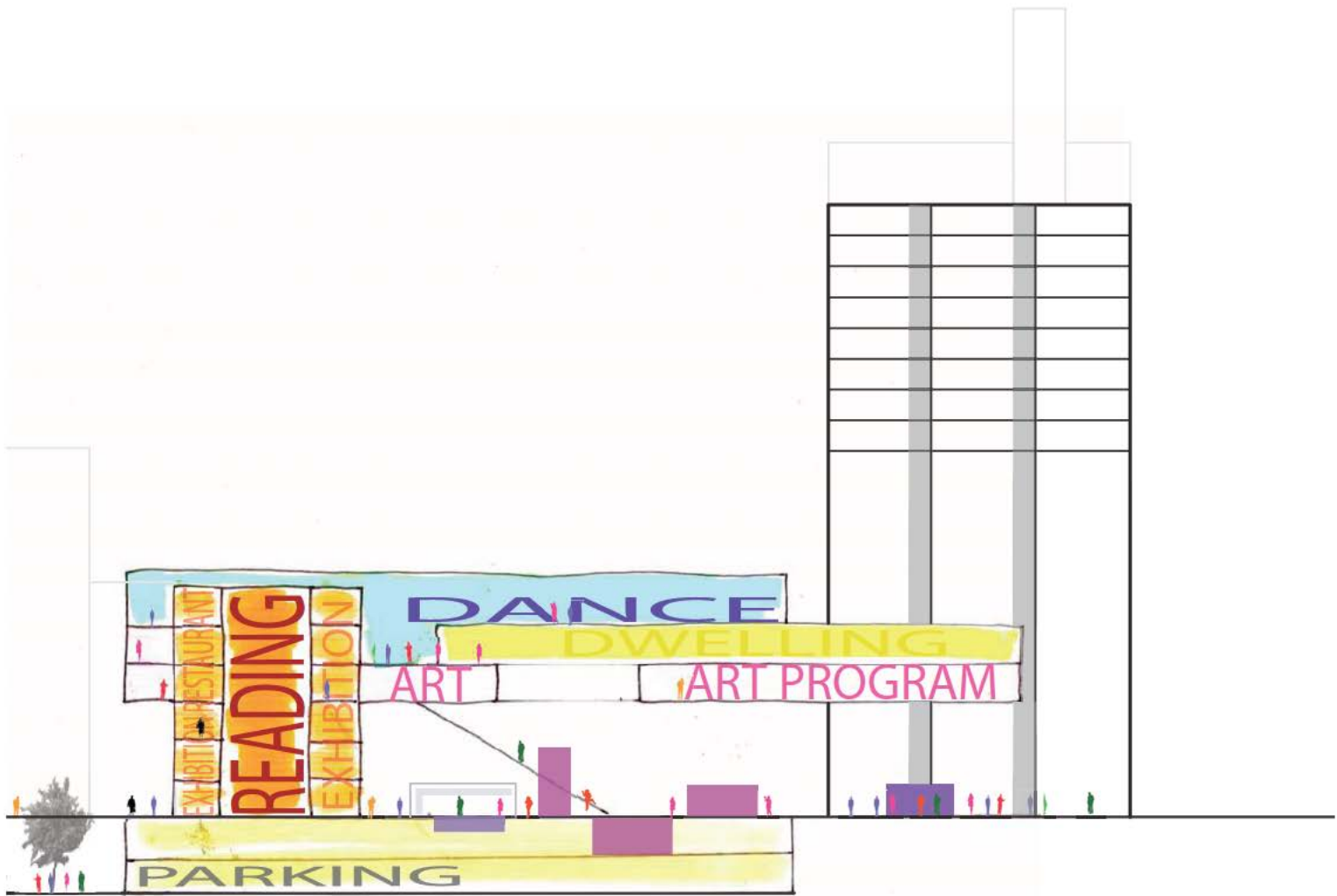
When people curiously enter the site, they have the opportunity to enjoy the different programs. Their attention can be drawn to a nice drink and or reading the paper in the monumental building. From the monumental building its well wearth it to go and see an exposition. Maybe the sound of a dance performance on the roof makes visitors climb the stairs eager to see what's going on.

Around 18.00 the public starts to look for a nice place to have a drink or eat something after work.

At the Stadhuisplein is a place were many Rotterdam inhabitants go for a drink. We want to relate our program to the functions at Stadhuisplein, to attract this potential group as well. From this square there we have a connecting bridge to the monumental building, with restaurant.



Section AA





### *Shoppers scenario*

After a nice day shopping with friends, its no time to head home yet. Together they go to the beauty care and have some more girl time.

Or a mother can finally bring her children along combining shopping and the fitness on the site. During her workout the children play with the water or attain a workshop in the supporting mental health program.

### *Other scenario's*

Primary school classes enter the site to look into some books at the library or maybe there has been a lecture prepared, and they sit down and listen.

The students of the art & dance school come sometimes down to give a demonstration, or they put some provocation art at the ground floor, curious for reaction. And so there are many scenario thinkable.

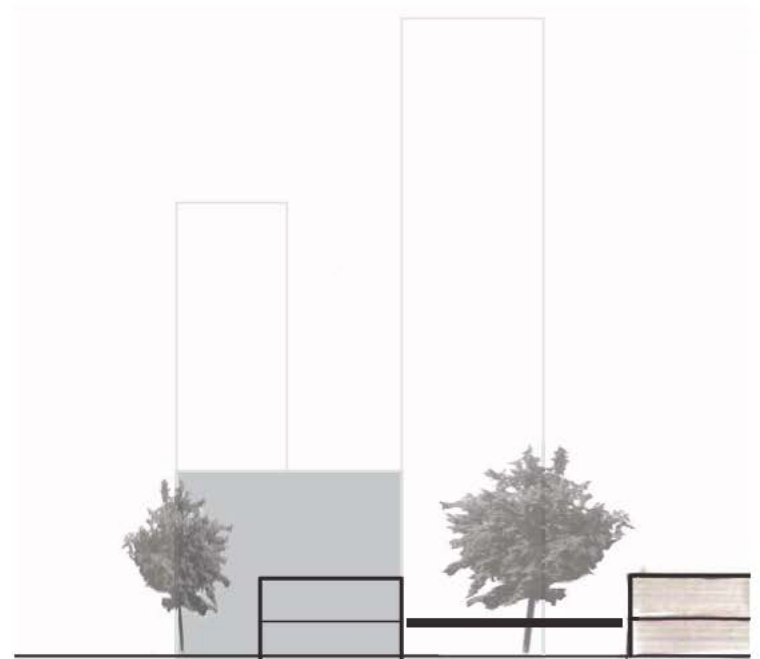
The building block is a element of interest to people driving over the Aert van Nesstraat. Here they can show off their cars like on a boulevard. And if their interest is drawn, people can drive their car into the parking underneath the old monument.

### *Businessman scenario*

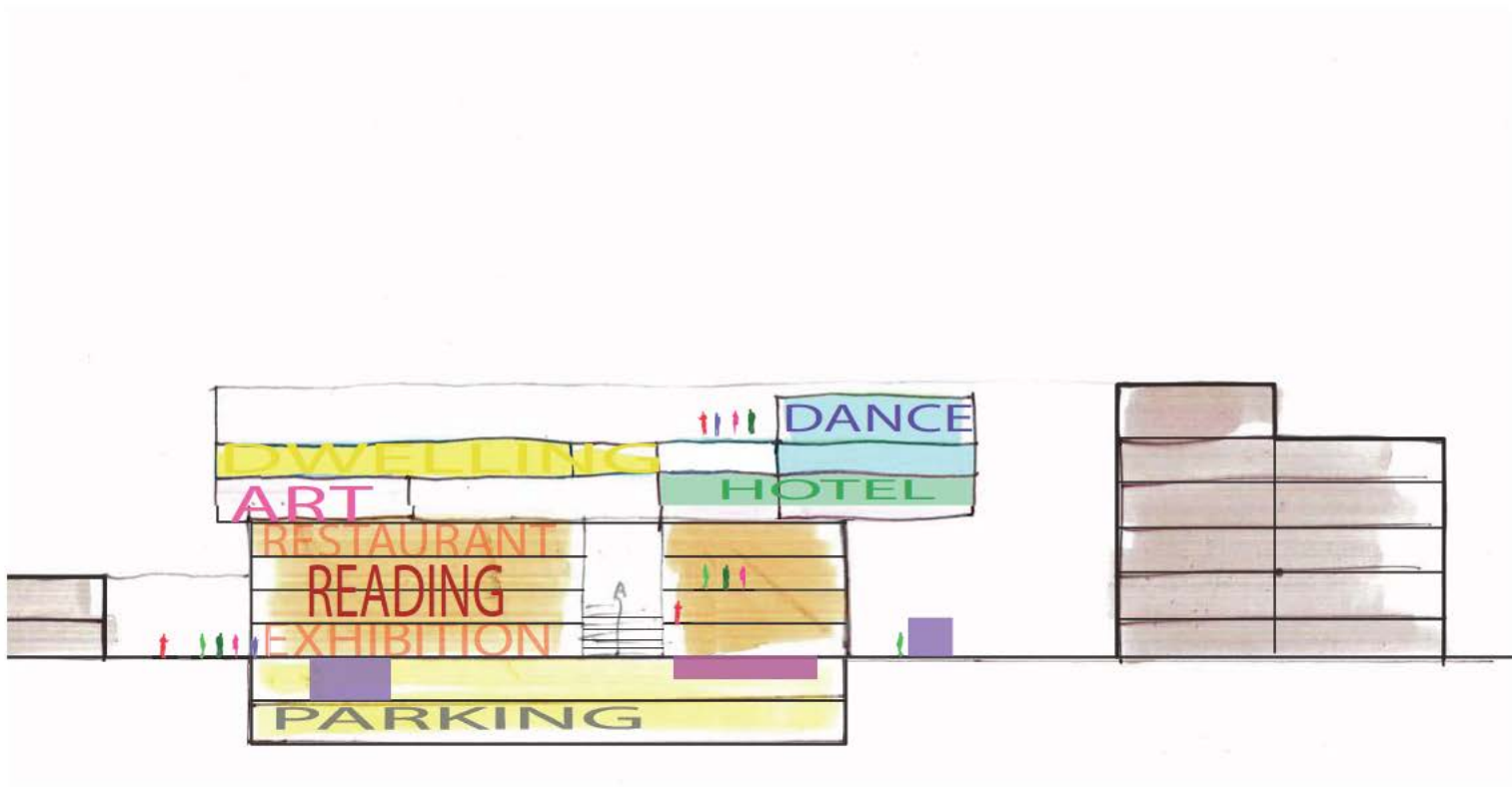
When finally lunchtime arrives, the businesspeople rush down to find some food in the area. At our site some just go for a fast bite at one of the kiosks, others take advantage and make a lunch meeting at the restaurant. The Dutch businessman sets down at the water and takes his lunchbox from his bag enjoying the unrestrained lunch break.

Our program provides Heterotopic and Isotopic conditions. The constantly changing public throughout the day, are our aim to attract. The different scenarios will bring interesting encounters between a wide variety of people.

It doesn't matter if the public intentionally stays for a long time or just a little bit. Our program can attract and serve both conditions.



Section BB





# Our loss of touch

**The Public and the Public domain**

Essay



## INTRODUCTION

*'The paradox is that what many people experience as pleasant public space is in reality often dominated by a relatively homogeneous group. However, these are not the spaces dominated by one's own group. Anyone reflecting on personal 'public-domain experiences' will notice on closer inspection that the key experiences with shared use of space often involve entering the parochial domains of 'others'. Public domain is thus not so much a place as an experience.'* *New Public Domain, Hajer and Reijndorp, NAI publishers 2001, p.88*

In the book 'New Public Domain' of van Hajer and Reijndorp, there is written about the contradiction that occurs in the Public Domain of the last couple of years. A public domain is by most seen as a place to meet others. In the public domain the 'others' can be everybody varying from people you know to people who differ from that; ethnical, cultural, age, gender, wealth differences etc. Every certain group of people brings a set of habits and rules to the domain. It is the confrontation between different groups and rules that makes people aware of public domain. Some groups have more influences in the public domain than others, but this can shift through time. So, no contradiction there! The contradiction starts, as we discuss the personal wishes of feeling safe in the public domain. Sometimes certain groups are threatening to others, just think of loud youth hanging around a bench, kicking soda cans and an old lady who has to pass through this. There rules are too far apart to understand each other, the lady might feel threatened. Today the reaction to all the misunderstanding seems to be designing non-friction space, excluding certain groups. And there lies the contradiction, because people like to experience public domain and due to safety issues they also like to avoid confrontation. So why do people want to seek the public domain?

During the 18 – 19th century public and private became the difference between sharing space in the proximity of unknown people and family life in the protection of their home. With the growth of the city came the growth of places with diversity of strangers. Big urban Parks and coffeehouses were built as part of a growing social network. Theatres became open to a larger public and gardens were not only for the elite. Nikolaj Wasiljewitsj Gogol writes about the people in the public domain of 1833 Njerski Prospect. He describes a changing scenario of people who parade over the Njerski Prospect, a central avenue of St. Petersburg. The festivity at Njerski Prospect displays a pleasant show in St.Petersburg.

*'And the ladies! Oh, the ladies find Nevsky Prospect still more pleasing. And who does not find it pleasing? The moment you enter Nevsky Prospect, it already smells of nothing but festivity. Though you may have some sort of necessary, indispensable business, once you enter it, you are sure to forget all business. Here is the only place where people do not go out of necessity, where they are not driven by the need and mercantile interest that envelop the whole of Petersburg.'* *Petersburgse verhalen, N.W.Gogol, Meulenhof Amsterdam 1985, p.96(translated to English)*

Nowadays there are still certain areas in the city, for example the boulevard of Scheveningen, which shows festivity. But for most city centres there has been a big change. As becomes clear after a questionnaire in the city centre of Rotterdam, people now have a very clear goal when they go to the centre. They don't go there without any need as which we do see at the Njerski Prospect. There has to be a mercantile interest and a display of merchandise. The public domain changed from a field of display with the public as actors, into a theatre where the public becomes only the spectator and the observer waiting for his show.

## THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

### The Architect

There are a lot of expectations from the architect of the public domain. The space has to function well, and if it does not, there are accusations all over the place. When Peter and Allison Smithson designed the mass housing plan 'Robin Hood Gardens' in London 1979, they could never have expected their building and public space to become vandalised and unsafe. The architects wanted to solve social problems with the capacity of architecture. Their architecture was abstract, brutal and impersonal with precise reason. They saw the rapid changes in society and their concrete design was there to absorb these changes. The sky-streets were there as socialising area like streets in outdoor infrastructure. But people used the streets to put their garbage, and the place became abandoned. The architects had a noble plan but the public space did not meet the wishes of the public.

The architects held the residents responsible for neglect and vandalism, but there was more to it.

The design plan was based on one type of public 'English residents', but the real inhabitants were Indian immigrants who's lifestyle was totally different. The busy colourful ongoing Indian streets were a big contradiction to the monotone grey sky-streets of Robin Hood Garden.

From this project is a lot to learn for architects of the public domain. From the Smithson's can be discovered the main important influential element of the architectural design; the public. The second element of importance is spatial quality, to prevent the space from abandonment and vandalism. Although it's also important to be able to foresee change in society and possibly public domain, its very naïve to think a design can overcome the problems in society. The architect definitely needs to know on forehand what the

public of the public domain will be like now and when changes occur in the nearby future. Although public interest changes allot, this element is fix in the design and an unchangeable factor.

### The Public and the Public Domain

*'However, the actual creation of public domain demands a new approach to the relationship between form and meaning. In urban planning the relationship between the form of the public space and the use and socio-cultural meaning of these spaces was for a long time typological in nature. Squares not only had a form and layout that differed from streets or avenues, but there were associated differences in meaning and use that were understood by everyone.'* *New Public Domain, Hajer and Reijndorp, NAI publishers 2001, p.109*

More then ever does the public determine the meaning of public domain. The definition of a square and street used to be clear, but now even a street can be traffic-free and act more like a square. Changes in society means change in usage of space. And there is an incredibly big change in today's society in relation to public space. Technology made it possible to speak with friends on the phone, email, chat, twitter constantly. The specific place to meet en speak with friends, became weakened because people can meet verbal and visually everywhere. As well the phone conversation in private are not bound anymore to the private sphere at home. Suddenly the always so clear defined function of urban public spaces becomes less related. Then it's not surprising that at the same time a new public domain appears. This new do main is a social network on internet, with uncountable rooms targeting certain groups of people in the safety of anonymity. The action of social interaction seems

no longer to be bound to an urban public space. Is this were architecture of public domain ends and the programmer takes over? It didn't take long before evidence for an answer appeared in the urban field as well as on the web. The so called flash mob brought many people together in busy locations within the city. In public many strangers would suddenly act different. What happened was that other people became aware of this different group of people, some joined were others watched and others disliked. In the group the people were all strangers to each other but they chose to interact visual, verbal and physical, using the internet to make an appointment. Before the action many individuals shared public space with their invisible friends on the net, not aware of the people around them. This action shows the eager to interact with people who are similar as well with people who are different. It's the rule in public urban domain. Although this action of public display shows a great use of public domain, it is temporarily. The public domain does not only exist out of events but also the experience of every day action. The architect of the public domain does not have to be afraid that urban public space disappears, but should be aware that urban public domain has the opportunity to be a place of experience in totality, other then the anonymous monotone experience in the virtual public space, of which there is enough space. It has become clear that there are many ways to make your social network grow, and the urban public sphere is not the fastest or safest way. But it is the only way of unexpected experiences that will always attract public. It's the architect's obligation to design a save and attractive domain.

## **TURNING AROUND THE NO TOUCH POLICY**

### Sense of safety

The sense of feeling save in public domain has not so much to do with protecting an area from its surroundings, but more to do with offering a place trustworthy and still full with strangers. Again there lies cooperation

between domain and the public. Due to public violence the government had to come up with tougher measurement to try and protect public domain. But instead to build trust between people in the public domain, the measurement concerns creating non-friction zones. Zones that avoid any confrontation between groups, what also means less spontaneous actions and losing urban characteristics. It is the exclusion of exactly the things that make public domain so attractive. The relation between public space and the public comes more and more unnatural and impersonal.

At some point the public space became burdened with the no tough policy, where everybody acting out of order would be seen as a treat. No expectations of the public and no possibilities to interact, has in the long run the same effect as a renter on a rented apartment. As long as the public domain does no appeal to the public's sentiment, there will not be a relationship and nobody feels obligated to keep the place liveable.

Its time to look for ways to create condition in the public realm that can speak to everybody.

### Spatial conditions

Through time we managed to get a hold on almost everything in this world, making it understandable and readable by structuring it. Especially the readability has been more determined by vision then by any other sense. When mass production and mass consumption became part of everyday life, the globalisation process ruled the world. Money driven, the production processes became faster then ever and products are replaced before getting too attached to it. The process became

so fast that the public is not even bothered with it, they receive the final product unknowingly what it's made of or coming from. To inform people what the product is or were its made they have to rely on written text or an image on the wrapping. As for architecture many essential elements in the design, like materialisation, became computer regulated processes, cutting out the craftsman and all character. Kengo Kuma writes in the text 'A return to materials' about the influence of mate-



rial on the perception of space. He quotes;

*'...what I desire is to create a certain type of place and a certain type of condition that can be experienced by the human body.'* *Architectural positions*, Kengo Kuma, SUN publishers 2009, p.158

The government and architect as well take it very seriously if people feel unsafe in an area, why then ignore the elements that can make you feel and experience other feelings? In the public domain this would be a possibility to not only connect with the public, but also to interact through experience. It combines the irrational with the rational and the public with the domain. Kuma touches the main point of a public domain, designing spatial conditions that make the public to (inter)act again.

Architecture for the senses

*'The understanding of architectural qualities is usually limited to efficiency of performance, physical and ergonomic comfort, and visual aesthetics, but architecture has also an essential mental task; it structures our being-in-the-world through projecting specific frames and horizons of perception and understanding.'* *Architectural positions*, Juhani Pallasmaa, SUN publishers 2009, p.130

Everybody knows the picture of standing on a mountaintop enjoying a magnificent view. Some people are so intrigued that they arrange a comfortable helicopter to the top and make the picture themselves. Back on lower ground they tell others how expensive the helicopter was and show a picture like many others, unknown of missing out on the real experience. From the moment that you put on mountaineering shoes, and start your journey climbing the slopes you feel the rough surface of the stone, get surprised by wind, feel the sweat on your head, asking for psychological strength to continue, experiencing space with every muscle and nerve. Achieving the journey to the top has become a memory for life. Everything that associates with this journey tells something about your self.

Something similar is happening in the design of public domain. The design of a beautiful place or building can be like standing on a mountaintop, great but missing out on something essential. It is the experience or the association by experience that can make you feel and recognise your being. Therefore it's not only shape or material that forms the architecture of the public domain, it's the interaction with the public too.

But what can this mean concrete for any design of public domain?

One of the architects famous for designing conditions that make the public interact with their whole body and spirit is Peter Zumthor. Analysing his design for the Serpentine Gallery in London we can discover how the design of the domain can be glued to the senses of the public.

Experiencing the building visually:

From the sunlit lawn outside, you enter a dark hallway, but just a few meters further there it shows an opening to an interior space. In the centre of the space are colourful flowers and the light from the void space above it, makes them brighter and contrasting with the black walls and floor. Alongside the walls of the space there are benches orientated to the flowers, and there is enough space to walk around. There are more entrances to this central room in the building. Proportionally the spaces are not higher or lower, wider or thinner just suitable for people to sit, stand and walk. Conclusion: in the darkness there is nothing, in contrast to that, there is a bright room with colourful flowers.

Experiencing the building by smell and sound:

Outside of the building it's hard to describe the smell because it's the smell of the city that has become so familiar, as well as the traffic noises and the sound of the wind in the trees. But entering the hallway there is silence, although you can hear the people behind talking the attention goes out to the murmur of people in the interior space. There the smell of many flowers hits you and makes you breathe deeply. The only sounds

here are oooh and mmmm.

Conclusion: the contrast between outside and inside is very noticeable through the different smell and sound.

Experiencing the building by touch:

When entering the hallway the raw and sandy walls make you touch the surface carefully and the raw sandy floors feel assuring to move on. In the interior space the flowers makes you want to touch them, and they feel soft sometimes hairy. Conclusion: from the lawn into the hallway it's clear that it is a different space. The soft and organic flowers are contrasting with the raw material of its surrounding.

What is interesting to notice is that although this description has awoken some of our imagination, without our association with words, we could not express our feelings about the design.

Zumthor's states that:

*'the concept for this year's Pavilion is the hortus conclusus, a contemplative room, a garden within a garden. (...)The design aims to help its audience take the time to relax, to observe and then, perhaps, start to talk again – maybe not.'* Serpentine gallery website 04- 2011

Zumthor creates a condition that makes the public interact and experience freely, but at the same time by using all the senses he organises the space and conducts behaviour. Leaving out touch in the condition of his space could have made the hallway a scary ally and the interior space not interesting enough.

Zumthor makes happily use of the existing qualities that the public already bare within them selves to provide for them a great public domain.

## CONCLUSION

The public domain is a place where different groups of people with a different set of rules are confronted with each other. Some groups have more influences in the public domain then others, but this can shift through

time. Fear for confrontation made people feel unsafe in the public domain. And there lies the contradiction, because people like to experience public domain and due to safety issues they also like to avoid confrontation.

When the architect designs a public domain the main important influential element of the architectural design is the public and secondly is the spatial quality, to prevent the space from abandonment and vandalism. Although the public domain has gotten some competition of virtual public domain, the architect of the public domain does not have to be afraid that urban public space disappears, but should be aware that urban public domain has the opportunity to be a place of experience in totality, other then the anonymous monotone experience in the virtual public space. It has become clear that there are many ways to make your social network grow, and the urban public sphere is not the fastest or safest way, but it is the only way of unexpected experiences that will always attract public. It's the architect's obligation to design a save and attractive domain. The public domain of today has become often market unsafe. Governmental solutions lead to designing zones that avoid any confrontation between groups, what also means less spontaneous actions and losing urban characteristics. It is the exclusion of exactly the things that make public domain so attractive. The relation between public space and the public comes more and more unnatural and impersonal.

At some point the public space became burdened with the no touch policy, where everybody acting out of order would be seen as a treat. No expectations of the public and no possibilities to interact.

As long as the public domain does no appeal to the public's sentiment, there will not be a relationship and nobody feels obligated to keep the place liveable. The government and architect as well take it very seriously if people feel unsafe in an area, there is no reason to ignore the elements that can make you feel and experience positive feelings. In the public domain this would be a possibility to not only connect with the public, but also to interact through experience.

In the last centuries the public domain changed from a field of display with the public as actors, into a theatre where the public becomes only the spectator and the observer waiting for his show. Although feelings are something hard to lay a finger on and very personal, they are the key between public and the domain. The public domain and the public need to go hand in hand, interacting and experiencing freely. The architect can not only organises the space but can also condition the space using senses as a tool to liberate today's constrained public domain.





# The necessity of public space

## Essay



## Introduction

The decline of public domain is caused by transformation in social structure, emerging virtual realities, and globalization. This is reflected in the common possession of hand-held digital products, such as iPhones and iPads. As Dirk de Meyer wrote in 1999, "A city always changes and is affected by explicit and implicit factors, ranging from policy, economics, and regulation, to social behavior and cultural and mental artifacts" The society is operating in a way that people relies less and less by physical contacts, where as historically, built spaces were the only platform for social interaction. Nowadays, the online community plays a more dominant role to encourage social interaction as well as communication- people meet online and expresses opinions electronically. This raises the question of whether architecture still provides a relevant public role in this emerging media driven society.

German philosopher, Hanna Arendt, demonstrates that when one leaves one's own realm and actively participates in public life can one begin to find oneself (Arendt, 1958). However, in the online society

society shows more chances for us to participate in more events. One main reason is that the online society has less hierarchy, which allows people to express opinions freely and play more roles. Such as Facebook. Another example is the "cooperative mechanisms" derived from video games, it shows how influential it is that people can form online organizations spontaneously (Chatfield, 2010). The flow of online information has been a crucial means of developing the recognition system of people . Therefore, the virtual world seems to have more potential for people to fulfill their needs today. However, does the public domain simply shift from the physical world to the virtual world? Or does one supplement the other?

In recent years, Augmented Reality has been more popular because it is applied in many fields to help people accomplish difficult tasks to achieve in reality. Such as the realm of medication, medical students had been using this technology to operate on the fetus of a mother by projecting 3-D virtual fetus in reali-

ty (Azuma, 1997); architecture realm applies the technology of Augmented Reality to create real-time city, which allows citizens to get the most up-to-date information in order to correspond to the changes of the city. However, at the same time, we still cannot know whether public domain would appear. The one thing that we can make sure of is that the real-time city requires a lot of real-time information collected from citizens. In a way, people would feel more connected to cities. The application of Augmented Reality in the city is especially useful in Rotterdam as it is predicted to have more than 70% of non-Dutch population in 2025. In that case, how to bring different ethnic groups together to live peacefully in the same city will be a crucial task for the Rotterdam Government. Therefore, not only trying to make different groups involved in their city is important, but also making sure of that public domain will appear.

Since online community is so popular today, the virtual world seems to be more important for us in self-development. On the contrary,



the public spaces in reality are no longer the places that we can fulfill ourselves, but the openness of the physical space where we can enjoy the atmosphere with friends whom we have already known. In that respect, the virtual world is prior to the real world in terms of public domain. But, in terms of practical usage of the reality, the real world is still prior to the virtual world, such as real-time city informs people where the busiest street is at the moment to help people live in the city in a more convenient way.

**Fundamental to the human condition: labor, work and action—public realm in reality**

The book, *The Human Condition*, by Hanna Arendt, elaborates three forms of activity that are fundamental to the human condition: labor, which corresponds to the biological life of man as an animal; work, which corresponds to the artificial world of objects that human beings build upon the earth; and action, which corresponds to our plurality as distinct individuals (Arendt, 1958).

From “work”, people create a sustainable artificial world of things within which human life develop. Therefore, the condition of work is being alive or being in the world. This is the human tendency to carve out a place for him and makes it more comfortable. This behavior is to show that he is not alone in the world (Teerds, 2009).

“Action” takes place directly among humans. It is transitory but can significantly affect people. Hanna Arendt stresses this one the most: men can very well live without laboring, they can force others to labor for them, and they can very well decide merely to use and enjoy the world of things without themselves adding a single useful object to it. A life without speech and without action, on the other hand—and this is the only way of life that in earnest has renounced all appearance and all vanity in the biblical sense of the word—is literally dead to the world; it has ceased to be a human life, because it is no longer lived among men (Arendt, 1958). With word and deed, we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth, in which we

we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original physical appearance. This insertion is not forced upon us by necessity, like labor, and it is not prompted by utility, like work. It may be stimulated by the presence of others whose company we may wish to join, but it is never conditioned by them (Arendt, 1958).

The condition of action is thus embodied in human plurality. Man in the plural, the world of things, in this plural community, has an intermediary function: To live together in the world means essentially that a world of things is between those who have it in common, as a table is located between those who sit around it; the world, like every in-between, relates and separates men at the same time. The public realm thus gathers us together and yet prevents our falling over each other, so to speak. What makes mass society so difficult to bear is not the number of people involved, or at least not primarily, but the fact that the world between them has lost its power to gather them together, to relate them (Arendt, 1958). From Arendt’s point of view

on the importance of action and speech in public, she gives three aspects: first, only when one leaves one's own realm and actively participates in public life can one begin to find oneself; second, the nature of the individual constitutes human plurality. One must demonstrate one's uniqueness by speaking and acting; third, affirmation of reality by appearing in public (Arendt, 1958). The three aspects clearly illustrate the importance of being in public.

### **Popularity of online community—less hierarchy –new form of public realm**

However, today's online society is much more popular than ever. For instance, Facebook is now actively used by more than 500 million people. This means almost 8% of the world's population visit the site. It provides information sharing, images and videos posting...etc. The most interactive function to people is the button "like," which is not incumbent upon people to leave a message, but at the same time, gives a sense of belonging to the online community. Other forms

of online society are also popular, such as online video games. In 1990, the industry was worth 10 billion; in 2000 it was worth 20 billion. Last year in 2010, it grew up to 50 billion and is estimated to be worth over 80 billion dollars in 2014, which is three times the recorded music industry. The most significant reason to mention online video games here, is that online video games not only provide the leisure of having fun, but it also gives a chance for people to form an online community spontaneously. For example, in the online game 'Everquest', people manage to cooperate with one another in order to kill two dragons in the game. Therefore, players addressed this task by spontaneously coming up with a system to motivate each other fairly and transparently. They paid each other a virtual currency called dragon-kill point. Every time one turned up going on a mission, one got dragon-kill points. They kept track of the points on a separate website, so they earned their own private currency, and then players could bid afterwards for items they wanted. The online community is organized by the players them-

selves(Chatfield, 2010).

### **Online social community and our online characters, taking Facebook for example**

Photo posting, browsing and information sharing are simple facilities with complex social implications. This has been so essential to people's life that some have adopted it in their daily routines. There are two main categories of people who use it frequently: one is in an active position and posts something in it, while the other one answers or responds to it. The two main categories constitute an interaction. Due to having "action", in the virtual world people insert themselves; Facebook also allows people to create events—they create an artificial world within which people can participate in activities in the real world. In that case, they are in the condition of "work" that Anna defined; people who keep diaries in Facebook carve out the world they want. At the same time, they also reply intensively on one another's webpage. Therefore, they are in the condition of "work" and of "action"; for those who reply message

in Facebook, can be in both conditions, “work” and “action”, as well. They can passively only reply ones’ messages, but also can carve out their own world under other web pages in the virtual world. Perhaps this is because Facebook gives certain distance among people physically. Therefore people can observe others first and then decide who to be friends and which groups to participate. This shows the freedom in the virtual world that people play multiple roles within different social groups.

--Online video game and our online characters---engaged in rewards system

A British longtime game player, Tom Chatfield, explained why game players are increasing each year in a large amount on TED Talks . There, he pointed out the importance of “Rewards system/ schedule” within online video games. It influences game players’ behavior a lot and it keeps them constantly engaged in the game.

If we look at what’s going on in someone’s head, there exist

wanting processes and liking processes: wanting process is a bit like ambition and drive, which tells you “I am going to do that and I’m going to work hard”; liking process, is about fun, affection and delight, which satisfies your imagination and ambition (Chatfield, 2010). For instance, the vast flying beast, which you can ride around in the video games gives people great pleasure and feels powerful. This forms a very intense emotional engagement.

Here comes the point. The real interesting thing about virtuality is not about itself, but what you can measure with it (Chatfield, 2010). In virtuality, every single thing that every single person played in a game can be measured. This induces the power which motivates us. This, at the same time, allows something very special to happen in games. Something called the “rewards schedule”: millions of people in the game are carefully calibrating the rate, the nature, the type, the intensity of rewards in games to keep them engaged over staggering amounts of time and effort (Chatfield, 2010). For example, In

Warcraft video games, people have to open about a million boxes. Through combination of probability and data, like by making the rate of targeted object in boxes about 25 percent—neither too frustrating nor too easy, players can keep engaged and they adjust the world to match their expectations.

“The point is that we evolved to be satisfied by the world in particular ways. We evolved to find certain things stimulating, we’re enormously stimulated by problem-solving and learning” (Chatfield, 2010).

The most significant thing in the process of engaging in the online video games is in the way it stimulates or motivates players to keep playing in order to realize their ambitions by cooperating with other players spontaneously outside of online games. It creates a player developed, self-enforcing, voluntary currency, like in the game of Everquest. It forms cooperative mechanism, which is unprecedentedly complex and brings people together. (Chatfield, 2010)

Once people are engaged in the rewards system, they can set a target together to achieve the goal in the virtual world. Because there is no hierarchy in the online games, it's easier to form an online community. Here people find themselves by having actions in "online public". They thus do not need to play fixed roles, but can freely choose the roles to play.

**Shift in form of public realm:  
"from one to the other" or  
"one supplements the other"**

According to Hanna Arendt, the public realm gathers us together and yet prevents our falling over each other. However, the fact is that the world between us has lost its power to gather us together (Arendt, 1958). Today, popularity in online communities can be seen as an evident of a shift of public realm from the physical world to the virtual world. People can play multiple roles in the online society and then go their own way in the physical world outside.

We no longer see these "physical public space" as places to fulfill our needs or increase our confidence, so the virtual world draws our attention. The shift however, it is not a binary situation, it also goes the other way around. The real-time cities, Rome and Singapore, show that virtuality can extend the real world by collecting everyday-data from citizens. In return, citizens can get the instant condition of the cities to make more informed decisions.

**Augmented Reality—virtuality  
extends reality**

Augmented Reality is a variation of Virtual Environments (VE), or Virtual Reality. VE technologies completely immerse a user inside a synthetic environment. While immersed, the user cannot see the real world around him. In contrast, AR allows the user to see the real world, with virtual objects superimposed upon or composited with the real world. Therefore, AR supplements reality, rather than completely replacing it. Ideally, it would appear to users that the virtual and real objects coexisted in the same

time and space (Azuma, 1997). In a way, Augmented Reality enhances a user's perception of and interaction with the real world. The virtual objects display information that the user cannot directly detect with his own senses. The information conveyed by the virtual objects helps a user perform real-world tasks, such as medical visualization, maintenance and repair, annotation, robot path planning, entertainment and military aircraft navigation (Azuma, 1997). In recent years, Augmented Reality also has been applied in the concept of "real-time city". The increasing deployment of sensors and hand-held electronics is allowing a new approach to the study of the built environment. The way we describe and understand cities could be radically transformed.

**Real-time city—Rome**

Imagine a world with a ubiquitous flow of real time information; a world where every point in space is a sensor and also a potential display; a world of pervasive connectivity; a world where bits and atoms seamlessly merge. What would the consequences of this condition

be for design, objects, buildings, and cities? The project, Real Time Rome, directed by Richard Burdett, aggregated data from cell phones of each person in the city. This allows citizens better understand urban dynamics in real time. For example, buses and taxis in Rome are able to know real time road conditions to avoid traffic jams.

Especially in today's world, wireless mobile communications devices are creating new dimensions of interconnectedness between people, places and urban infrastructure. Through aggregating records collected from communication networks. Real-time visualizations expose the dynamics of the contemporary city: traces of information and communication networks, movement patterns of people and transportation systems, spatial and social usage of streets and neighborhoods. In the visualizations of Real Time Rome, we can see, in picture 1 and 2, the synthesized data from various real-time networks allows us to understand patterns of daily life in Rome, such as flow of public transit, pedestrians, and vehicular traffic.

What's more, by overlaying mobility information on geographic and socio-economic references of Rome, the team unveiled the relationships between fixed and fluid urban elements. These real-time maps help us understand how neighborhoods are used in the course of a day, how the distribution of buses and taxis correlates with densities of people...etc. With the resulting visualizations users can interpret and react to the shifting urban environment.

### **Real-time city—Singapore**

The LIVE Singapore exhibition presented five different perspectives into Singapore's urban dynamics using graphic visualizations of selected digital data generated by people in Singapore and their actions. Employing real-time data recorded and captured by a vast system of communication devices, microcontrollers and sensors commonly found in our urban environment and mapping this information onto multi-dimensional maps of Singapore, this geographical information system merges cartography, statistical analysis and data

platform technology. It suggests new ways to view, understand, and navigate our city. See picture3 and 4. The visualization of selected digital data is ultimately revealing the instant condition of the city, which effectively allows us to respond.

### **Rotterdam current situation and its future**

The composition of the population in Rotterdam, together with that of three large cities, Amsterdam, The Hague and Utrecht, underwent major changes in the period of 1995 to 2003. The proportion of native Dutch people fell from 64 to 57 percent, while the share of city dwellers with a foreign background rose to 43 percent; 31 percent comes from non-western countries (see figure1). This development was caused by Dutch people moving from the large cities to other municipalities, and immigrants settling in the large cities. Among the four big cities in Holland, one can see in figure1 that the percentage of non-western foreigners in Rotterdam increased the most among the four cities by around 8 percent. Rotterdam is even predicted to have a

population with 57% non-westerns in 2025.

In 1965, Rotterdam had 100% westerns; in 1990, it had been reduced to 80% westerns and 20% non-westerns. This resulted from well-educated Dutch people were unwilling to do the dirty work. On the other hand, the government provided work for immigrants who were low-educated; in 2011, westerns had shrunk to 48% of Rotterdam's population with 52% non-westerns. This was due to the second generation of immigrants remaining there. It is estimated that, in 2025, non-westerns will constitute more than 75% of Rotterdam's population. Of this total, there will be 75% of non-westerns: 8% Moroccans, 5% Turkish, 5% Cape Verde, 4% Antillean, 14% Surinamese, 7% South-European, 14% from other industrial countries, and 20% from other non-industrial countries. This is because the second and third generation will tend to remain in the city to be in a multi-culture environment.

Moreover, the Rotterdam Government proposed the future image

of the city as Manhattan-like with high-rise buildings along Coolingsingel all the way down to the south of Rotterdam. The aim is to boost the local economy by attracting headquarters offices from all over the world. In that case, it will become a crucial task for the government to enable different groups of people from different countries to integrate into the Dutch culture and to create a multi-cultural environment that is friendly to all. Currently, it is easy to see that second-and third generations of immigrants in Rotterdam are having difficulty integrating into the Dutch culture. For example, the resident housings along Essenbursingel are totally occupied by Dutch. However, one block south is completely different scene: Moroccans, Turks, and Asians. They form their own community, while the Dutch stay only in Esseabursingel.

### **Conclusion**

Today, public domain declines due to transformations in many fields in society, such as social structure, emerging virtual realities, and globalization, etc. This is especially true now that almost everyone uses

the online social network to express himself or herself. This proposes a question: do we still need public space? Or can architecture ensure a relevant public role in this emerging media driven society?

German philosopher Hanna Arendt, elaborates the three forms of activity that are fundamental to the human condition: labor, work and action. She stressed "action", in public the most. In a way, we insert ourselves into the human world to fulfill our needs, because we all have the nature of the individual which constitutes human plurality. In that sense, Hanna demonstrated the role of public space as a place where you can develop yourself and find your confidence by speaking and acting in public space. However, by comparing the traditional categories of what Hanna Arendt defined as labor, work and action with today's definitions within the online society, it shows online society even gives more chances for us to have "action" to fulfill ourselves than physical public space provides. The main reason is that there is less hierarchy in the online society, which allows us to express

ourselves more freely and play more roles. In that case, the public realm seems to shift from physical public space to the online community where everyone can express himself more freely and confidently. At the same time, the physical public space changes its role from the place where you can develop and affirm yourself to the place where you only need to enjoy the atmosphere of the public space.

However, this shift cannot be merely a binary term which shows a change from the real world to the virtual world. For instance, the "real-time city" is an example by which virtuality supplements the reality. People make more informed decisions in the city by contributing instant digital data. This makes them feel more engaged with the city as well. This concept is also suited for Rotterdam city, for the government will have a task of creating a multicultural environment for the more than 75% of the population who are non-Western. However, the real-time city doesn't give the insurance that the public domain would appear. Perhaps, in the future, the combination of the quality of the

quality of the online community and the real-time city could be an option. Or more specifically, it is a city that sometimes shows the reality extends the potential of virtuality, and sometimes the virtuality extends the reality: imagine there is a certain place or a series of places which allow people to conduct daily activities, like buying clothes in 3D shops which are temporarily projected. Then, other people in the same online forum can also buy in these shops. Other people who are not in the same online forum can also be informed by real-time city of the latest activities where they can participate. In the movie 'Wall-E', everyone has a digital screen at hand, and the online community is more paramount than ever. People can be informed of the instant city situation and know where to perform their missions. Their online friends can also be invited to the real world where certain places are projected with different temporary purposes. In short, these series of certain places in the city could be places where public domain would appear. In a not so futuristic sense, certain places might only be the plug-in function by which everyone

can bring their digital screen or laptop to recharge. Thereby, the public domain would appear again in a new way.





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