

LORENTZPLEIN 76  
2522 EH, DEN HAAG

~~Cinema~~

Rembrandt Theater

~~Supermarket~~

Albert Heijn

A Stage for Social life

# LORENTZPASSAGE

the market as instigator for a social neighbourhood

Thank you to my God and my community,  
You are my source and you are what makes me  
want to share the experience of living life together.

## CONTENTS

Introduction		9
The original plan	Berlage's ideology	23
As it was	The cinema	31
As it is	Laak: de vergeten wijk	45
	Supermarket	55
Possibilities		83
Proposal	Reinhabiting the space	105
	The Galleries	152
	The Drum	176
The Lorentzpassage as a theatrical experience		197

"I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me,  
They replied, "Let us start rebuilding"  
So they began this good work.

Nehemiah 2:18 (NIV)

A Stage for Social Life is the graduation project  
documented in this project journal  
by Joëlle Blokhuis  
Graduation defense: 10th April 2026  
supervision by Daniel Rosbottom and Koen Mulder

## PREFACE

Before starting my graduation I was interested in cafes and cafe culture of the 19th century. These Parisian and Viennese coffee houses were places where people could come together and converse, without knowing each other beforehand.

Underlying this fascination is not only my interest in how food brings people together and plays part in cultural exchange. On surface level this interest stems from interactions people share around the table, at dinner time or in the kitchen or even at a market, talking about food and tradition and culture. More fundamental is the need people may or may not feel to share these cultures and the relevance of both maintaining one's own culture as being open for that of another. It is also a sense of necessity for our society to meet outside of our 'bubbles'. I believe this need for interaction is something we as individuals should try to work towards, while I also believe municipalities and governments should encourage citizens to step outside of their circles of regulars.

This led me to ask myself, how do I, not only as an individual, but also professionally work towards creating a more dynamic and interlaced society?

*What is the role architects play in the making of society?*

This led me to read Herman Hertzberger's works, think about Ray Oldenberg's Third Places theories, and to take in consideration what Eric Kleinenberg's ideas on social infrastructure, among many other ideologies.

My interest in public spaces such as cafes and the creation of them is what made me reach out for the independent group more than a year ago now. It quickly derived from cafes into a site that could play a role in bringing together the people in the neighbourhood I had just moved to, Laak in The Hague.

I feel inspired by the people around me, my community to play a role in shaping this for more people. I can see the value of having people to fall back on, to be questioned in what you believe and why you do what you do. I believe this forms an anchor in tough times and makes us resilient, as individuals within a community.

For this I want to thank my friends and family, people I've known for years and met over the course of my graduation, who have allowed me to drop in for dinner, walk me through my presentation and who have let me yap on and on about my project and its development. I am also grateful to those who have physically helped me build the model, the friends who have encouraged me to just try, when things seemed like a large and looming task, or motivated me to bake a cake anyways.



*The Scandinavian Artists' Lunch at Café Ledoyen, Paris: Varnishing Day, by Hugo Birger*

Last, but definitely not least, I want to thank my tutors, Daniel and Koen, for your guidance. The thoughts you shared, references you gave and especially the time we spent in conversation over the last few months have been immensely helpful in the formation of my thoughts and plans. You have challenged me and I have grown through it.

Dear reader, let me bring you along this journey, and show you what I have learnt and am still continuing to learn.

“Joy is empowering people to celebrate  
life”

Herman Hertzberger

introduction

## LORENTZPLEIN 76 - THE CENTRE OF LAAK

This project entails the transformation of a supermarket in Laak to a space of encounters; a stage for social life.

### Project summary

Laak is a multicultural neighbourhood, existing of islands of cultures. In a society that is becoming increasingly individualistic and seems to polarise further by the day, it is relevant for people to come in contact with one another. This building used to have a cultural and connecting function in the original neighbourhood development plans. Transforming it into a passage creates a physically connecting space for the neighbourhood. Within the building then, a microcosm of society is placed: a miniature 'ideal city' in the form of a market and a city square, a theatrical gallery and an introspective element, as well as a neighbourhood kitchen. Each of these elements is multifunctional in use, ready to be appropriated by its users. The architectural language of all of these elements can be understood by people from various cultural backgrounds. This way, the visitor is not only a spectator, but is invited to become a participant in the society that plays out here in this building.

### The project location: cafe or community centre?

Finding a site and a theme started with an interest in cafe-culture. In the nineteenth century the cafe, pub or 'bruine kroeg' were all spaces that belonged in a sense to the neighbourhood. You would go and meet familiar faces but also find yourself besides a stranger. Different perspectives came together. Nowadays a café is a place you go with a friend (group) and there will rarely be interactions outside of this group.

Having moved to Laak I started to look around in my own neighbourhood. A divided, multicultural population and five community centres showed both the wish for interaction and the opposition against it. Residents tell of the difficulty connecting, because of language barriers or festivities that seem exclusive to specific cultures. Others speak of a sense of not-belonging, a feeling that the neighbourhood has changed from what they knew and now it no longer feels like home.

It did not feel like I could create a new, or better community centre than those already there. They felt as if they were made by their people, and if an architect would come the hierarchy of the space would change.

### The expansion plan for The Hague: a cinema and supermarket

By then, I had gotten to know more of the history of the neighbourhood. I found out that the plan for Laak was based on Berlage's extension plan for The Hague. I found out that his drawings contained a lot more public space in this neighbourhood, including a large representative building surrounded by a park. More or less at the same time I found out that the building that was actually made in that space had

been a theatre. Some sort of representative building at least, even though the actual square had never been as grand as Berlage's plans.

This theatre-cinema is now a supermarket. And it has been a supermarket for most of its lifespan. This made me think: a supermarket is a place where most people in a neighbourhood will come. This space might have some social potential.

By looking at other supermarkets and especially those taking on extra social functions, I started to understand what drives supermarket layout (mostly customer experience, facilitating easy shopping or elaborate shopping for instance). I learned about theatres and 'theatre' as a way to control and act, too. Simultaneously I looked more into the square and possibilities to create a space for people in a traffic-infested area. Little by little, the social square started taking place on the inside of the building instead. By adding a new entrance I had created a street, a physical connection for the neighbourhood and in the middle a new square.

### Markets and democratic space

I investigated the history of markets and realised how markets have always been a kind of democratic space. People interact, debating the quality and price of the goods that are being sold. These spaces have become the hearts of our cities. Initially not more than a crossroads, or a space along a busy road, the markets became surrounded by buildings and paved to form squares. Centrally located while cities expanded, these places are often home to the most important governmental and cultural buildings, the town hall and the church for instance.

Because I had wanted to maintain some kind of theatrical space, I initially kept the balcony in my plans. However, it being a very specifically directed object, it barricaded the possibilities I saw for the new square.

Removing it gave me freedom to instead play around with elements, as a kind of theatre sets. They became concrete in their current assembly, anchoring in the square in a way that the church and town hall did too.

The democratic element - the galleries, form a kind of arena around the central square, which can be used for theatre, neighbourhood councils, public debates and more. Anchored by the temple, it is literally set in stone. The drum, which functions as introspective space, for prayer or meditation also functions as micro-theatre. In a way it is like the baptistery on the Piazza del Duomo.

## THE CAFÉ AS EXAMPLE - THE IDEAL THIRD SPACE?

At the start of this journey I was, and still am, fascinated by the way buildings that revolve around food and drink bring people together. Conversations arise when people take the time to sit still and enjoy the fruits of their labour together. Spaces like pubs and cafés which function as a common ground for their visitors. Ray Oldenburg coins the term 'third spaces' for places such as these.

Cafés came up in the 17th century, when colonialism brought foreign products to Europe. Coffee was imported, and instead of beer or wine, coffee alerts the drinker instead of slurring the mind. This allowed for more presence in the conversation of coffeehouse patrons. The classical idea we have of a café is inspired by the 19th century Parisian and Viennese coffee houses, where artists would come together and talk about culture, politics and the like.

Because this happened outside of the home everybody was equal, there is no host/guest culture where one person is responsible for the other's being at ease. There is equal footing in conversations and debate, but it happens outside the political sphere, that is government. Therefore this was the space to observe and criticise society. It is no wonder many protests and revolutionary ideas were started in cafés.

Besides this, the fact that cafés are not famous for their alcohol, in the way that pubs or (kroegen) are, made spaces as these great places for the youth to hang out. Away from their parents, but still watched by the cafés staff. Parents would be assured that their children would not come home drunk, but they could still meet their friends outside the home. One of such spaces in Den Haag was the Ice Cream Salon Florencia, run by Italian immigrants. In the 1950's it was the place to be, and interestingly back then the Dutch policy towards minorities was "integration with preservation of the own identity". The Italian Gelato- culture was very welcome to remain Italian within the city.

Nowadays, it still sells relatively affordable ice cream and it seems like a space that sees a more diverse section of the population than other cafés see, which are either quite gentrified or so rooted in space that they have a fixed group of regulars.

Like Ray Oldenburg, sociologist Eric Kleinenberg also describes the need for social infrastructure - spaces that shape the way people interact. People need places where they can enter freely and where they can meet others. They need spaces where they can linger, because that is when interaction starts to happen. The opposite of spaces as these are private clubs and gated communities, spaces where people want to protect themselves against others. When this idea wins too much ground, the collective becomes the 'unprofitable extra' as architect Herman Hertzberger says.

Nowadays, when you go to a café, it is normal to go with friends, instead of spontaneously meeting whoever might be there too and strike up a conversation. There seem to be fewer spaces where people randomly talk to others and within our polarising society, it might be necessary to talk to people outside of our own circles again.

*In Laak there are quite some cafés, but they seem to cater to quite specific cultural groups. There are also five neighbourhood centers, that see more diverse visitors, but these still only seem to receive around 4000 - 5000 people every week. Almost a tenth of the number of inhabitants of this city district.*

How can places that allow for this spontaneous interaction be created again? Who will pay for the 'unprofitable extra'? Municipalities seem to realise that strong communities seem to cost less, as problems are fixed within the community instead of requiring outside help. But there is no exact cost and gains scheme that can be referred to. Even so, the individuals themselves should also realise that these wider contacts are beneficial to them.



Florencia Ice Cream Salon, The Hague, 1965

## ASPIRATIONS FOR GRADUATION PROJECT

Early in the process terms for the project were drafted.

Aspirations were formulated for the creation of a third space that would facilitate encounters in the neighbourhood of Laak. At the time of the first draft the site was not yet selected.

Aims for this project were then formulated as “laying a foundation for the approach I will take in my further work” and to maybe “start something tangible within Laak”. From the forgotten borough of Laak, as it was named in letters from the neighbourhood council, as well as in a 2023 documentary by the NPO, the project would aim to create something prominent and connecting, with a flexible programme answering to the residents’ needs and wishes, embedded in its urban situation.

After a few additional weeks of literature and site research the terms that are stated on the following page were set up.

A large underlying ideology was Eric Kleinenberg’s ideas on social infrastructure, from his book *Palaces for the People*. He mentions “If we fail to build physical places where people can enjoy one another’s company, regardless of age, class, race or ethnicity, we will all be similarly confined.”[disconnected]

Source: Eric Kleinenberg, *Palaces for the people*, 2018, p.43

Then again, social life is not purely engaging with one another, it has many steps, which each should find a place in a social environment to lead to an actively engaged community. Design decisions that this would lead to is that there should not only be places where people act and talk collectively, but also places where people doing so are visible to outsiders, who might be encouraged to step inside, or who can be seen on their own, to be then asked inside.

### SOCIAL LIFE: A SPECTRUM



ISOLATED

SOCIAL

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR

# A STAGE FOR SOCIAL LIFE

## civil supermarket and community space in the Rembrandt Theatre

A Joëlle Blokhuis production with supervision by Daniel Rosbottom and Amy Thomas

INTERIORS BUILDINGS CITIES - INDEPENDENT GROUP

### BERLAGE PLAN FOR LAAK

Laak: A Berlage-esque working class neighbourhood will see some of Berlage’s ideology returned. A representative function on the square at the end of the central Goeverneurlaan.

By recreating a representative function the square will be enlivened, becoming once again a place to stay and connect.

### A THEATRE FOR LAAK

the original function of the building was that of a cinema-theatre. Nowadays, Laak has a theatre, but it has little other forms of cultural spaces.

By reusing the available space, as meeting space, but also as a creative one, cultural qualities can be embraced, renewed and return to the stage.

### A SPACE FOR EVERYONE

Laak, a very diverse neighbourhood, with ethnicities ranging from Dutch (20%) to European (25%) and beyond (55%) has difficulty connecting. With votes ranging from the far right to very left, polarisation seems to be an issue.

The project aims to highlight similar interests and aims to make every citizen a protagonist, which is necessary for a change in society.<sup>1</sup>

1. Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed* (London: Pluto Press, 1979).

### THE SOCIAL SUPERMARKET

the building has been in use as a supermarket since 1967.<sup>2</sup> This is one of the most generally visited spaces, and therefore it reaches a vast majority of the neighbourhood’s residents.

By challenging the concept of ‘supermarket’, and realising in and with it more social functions, the foundation for a connected centre within the neighbourhood can be made.

2. ‘Rembrandt Theater’ – Joods Erfgoed Den Haag

## RESEARCH PLAN

In week 10 of the graduation a research plan was formulated. This is a summary of the research done and knowledge gathered at that point. It is also a formulation of intentions and a plan of methods for collecting the necessary information to develop a good design project.

Many of the elements from the research plan will be discussed more in depth further on in this journal (the theatre, the supermarket etc.). Therefore only the academic elements and the proposal of the (design) research are included here.

### Reflection

As described in the methodology page, I planned to use the disciplines of architecture, psychology and sociology combined to create a connecting environment, a cultural commons and a civic space. All in all I can say now that I think I have managed. Although the project's scope has become more introverted - using only the building, instead of the Lorentzplein too - this has led to the building becoming a very extroverted space. I have read many architect's considerations for bringing people together, as well as studied buildings that do so in various ways. Through plans and paintings, written descriptions I have taken various experiences, also from sociological perspectives and attempted to integrate those within my interventions. By using paintings it is possible to relate to the characters and see their life and experiences play out. A careful eye leads to observation of behaviour that might be different or similar to my own experiences. And I have aimed to give this all a space within the elements I have created.

What I have not done, as I had envisioned, is a participatory design. This is mostly due to the fact that I was still very much developing ideas with so much input already, that it was difficult to bring it together in a presentable way that would be clear to someone outside the project. Doing that earlier on might have actually been helpful, also for my own process.

I have been in touch with the supermarket manager throughout the project, but that of course is a very specific perspective, although he and his employees seem to know the neighbourhood rather well. Besides that Klaske Havik mentioned at the time of writing the research plan, that I myself am a participant in this project, as I am also an inhabitant of this neighbourhood. I have taken into consideration what I have heard said around me, what I see when cycling or walking or running through my neighbourhood and I have tried to show up to some community events, as well as visit the various corner stores and see and try more of the different cultures around me.

## a stage for social life

### Architecture of communities / ACADEMIC POSITION

*"Architecture can't force people to connect; it can only plan the crossing points, remove barriers and make the meeting places useful and attractive"* - Denise Scott Brown<sup>2</sup>

#### Architecture as connector

As an architect, I want to be socially responsible. I want to create sustainable places, both in terms of materiality but most of all in the sense of longevity and usefulness. For this I have looked at what both architects and sociologists say about buildings and spaces that connect. How good design can be the foundation for community and create a sense of belonging.

#### Social Infrastructure

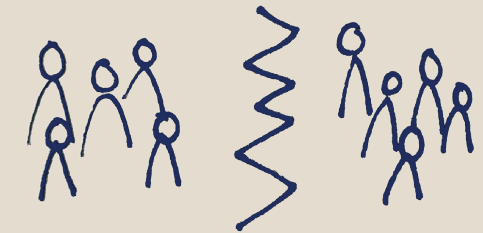
To describe both the physical places but also the organisations that shape the way people interact, Eric Klinenberg coins the term: 'Social infrastructure' in his book *Palaces for the People*.<sup>3</sup> He describes the vast variety of spaces and institutions that can belong to this social infrastructure: Libraries, schools, playgrounds, parks, sports fields, pools, sidewalks, courtyards, community gardens, community centres, churches and other civic associations. But also third spaces,<sup>4</sup> such as cafes, diners, barbers and bookshops, especially if these latter spaces allow one to linger.

#### The invitation to come in

And what brings people to these places? As Denise Scott Brown mentions, the medieval towns started with a marketplace at a crossroads. This is the place where people come across each other and where one wants to be, when looking for connection.<sup>5</sup> Specific buildings have a reason people go there, schools and supermarkets, as well as sports centres. But a space such as a library or a café could also be a space a passerby might be brought into, without originally planning to do so.

#### Social barriers

On the other side, buildings can also keep people out. Among the Dutch population there is a sense of increased polarisation. This creates we-they-thinking and with a relatively large sense of friction between ethnical groups in the Netherlands, social barriers are formed between different groups.<sup>6</sup> In Laak, this is visible in the spaces where people come together, within mainly their own groups.



There is a perception of increased polarisation in the Netherlands, although general opinions are not so different.<sup>6</sup>

Hertzberger summarises: "Community as idea has lost to the thought of protecting oneself against others."<sup>7</sup> These barriers can physically show up as walled communities, but also through lack of investment in neighbourhood amenities, and so, a lack of people in the public realm.<sup>8</sup> Fortunately, this is not yet the case in Laak, although people seem to live besides each other, opposed to with each other.

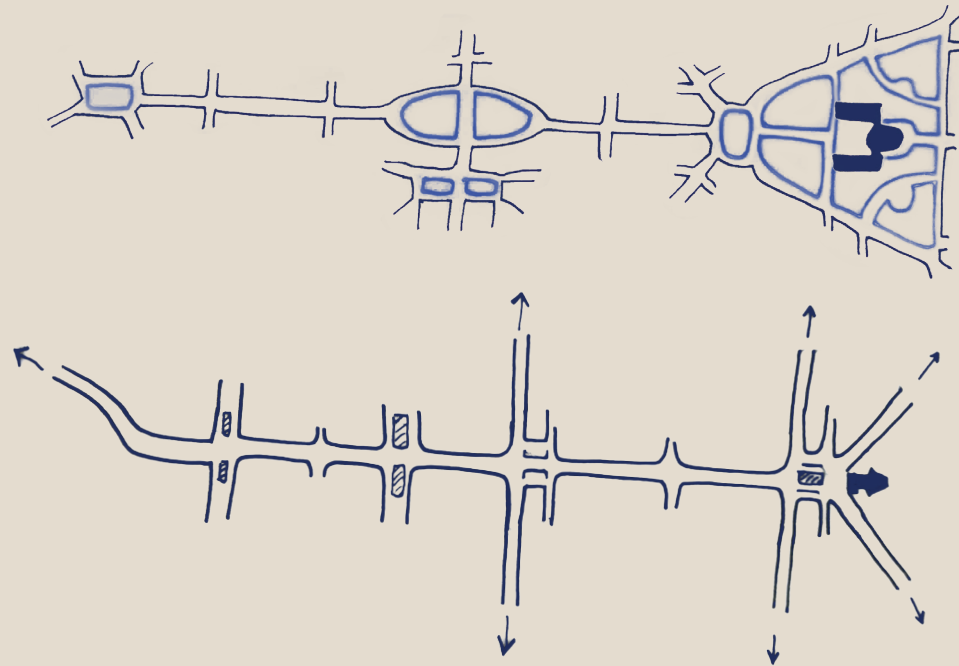
#### City as collective memory

These different groups share the same environment. They live within a space of connected history, through memories the buildings around them hold, as Aldo Rossi<sup>9</sup> argues. In Laak, many residents regrettably mention the sense of degradation, "it used to be a chic neighbourhood".<sup>10,11</sup> By focussing on the history of the neighbourhood, both through Berlage's plan and his social-cultural intentions, as well as through the history of the Rembrandt Theater and the supermarket on the Lorentzplein, there is space for this history to instill a renewed sense of pride and connection for the residents of Laak.

#### Square as centre of society

The placement of the Lorentzplein can be traced back to Berlage's expansion plan for The Hague, although the realisation is much smaller than Berlage's grand plan (side by side on right page). Located at the end of the Gouverneurlaan, the central axis through Laak, it was planned to be a meeting space for commercial and cultural functions, with Berlage's intention for a representative cultural building at its end.<sup>12</sup>

Joëlle Blokhuis



Berlage plan (above) and current situation of Goeverneurlaan and Lorentzplein (on right edge, with theatre).

Throughout the years, the square has become more and more traffic oriented, although the centre part of the square was mostly green to look at and not green to stay in.<sup>13</sup>

Nowadays, multiple traffic streams cut up the square, which is still one of the main commercial hubs of the area, although it is not a space where one can easily and comfortably stay. One of the restaurants has space for a terrace and often some people can be found sitting here. In front of the old Rembrandt Theater, the present-day supermarket, two benches are frequently occupied, but no other space is offered to the passersby and people-watchers.



Lorentzplein, 1922 (source: Gemeente Den Haag)



Lorentzplein, 2025 - traffic junction

Joëlle Blokhuis

Nowadays, there are many small convenience stores in Laak, representing the various cultures. Apparently, the Dutch supermarkets don't supply what the public requires, or do they purposefully leave space for competition?

Generally, supermarkets are focused on profit, and not so much on offering extra unpaid services, although exceptions exist. Jumbo Monique, franchise stores in Alkmaar and Noord-Holland, offer a sitting space that can be used by customers, but also by passers-by. This is something Monique Ravenstijn, the entrepreneur behind these supermarkets, wants to give back to the community<sup>18</sup>. Is this the future for supermarkets? Offering a place for people to come, shop and stay?

**Involvement**

Like many supermarkets, not everyone sees value in the unprofitable extra, especially because positive results of community cannot be easily quantified, although there are great examples of community-involvement leading to better health and happier lives.<sup>19</sup> Eric Klinenberg confirms this: when involvement is encouraged, communities grow.<sup>20</sup> In Laak, involvement in the community becomes greater when people are the homeowners, Mieke Wytéma, project manager of the action plan for Laak, mentioned.<sup>21</sup> In the neighbourhood starters are able to afford houses that come up for sale, who become responsible for the care of the house and garden or street. Simultaneously she sees these people being involved within the community. Methods of involvement could be within the community centres, as many people already do.

One of the big barriers for connecting here, is also the lack of a collective language. Many people know little or no Dutch nor English. Activities based on neither of these languages or a connection between languages might be helpful. Augusto Boal mentions the richness that knowing various languages brings, a richness that could flourish in Laak: "by learning a new language, a person acquires a new way of knowing reality and of passing that knowledge on to others."<sup>22</sup>

**Architect's tools**

The language of the architect then is to speak through drawings, and buildings and create a new reality which can be passed on to others. Hertzberger describes the use of barriers, to create connection. By using the correct scale for walls, steps, elevations, and plateaus, spaces of separation and concentration are created (see below).<sup>23</sup>

Additionally, Hertzberger implores to create spaces that can and may be appropriated: Giving people the power and space to celebrate life.

Besides the building and design tools, the architect has at hand the task of intermediary, bringing together opinions of users, developers and other stakeholders, such as the municipality. Through both architectural language and the languages of each of these involved, the architect can start creating a transformed reality.

Considering the building of the Rembrandt Theater, here lies the possibility for me to use these skills and hone them and find the spatial qualities and highlight them, to set the stage for the social life of Laak. Tamas, 'Interview: Robert Venturi & Denise

interaction - no interaction - interaction



but still a sense of 'own' space



sense of separation, interact when want to.

Herman Hertzberger on creating barriers to facilitate interaction.

**How can the re-imagination of the Rembrandt Theater, considering its historical function and current use, set the stage for interaction between the multicultural people of Laak?**

To bring together my interests and respond to the question of a meeting space, as well as re-instil a sense of local pride for the inhabitants of Laak, I will take the former Rembrandt Theater building as project, along with the square in front of it. I will look at ways to revalue the theatre, as space, and how to add community value to the building and the square. This will take in account the historical function - the cinema, and regard what a more civil functioning supermarket could mean for the interaction of the neighbourhood's residents.

**Lorentzplein as space for people**

How can the square, now dominated by traffic, become more people oriented? It is also worth thinking about the stream of passersby, how can they be invited to stay and come inside? What programme might be added to the square to create a stage for the people, and make it a gathering or performing space? What was Berlage's intentions and ideology, how do other squares in the city function and could these be of importance for Laak?

**Cinema as a collective, cultural space**

What is the cultural importance of the cinema-theatre for the neighbourhood? Many citizens of Laak seem to know of the cinema function the building used to have. What was its importance in the past, before the cinema's decline in the 1960s, and what could a cultural - cinema - function be in the future? Is the neighbourhood ready for its comeback? A cultural function might lead to a sense of pride for the people, a place people can take their friends and meet their neighbours. It can focus on social topics that play within the various communities and bring these to the table for others.

**From non-space to civil supermarket**

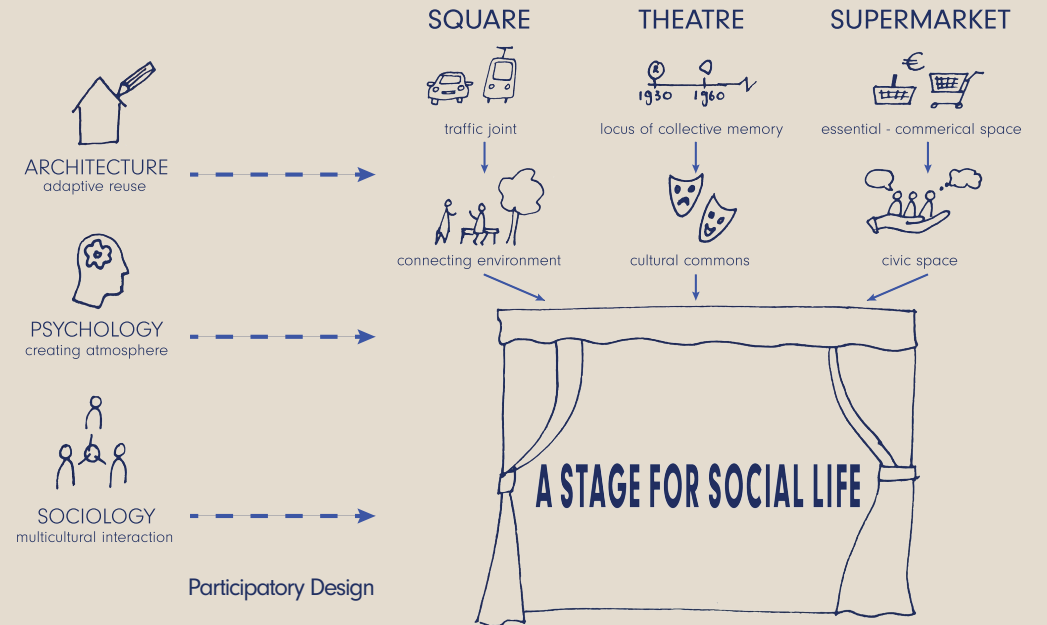
How can the supermarket benefit from a civil function and add to the social cohesion of the neighbourhood? The supermarket hosts many people daily but has little spatial qualities. How can the people inside be invited to stay through additional functions. For this it is relevant to understand how the supermarket works and organises its space. What programme can be proposed that overlaps?



Collage: Lorentzplein as square for the people

**a stage for social life**

**How to get there / METHODOLOGY**



Research Diagram

As I am a resident of Laak myself, my position is that of a participant observer. I get to live in my research area each day and this will help me experience life here as much as any other inhabitant. Besides this position I aim to look through the perspective of environmental psychology - how does the built environment interact with people and lead people to interact.

Through literature on architecture, psychology and sociology, referential research as well as by learning from experts (architects, supermarket managers and community-centred people in Laak), and through my experience living here, along with that of my neighbours, I hope to find out who make Laak, how Laak works outside and within the supermarket and community spaces and use all of this to develop my project.

The fields I will look at can be narrowed down to three overarching forms of spaces: The square, the theatre and the supermarket, which I will

revalue through perspectives of architecture and psychology, as well as sociology. Working through these perspectives I will keep in touch with locals and users, through conversations with residents and shoppers, in the community centres, on the square and in the supermarket.

Epistemes: Typology, praxeology

the city is the epitome of human culture  
H.P. Berlage

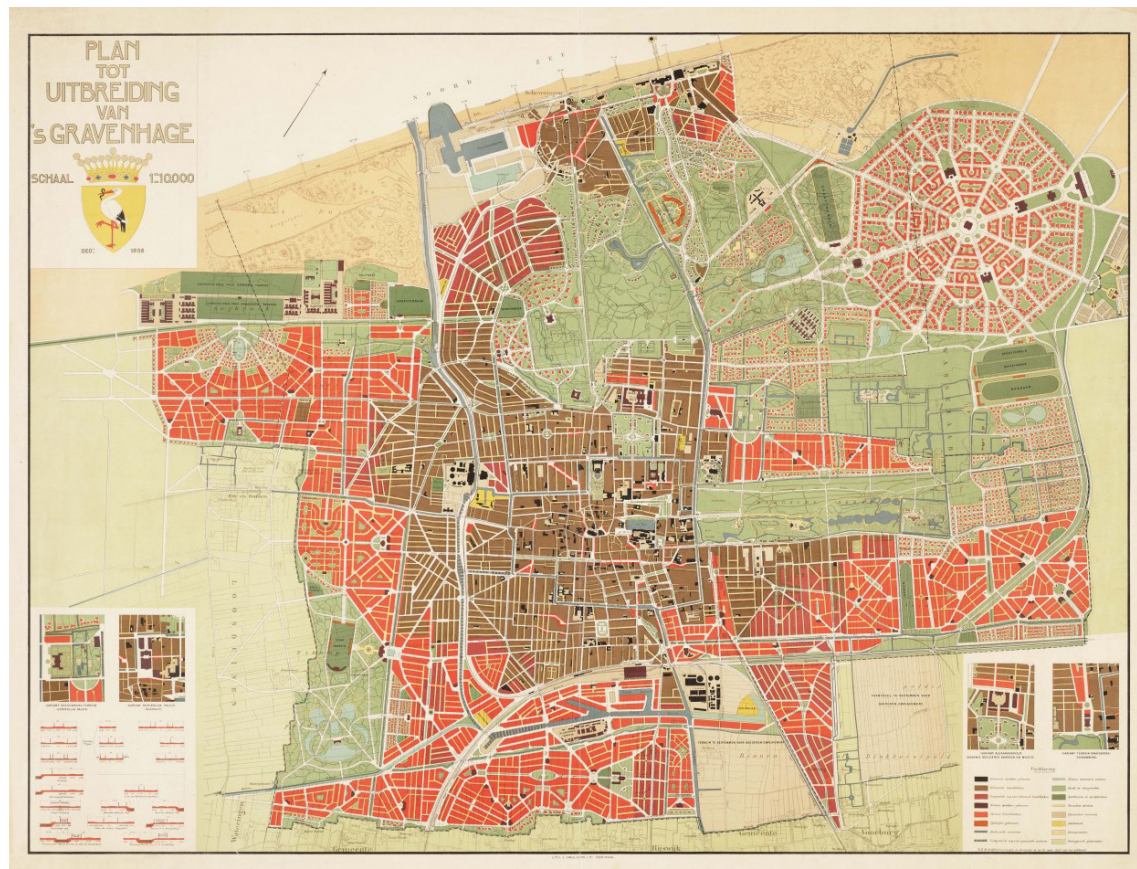
the original plan

## EXPANSION PLAN FOR THE HAGUE

The Hague was in need of expansion at the end of the 19th century. Through the annexation of part of Rijswijk in 1844, with the construction of the Hollands Spoor railway station, there was quite some polder open for construction. Round the year 1900 the Laak harbour was dug out and industry started to settle here. For these workers, affordable housing was necessary.<sup>1</sup>

The municipality hired the renowned architect H.P. Berlage to draw plans for the expansion of the city. His full plan can be seen below, with all new additions in red. With Laak the south-eastern addition (enlarged on the right).

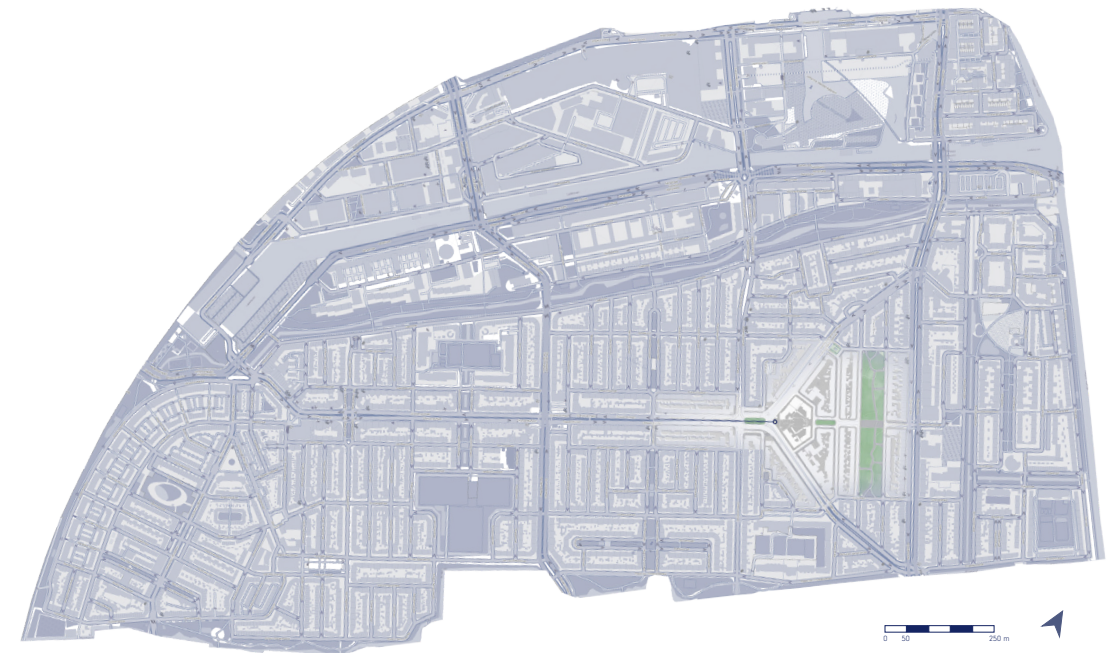
Berlage's plans are characterised by diagonal streets that meet on squares. These streets would connect neighbourhoods and the squares would see representative buildings<sup>5</sup>, highlighting the city's cultural importance. His plans show Berlage's ideology, that people, rich or working class alike, deserved well-thought out and well-cared for spaces.



Expansion plan The Hague, 1908, Haags Gemeentearchief



Berlage's plan for Laak, 1908



Laak in 2025, Lorentzplein until Puntpark is highlighted

Once approved, construction started on the Molenwijk, the first part of Laak. These houses were government-owned, one of the early examples of social housing in the Hague.

In 1925 construction continued on the central part of Laak, Laakkwartier, where school buildings, sports facilities, central squares and the neighbourhood cinema, the Rembrandt Theatre would be erected.

As can be seen in the side by side comparison of Berlage's plan and the current map of Laak (previous page), his intended squares were not realised as prominent as envisioned. Especially the Lorentzplein, was realised less grand than the plan drawings. The representative function that came here was a cinema, which was the cultural place of the 1930s-1950s, and in that sense does reflect the zeitgeist.

Through the years the population remained working class, but its appearance and character greatly changed, through the influx of immigrants. The many changing origins throughout the last 50 years leads to a very diverse neighbourhood. Surinam, Turkish, Polish, Moroccan, Bulgarian and Chinese are all visible cultures within the streets of Laak. Only 20% of the population has a Dutch background as of 2025.<sup>3</sup> There is a sense of degradation, among some of the neighbourhoods longtime residents "it used to be a chic neighbourhood".<sup>4, 5</sup>

This corresponds to Berlage's ideology of using buildings to shape space, but also leaving space, that creates parks, pleasant sidewalks and encapsulates a sense of dignity for its citizens. In the neighbourhood's realisation this respect was already diminished in the realisation of the smaller squares. Nowadays this dignity is only visible in the architecture, its sense has been lost among the neighbourhood's residents.



Lorentzplein, ca. 1960



Rijswijkseweg, 1930



Jonckbloetplein, 1943



De Genestetlaan, 1939

## THE HAGUE'S RESIDENTIAL SQUARES

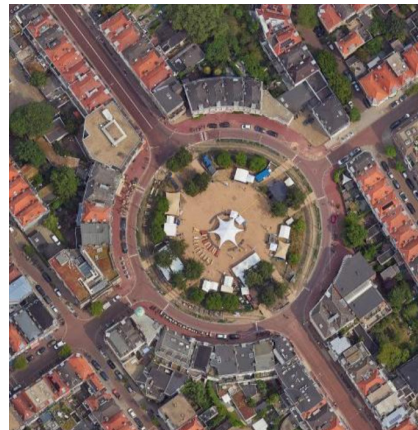
Berlage's plan for squares in residential neighbourhoods set forth a typology that was present in the city's more high class neighbourhoods. This further highlights the dignity the presence of spaces like these would give a neighbourhood.

Spaces as these can belong to a strong social infrastructure, as is visible in two examples from pre-Berlage squares on the seaside of the city (below). These spaces facilitate interaction between the neighbourhood's residents, by providing a space to sit, people-watch and play. Some of these squares now host terraces for surrounding restaurants.

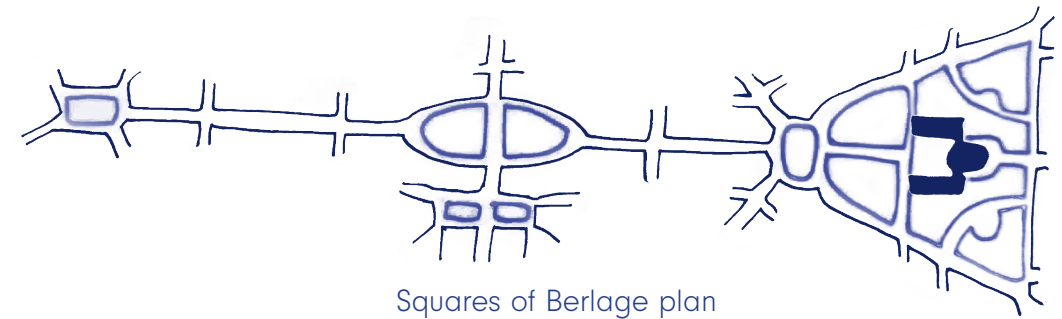
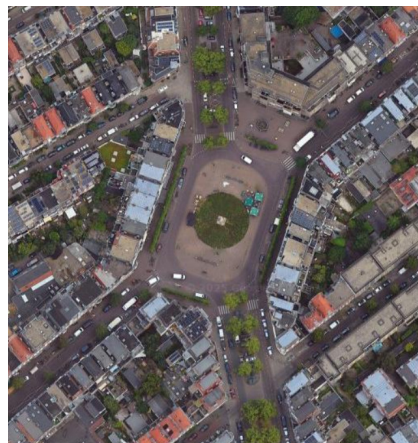
At the Lorentzplein instead, multiple traffic streams cut up the square and it is not a space where one can easily and comfortably stay. It is still one of the commercial hubs for the neighbourhood, but only one of the restaurants has space for a terrace. In front of the supermarket (the historic cinema), two benches are frequently occupied, but no other space is offered to the passersby and people-watchers.



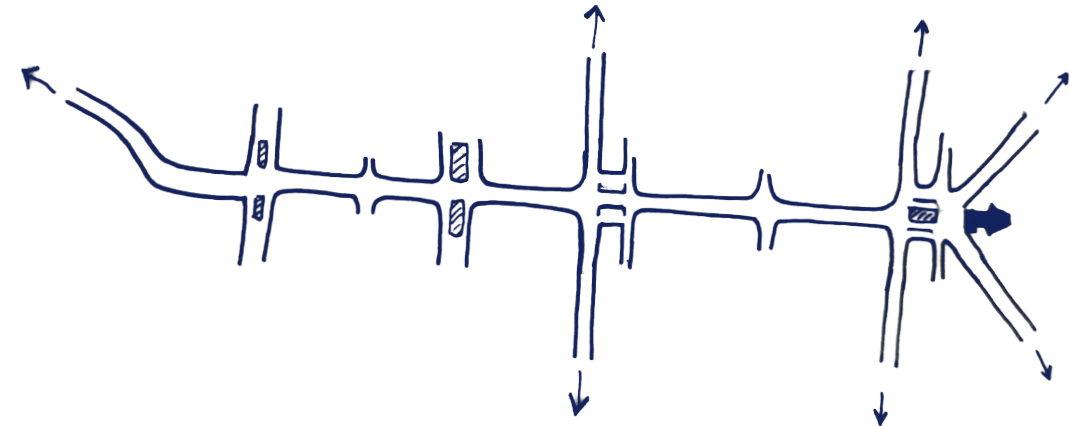
Prins Hendrikplein, Den Haag



Regentesseplein, Den Haag



Squares of Berlage plan



Squares or intersections of Goeverneurlaan, as realised. Lorentzplein on the right



Lorentzplein, Den Haag



## BIBLIOGRAPHY THE ORIGINAL PLAN

1. Haags Gemeentearchief, 'De Kortste Geschiedenis van Laak'
2. Verbeek and Berlage, Berlage in den Haag = Berlage in The Hague.
3. 'Inwoners Naar Land van Herkomst per Jaar | Laakkwartier En Spoorwijk (Gemeente Den Haag) in Cijfers En Grafieken | AlleCijfers.NL'.
4. Sevenstern, 'Louise Roeleveld over wonen in Laak, vroeger en nu'.
5. '100 dagen in de vergeten wijk'.
6. Gemeente Den Haag, Voorontwerp Van Musschenbroekstraat & Lorentzplein.

the city has become a locus of collective  
memory  
Aldo Rossi

as it was



Facade of Rembrandt Theater on the Lorentzplein

## REMBRANDT THEATER - THE NEIGHBOURHOOD CINEMA

It is the year 1933. The Hague has more than 20 cinemas, the newest addition has recently opened in the young neighbourhood of Laak. As a neighbourhood cinema, this is not the cinema where films are premiered, but here they arrive a week or two later. Besides, the cinema was one of the places to see and hear about the news, in a time when there were no home televisions yet. All in all, the cinema plays an important role in the social infrastructure at this time.

Located centrally in the city district, at the crossroads created based on Berlage's plan, the cinema was realised at the spot proposed for a representative function. What could have been more fitting than this, a modern function, bringing people together and informing them at the same time.

In this chapter I will describe the cinema, architecturally concerning the actual building, but also what it (still) means to be a cinema, to offer a stage to culture and bring this stage to a neighbourhood instead of keeping it only in the city centre.

**JEUGD-FILMVOORSTELLINGEN**  
 onder verantwoordelijkheid van de Filmcommissie der HAAGSE JEUGD ACTIE  
 met medewerking van het HAAGS VACANTIE COMITE in het

<b>REMBRANDT-THEATER</b> Lorentzplein - Tramlijnen 4 en 4A en Bus B <b>24, 25 en 26 JULI</b>
<b>HOLLYWOOD-THEATER</b> Boekhorststraat - Tramlijnen 6, 10 en 13, Buslijnen D, K, N, P, en R <b>27, 28 en 29 JULI</b>
<b>CAPITOL-THEATER</b> Loosduinsekade - Tramlijnen 6, 10, 11, 12 en 15, Buslijnen D en P <b>31 JULI, 1, 2, 3, 4 en 5 AUGUSTUS</b>

AANVANG 10 UUR V.M. ZAAI OPEN 9.30 UUR  
 HOOFDFILM:

**De ruiters van het eenzame woud**  
 Gespeeld door en voor de jeugd.

Een Arthur Rank-product, vervaardigd onder leiding van de Paedagoge MISS MARY FIELD.

Aantrekkelijk Voor-Programma  
 ALGEMENE TOEGANGSPRIJS: f0.25  
 (Volwassenen alleen toegang als begeleiders van jongeren)

Voorverkoop één dag tevoren aan de cassa's van de theaters.

playbills of cinemas in The Hague, Haags gemeentearchief

**JEUGD-FILMVOORSTELLINGEN**  
 onder verantwoordelijkheid van de HAAGSE JEUGD ACTIE  
 met medewerking van het HAAGS VACANTIE COMITE in het

<b>HOLLYWOOD-THEATER</b> Boekhorststraat <b>op 2, 3 en 4 Augustus</b>	<b>SEINPOST-THEATER</b> Scheveningen <b>op 5, 6 en 7 Augustus</b>
<b>CAPITOL-THEATER</b> Loosduinsekade <b>op 10, 11 en 12 Augustus</b>	<b>LORENTZPLEIN-THEATER</b> Lorentzplein <b>op 9, 13 en 14 Augustus</b>

Aanvang 10 uur v.m. Zaal open 9.30 uur  
 VERTOOND WORDT:

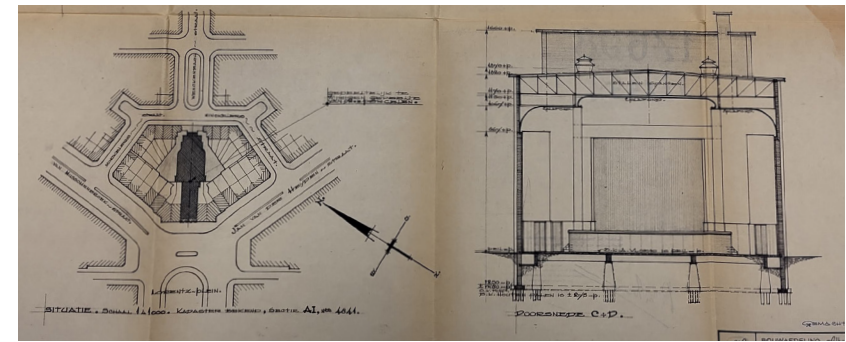
**CIRCUS-JONGEN**  
 Gespeeld door en voor de jeugd  
 Een Arthur Rank-product, vervaardigd onder leiding van de Paedagoge Miss Mary Field

**AANTREKKELIJK VOOR-PROGRAMMA**  
 o.a. Film-jeugdkrant - Natuurfilms - Tekenfilm

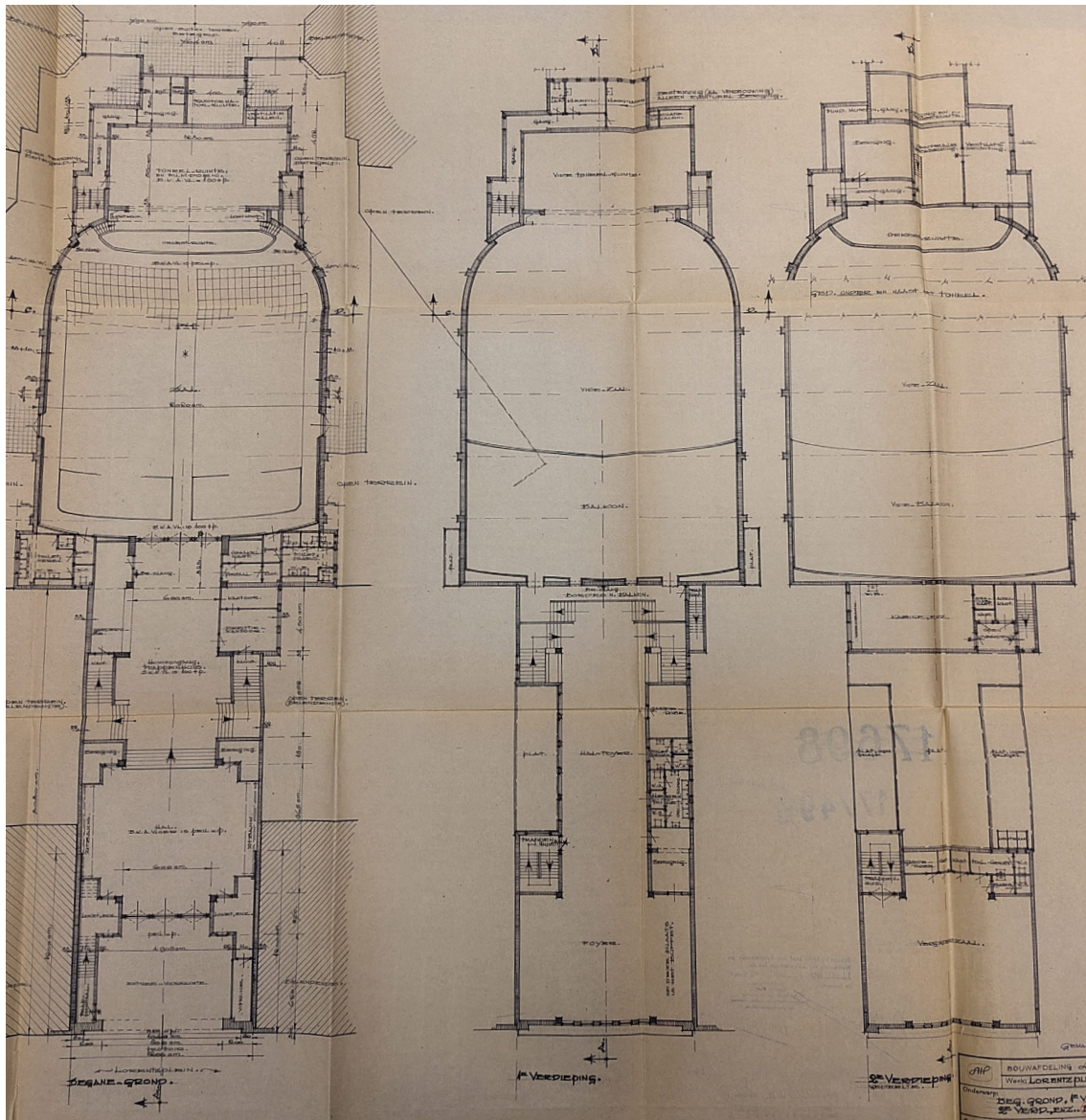
ALGEMENE TOEGANGSPRIJS: f0.25  
 (Volwassenen alleen toegang als begeleiders van jongeren)

## FLOORPLANS THEATRE

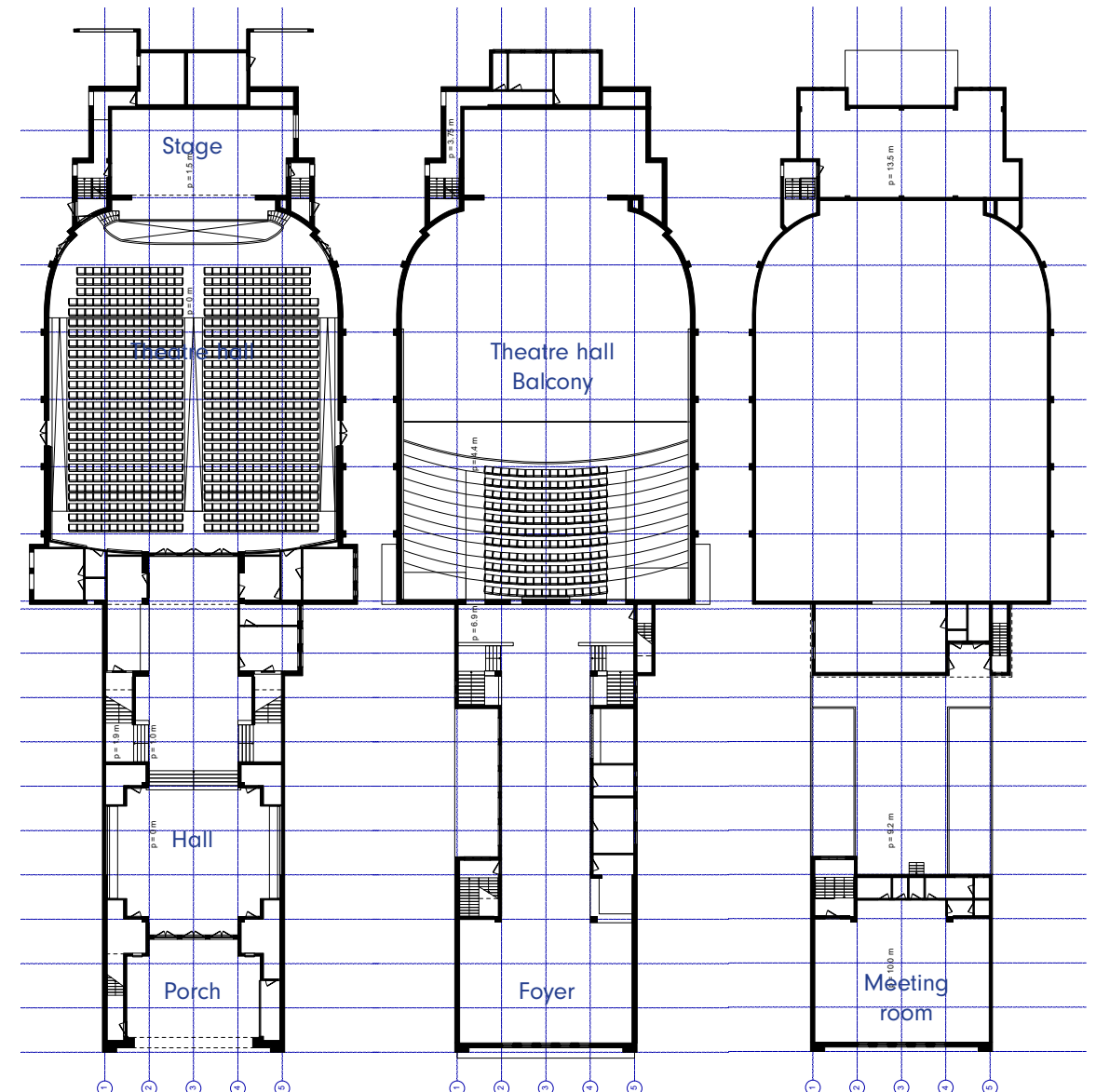
The buildings plans are carefully documented in the city archive. As the building is nestled in between shops in a residential neighbourhood (as visible on the right page), the entrance is rather narrow, and the film hall is located behind the other buildings. This requires a long entrance hall, that is split up to create a succession of rooms. First of these is the porch, an outdoor space to wait, protected from wind, rain or sun. Here is where tickets could be bought. Then follows a first hall, with benches on either side. The next hall sees two stairways leading to the upstairs foyer, the cloakroom and the entrance to the film hall. Other floorplans show a bar in the front of the upstairs foyer. This floor, at 5.5 metres height, connects further up to the balcony.



building in site (left) and section facing stage (left)



Floorplans: Ground floor, first floor and second floor (left to right).



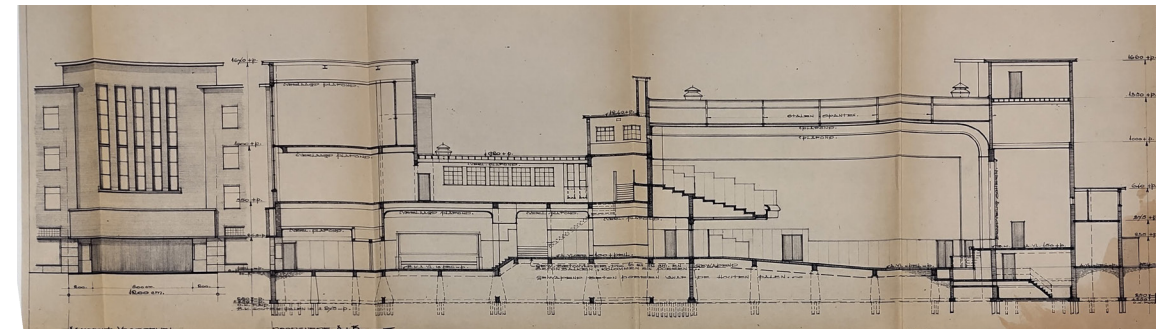
Floorplans, recreated: Ground floor, first floor and second floor (left to right).

As is visible in section, the foyer and meeting room on the second floor, are situated right behind the facade, from where the view looks out over the neighbourhood, over the 1 km long Goeveneurlaan. The rest of the building is more introverted, leading to the cinema hall. As it is ideal to place these seats on a slope, the building leads you inwards as well as up, through a series of stairs.

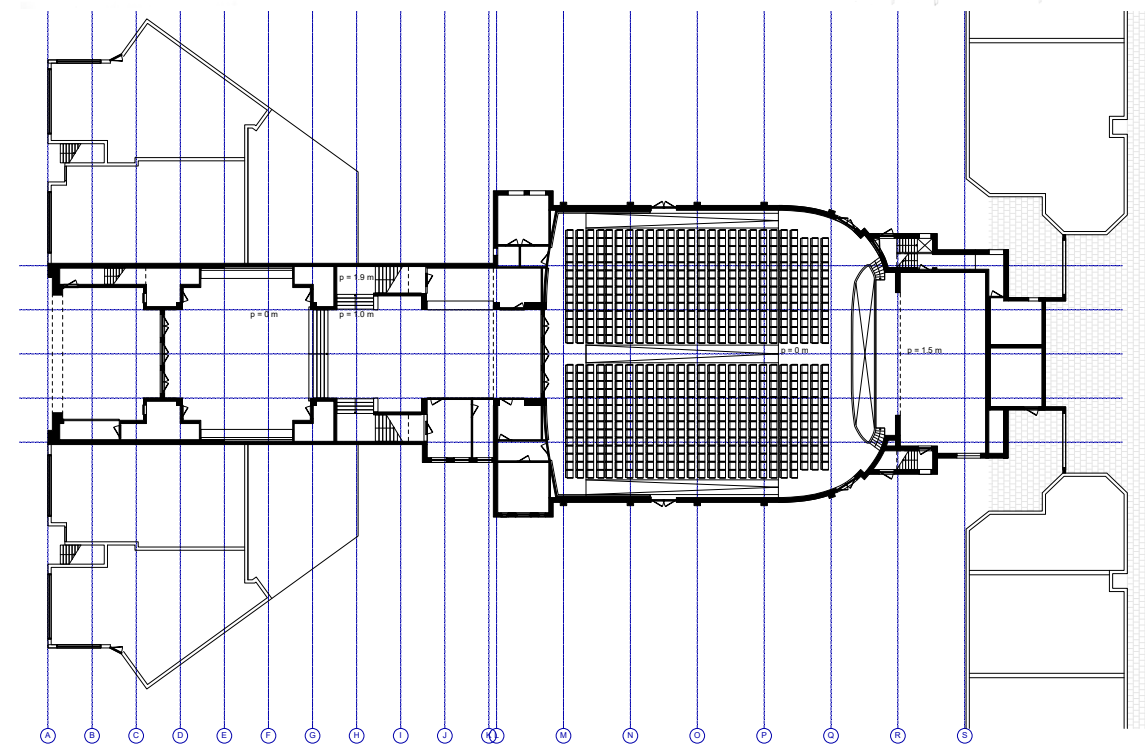
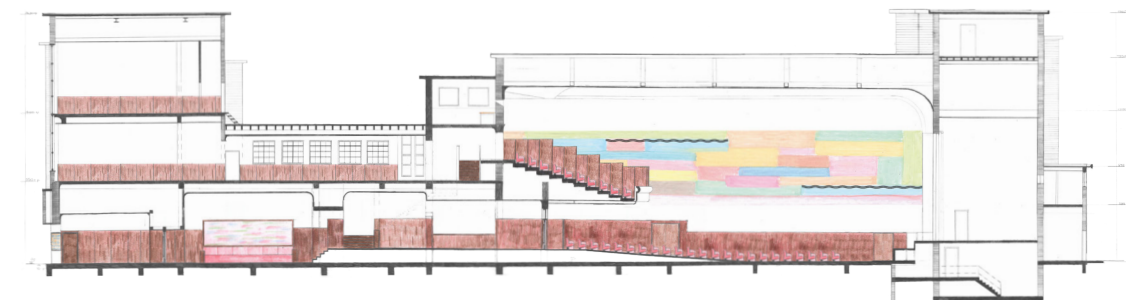
The cinema was mainly used for film screenings, but it occasionally saw small musical performances. During the break piano or organ was played, but also singers as big as Willy Alberti, a renowned folk and opera singer, performed here.

The cinema-theatre was decorated with tapestries by Jaap Gidding, the same tapestry artist who did the interior of the Tuschinsky cinema in Amsterdam, still renowned for its art-deco interior. The colours of this theatre have been used as a reference for the assumption of colours used in the Rembrandt Theatre tapestry. (below and in section on the right).

It shows attention was given to the space, similarly in the way Berlage wanted to give dignity to the working class neighbourhood.



section and facade Rembrandt theatre, 1965 plans



Floorplan recreated in context, section recreated (above)



Tuschinsky theatre, Amsterdam (left), sketch with colour-guess of tapestry RT (right)



View of cinema hall from balcony, 1933



View of cinema hall from stage

## CINEMA AND THEATRE: THE COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE

Cultural spaces are important for people to be informed, form ideas and question the world around them, in a very different way that political or scientific spaces do.

Besides this cinemas and theatres create collective experiences for the audience, who experiences the same happiness, loss, fear or other message a movie or play tries to bring across. Everyone has an individual experience, but together, as a group, the experience is felt too. People may realise they are not so different from their neighbours, such as Agnes experiences in Hamnet (2025).



Agnes reaching out to Hamlet, as the crowd follows her (Hamnet, 2025)

In June I wrote an essay on cinema's role for community, which is included here.

What the essay leaves out is theatre as an art form. Where I have quoted Augusto Boal on language-learning, I have left out his perspective on theatre as a language: "A way to experience real life, simulated". In his book he describes how the stage can be a place to try out scenarios, or to use your own body to experience someone else's lived experience. This makes it a way of giving people the means to express themselves and formulate their stories. This is also a way to give dignity and a sense of self-expression to people who do not fully grasp a verbal language.

### a stage for social life

#### The cinema as community builder

*"It's a collective experience. Laughter's contagious, sadness is contagious, anger is contagious, and to experience something as a collective, that's our real strength. There's so much that atomizes and divides and reduces us to individuals in the digital age. The collective experience is what's great about [the] theater." - Ken Loach<sup>1</sup>*



Watching a film in the cinema, you can be surrounded by a 'random' selection of people, but they will be the passengers you share the journey of the film with. Source: The Muppet Movie

On the screen in front of you, a film plays, you can hear the bombs falling around you, feel the pain of heartbreak or experience the joy of love. The strong sound system and the dark room lures you in completely and surrounded by the oohs and aahs, the laughter or the shock of fellow visitors, you are collectively transported somewhere else. The ancient Greeks would consider this time travel: Chronos, (the time that is passing) is different than Kairos, (the time that we are lost in the moment, the lives we live through the film).<sup>1</sup> And it is not the journey or the destination, but the company that is most important.<sup>2</sup> Similarly sharing the experience of watching a film together, makes people travel companions; people that have shared the same experience. This bonding experience is what leads to a sense of community. Cinema's play their part in this community creation in various ways: Uniting people through shared experiences, as just illustrated, facilitating social interaction and discussion and offering a platform for cultural appreciation and diversity. Furthermore, cinema's have a set of tools to pull people away from the everyday.

Cinema's actively build these communities by offering various themed activities. Cinemas in The Hague and nearby cities organise youth or student nights; cultural cinema with films in the original languages; book-and-movie nights, in collaboration with local bookstores and libraries; documentary and discussions, with experts that can elaborate; ladies' nights or beer-and-bitterballen men's nights; movie festivals with local filmmakers; but also rescreening of classics or cinephile events honouring directors or actors.<sup>3,4,5</sup> Through these means a wide audience is aimed at, students, creatives, older audiences with a nostalgia for the films of their youth, as well as international communities. Especially through facilitating space and time before or after the film, through as little as an introductory talk, or as much as a Q&A with an expert, the audience becomes aware of the people amongst them, which leads to a sense of community.

One of these activities, the cultural cinema, could be elaborated through thematic weeks. Especially in a place as Laak, this could give people of various

## Joëlle Blokhuis

ethnicities a podium in their neighbourhood, where they can both show their neighbours who they are, as learn from others. Both the showing of films and the sales of related foods and products could be done in the building of the theatre itself. Wider reach? Possibilities for a shared kitchen where cooking workshops can be held. In the cinema-hall talks, debates and discussions can be held.

Besides these methods of bringing people together, the cinema has a unique method of placing people in a situation that falls outside the everyday. The dark room, the surround sound and the size of the screen take people away from their surroundings, their worries and cares. Whereas watching a film at home can be disrupted by your phone, children, pets or the to-do list – and who doesn't occasionally combine an in-house task with the movie that is on – the cinema does not share these distractions. The story the film tries to tell can hit home and land within the observer. Besides, Actor Franz Rogowski thinks the film might help restore one's ability to stay in the moment:

"you have to reduce your short attention span activities, otherwise you just lose the capacity to stay with someone's idea for a certain amount of time." Similarly, with the phone-restriction in the cinema, even watching a film as family, actually has everyone's involvement, whereas in the living room each individual might simultaneously be in their own digital environment. This again adds to the impact of sharing the experience, to conclude in full circle.

In this way, a space of shared history within the neighbourhood becomes a space for new memories. A podium for the sharing of stories, the learning from each other and from different cultures. As Augusto Boal says: "By learning a new language, a person acquires a new way of knowing reality".<sup>6</sup> So each culture holds its own perspective on life, and the sharing of these stories, through film and discussion, leads to the evolvement of each person's understanding of life and collectively living it. What wealth can the cinema dig up, what treasures to be found!



Being part of the same public - sharing emotion. The cinema brings the town together in the film Nuovo Cinema Paradiso.

7

1. Gracewood, 'Happy Together'.
2. Norbury, Big Panda and Tiny Dragon.
3. Filmhuis Lumen, 'Specials'.
4. Bioscopen Leiden, 'Specials'.
5. Filmhuis Den Haag, 'Over ons'.
6. Boal, Theatre of the Oppressed.



Augusto Boal - Theatre is a language

“... this all happens in the forgotten  
neighbourhood of Laak”

letter to municipality by residents  
residents' organisations RadiLaak, Laak Noord,  
Spoorwijk, and neighbourhood councils Laak Centraal  
and Laakhavens

as it is

Laak as forgotten neighbourhood

## LAAK: THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ANNO 2025

Laak is still a working class neighbourhood. Nowadays more than 75% of its population has a foreign heritage. Laak was dubbed the forgotten neighbourhood in a letter written by the neighbourhood's resident organisations and councils in 2022 after a series of violent incidents. The feeling lingered that the municipality could not care less about this part of town.

Since then a documentary has been made '100 dagen in de vergeten wijk', which pays attention to the amount of social work happening here and its necessity. The neighbourhood centers are brought to attention and the way they work to bring people together. There is a social infrastructure here, but it is very much put into place through organisations, as the neighbourhood has a lot of cultural islands: people drawing in their own small circles, as they might lack a common language and do not feel understood. A lot of people feel lonely and unattached.

This concerns people who came as guest workers or as refugees, but also people who have lived here for years and who have seen the neighbourhood change. Now all their neighbours might speak different language and they feel a disconnect. One lady described the different cultural activities happening, but without a possibility to join in as an outsider. This segmentation may have always been here, says Louise Roeleveld, but in the past it was among churchgoers, now it is if you are muslim or christian or not religious at all.

In the Actieplan Laak, the plan made in response to the emergency letter of 2022, the lack of connection is related to the fact that people only temporarily live here.

Personally I think the neighbourhood centers are doing a lot of good work, but that there may also be some stigmatisation around places as these. Besides that, some people may not know how to find these or do not know they are welcome there.

In contrast the supermarket is a place anyone seems to be able to find. Everyone needs groceries, the advertising towards the street is clear, the supermarket wants to make money! The supermarket sees 28.000 paying customers each week. Which means there might be 35.000 people who come inside this building weekly. That is more than 3/4 of the neighbourhood's residents. The neighbourhood centres only reach an enthusiastic estimate of 4500 people every week.

Combining social activities within a (super)market then seems like a way to bring people, perhaps even unintentionally, together.

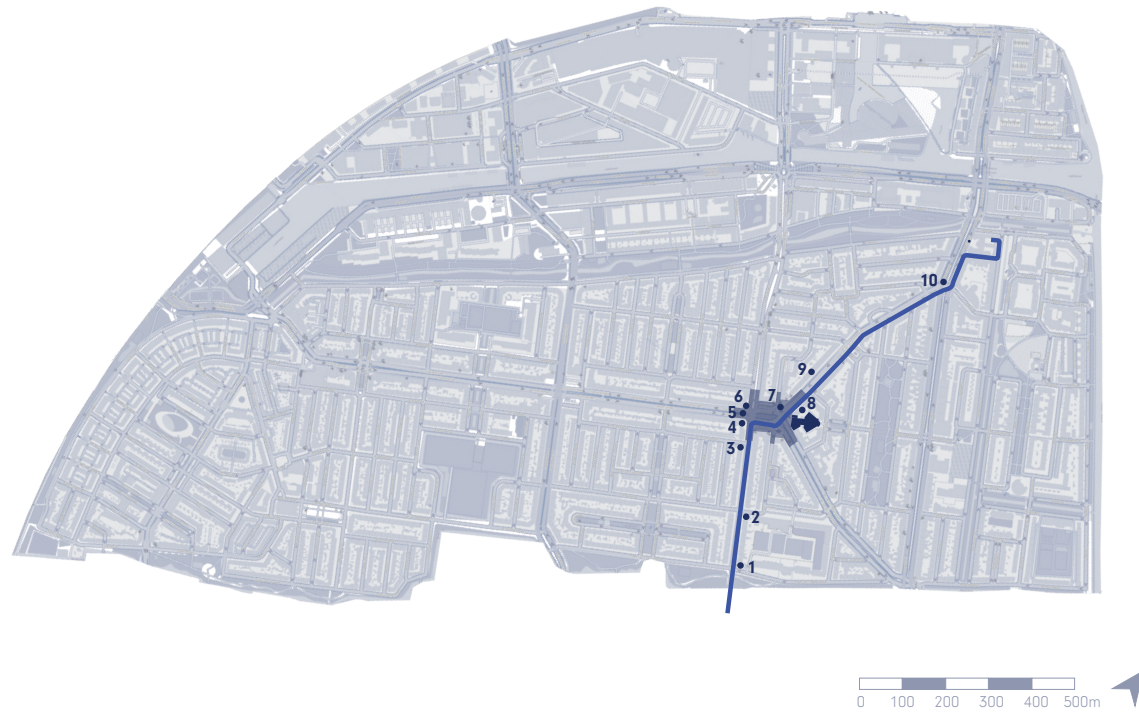


Some facts and figures about Laak and its communities



Commentary on Laak and its communities

## LAAK - CYCLING ROUTE



My cycling route through Laak, illustrated. Rembrandt Theater and Lorentzplein are shaded.



5. Goeverneurlaan



6. Monumental architecture Goeverneurlaan-Lorentzplein



1. Leo's koffiehuis, Oudemansstraat



3. Sam Supermarkt, Oudemansstraat



7. Empty snackbar and Greek restaurant, Lorentzplein



9. Second-hand store, Van Musschenbroekstraat



2. Milan market, Oudemansstraat



4. Cafe New Eldorado, Lorentzplein



8. Grocery, Van Musschenbroekstraat



10. Intersection Van Musschenbroekstraat - Rijswijkseweg

## GETTING TO KNOW MY NEIGHBOURS

The architecture I want to make, comes from a place of involvement. Not dropping in on a place and saying: "Here, this is what you need." Instead I want to anchor what I do in its surroundings, both physical and social. At the start of my research I visited a few of the neighbourhood centers, and was able to speak with some people who had lived in Laak for 50 years, and others who were quite new to city. There were people who actively put time apart to host events and be a listening ear for the people around them and there were people who were just looking for some company.

I also headed to the playground in the puntpark, right behind the current Albert Heijn. Here I was working on a sidewalk chalk drawing of my projects façade, hoping to get to talk about the site. The drawing became a collaborative task, and on the side there was also conversation with the kids. They were telling me about their school, about the playground and hatching plans for door-knocking pranks. I realised that the act of doing something that invites people in, as happens with playing, is something we do way less as adults then children do. Then people will connect and start talking more easily too.



playing outside: drawing the supermarket facade with sidewalk chalk



Christmas at the Vadercentrum in Laak Centraal



The corner café at the Rijswijk-side of Laak (yellow and green are The Hague's colours)

At the Vadercentrum, the most central of the neighbourhood centers, with a city-wide outreach, every evening people can come for dinner. During the day there are sewing and computer workshops, but they also offer mechanical training and host the foodbank service. A diverse group of residents come here...

The café on the image below is frequented mostly by white nationals. When I spoke to some of them they were very outspoken about the alt-right parties they support.

## ACTION PLAN LAAK, IN CONVERSATION WITH PROJECT LEADER MIEKE

Tuesday March 18th, I spoke with Mieke Wytema, project lead of the action plan Laak and Peter Zoutendijk, responsible for process support. We spoke of the "brandbrief" the emergency letter that set in action this plan, but also about what I could mean for them, as an architect in spe.

One of the goals of the action plan is to show the beauty of Laak, 'the chique neighbourhood it once was', through reordering measures and inclusion and cleaning programmes.

Mieke was very positive about the new influx of young people who are starting on the housing market, able to buy properties that are coming up for sale now that rules for landlords have become stricter. "These people take responsibility for their house and their gardens and outdoor space". The lacking ownership, due to uninvolved landlords and changing renters is now evened out better, due to these new homeowners. This is a form of gentrification, but it does create a form of stability within the neighbourhood. There's unfair sides to it, but this might also create a better environment for the guest workers that do remain.

My main focus is on creating a space to bring people together. By then I had visited a few neighbourhood centers, and I knew the action plan was still looking for a center or Laak Centraal (the middle of the neighbourhood, around the Goeveurlaan and the Lorentzplein). Mieke mentioned there was a lack of a general space. Where the centrally located Vadercentrum has a city-wide reach, the other space was connected to a church, so more positioned than the municipality would wish.

When I mentioned the Albert Heijn, Mieke told about the great view from the meeting room. The space is occasionally rented by the municipality. At the same time, the action plan was looking at the empty space next door. But that would be too small for the programme a new neighbourhood center would need.

### Programma van wensen

#### Wijkberaad (110)

- kantoorruimte met 4 bureaus (40m2)
- kantoorruimte voor de redactieraad van de wijkkrant met 3 bureaus en apparatuur (30m2).
- besprekkamer voor ca. 10 personen (20m2).
- opslagruimte (mogelijk in de kelder) (20 m2)
- een grote vergaderruimte voor wijkvergaderingen (gedeelde ruimte/bijv. het jongerenhok).

#### Wijkz (110 m2)

- Ontmoetingsruimte voor de jeugd (min 50m2)
- Werkplek voor opbouw- en jeugdwerk 3 (30 m2) (check)

#### Gemeente (40 m2)

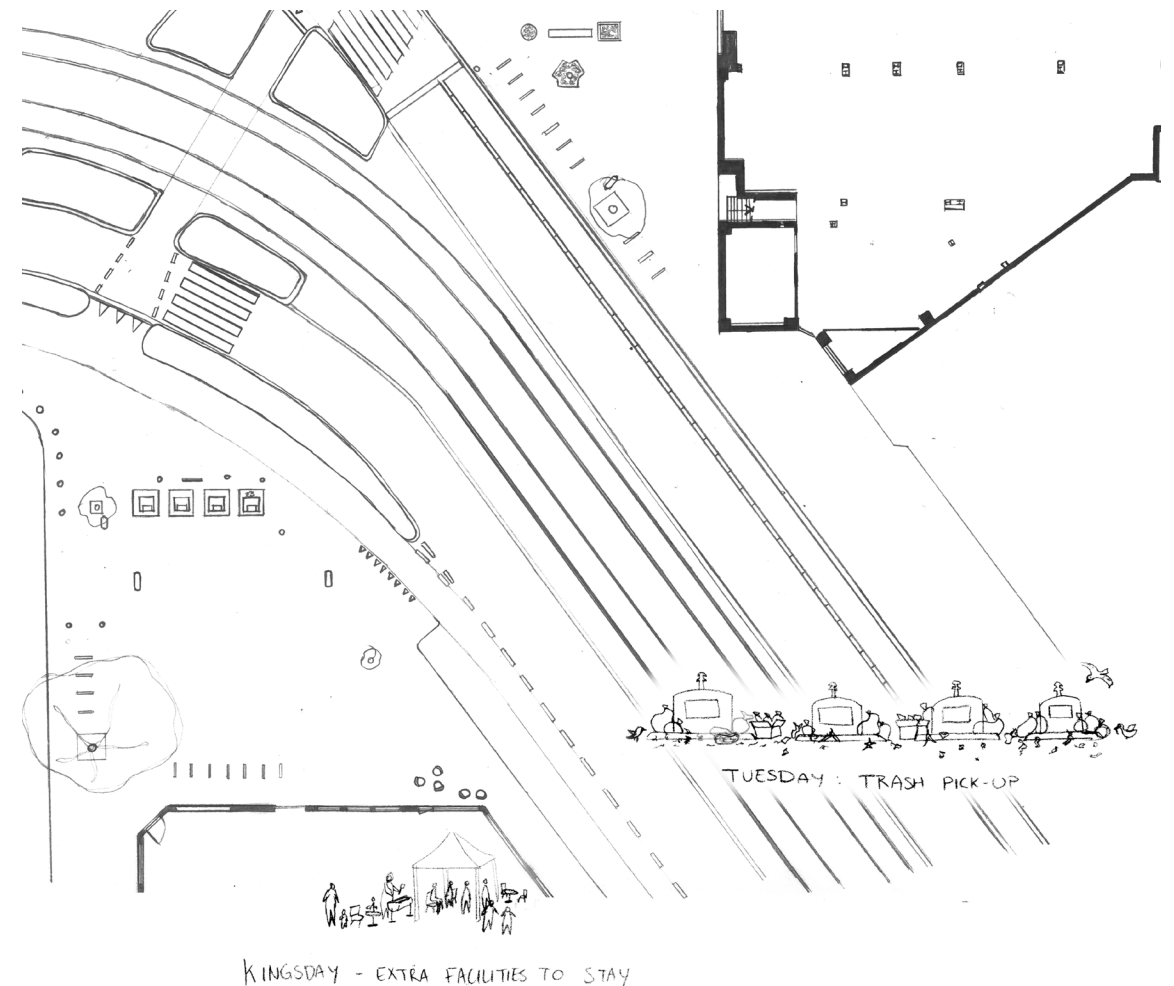
- Werkplek voor 4 personen (40 m2)

#### Algemeen (100 m2)

- Ontvangstbalie
- Keuken
- Toilet
- Kopieerapparaat etc.
- Zithoek/koffietafel?
- Evt. een zaaltje voor activiteiten los van jeugdhok

programme of requirements for centrally located neighbourhood center/office

One of the biggest complaints by residents regards the waste, that is either too much for the waste management to handle, or not treated properly by the people leaving it at the trash containers. Part of this problem is the overload on the housing market, where landlords allow 6-10 guestworkers to live in the same house. Where this happens, the strain on the house and neighbourhood is immense: a lack of parking spots, large amounts of trash and high noise levels are what many residents complain of. Besides the strain, it also seems like many people do not feel a need to take ownership of the space. When society treats you as a nuisance, there is little reason to bother to behave otherwise, especially when switching jobs and living space so often you do not even have the time to build up a different relationship than the one perceived. This is where (environmental) psychology comes in. If we as a society treat people as deserving of respect, like Berlage did in his plans, the majority of people start behaving worthy of this respect too. But it requires us, as society, to have a more open perspective towards the world around us.



trash deposit on the Lorentzplein, and situation before pick up

“Unique about the Dutch shopping experience is the almost daily, or even more than daily visits to the supermarket”

Wesley van den Bedem,  
Layout designer Jumbo Supermarkets

as it is  
the neighbourhood supermarket



## THE SUPERMARKET TAKES OVER THE CINEMA

In the 1960s cinemas nationally and worldwide fall into disuse. Home television has become affordable and more and more channels are broadcasted straight into living rooms.

In a similar evolution of comfort, the supermarket is on the rise. These stores offer an alternative to the market, and combine the green grocer, butcher and baker all in the same store. In the Netherlands Albert Heijn is rapidly growing and developing.

In only 1952 the franchise saw its first self-service store, where customers could pick their own groceries instead of being serviced by shop staff. By then it was still only a grocery store, in 1955 the first 'supermarket' with an area of 340 m<sup>2</sup> is opened in Rotterdam, this store is the first to include fruits and vegetables as well as a meat department alongside its other foodstuff.

When the cinema is bankrupt, the Albert Heijn is ready to take over the site and becomes a supermarket with more than 500 m<sup>2</sup> serving the neighbourhood of Laak. In its arrival it boards up the balcony and mainly uses the ground floor area. Over the years it expands to its current size, taking over all available ground floor area in the residential block (see next page).



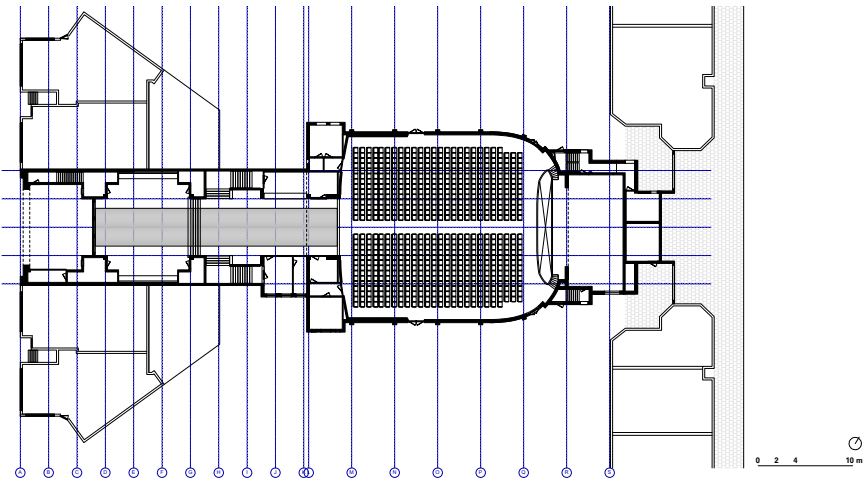
Opening of Albert Heijn in 1967, photo in possession of AH



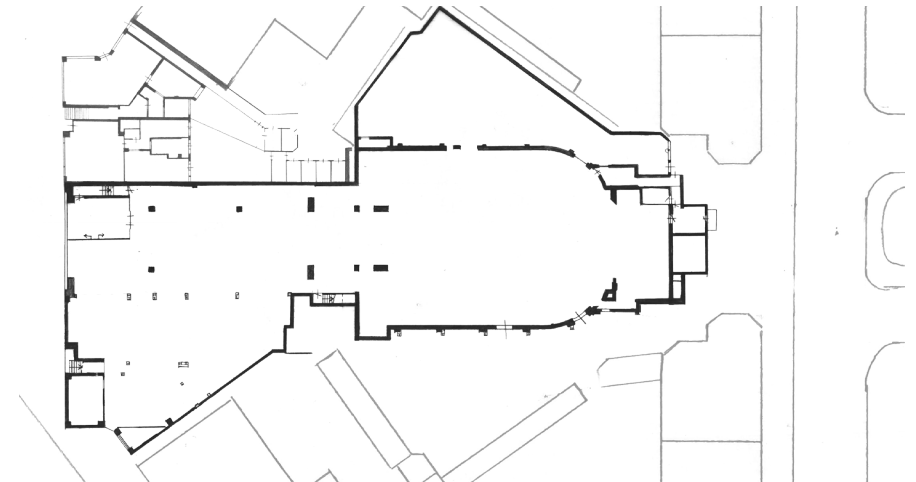
balcony photographed in 2008



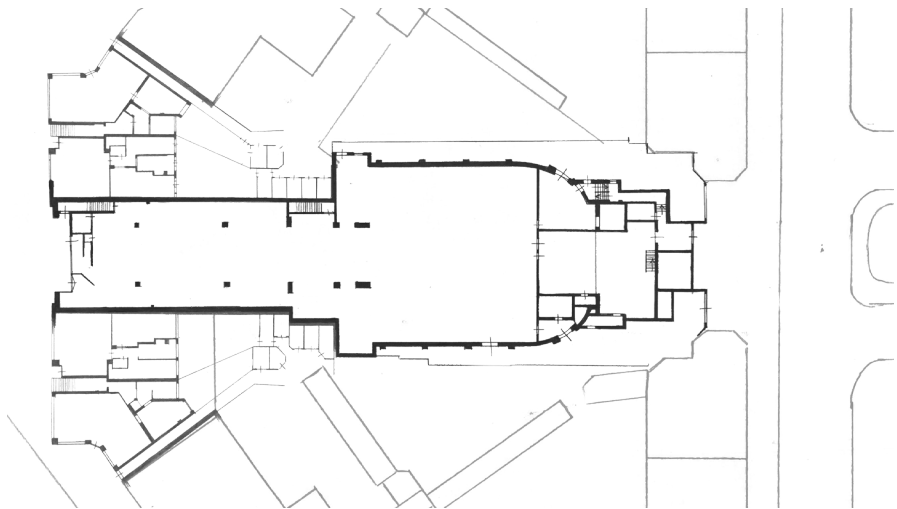
Current situation: Albert Heijn on ground floor, historic balcony and stage above



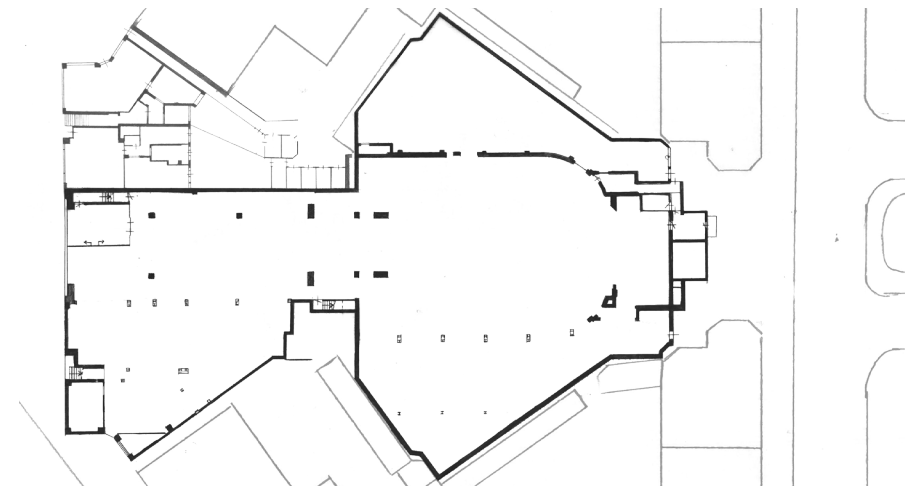
1933 - Cinema



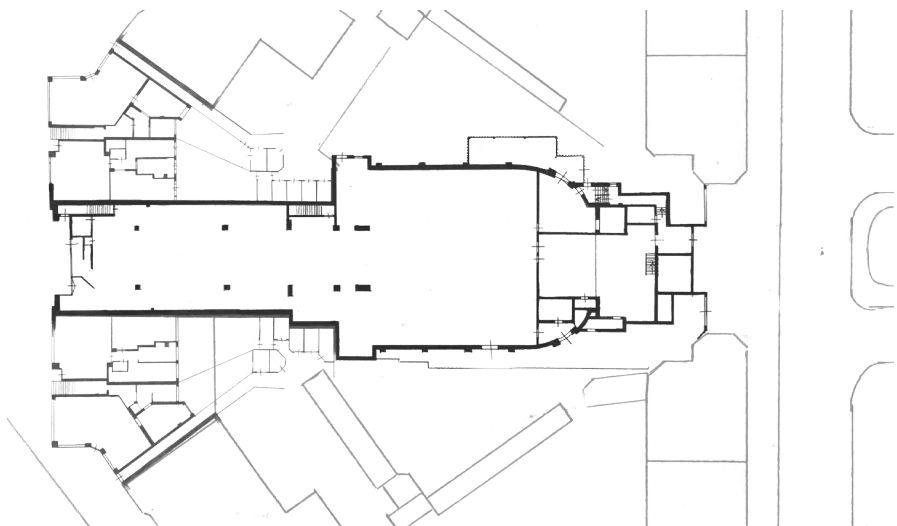
1989 - Supermarket, storage wing and store wing addition



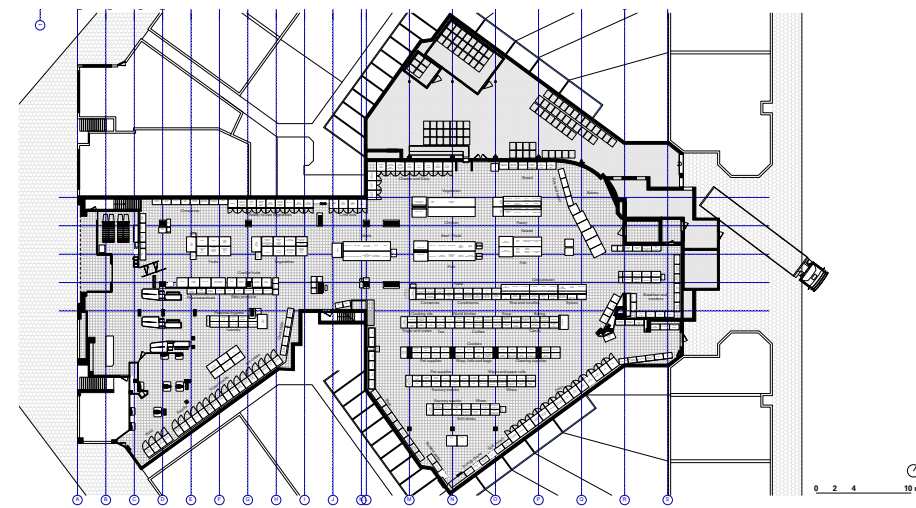
1967 - Supermarket



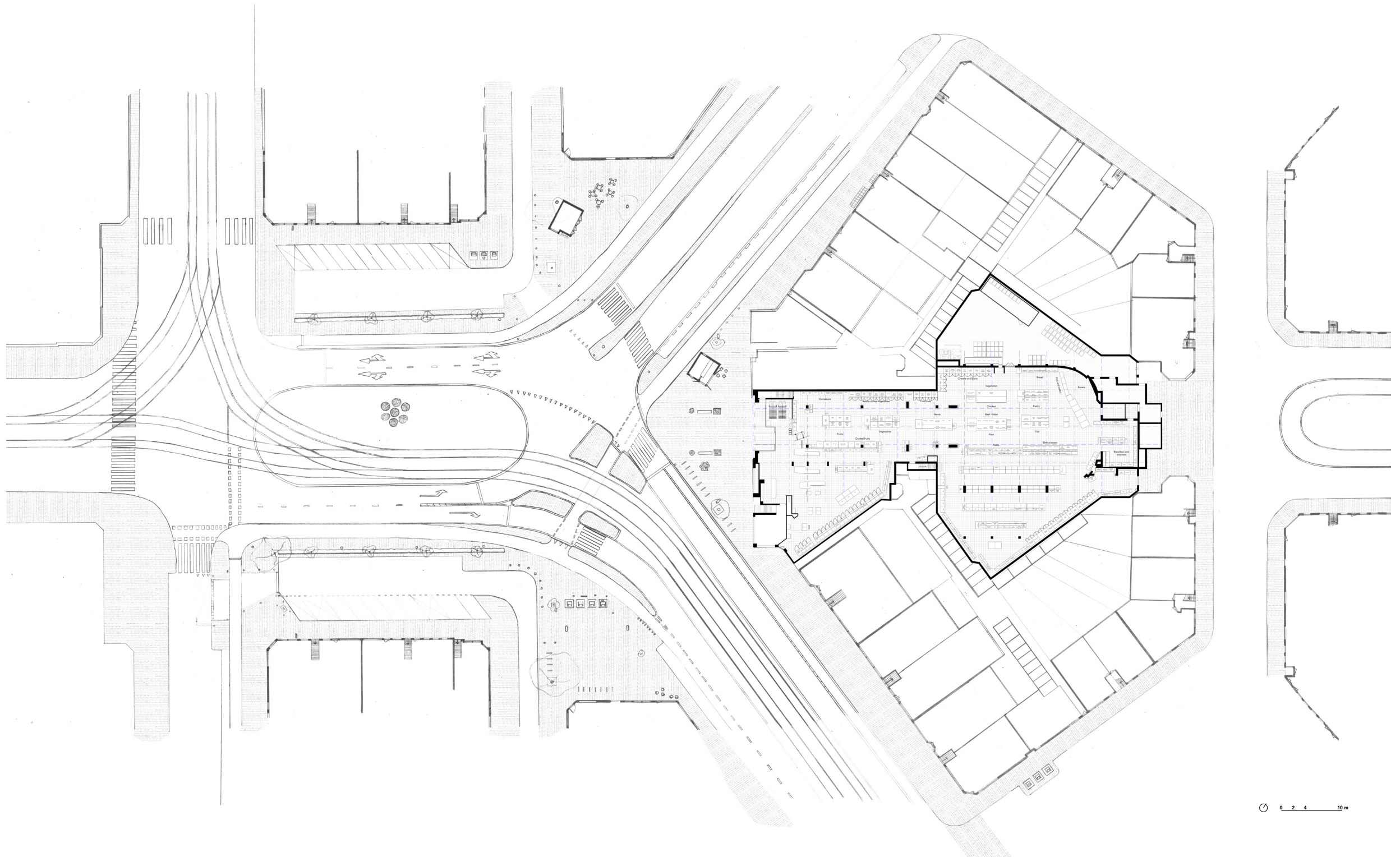
2007 - Supermarket, store wing addition



1968 - Supermarket, storage additions



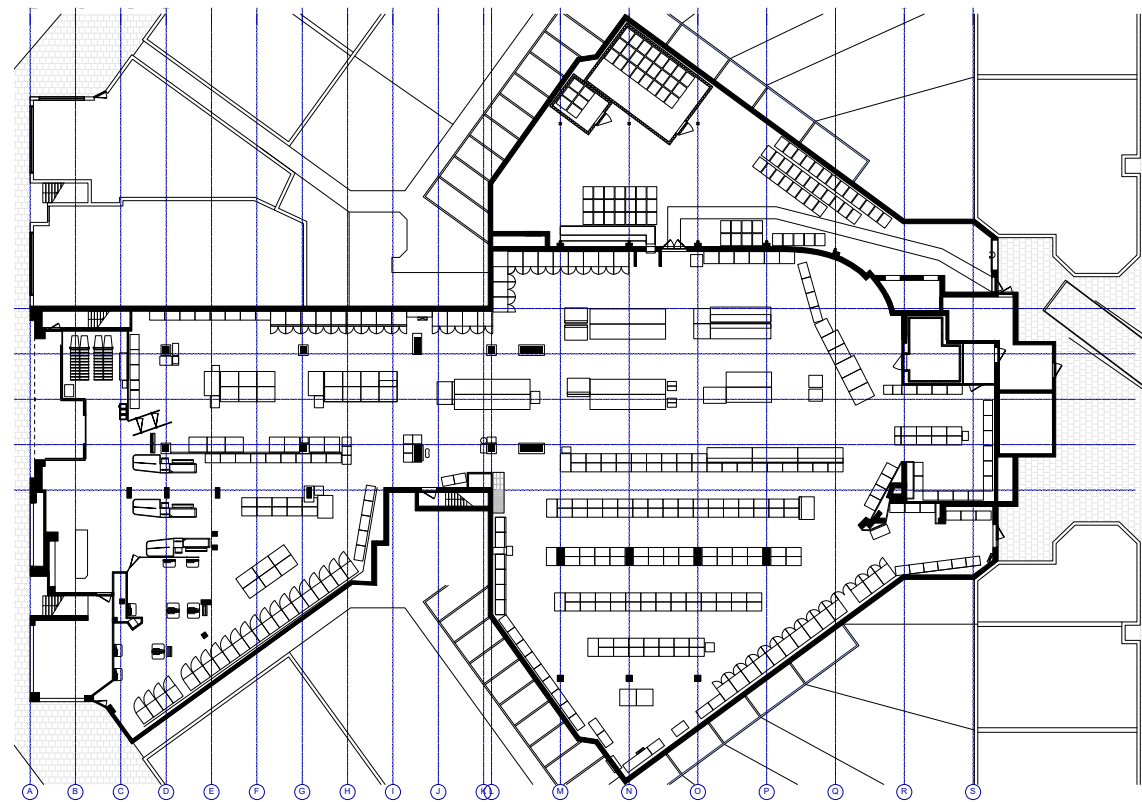
2025 - Supermarket, current layout.



## THE SUPERMARKET IN PLAN - 2025



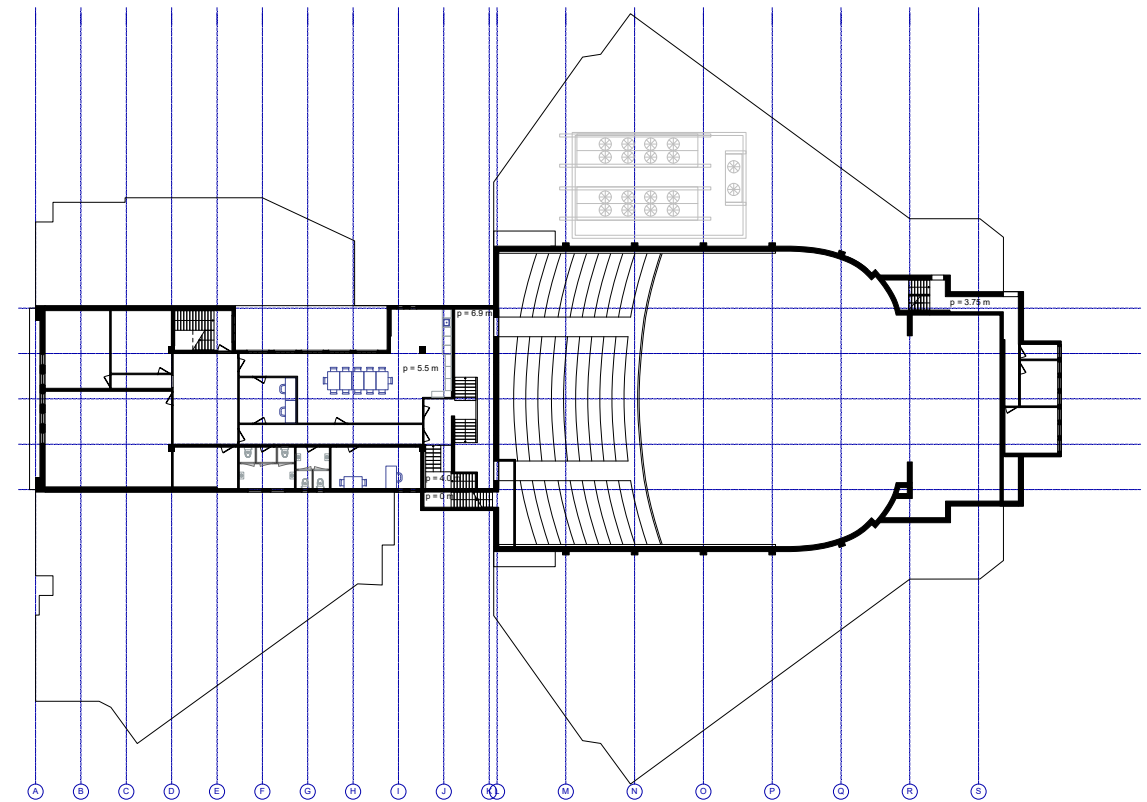
2025 Section



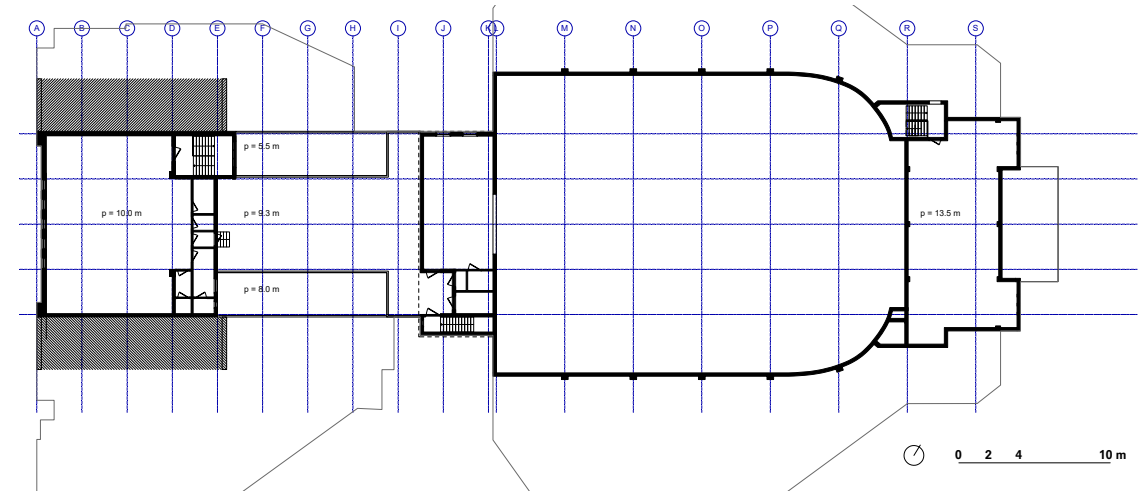
2025 Supermarket floorplan in context

The supermarket expanded and every valuable square meter is used as efficiently as possible to gather as large a profit every day. The upstairs space is far less valuable, as that will never be space where products will be sold. This is probably the only reason that the balcony still remains. Removing it would be more costly and lead to no particular gain.

To go upstairs a front stairway can be used, accessible by employees and guests, that would use the meeting hall. Another stairway at the narrowest part of the building is



2025 First floor



2025 Second floor

the one used most by employees during working hours.

On the first floor the canteen takes up quite some space, together with some office space. On the front side of the building a classroom-like space is used by the regional Albert Heijn for workshops, another room is used for language classes for employees and another is in use as prayer space.

On the second floor is a meeting room, that is rented out about once a week and vacant for most of the other time.

## LORENTZPLEIN: THE SUPERMARKET AND CONVENIENCE

Over the last decades, supermarkets have evolved from grocery stores into convenience stores. There is a difference between privately owned shops, such as corner stores and mom-and-pop-stores and the corporate shops. The latter has seen a lot of development in the facility they offer their customers. These stores are planned to the dot. Product placement is completely programmed for the biggest revenue.

In facilitating the customer, supermarkets have moved online too. It is possible to outsource the process of doing the groceries; the selection of products can be delivered at the doorstep. Albert Heijn vans drive around with the text: "Haal jij de kinderen, doen wij de boodschappen." (You pick up the kids, we do the groceries.)

At the same time physical supermarkets have to offer an enticing alternative to attract in-store customers. Fortunately the Dutch shopping experience is unique in the way that it sees many customers on an almost daily basis. Especially in urban areas, people might enter the supermarket per meal, instead of doing weekly groceries. Besides this, the physical supermarket offers customers the possibility to check the quality of the bought products, as well as a shopping experience that involves all the senses: seeing, smelling and touching the products. Additionally supermarkets have a level of entertainment, a theatrical approach: staffed counters in the produce department and product try-outs.

This leads to the current supermarket design. Each supermarket company has their own standardised plan. This helps customers find their way in each store of the same supermarket without much difficulty. Based on location, the store profile is set up to offer the right experience and products to the local customers and to rival the local competitors.

Basic elements in the supermarket plan are the creation of sightlines and an inviting entrance with colourful (fresh) products. By placing these in the first part of the store, the customer has an easy oversight, with the low shelving at the entrance. This also allows personnel at the bakery, often in the back of the store, to keep an eye on customers, for the safety of all. The non-perishable foods are preferably stocked in short aisles, so the products are more easily found and there are more aisle ends (space for advertised products).

Within this layout, focus is placed on the different kinds of customers. Those that come for just their meal and those that do the more expansive groceries. Grab-and-go products are lined up along central aisles, offering a quick single route in and out of the shop, while tempting the shopper to also take a drink and possibly a snack or some pre-cut fruits. The elaborate shopping leads customers through the entire store and invites them to try something new, showing pairings of products displayed together for an element of surprise.

In the evolvement of market to grocery store, to supermarket, certain elements have been lost too. Where the market is a bustling area and more theatrical than the supermarket could ever be, with vendors loudly advertising their products but also informing the shoppers of the quality of their wares, supermarkets have become distant.

Customers are cycled through the assembly line: Welcomed in, tempted with products and quickly led to the checkout, where they can pay with more people simultaneously in as little space as possible through the self-checkouts, the supermarket has become a machine. It is possible to enter and leave without speaking to a single person.



Self scan facilitates the shopping experience and makes it contact-free

## THE SUPERMARKET: WHAT IT WANTS TO BE

Supermarkets are ever evolving. The large companies have their own development teams and pilot stores, where they test new products, new gadgets (smart trolleys, cameras). Already a few years it has been possible to scan your products with your own phone in the Albert Heijn, immediately ticking off your grocery list. Supermarkets experiment how to facilitate the customer's wish for easy and sustainable products. The last years the supermarket's house brands have been winning from major brands because of their affordability as well as their quality. This shows how supermarkets have developed their own lines, often including different levels of house brands, to cater to different customers.

The physical supermarkets are realising they should step up in their hospitality, realising that one of the aspects that makes people come to the stores is also the level of entertainment. Life is happening where people come together. People want to be amused and entertained. Jumbo supermarkets are responding to this by realising Foodmarkt stores. These branches have an even larger fresh market, and more staffed counters. Not only for the bakery and deli-meat, but also a salad, sushi and grill counter. The chefs that work in the store create pre-packaged meals that can be prepared in-store or at home. More affordable than a restaurant, but still a similar environment as the customer can watch the chefs at work, while doing the groceries. Besides this, supermarkets are realising the customer expects them to be a market leader in sustainable development. Ecological supermarkets such as Ekoplaza, that caters to a select group of customers is market leader on this area, but big chains are following more and more. The Albert Heijn introduced a vegan line: some of the products were just rebranded, but it has expanded too. This line highlights plant-based options, facilitating the customer in their search for sustainable products.

However this continuously facilitating to every customer, leads to such a vast product supply that choices almost becoming overwhelming. **New initiatives like Upfront, the supermarket that opened in December of 2025, instead offers a very limited product supply, but ensures the heritage and minimal**

Monique Ravenstijn, the entrepreneur and franchise-holder of three Jumbo supermarkets, realises the position the supermarket can take: "We are that hub in the local ecosystem." She has made her supermarkets a space that answers society's request for contact, by making space for a café-like space, where people are invited to stay. Here they can eat or drink something they just bought, but they are also allowed to enter and sit, without shopping at all. She sees this as giving something back. Just like supermarkets stabilise market prices by not making revenue on every product they sell. For instance, supermarkets often reduce the price of coffee and make up for this by asking a higher price for toilet paper.

Monique Ravenstijn's Mootjes cafés offer space for visitors and passers-by to stay.



The Jumbo Versmarkt concept is a branch of the supermarkets larger stores with an expansive selection of prepared meals (to-go) and to save at home. Taking inspiration from the activity of real markets. (also inspired by Eataly)

## SUPERMARKETS AND DESIGN: SAFETY AND FACILITY

With evolving ways of doing the groceries, the supermarkets respond and oftentimes are market leader in offering innovations; pin payments and self scan counters as very visible developments.

I spoke to Wesley van den Bedem, a layout designer for the dutch Jumbo Supermarkets. Before designing the supermarket, the 'store profile' is configured; who is the customer and what is their shopping behaviour. Local competitors are also taken into consideration when assembling the products that will be sold and the programming of the supermarket. There are standard plans for various building sizes, which are then projected and filled based on the customers' data.

Source: The Independent, 19th July 2025

Source: Grocery Gazette, 27th June 2024

For the Jumbo the standard plan is a left/right-layout, with a central entrance, entering in the produce side of the store. This way there is daylight on the fresh products, that also have low shelves, so light may come further inside. This plan makes the shop feel less deep, so the customer has a sense of oversight. Within this plan, two routes are created: one for facility and one for elaborate shopping. At the same time the supermarket is divided in 'worlds', that combine simultaneously eaten products: Meals, Breakfast and Bites for example.

Certain social aspects that are considered for the programme are the 'klets-kassa' or 'chat-counter', which sees a wider path for elderly or lonely people that are in need of some small-talk.

Certain neighbourhood supermarkets still have a coffee table, although a lot of these have been removed during the Covid period. Wesley mentioned that there have been quite some complaints about the same people taking over the table each day. Which might be because these people are in dire need of the company, but could also mean they are profiting off of the free coffee. Nowadays the Albert Heijn has a coffee machine outside of the store, which you have to pay for. This is in stark contrast with the spaces Monique offers in her Jumbo's, as described on the previous page. Wesley said these coffee tables are now only placed in neighbourhoods (not city centres) where little hindrance is expected.

Supermarkets are now aiming for a theatrical approach, bringing staffed counters back into the stores. A market-like experience is created with try-outs and more focus is placed on local products.

Concerning safety, the layout of the supermarket makes use of sightlines to lure clients into the store, towards luxury products for instance. But the sightlines also ensure the personnel's safety, as well as that of the customers. The counters often look into the higher shelves, whereas the bakery looks out over the produce section. This is more

and more important now rates of shoplifting seem to be on the rise. In the UK a shoplifting epidemic is described and supermarkets are enforcing various measures, such as AI-trained cameras at the self check-outs. This only seems to divide customers and supermarket staff further. Instead of offering a small conversation while checking someones groceries, the customers feel overmonitored. This turns supermarkets into high-security zones and creates an almost hostile environment, in contrast with the friendly store the supermarkets promote themselves to be, while trying to earn their customers' trust. Consumer expert Kate Hardcastle also mentions customer service staff might just be the answer, as present staff deters theft and engages the customers. The dutch shop-theft liability organisation also mentions that hospitality diminishes theft, as it de-anonimises the thief, and creates a friendshiplike mentality.

Whereas supermarkets are seeing the cost reduction of self-service check outs, due to the fact that less people need to be employed, they might seem to forget that visibility of employees creates a sense of safety within the supermarket too.

Source: SODA Bijwinkeldiefstal.nl

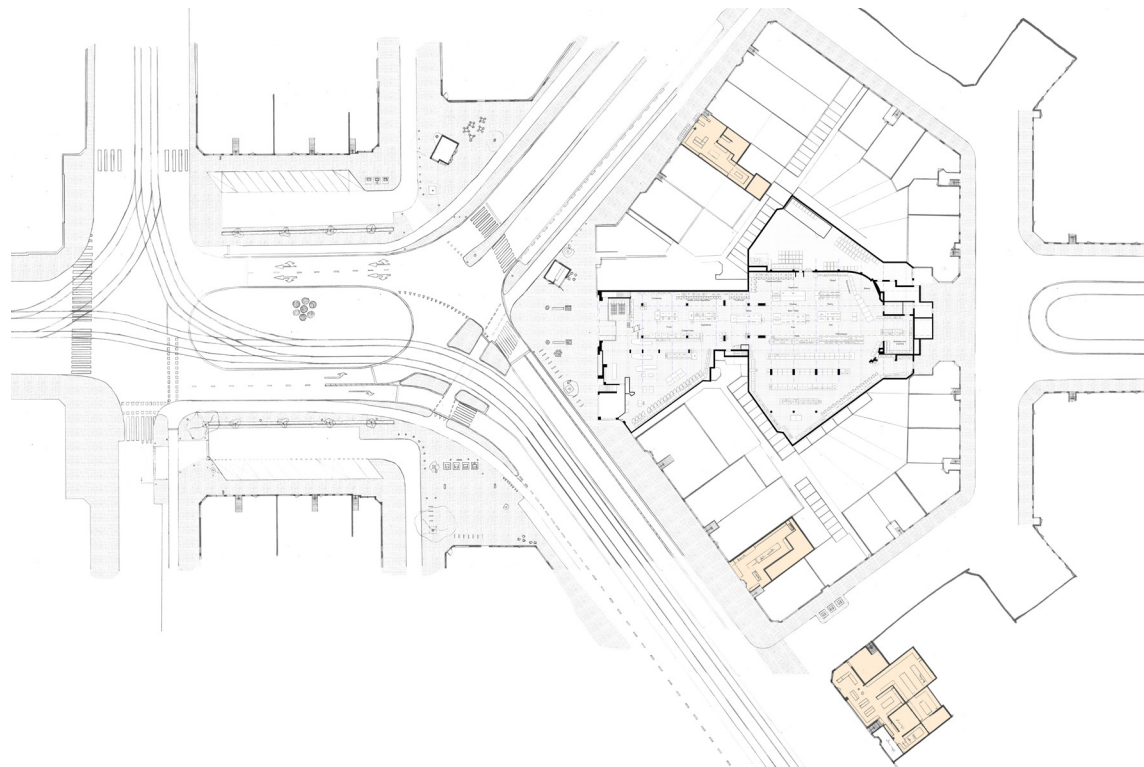
Source: ad.nl 3rd January, 2024r

## THE MINI-MARKETS OF LAAK

Laak seems to have an abundance of cornerstores or mini-markets. Some of these seem to be mom-and-pop stores, in others, the store manager might be hard to find. Some of the stores are quite nicely kept, others are full of boxes of products that almost form an obstacle course. Most of them form a big contrast with the innovation and organisation of the Albert Heijn.

Each of these stores has a distinct character, based on the shop operator and the culture it hails from. There are mainly Polish, Turkish and Bulgarian stores, but also Surinam products are offered at some. Many people might combine a visit to one of these smaller shops with a visit to the Albert Heijn or one of the larger supermarkets in the neighbourhood. A few hundred metres away there is an Aldi and a Jumbo, the Albert Heijns biggest competitor in this area.

I have documented some of the surrounding stores, to compare their floor area and shelves with those of the Albert Heijn. The area of the Aldi and Jumbo are both estimates, the smaller stores are those visible in the urban plan.



Lorentzplein and surrounding shops

## Surrounding Supermarkets Minimarkets / Corner stores



Supermarket	Area	(m <sup>2</sup> )
AH Lorentzplein	1850	m <sup>2</sup>
Jumbo Laakkade	2300	m <sup>2</sup>
ALDI	1400	m <sup>2</sup>
Aktas supermarkt en slagerij	310	m <sup>2</sup>
Supermarket Fantasya	130	m <sup>2</sup>
Cerci Supermarkt	100	m <sup>2</sup>

floorplans of surround shops

## LOCAL FOOD SUPPLIERS



Title

Producer	Products	Season	Location	Distance	Amount?	
Haagsche Cacaofabri Candy	Chocolate	*cocoa fro	Den Haag	3 km		<a href="https://haagshecaca">https://haagshecaca</a>
Wijdehorst	horticulture	May - Nove	Wassenaa	11 km		<a href="https://wijdehorst.nl/">https://wijdehorst.nl/</a>
Braamhorst			Wassenaa	13 km		
Hoeve Biesland	Dairy		Delft	13 km		<a href="https://hoevebiesland">https://hoevebiesland</a>
Holy Hoeve	Meat		Schipluide	16 km		
Kievit	horticulture / distribut		Katwijk	22 km		<a href="https://kievitamines.n">https://kievitamines.n</a>

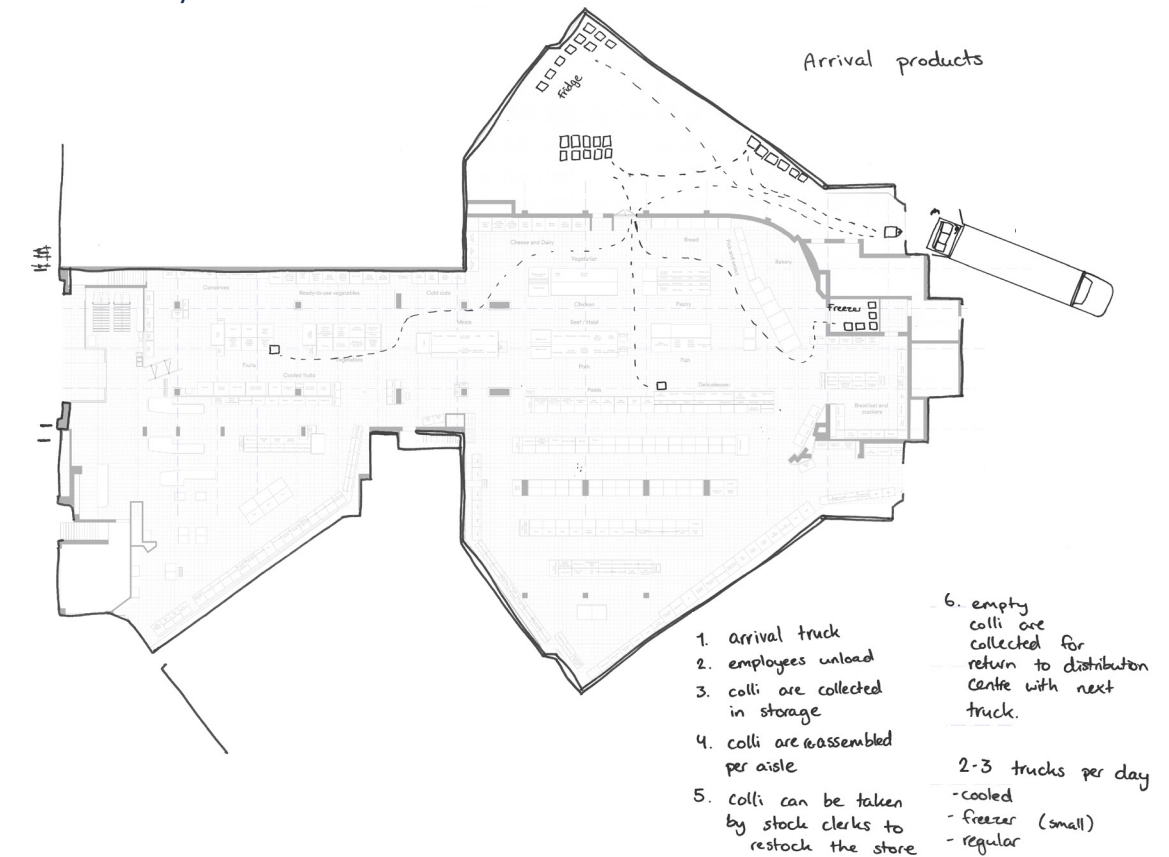
Selling local products strengthens local and social roots. Local farmers have more appreciation for the shops and can feel a bond, instead of not knowing where their produce ends up. Customers might be more involved and can maybe visit the farm sometime too. This creates a cycle of involvement and consciousness about what we eat and how it is grown. This is not a way for the project to embed itself physically, but metaphysically. Local producers are brought to the stage here.

A few local suppliers and their products are shown in the map and list scheme above.

## THE SUPERMARKET PERFORMED

To show routes different people take in the supermarket I have done an assumption of some of these, based on my experience working at an Albert Heijn (2016-2021).

I have added characters and a short script to describe the activities more elaborately and actually set the scene.



### INT. TRUCK ARRIVAL (DAY)

The doorbell rings. The truck driver is ready to unload.

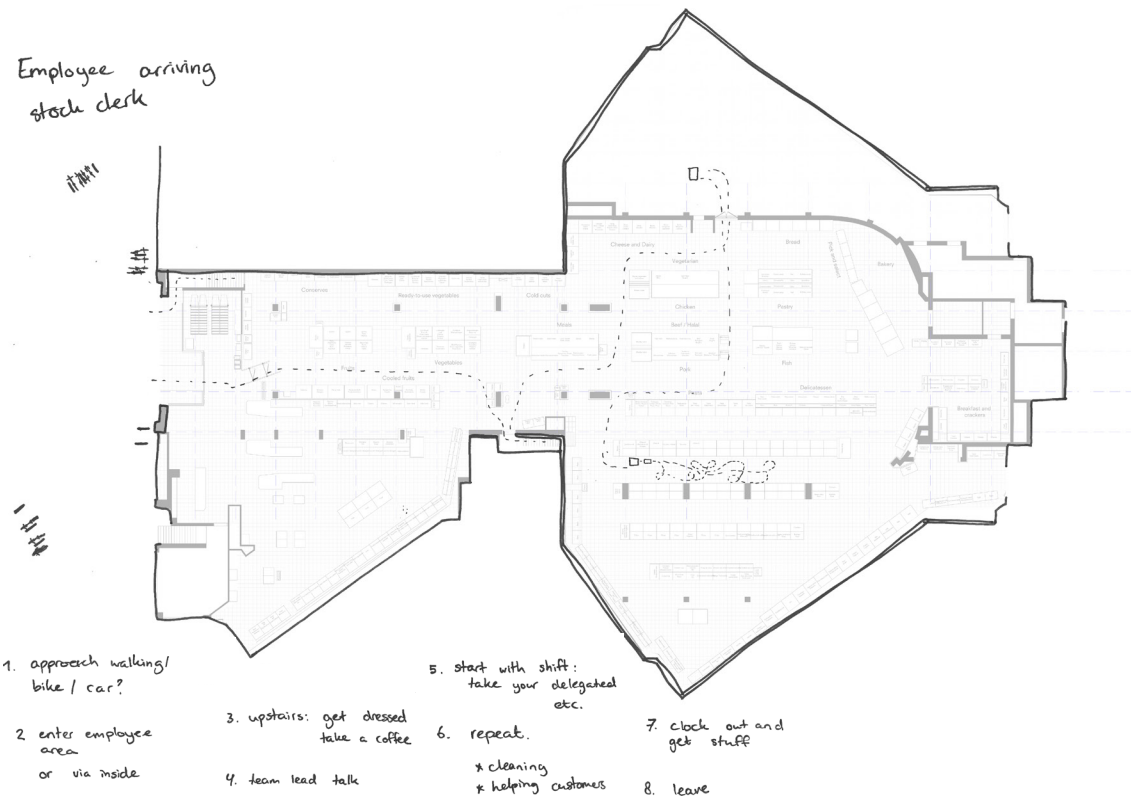
TEAM LEADER

Good morning! 16 trolleys for me? Great! Let's get them inside. Come on Nick!

Nick and the team leader unload the truck together. Petra is waiting in the warehouse to start assembling the containers so they are ready to stock per aisle.

NICK

Here's the first one Petra! Mainly chips, so that's gonna be an easy one! Be with you in a bit!



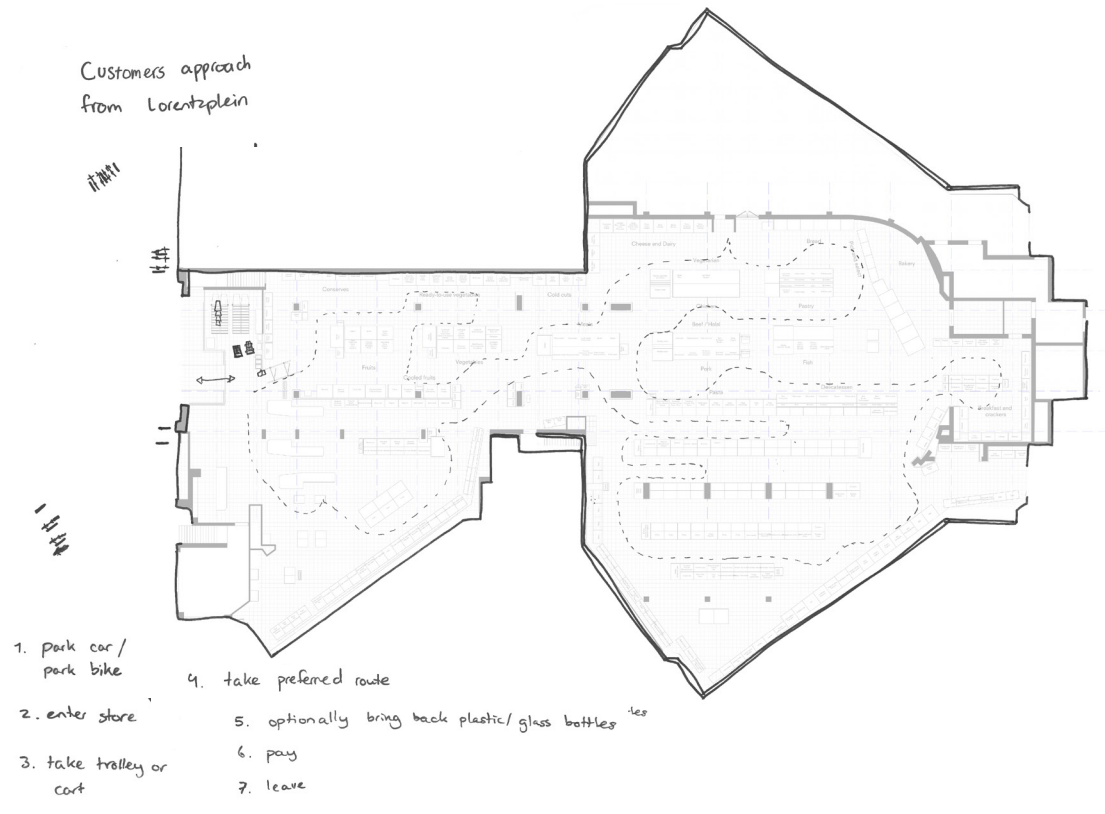
**INT. EMPLOYEE IN THE SUPERMARKET (NIGHT)**

Today Ali works an evening shift. He comes in and heads upstairs to place his bag and jacket and pulls on his work vest. He sits at the table in the breakroom.

**TEAM LEADER**

Hi guys, good evening! Are you ready to rock tonight?  
 Yamilah you are working on aisle four, wine and chips, Nick on 3 and Ali, you're on aisle two, coffee, tea and cookies.  
 Petra you take the pasta and rice! Let's go guys!

Ali and his colleagues head downstairs to the storage space and each takes the first of their container trolleys and heads to their delegated aisles.

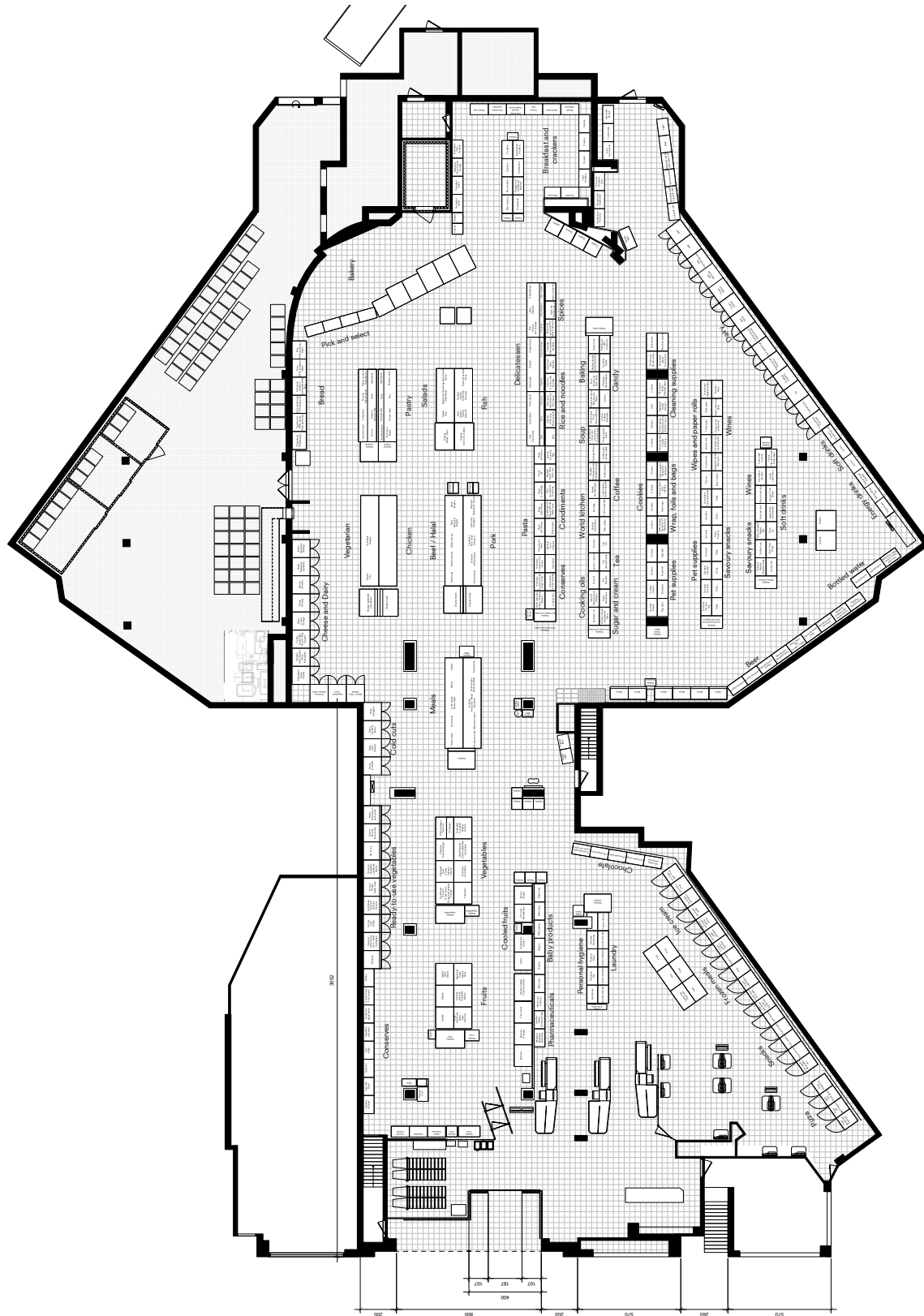


**INT. CUSTOMER IN THE SUPERMARKET (DAY)**

The customer parks their bike and enters the supermarket. Debating to take a trolley or a cart, they take the latter and enter the store.

**CUSTOMER**

Let me see: I need some pre-boiled potatoes and half a kilo of broccoli. And I have some plastic bottles I need to return. I need to get some croissants for lunch and some pesto and pasta. Let me check out the cereal, and get some milk to for tomorrow morning. If there's any nice wines for sale, I could get one too, and I want some chips. I also should not forget the cat food, I've nearly run out. Then some rice and maybe something easy for tomorrow? Well that's about it. Let me head out and pay.



## THE SPACE OF THE SUPERMARKET

Supermarket floor area is the most valuable thing it has. How many products can be stalled out and can be shown in as limited a space as possible. Taking in consideration walkable aisles where people can cross by each other and have a good view of as many products as possible, heads of these aisles are places for article promotions and special displays. For the Albert Heijn I documented all the metres of aisles in the supermarket to be able to calculate how much space will have to move and to know how much will disappear with the site's transformation.

department		meters	Stellage / Schap	Ratio of full height
Fresh	<b>Fruit/Vegetables</b>	Fruits	9 Low, double stacked crates	12.2
		Cooled Fruits	2 Low fridge	4.5
		Vegetables	8 Low, double stacked crates	0.7
		Potatoes	3 Wall shelves	4.0
	<b>Ready-to-use</b>	Potatoes	3	3
		Vegetables	1 Tall fridge	9.0
		Kruiden	7 Tall fridge	1
	<b>Meals</b>		1 Tall fridge	1
			10 Low fridge	3.3
	<b>Cheese, Cold cuts, Dairy</b>			3.3
		Cold Cuts	6 Tall fridge	17.0
		Cheese	6 Tall fridge	6
		Butter	2 Tall fridge	6
		Salads	3 Low fridge	2
		Salads	1 Tall fridge	1.0
	<b>Meat</b>	Dips	1 Tall fridge	1
				7.3
		Pork	5 Low fridge	1.7
		Chicken	5 Low fridge	1.7
		Beef	3 Low fridge	1.0
		Halal	2 Low fridge	0.7
	<b>Delicatessen</b>	Vegetarian	5 Low fridge	1.7
		Fish	2 Low fridge	0.7
				2.9
		Kaas	3 Display	0.6
	<b>Bakery</b>	Vleeswaren	5 Display	1.0
		Borrel	2 Low fridge / Display	0.4
Borrel (chips and nuts)		9 Single shelf	0.9	
			12.0	
<b>Bread</b>				
<b>Pastry</b>	Voorverpakt	6 Wall shelves	6	
	Versgebakken	6 Low shelves	2	
	Broodjes	4 Selection boxes	2	
<b>Dairy (cooled)</b>	Afbakbrood	2 Wall shelves	2	
			2.7	
	Taarten	4 Low fridge	1.3	
	Koeken	4 Low shelves	1.3	
			14.0	
	Milk	4 Tall fridge	4	
	Yoghurt	3 Tall fridge	3	
	Yoghurt (drinks)	1.5 Tall fridge	1.5	
	Plant-based	1 Tall fridge	1	
	Dessert	2.5 Tall fridge	2.5	
	Sappen gekoeld	2 Tall fridge	2	
<b>Total fresh</b>				<b>80.4</b>

department		meters	Stellage / Schap	Ratio of full height
Long-shelf life (food)				<b>12.0</b>
<b>Dairy, Juice and Eggs</b>				
	Dairy	4	Wall shelves	4
	Eggs	2	Wall shelves	2
	Juice and lemonade	6	Wall shelves	6
<b>Breakfast and Crackers</b>				<b>21.0</b>
	Biological	2	Wall shelves	2
	Gluten free	1	Wall shelves	1
	Bread toppings	4	Wall shelves	4
	Cereals and oats	4	Wall shelves	4
	Crackers	10	Wall shelves	10
<b>Pasta</b>				<b>9.0</b>
	Pasta	5	Wall shelves	5
	Sauce	1.5	Wall shelves	1.5
	Tomatoes	1.5	Wall shelves	1.5
	Dried antipasti / conservi	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Conserves</b>				<b>11.0</b>
	Legumes	3	Wall shelves	3
	Vegetables	2	Wall shelves	2
	Fruits	2	Wall shelves	2
	Pickles	1	Wall shelves	1
	Meat	1	Wall shelves	1
	Fish	2	Wall shelves	2
<b>Condiments and oils</b>				<b>8.0</b>
	Condiments	5	Wall shelves	5
	Cooking oils	3	Wall shelves	3
<b>World Kitchen</b>				<b>14.0</b>
	Rice	2	Wall shelves	2
	Noodles	2	Wall shelves	2
	Condiments	2	Wall shelves	2
	Sushi	1	Wall shelves	1
	Tex-mex	2	Wall shelves	2
	??	5	Wall shelves	5
<b>Spices</b>				<b>3.0</b>
	Spices and dried herbs	1	Wall shelves	1
	Spice mixes	2	Wall shelves	2
<b>Baking supplies</b>				<b>6.0</b>
	??	3	Wall shelves	3
	??	3	Wall shelves	3
<b>Coffee and Tea</b>				<b>13.0</b>
	Coffee	6	Wall shelves	6
	Tea	7	Wall shelves	7
<b>Cookies</b>				<b>14.0</b>
	Cookies	10	Wall shelves	10
	Snacks	2	Wall shelves	2
	Protein bars and drinks	1	Wall shelves	1
	Granola bars	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Candy</b>				<b>8.0</b>
	Candy	3	Wall shelves	3
	Chocolate	5	Wall shelves	5
<b>Savoury snacks</b>				<b>11.0</b>
	Chips	6	Wall shelves	6
	Pop corn	1	Wall shelves	1
	Nuts	3	Wall shelves	3
	Salted crackers	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Wines</b>				<b>9.0</b>
	Red	4	Wall shelves	4
	White	2	Wall shelves	2
	Sweet white / Bubbles	1	Wall shelves	1
	Rosé	1	Wall shelves	1
	Small bottles / Taps	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Beers</b>				<b>12.0</b>
	Beer	6	Wall shelves	6
	Alcohol free	2	Wall shelves	2
	Specials	3	Wall shelves	3
	Cider and flavours	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Bottled water</b>				<b>6.0</b>
	Sparkling	2	Wall shelves	2
	Flavoured	1	Wall shelves	1
	Still	2	Wall shelves	2

department		meters	Stellage / Schap	Ratio of full height
Freezer				<b>6.0</b>
<b>Ice cream</b>				
	Cups and containers	3	Wall shelves	3
	Cones and popsicles	3	Wall shelves	3
<b>Meals</b>				<b>6.0</b>
	Pastries	1	Wall shelves	1
	Frozen meals	1	Wall shelves	1
	Fish	1	Wall shelves	1
	Vegetables	1	Wall shelves	1
	Fruits	1	Wall shelves	1
	Asian specialities	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Snacks</b>				<b>5.0</b>
	Fryer snacks	4	Wall shelves	4
	Oven snacks	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Pizza</b>				<b>4.0</b>
	Pizza	4	Wall shelves	4
<b>Fries / Low freezer</b>				<b>3.0</b>
	Fries	4	Low freezer	2
	Fish	1	Low freezer	0.5
	Alternative	1	Low freezer	0.5
			<b>Total Freezer</b>	<b>24.0</b>

department		meters	Stellage / Schap	Ratio of full height
Non-food				<b>10.0</b>
<b>Pet supplies</b>				
	Dog feed	4	Wall shelves	4
	Cat feed/litter	5	Wall shelves	5
	Alternative	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Household articles</b>				<b>5.0</b>
	Trash bags	1	Wall shelves	1
	Baking paper / wraps	1	Wall shelves	1
	Vacuum bags and ziploc	1	Wall shelves	1
	Office supplies	1	Wall shelves	1
	Kitchen utensils	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Cleaning supplies</b>				<b>5.0</b>
	Dish washing	1	Wall shelves	1
	All purpose and specials	3	Wall shelves	3
	Alternative	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Paper rolls and tissues</b>				<b>7.0</b>
	Toilet paper	3	Wall shelves	3
	Kitchen rolls	2	Wall shelves	2
	Tissues	1	Wall shelves	1
	Air purifiers	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Baby products</b>				<b>6.0</b>
	Baby food	2	Wall shelves	2
	Milkpowder	1	Wall shelves	1
	Diapers	2	Wall shelves	2
	Baby care	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Personal hygiene</b>				<b>4.0</b>
	Skincare and shower	3	Wall shelves	3
	Dental care	1	Wall shelves	1
<b>Pharmaceuticals</b>				<b>3.0</b>
	Menstrual products	1	Wall shelves	1
	Vitamins, medicines	2	Wall shelves	2
<b>Laundry</b>				<b>5.0</b>
	Detergents	4	Wall shelves	4
	Fabric softeners	1	Wall shelves	1
			<b>Total non-food</b>	<b>45.0</b>

**Total meters (full) 319.4**

Architecture can't force people to connect; it can only plan the crossing points, remove barriers and make the meeting places useful and attractive.

Denise Scott Brown

possibilities

## POSSIBILITIES: A STAGE FOR SOCIAL LIFE

supermarket, theatre and square, all elements that are foundational in a modern society. Make supermarket a market and these are elements that have created the basis of society since the Ancient Greeks, if not earlier.

However the Lorentzplein is now missing its cultural function and the square has become a traffic intersection.

**What if all the best things that have been or were intended for this place could be brought back?**

This is where my research plan finishes and an initial proposal is suggested through collages that recreate the spaces in- and outside this building into something that might be a stage for social life. Most vivid of these is the image of the Lorentzplein with people dancing, sitting and talking. The people who live in Laak now might be used to living life on the streets, in public, more than it is part of a traditional Dutch culture. But there is no space for it now. If the Lorentzplein had more benches, there would be more people sitting around. In the parks I run through I often find sunflower seeds below benches. People will sit there for a while and work through all those seeds with a speed I could not try and copy. But add a little music and people might stand up and do a dance, if there is at least a space that allows for this to happen. Or bring some tea, and who knows who you might start a conversation with?

Throughout the next pages initial design ideas that are underlying the proposal will be discussed, starting with the design ambitions stated in the research plan (next page), references and through a thorough analysis of various markets.



The Lorentzplein as a social square (collage)

Joëlle Blokhuis

## A Stage for Social Life / DESIGN AMBITIONS

I would like for the old generation to find renewed pride in a place that might hold nostalgic memories, the allochthonous residents to find an invitation to learn about the history of the place they now find themselves and the whole district to be proud of a cultural centre that invites not only the residents, for local meetings and their weekly or daily supermarket visits, but also stands out to the city with occasional larger events, showing the rest of the Hague that Laak may no longer be the 'bad neighbourhood' they have considered it to be. But most of all I want to create a place for the people of Laak to come together and meet one another, to learn from each other's cultures and grow to appreciate one another.

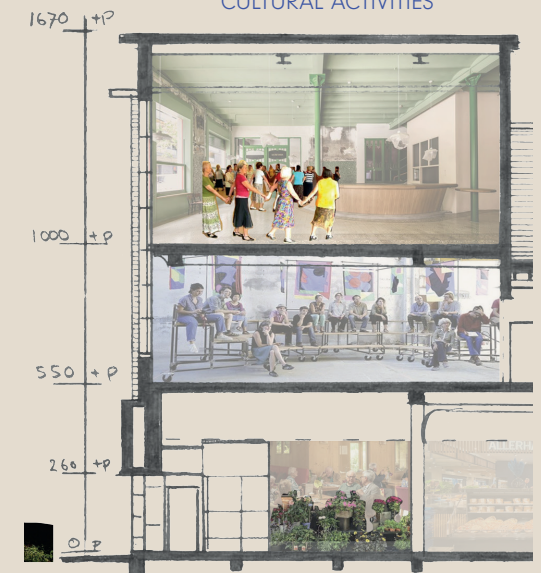
I aim to do this by creating a connecting urban environment from the Lorentzplein, which will then also bring people inside the supermarket-theatre. The theatre will build on its history, forming a new common cultural space, including a cinema space. Integrated with this cultural, social space, the supermarket will also offer space for social initiatives and become a space that not only offers goods, but also offers good to the community.

SPACE TO GROW



CONNECTING UP AND DOWN

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES



INVITING INSIDE



Design Proposal P1: social spaces that inspire and make space for cultural connections, above, around and in the supermarket

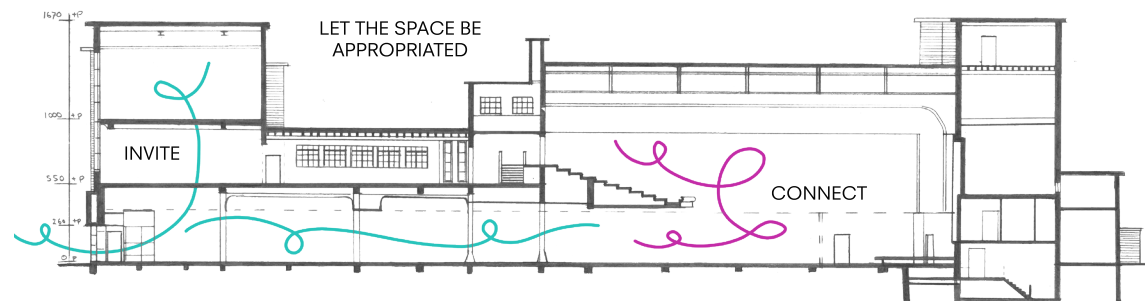
## DESIGNING APPROPRIABLE SPACE

As of now the Albert Heijn knows how to invite customers in. But retail and upstairs spaces do not often go together well. Shops have a hard time inviting people to go in and up. If social activities are happening upstairs they are even less visible, so only the balcony might be a connecting element in this sense, or any activities that can happen on the ground floor.

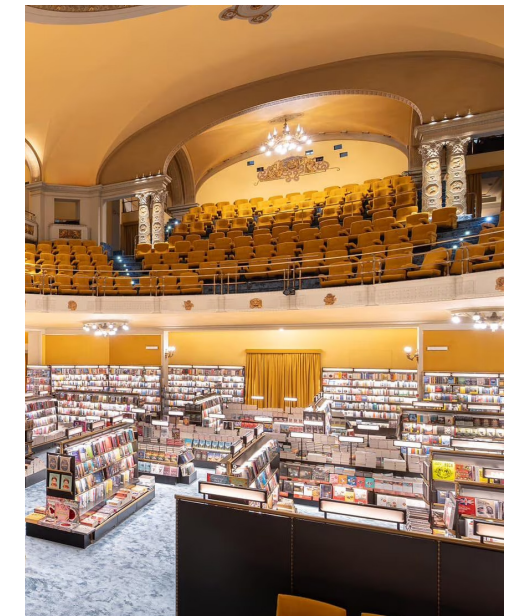
The neighbourhood centers are also all ground floor spaces, quite some of the visitors have a hard time walking and more difficulty with stairs. Another fact that stuck with me about the neighbourhood centres was that these felt very much like undesigned spaces. The people required a certain kind of space and they had made it. This must help in making it feel very much their own and by doing so, the volunteers might feel even more engaged with the space.

This raised more questions for me as 'an architect', how do I use my expertise, but not take full ownership for the design of a space.

If people see a space as their own, they will feel responsible for it. How can people be invited to take this responsibility, to feel like they have a say, but also be willing to share that say with many other people. How do they come together in harmony, or something resembling that. How can a municipality or even a market operator tell people: You are allowed to be here, you are allowed to care for this space, please take good care of it, please be willing to share it.



section with design intentions



Giunti Odeon, cinema and bookstore, Florence



ex-cinema, Venice

Initially I was inspired by supermarkets and shops that function in an historic environment. Giunti Odeon is a cinema and bookstore in one. During the day people are welcome to study and work at the tables on the balcony, meanwhile a film might play on the screen. At night screenings are played full volume and only the cinema space is in use.

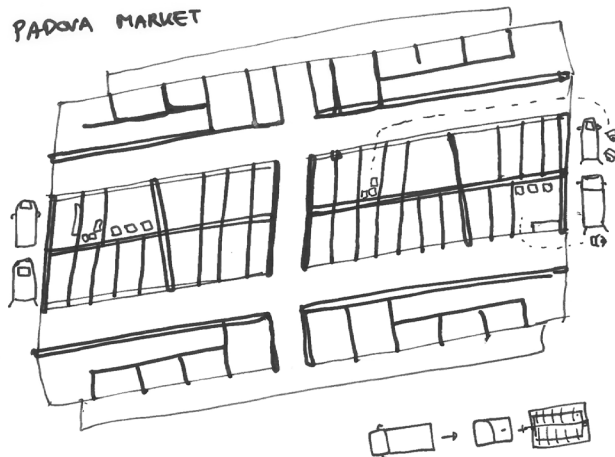
In other cases supermarkets may be set up in historic sites, like has happened with the Rembrandt Theater. But there are examples that do this in a way that is much more open towards the history. Instead of a suspended ceiling, the ex-cinema in Venice shows the buildings authentic walls, making shoppers aware of the fact the building was not always a supermarket.

## POSSIBILITIES: MARKET OR SUPERMARKET

As mentioned in the introduction, markets are one of the foundations for society. The supermarket is only a very new redefinition for the exchange of products, and like modern society, it seems to be much more individualistic than the market is. It would be unthinkable to do your groceries at the market without speaking to anyone. Unless you have a speech impediment, you would seem to be stealing if you would walk around the market as one does at a self service supermarket nowadays.

Every society has a form of market and specialised building typologies for these too. Where Dutch markets often happen on the city square, on covered tables or in trucks, this format happens more throughout Europe. But the more south you go, the more markets take place in covered halls. This way fresh produce and especially meat and fish are protected from the sun and the heat. In large cities, where the market would take place every day, these covered markets have become fixed buildings, resulting in formats such as the souq or the bazaar.

### PADOVA MARKET



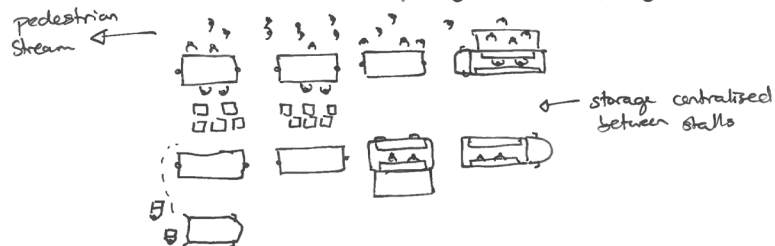
1. owner / distributor arrives
2. unloads and stores the storage in the store itself

#### Outdoor vendors

1. vendor arrives with car / truck
2. truck attachment is also the market stall products are within or in second truck.

### DUTCH MARKETS

vendors bring their own trucks (fish, nuts, meat suppliers) or rent tables set up by the municipality



Market supply is mainly done outside of "shopping hours" whereas at the supermarkets it happens simultaneously with as little disturbance of shoppers.

1. vendors arrive with trucks and prepare or unload them
2. storage fits in between stalls. waste is removed in the afternoon
3. passengers can pass by on the streets.

comparison Dutch daily market and Padova fixed market



Albert Heijn, Lorentzplein

A way in which the small local market reflect the culture they come from is how jampacked the souks and bazaars seem to be. It takes the value of floor area to a new level, and shoppers envelop them with the wares of the store to select something they like. The supermarket, however, offers efficiency, through the clear overview, as many shoppers as possible can see and select their preferred product, take it and move over to the next spot. Is this cleanliness and organisation connected to the ability to appropriate? Considering misbehaviour it seems much easier to take a product from a crowded and filled space, who will notice what went missing? Whereas in the wide supermarket aisles, it can barely be missed that someone indeed took a product. Does this also work the same the positive way around?



Souk, Marrakesh



Bazaar, Istanbul

## THE MARKET AS ORIGIN OF THE CITY

The earliest forms of markets arised at crossroads, where travel routes would meet. These encounters between strangers going different directions would lead to exchange of information and of goods. Around these exchange spaces buildings were created. Inns, warehouses, religious spaces and political buildings would follow. The open public space would become the square, the centre of a new village or city.

As such, many current squares are still reminiscent of their earlier market function. Take for example Delft, the market is still held each Saturday at the Markt, the original market square and Thursdays at the Brabantse Turfmarkt. But the Beestenmarkt never sees the sale of animals and instead is now popular for its cafes and terraces.

The Markt of Delft is simultaneously a good example of the market bringing together religion and politics in a city, surrounded on both sides by the City Hall and the Church. Before the middle ages, the Greek Agora did the same. Political buildings and temples surrounded the market or the market took place amidst all these buildings. As such the market is the temporary event that takes place among fixed elements of society.

It is then hard to say which sustains which. Do people come to the market because they need to do politics? Or do people do politics (talk and debate) because they need food and goods.

Considering basic human necessities, it is actually not so hard to say. People need food and might need to discuss rules surrounding the the state of the land to maintain a steady flow of food. Rules are set up and redefined over time concerning land ownership, but also management and maintenance. Now the EU regulates farmers' usage of pesticides and individual countries see strict regulations on food products that enter the market.

Nowadays this seems to go so far that there is a disconnect between cities and farmland. Cities seem to be set up more according to a principle that work needs to happen: Politics need to be debated and discussed, but what is the underlying reason?

The supermarket is made more and more easy, but people barely realise where their food is coming from. Farmers don't feel understood and city-people blame farmers for pollution.

Not only were markets places to acquire food, as mentioned before, information was also exchanged at crossroads, and unfamiliar goods too. In the middle ages, the crusades brought along exotic goods, in later eras colonisation would bring spices,

fabrics and even people from distant shores.

Much can be said and must be condemned about these practices. But it cannot be said that this did not lead to a broadening of cultural exchange. Still (super)markets are one of the easiest places to encounter something foreign, without having to leave one's own city.

Maybe it is time to rethink how cities came to be and what basic human necessities are required to sustain a good life.



*The Cloth Market in 's Hertogenbosch,*  
Anyonymous, 1530

Through the use of market paintings as well as some personal sketches, different market typologies will be analysed and discussed, providing insight and takeaways for the way the market / supermarket will take place at the Lorentzplein.

Winkelen in Weelde - p.11-12

## THE MARKET AND DEMOCRACY

At the foundation of society lies the market. When people started settling down in villages people started owning property. In societies where food was no longer a scarcity, people were able to specialise in tending to certain crops or hone other skills. The exchange of skills or products ensures that everyone has food and society develops further. This exchange can happen within communities, where people each contribute their part, or it can happen for fixed values. With the growth of settlements, monetary value started with seashells, until coins were being made.

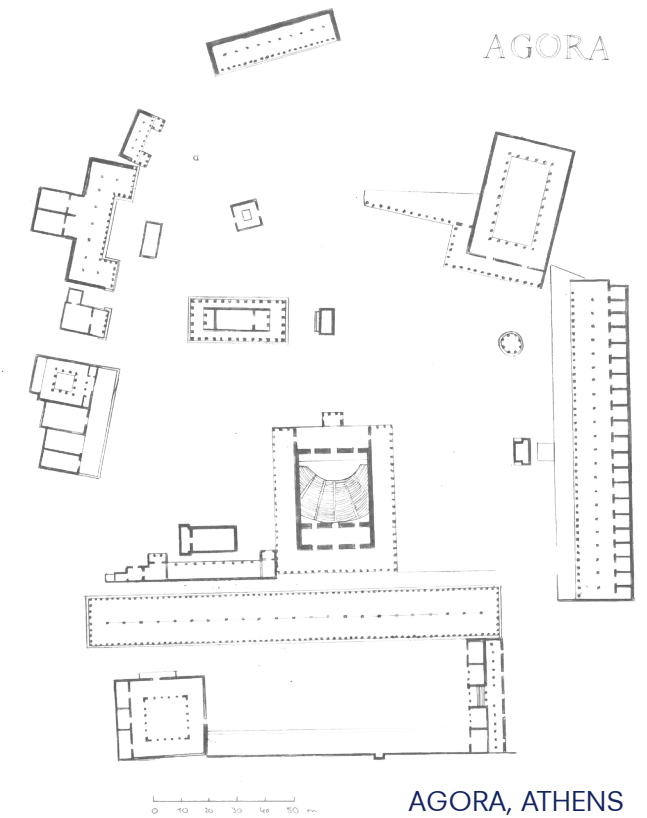
Democracy is seen as a Greek invention. It is one of the first systems of self-rule government, literally meaning people (demos) rule (kratos). 'Democracy (Ancient Greece)'.

In Athens, two sites were incredibly important for democratic purposes; the Pnyx and the Agora. The first (bottom-right plan) was the space people came together for public debates and elections. A raised rock was used as a stage, with a sloping field as the tribune. The Agora was the town square (top-right), where multiple religious temples as well as political buildings were scattered. In between the market would be held. This meant that conversation went from inside to out on the market, or often took place in the stoas, the covered walkways, that circled the buildings.

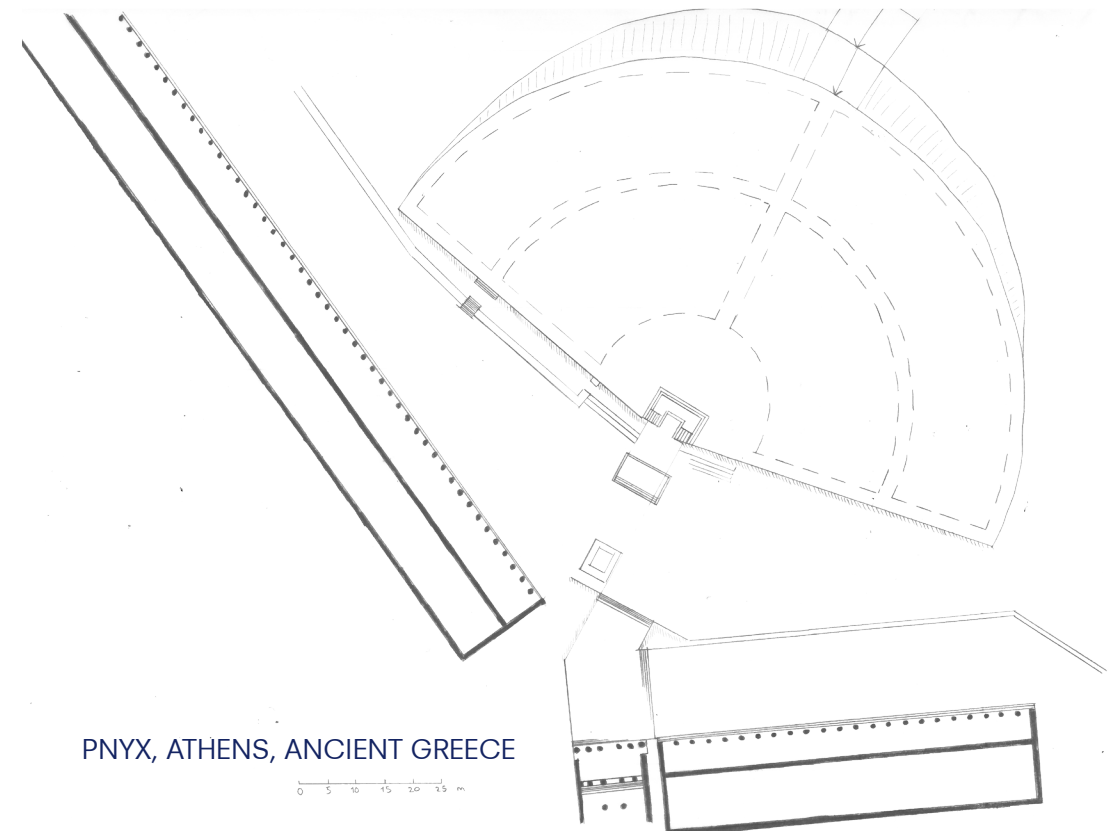
The market is just as much a place for debate, to ensure a fair price for the quality of the products offered.



Ancient Greek Agora - Christian Jegoe



AGORA, ATHENS



PNYX, ATHENS, ANCIENT GREECE

## THE MARKET WITH PLACES TO DRAW BACK

Many mediterranean squares have a colonnade surrounding them. Similarly the courtyards of roman villas was surrounded by such a row of columns. This form of architecture was just as present on the southern side of the mediterranean, where the columns and arches followed moorish geometry.

These covered walkways, or italian porticos, could be considered relics of the Ancient Greek Stoa. Like those, these covered walkways create a threshold between buildings' interiors and the outdoor public space. As a buffer zone they become more intimate. Simultaneously they form a shelter from sun during hot afternoons, or a dry place to still be out in public during rainy days. As seen below, these places could be used as a covered market, or just a place to draw back from being in the full public eye.

In the Southern Americas, this form of architecture is just as present around the many squares or 'plazas' that were created during the colonisation period. All these plazas are landscaped and see many benches, that are often occupied as long as the sun is out. Candy or tobacco sellers, artists and shoe polishers will offer their services, but the markets only take place in and around indoor market halls.



Porticos around Plaza de Armas, Arequipa, Peru



View of the Piazza del Duomo from the Coperto dei Figini by Inganni Angelo, 1842

## THE COVERED MARKET

The market hall is a typology that is found more in countries that see many warm and sunny days. It is a way to keep products cool and better preserved. In Venice only the fish market is covered, whereas the rest is still open air. Similarly at Les Halles, the market in Paris mainly images can be found of fish on the covered market. In these countries the market hall is not much more than a roof and a structure to keep it upright.

In even warmer countries markets are completely inside. Where small souks might still be open-air, the larger ones often consist of shops on streets that are covered with fabrics or lattice work, to create a shaded space for the customers to walk and to keep out the severe sun and dust. Other countries see bazaars that are entire buildings with multiple interior streets and fixed market stalls that almost become shops.

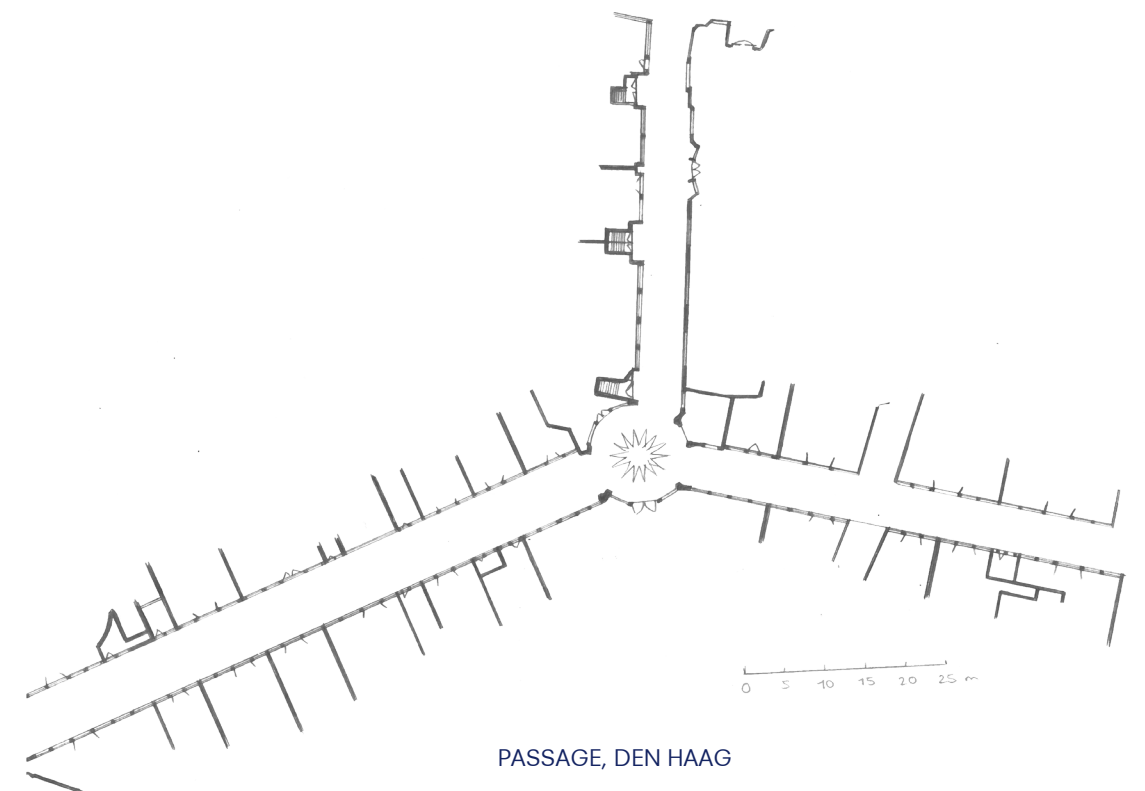
The covered street, or arcade, is also a familiar typology in more northern countries, although here it is no longer a market. Instead much more exclusive shops line the street that may see terrazzo flooring and chandeliers. Den Haag has the Passage and its new extension that feels a bit more contemporary and approachable.



Bazaar of Isfahan, Iran by Yervand Nahapetian



The Fish Hall at the Central Market by Victor Gabriel Gilbert, 1880



PASSAGE, DEN HAAG

## MARKET SQUARE AS THE CITY'S ORIGIN

The market as covered roads almost leads back to how many cities started. At the base of civilisation lie the settlements where people found good farm ground and often a source of water. When these settlements started exchanging products among each other, travel routes were created. Some of these roads intersected and these spaces became ideal places for exchange. Many cities that are not connected to rivers or fertile ground were in their origin, and might still be, mainly trade cities.

At these crossroads first an inn might be built, and more people would settle. These places are what would grow into the town square. Slowly it would develop; as more people would settle a church or other religious building and weigh house or other organisational building would arise here. At a certain point it would become paved. Fascinating to me is the painting of the market square of Warsaw. Where the square is surrounded by many stone buildings and an elaborate church, the square is still unpaved. At the same time it shows the basics of the square. Even now many town squares are surrounded by a church, town hall and every week it may still see a market bringing products into town.



Market Scene with Ecce Homo by Joachim Beuckelaer, 1550-1590



The new town market square with St. Kazimierz Church by Bernardo Bellotto, 1778

## MARKET SQUARE AS THE CITY'S ORIGIN

Joachim Beuckelaer's painting *Marketplace with the flagellation, the Ecce Homo and the bearing of the cross in the background* combines the market and the persecution of Jesus Christ, framing the market as the going on of everyday life while at the same time the justice system is doing its thing in more or less the same space.

Besides showing city elements, such as the city gate, a well for the water supply that is necessary to keep the market clean and provide water for the residents and a memorial column, public life is on full display too.

In this case it is a public trial in the most public space (the market), which in this case leads to execution. People would be warned not to behave badly or they might end up in a similar situation. As Aristotle described theatre to be a way to organise people and keep them in control by letting them experience feelings through a performance, so they no longer need to experience them themselves, so this public display scares people away from behaving wrongly. I wonder if we should not change this into displaying righteous behaviour on a stage, so that people may instead follow the example.

<https://rembrandttoreynolds.blogspot.com/2015/01/painting-collecting-and-art-market-in.html>



*The Fruit Seller* by Olga Costa

### THE MARKET ON DISPLAY

There are many paintings that show the abundance of foods at the market, such as the one above. Presentation is still one of the biggest elements the (super) markets, where all products are displayed in the best light. Fresh produce may be touched and checked by the customers, whereas prepackaged food is provided in transparent packaging. People will not buy what they cannot see. Is there a difference between cultures in ways that products are displayed? The haphazardness of markets, especially the southern ones seems to suggest something like that in contrast with the orderliness of northern markets and especially supermarkets. Are buyers more critical? The supermarket so standardly offers fruits and vegetables with as little beauty deficiencies as possible that farmers with larger or smaller products sometimes cannot sell, even though the product might be just as good...

In paintings such as these the viewer almost becomes the buyer, looking with a critical eye at the quality of the products on offer. Do we need the most beautiful food, or will something a bit odd-looking feed us just as well?

### THE MARKET AS PLACE OF EXCHANGE

*A fair in Ghent in the Middle Ages* by Félix de Vigne shows the exchange of high-quality goods such as jewellery, fabrics and pottery. This market was aimed at the wealthier citizens and nobility; sellers would come from the middle east. From the period of the crusades, people would come back with wares from the Ottoman Empire, which is considered to be more advanced in sciences at the time. This painting is obviously from a later period, when there were better relations among these regions.

Products such as fabrics, pottery and ironware can be seen on display. In the background both church and a guild house can be seen. This again shows how central to public life the religious and work communities were at the time.

mskgent.be



*A fair in Ghent in the Middle Ages* by Félix de Vigne, ca. 1862

## THE IDEAL CITY

Many thinkers, painters, architects have things to say about what makes the ideal city. Berlage specifically in the Netherlands interprets his own ideals. But these are not random. Built on earlier ideas or as criticism to those, each thinker adapts and reacts also to their own experience in their context.

A general consensus is that the ideal city is a democratic space. But what makes a democratic space. What is a city built from? What makes the city? is it the structures or the people or both?

The ideal city by Fra Carnevale shows five different structures, that define the city space. Three of those are ancient structures: A triumphal arch, symbol of military leadership, amphitheatre (people's entertainment), baptisterium (religion), on each side a residential palace is shown, as well as the four columns show four virtues (Justice, Moderation, Liberality and Courage). In the middle of the square is a fountain, showing the need for water supply.



The ideal city - Fra Carnevale ca. 1480



The ideal city - Luciano Laurana or Melazzo da Forlì

“The architect’s job is to diminish the fact that neighbours don’t know each other: to create spaces to meet”  
Herman Hertzberger

proposal

## THE LORENTZPASSAGE

This project proposes to transform the current supermarket in Laak into a space of encounter. Taking the best parts of the site throughout history and giving them a place in the programme, makes the building an integral part of both the neighbourhoods physical infrastructure as well as its social infrastructure. The space that is created becomes a third space, a place where people are allowed to enter and be. A space that facilitates a diverse range of activities, both necessary ones as more arbitrary ones that each invite different people, so interaction is bound to happen.

Architecturally this transformation takes place by stripping the former cinema hall, opening it to let daylight in and in doing so, creating a space that is more connected to its surroundings. This becomes a new form of square or market hall. Then by creating a new entrance, the building no longer has a front side and instead becomes part of its urban environment. The passage invites people to come in, even if they are just passing by. To define space in this vast hall, geometric elements are placed here. Both of these have their own functions and properties, creating very different spaces, that may be appropriated by their users.

In this way the building becomes a microcosm of the 'ideal city', with a market aspect, cultural space and the square that houses it all. It becomes a place to celebrate festivities, a space for encountering familiar faces and a space to hang out, sit and be.

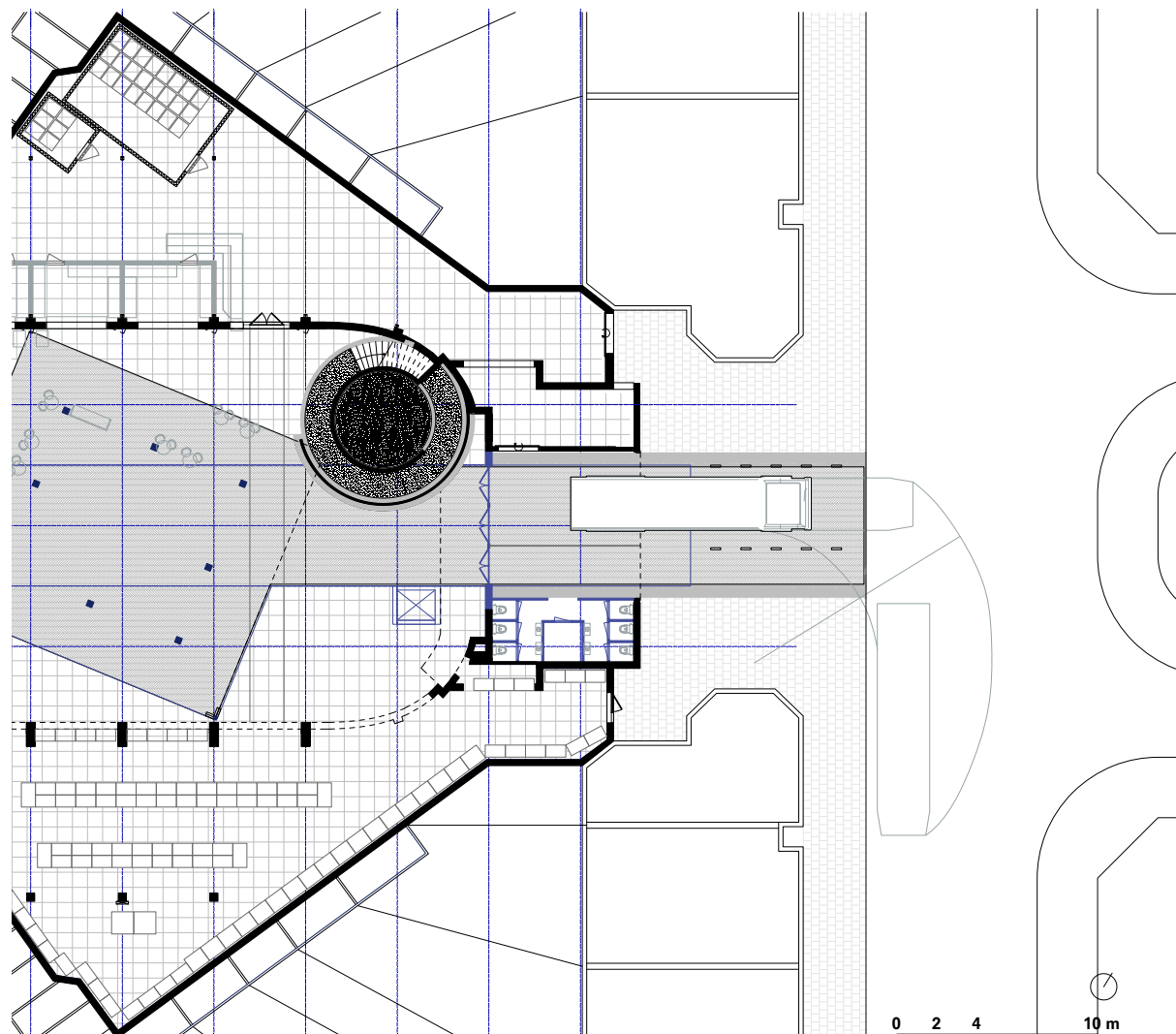
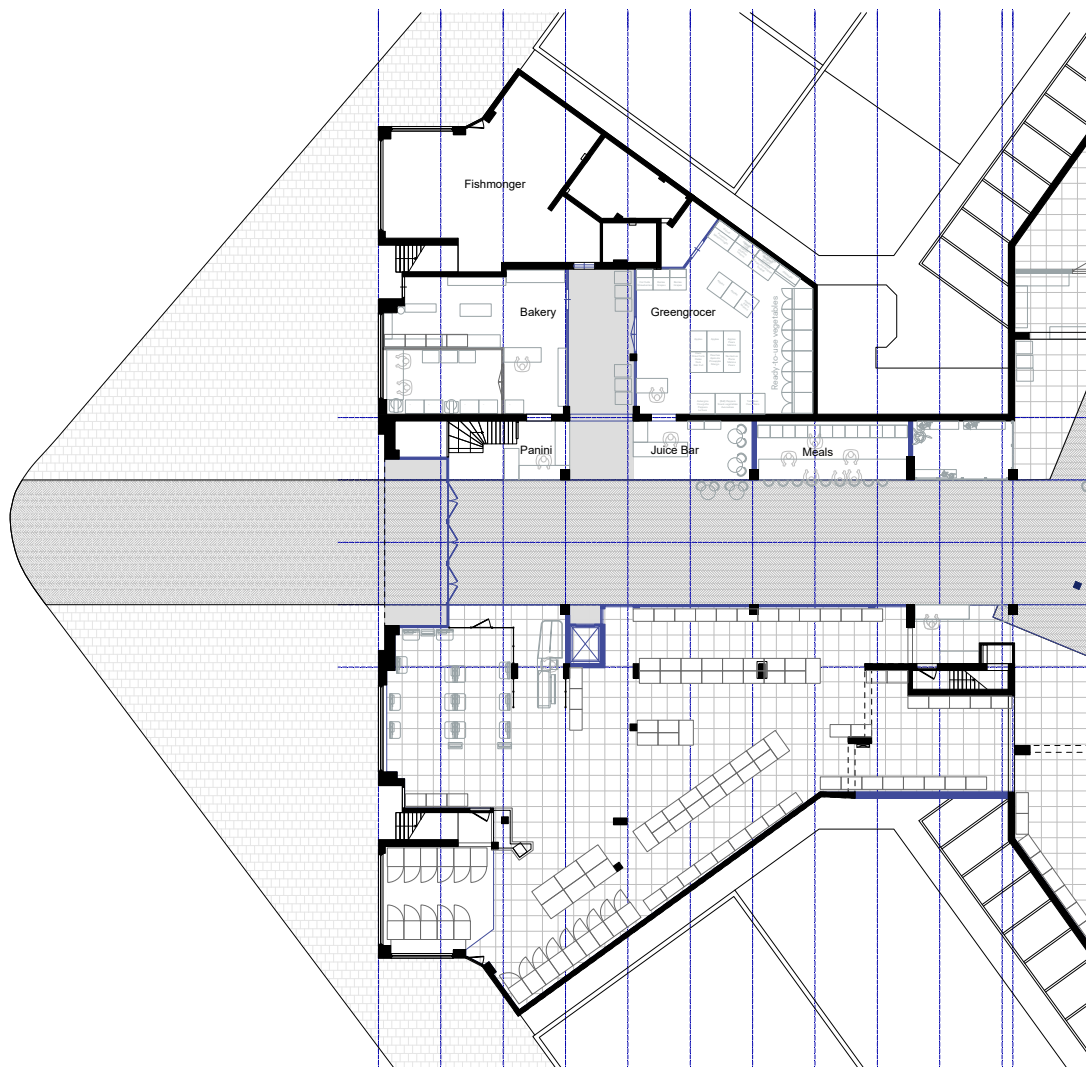
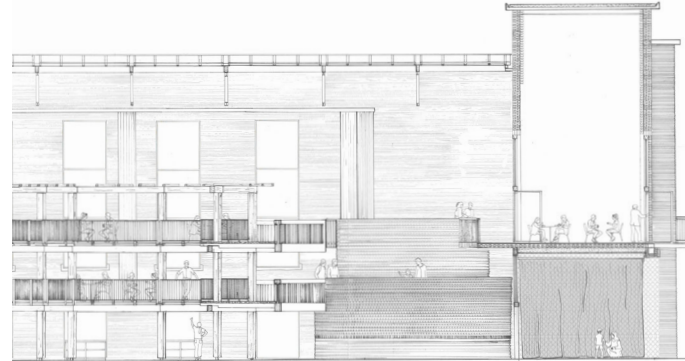
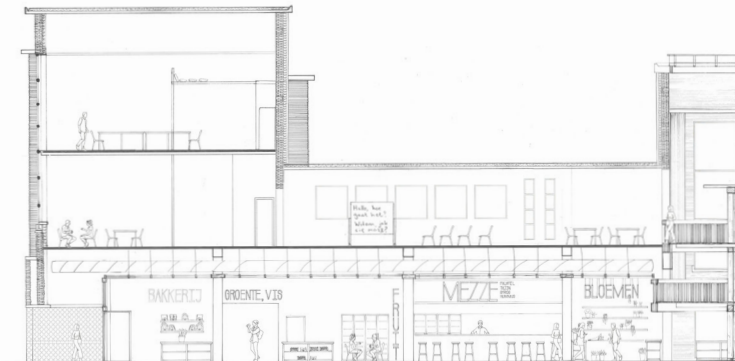
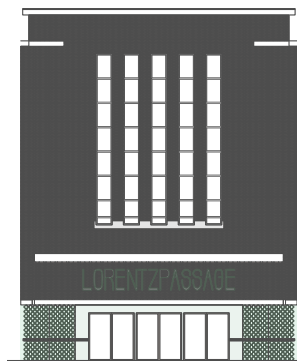
With all interventions the wide range of heritages of the people of Laak is kept in mind. Materials, shapes or typologies that are familiar to most of these different cultures are entwined to create a common ground here.

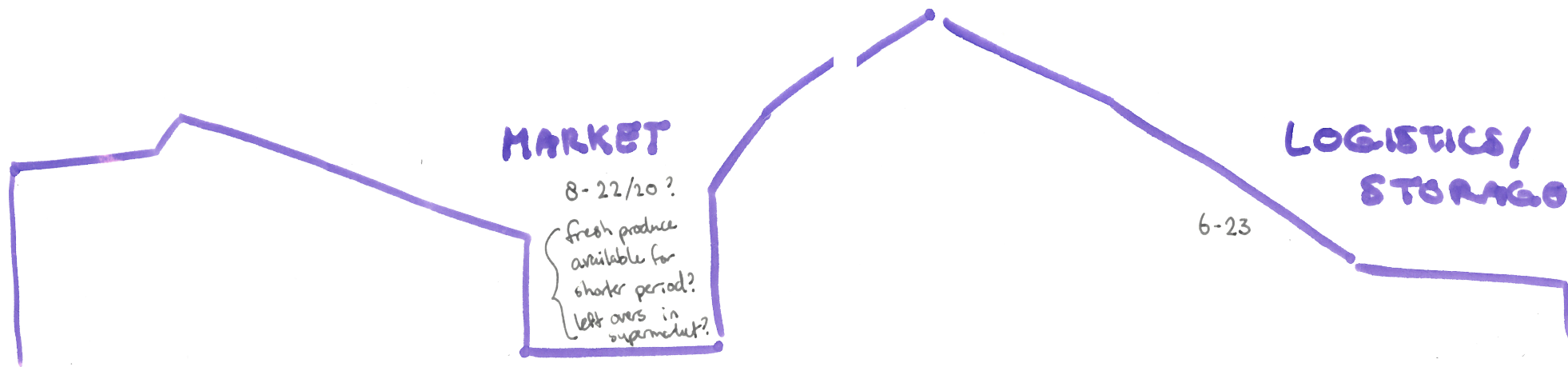
Initially the plan was to change as little as possible and bring back the qualities that already existed within the building, keeping the supermarket intact while the balcony could host a new function, perhaps. This chapter will start with showing propositions for that, and show the developments that lead to the final proposal. Here interventions are more daring, but through their boldness, they better ask attention for the existing building and its qualities too. This leads to the second half of this book being ordered as follows:

- Final proposal
- P2 Proposal
- Ruin
- Passage
- Galleries
- Drum



Model with edge of gallery, drum and neighbourhood kitchen



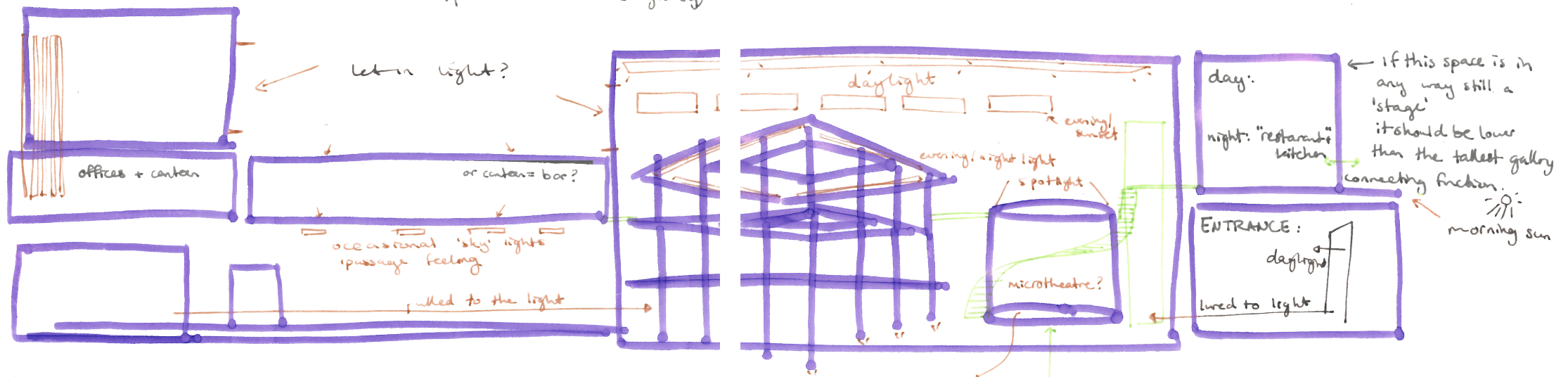


passage

is anything besides the supermarket keeping the passage lively after 20-22?  
 → cafe (place for drinks (in gallery))

AGORA

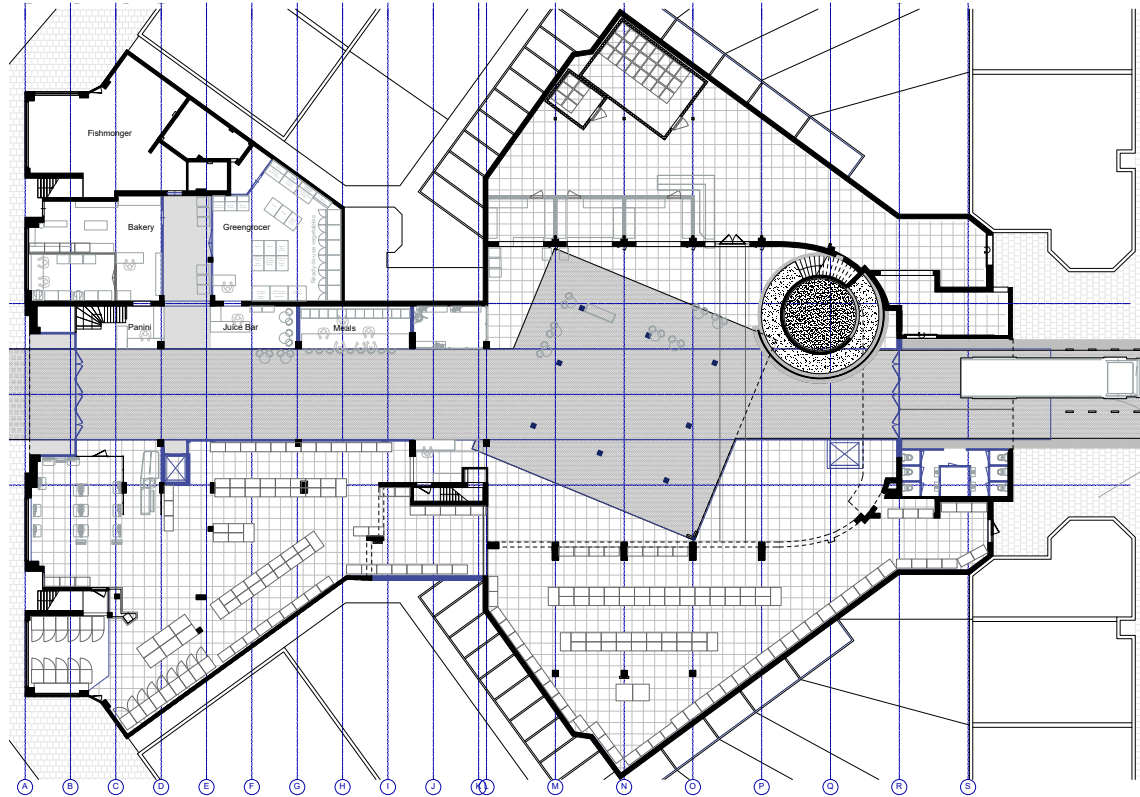
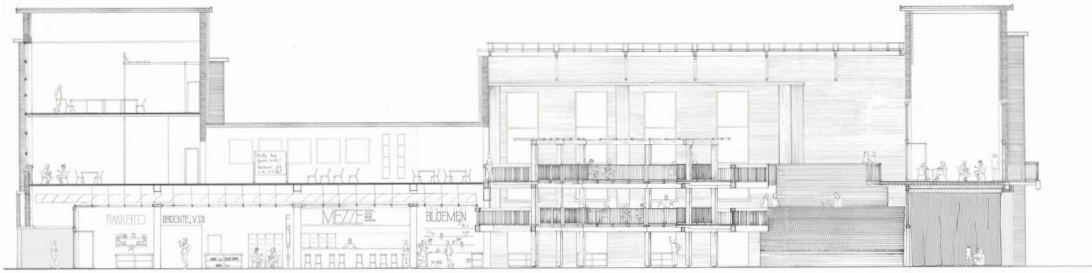
TOWER



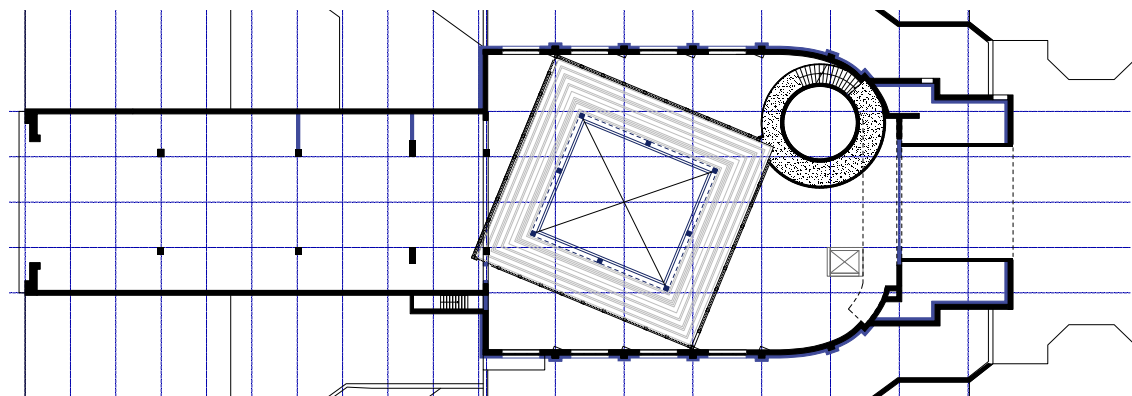
8-2 2 (-24)

SUPERMARKET

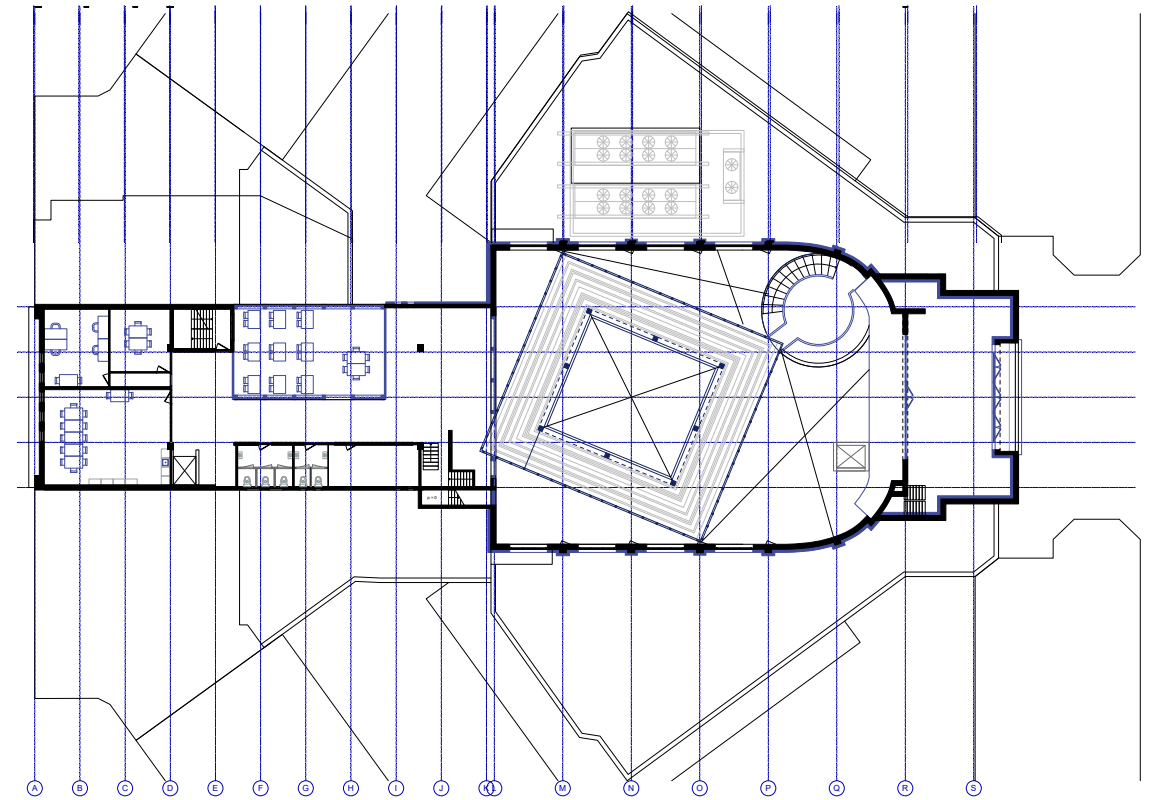
FINAL PROPOSAL PLANS



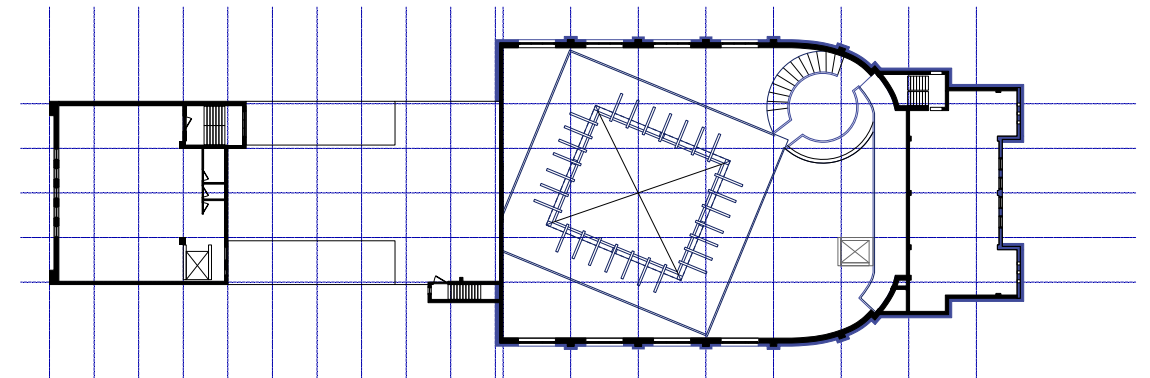
Section (above) and ground floor plan



Split level (2.75m) Gallery and drum walkway

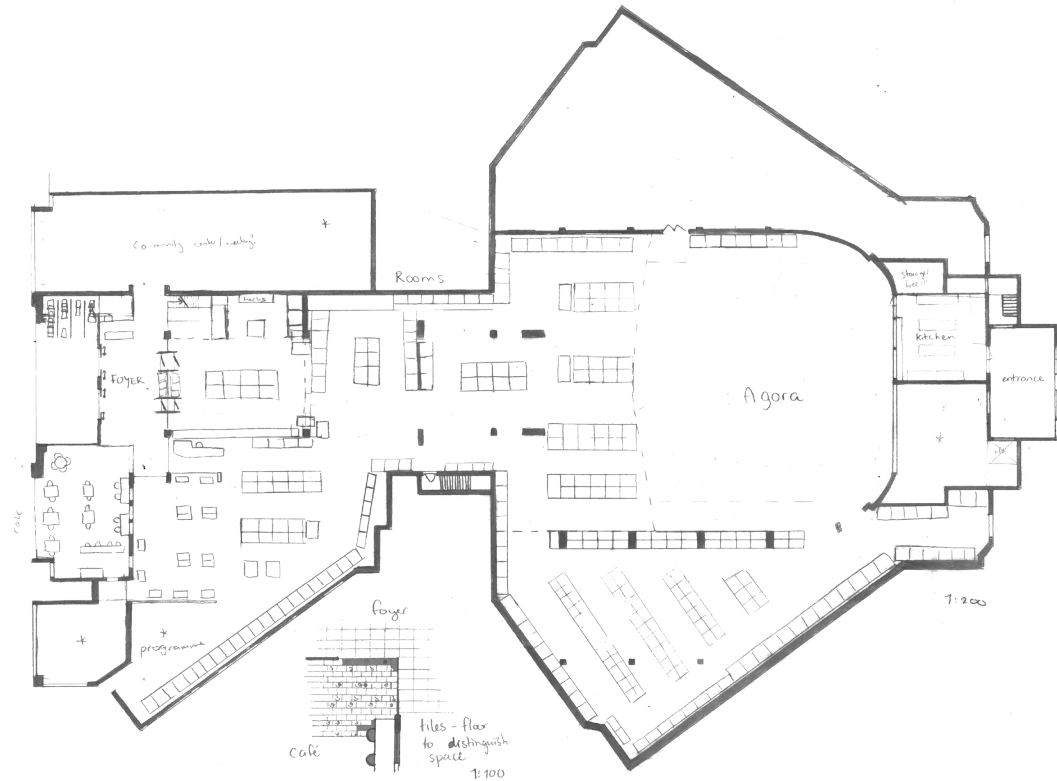
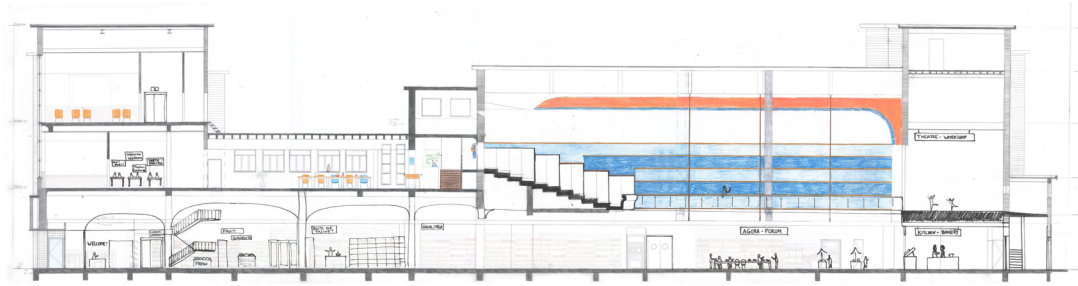


First floor plan



Second floor plan

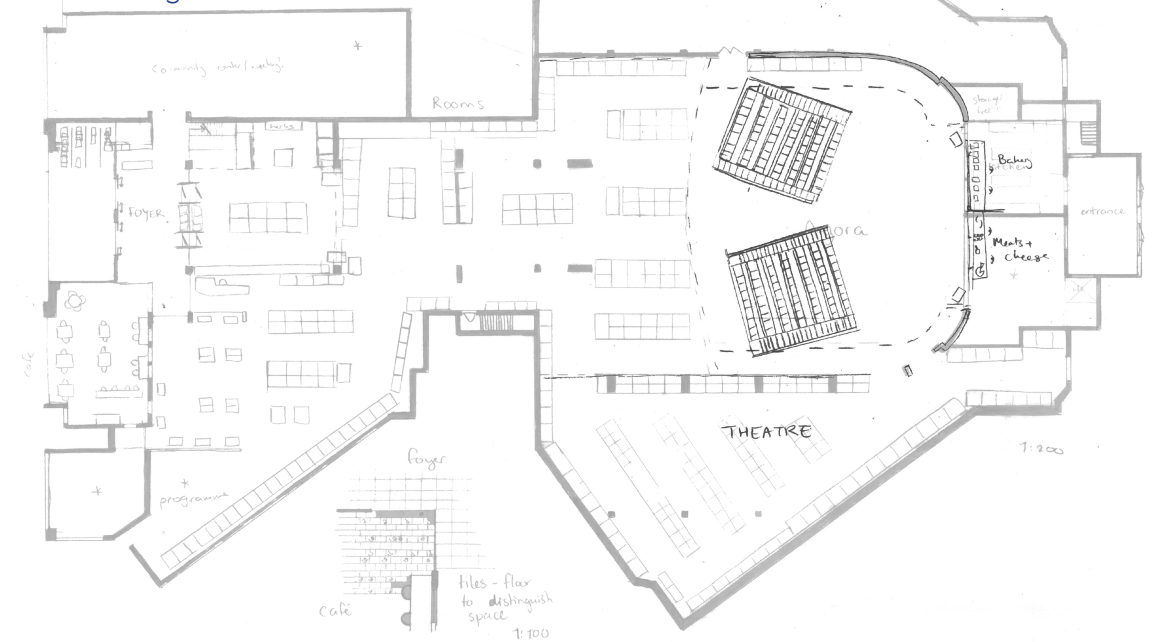
## P2 PROPOSAL



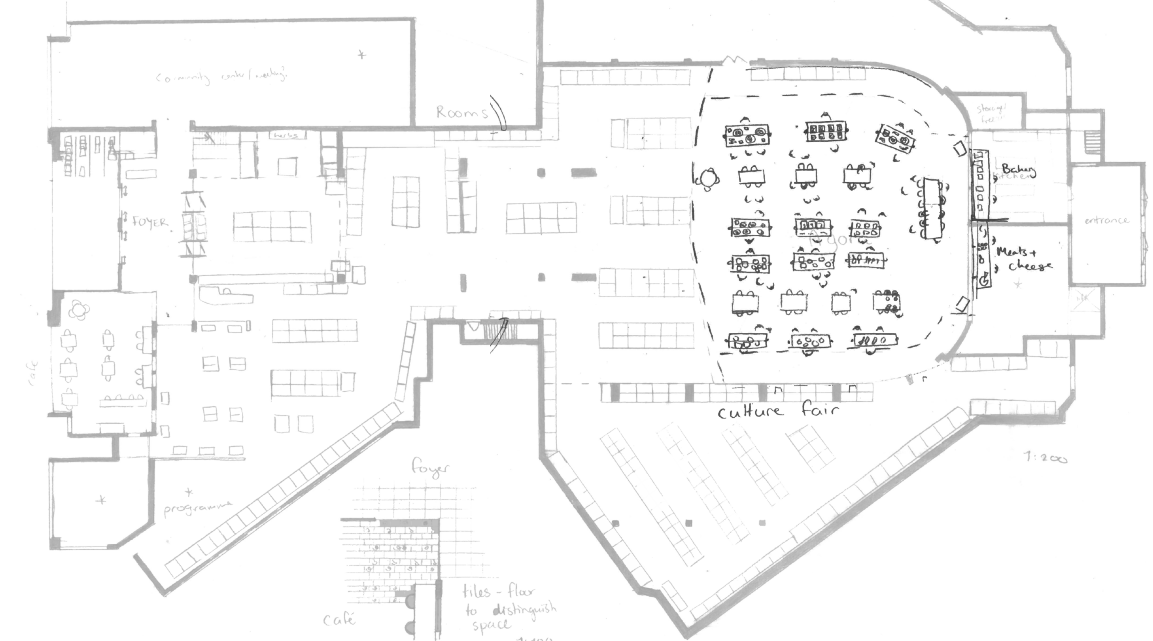
Section (above) and ground floor plan (June 2025)

In the first phase of the project, the intention was to keep interventions minimal where possible. First of all, because this would lead to a financially feasible project and secondly, not to propose anything unnecessary. Besides those reasons, the existing balcony was perceived as a starting point for the entire proposal: a space above the supermarket, that could be visibly in use during supermarket hours. A visible alternative function could take place here. Using the ground floor space that was visible from the balcony as a new stage or a market square would result in little loss of profitable floor space and make sure that shoppers would start to get interested in what would be happening in this space.

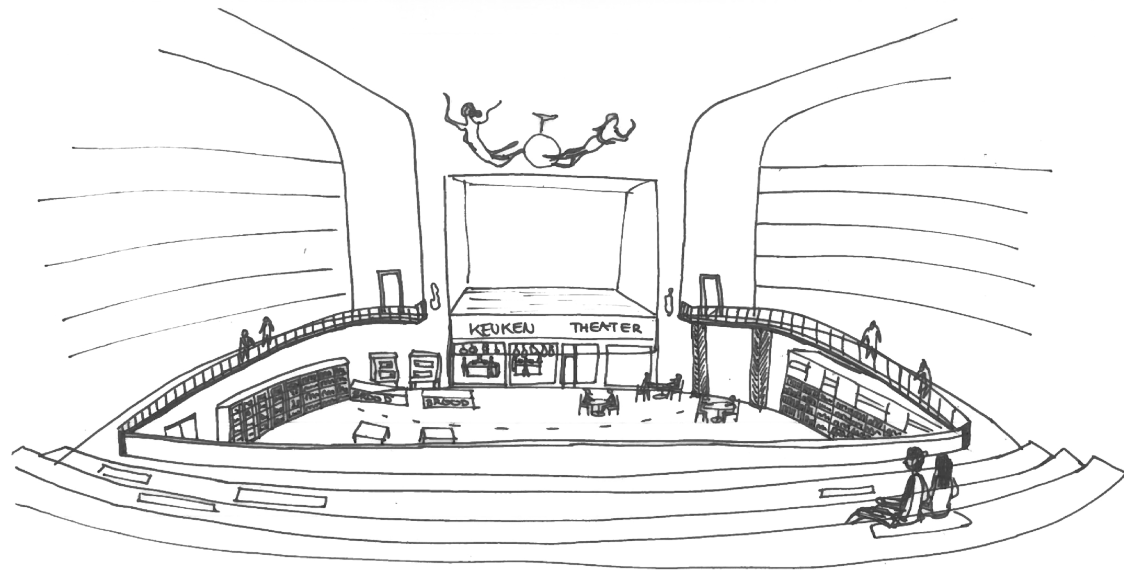
Agora used as theatre, two tribunes that reach up to the balcony create a large public seating space, as well as leave a stage area free.



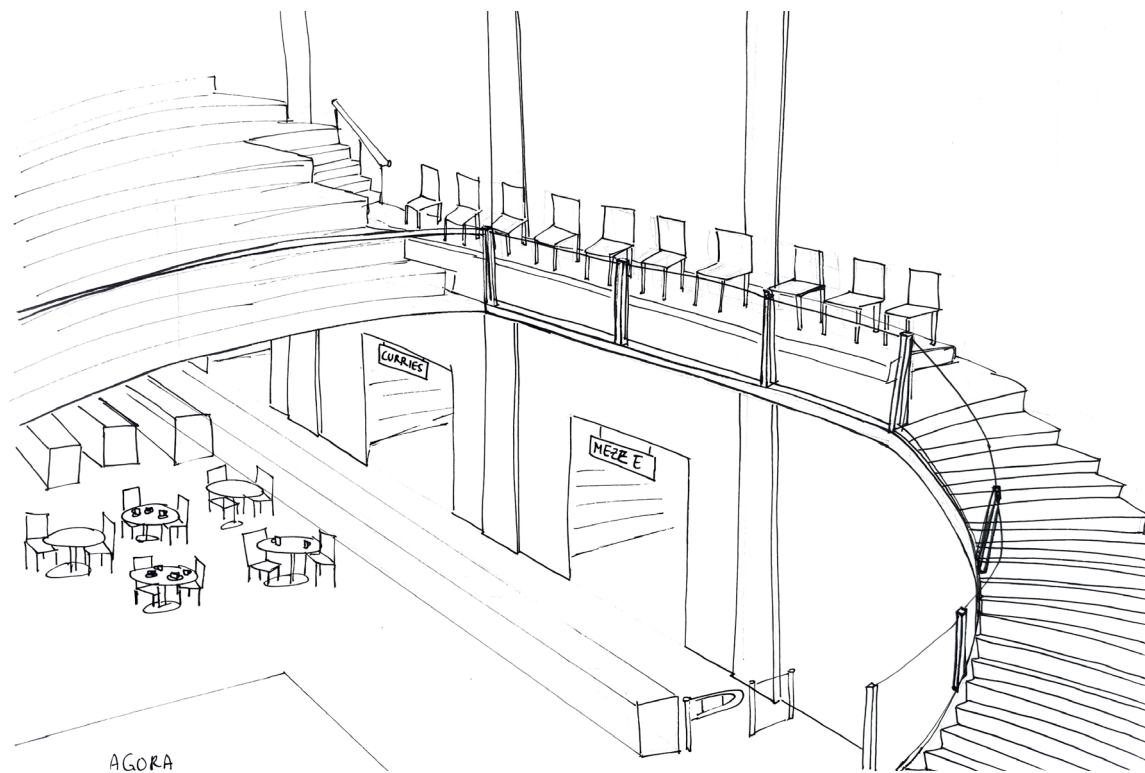
Agora used as market, for neighbourhood fairs, exchange of seasonal or cultural products. In this way shoppers are invited to participate



ground floor plans with agora functions



View from balcony towards neighbourhood kitchen and stage above



AGORA  
View from stage towards balcony and extended gallery above supermarket

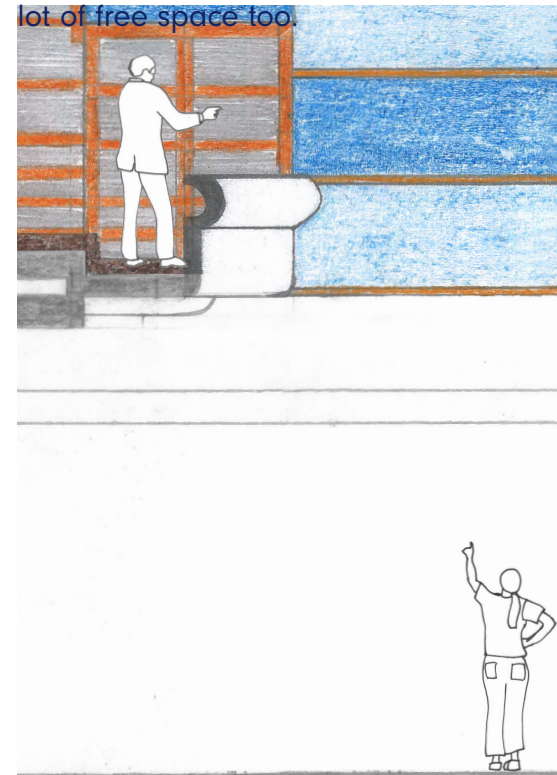
## PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED WITH INITIAL PROPOSAL

With this proposal issues arised, such as where the shop entrance and pay barriers would be, but also the fact that this space would become very directed, as the balcony only aims the viewers direction in one way. If an extra entrance could be made to allow people inside from the other side of the neighbourhood (to bring back Berlage's intentions), these people would arrive on the stage or in some kind of backstage area. Would the space that was now proposed to be a neighbourhood kitchen also become an entrance-like space.

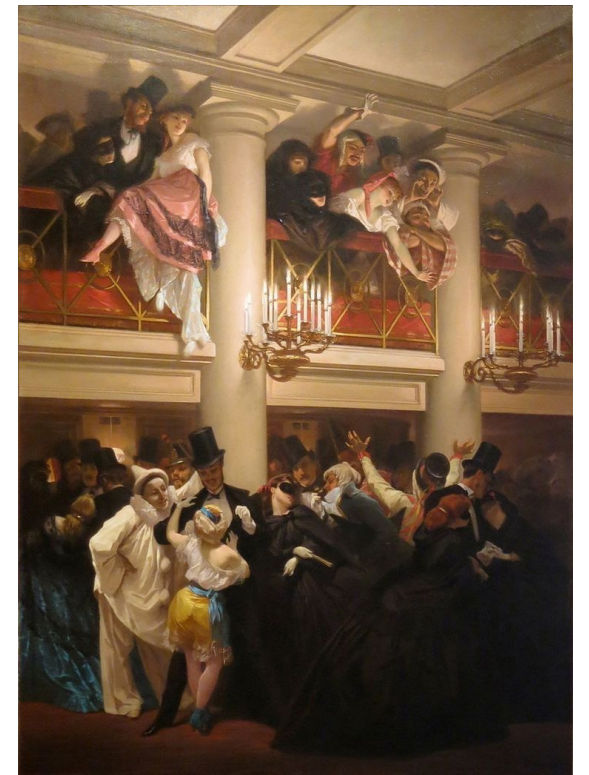
Not only the directionality of the balcony, but also its height seemed to be an obstacle. It ends at 4.5 meters height, which does not allow communication with the ground floor, this is only possible when the height is less extreme (see section and painting below). If it were to be extended so it ends closer to 3 meters above the ground floor, it would enclose the 'open' agora space too much.

The idea of galleries started with the extension of the balcony downwards along the walls of the hall, but these obstacles lead me to think of removing the balcony instead. What could more freedom for interventions in this space lead to?

First the possibilities that stripping back the space brings will be covered, but this intervention goes closely intertwined with the creation of a passage, which needs a lot of free space too.



distance from floor to balcony in section



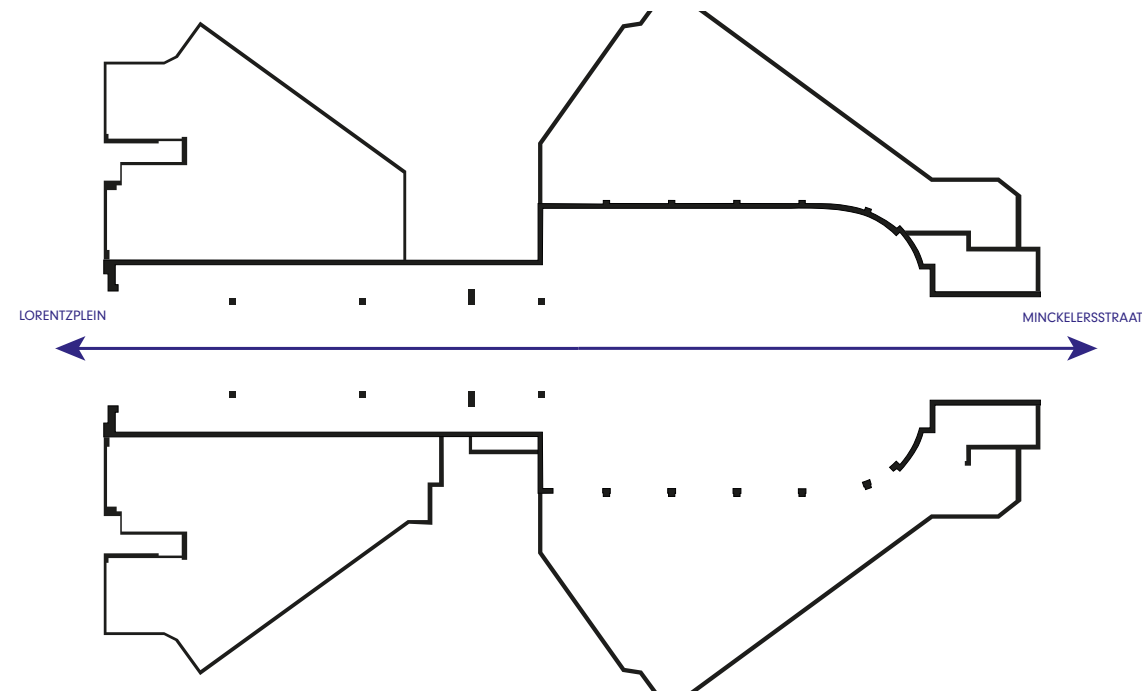
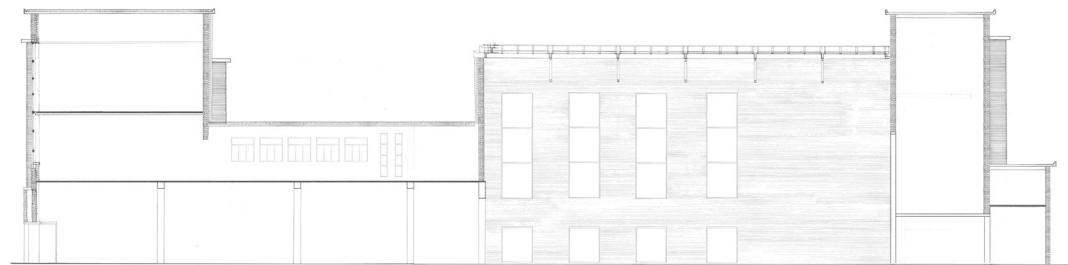
Le bal de l'Opéra - Eugène Giraud

## THE STRIPPED DOWN HALL - MAKING A RUIN

Removing the balcony would lead to a lot of freedom for the approach taken towards this space. With stripping the whole hall, also comes the removal of the supermarket from this space, at least for now. It allows more free thinking about the interventions and programme that can happen in this space.

Stripping the space also raises questions concerning materiality. Will the tapestry remain, what is its quality? Should the plaster be removed, will the brick construction be exposed or covered by something new?

Not only materiality comes into question. This 20x30 meters large hall, with a height of 13 meters is mainly a freestanding structure, except for the ground floor expansions. This would allow the space to be opened and windows to let in daylight. Bringing in light leads to shadows too. Large windows and skylights would create a space that feels almost outdoors, whereas smaller slits create stronger effects (light study on the right).



Section ruin with windows (above), ground floor plan ruin with two entrances

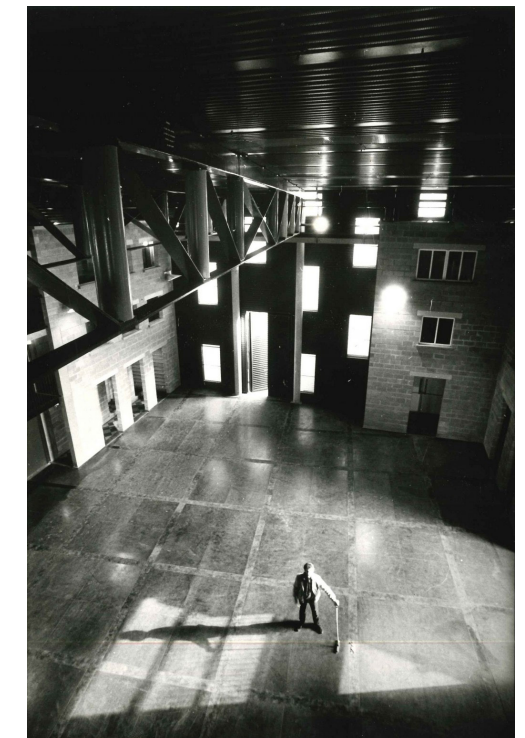


light study in model, winter and summer situation (sun from the south).

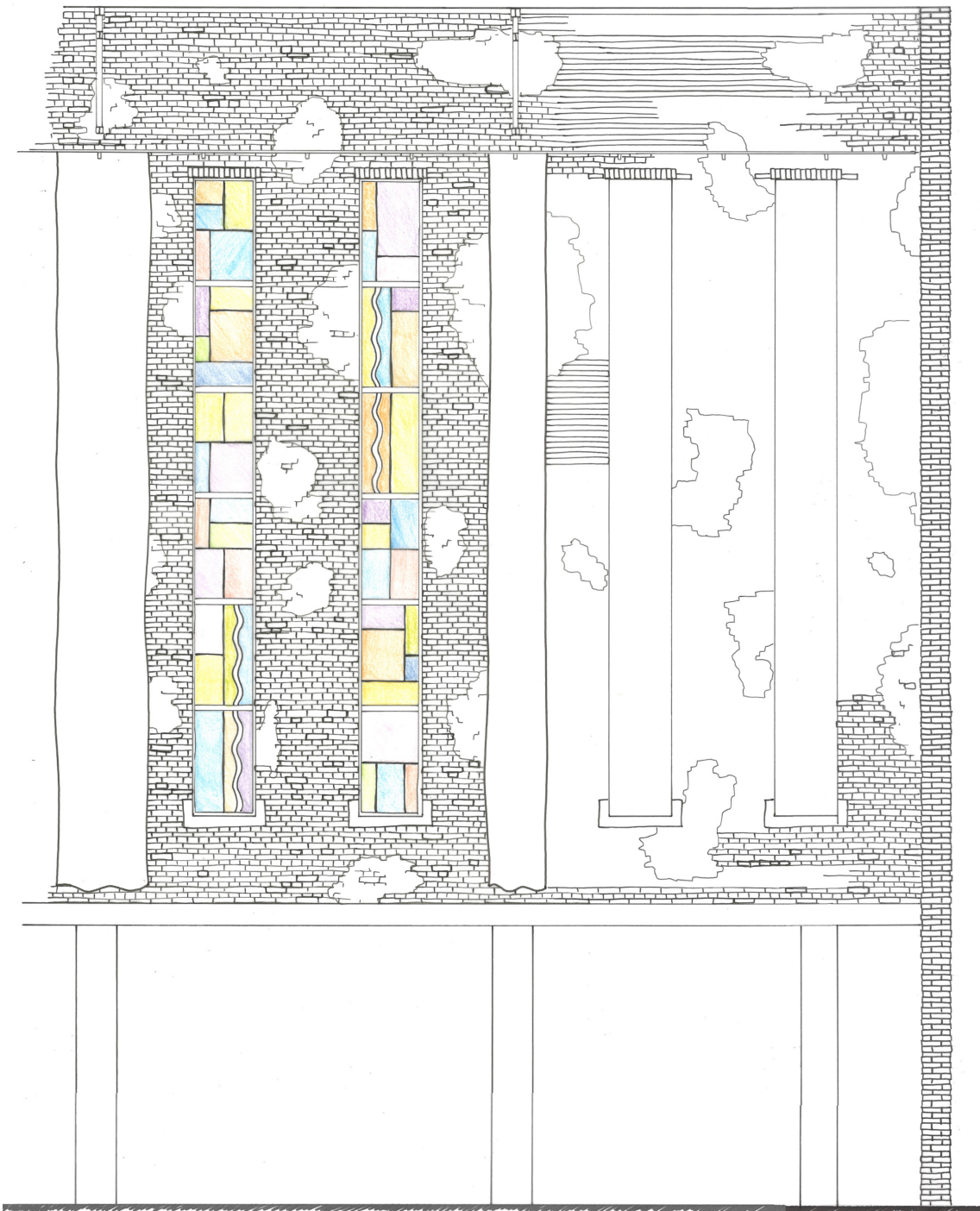
As seen below, a ruin (Almeida Theatre) can create a backdrop for a space that already tells a story. The Half Moon Theatre instead, is a found space, a theatre built in between existing buildings, using those as scenery.



Almeida Theatre  
Burrell Foley Fischer Architects

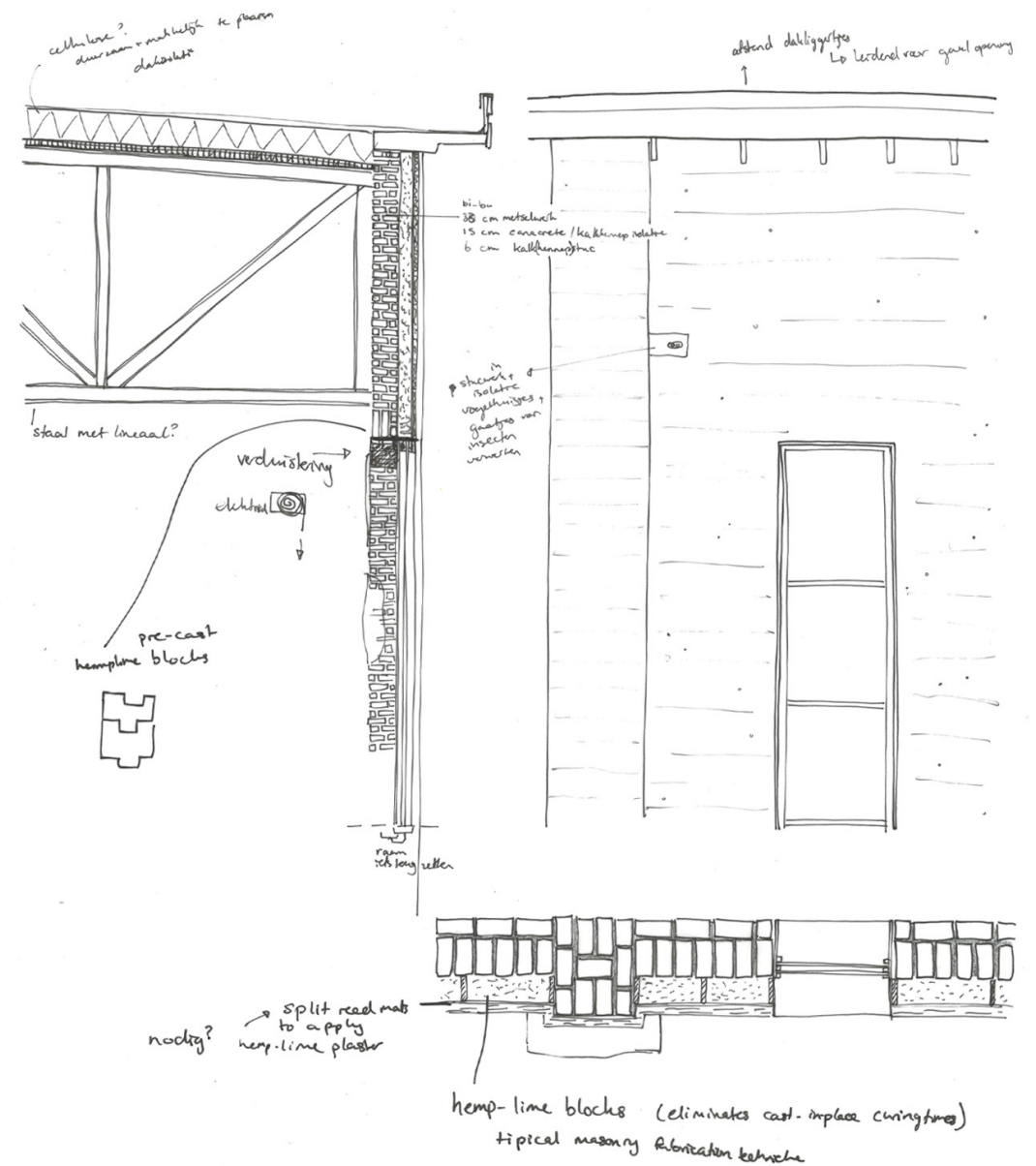


Half Moon Theatre - Peter Brooks

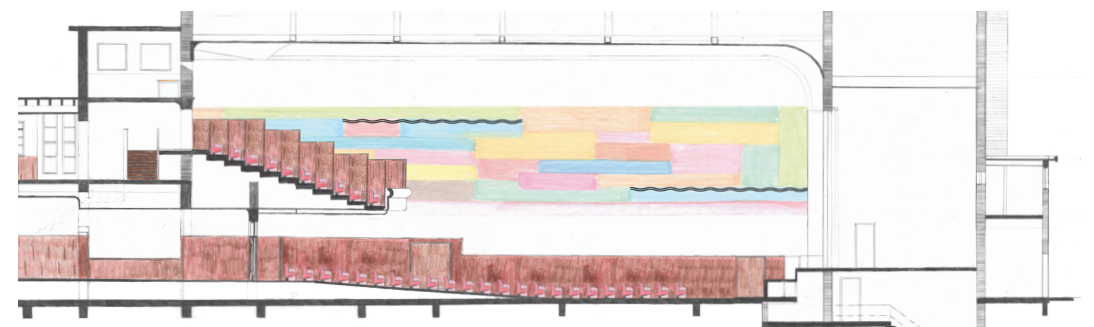


BINNENZIJDE AGORA  
INTERIOR AGORA 1:50

narrow window openings, with leaded glass as reference to former tapestry



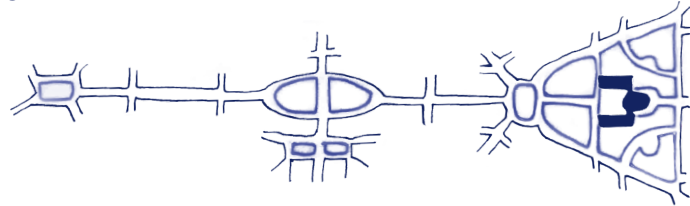
bricks visible on inside, so outside must be insulated



tapestry referred to in stained glass

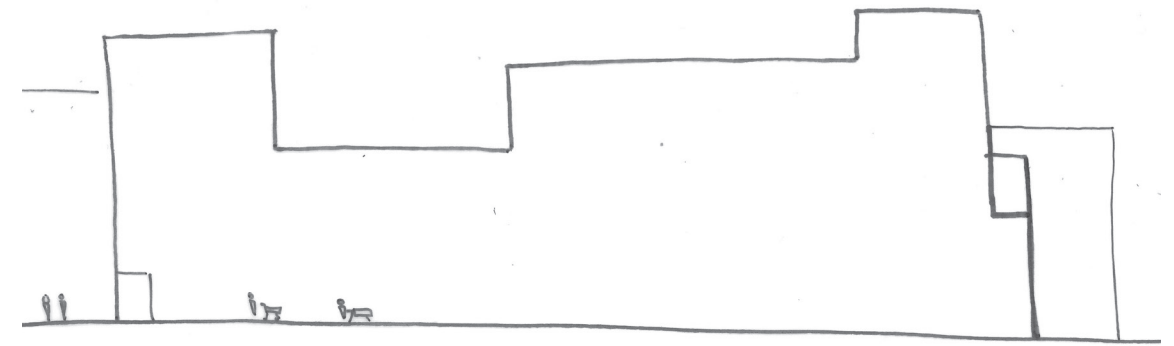
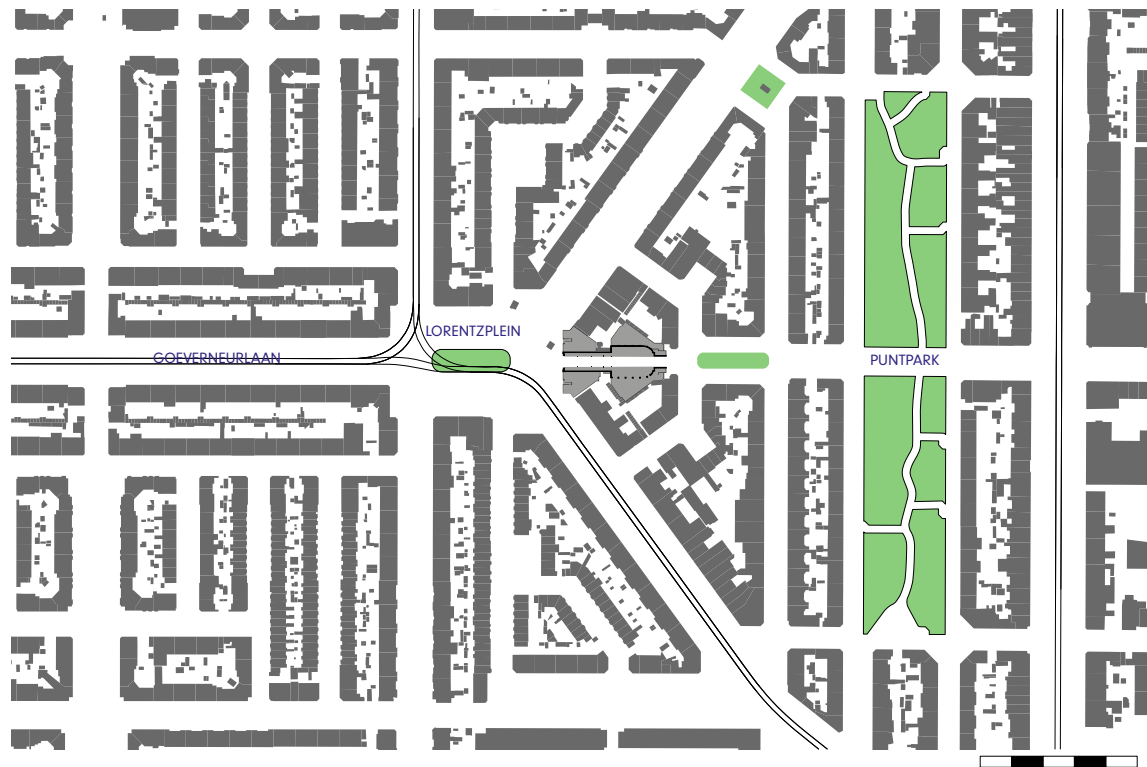
## A PASSAGE TO CONNECT THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Looking at Berlage's plans for Laak, we see the proposed 'representative building' situated on what is now the Lorentzplein and what became the theater and is now the supermarket. However this building is enclosed by a residential building block, instead of open to the neighbourhood on all sides. The building visibly forms an end of the Goeveurulaan, but seen in plan it seems to obstruct this horizontal line through the neighbourhood.



What if it would not?

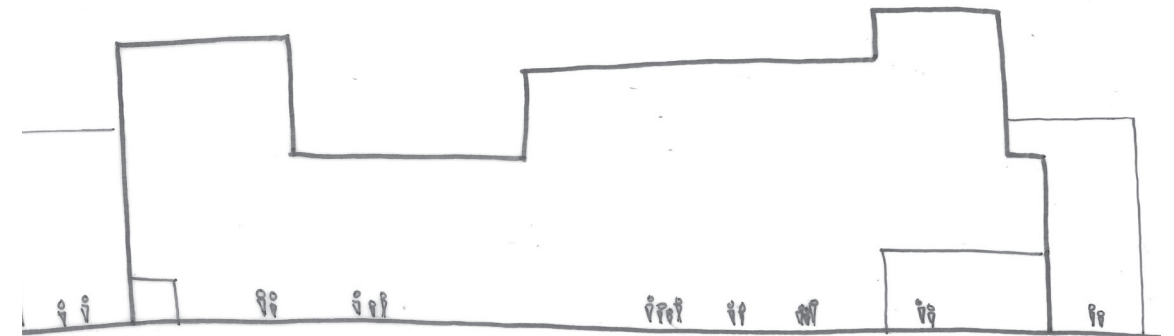
If the building instead formed a passageway, a continuation of the axis through the neighbourhood? This would give people a reason to be here without having to offer any programme at all yet. People would already pass through just to head to the tram or instead to head to the park and playground.



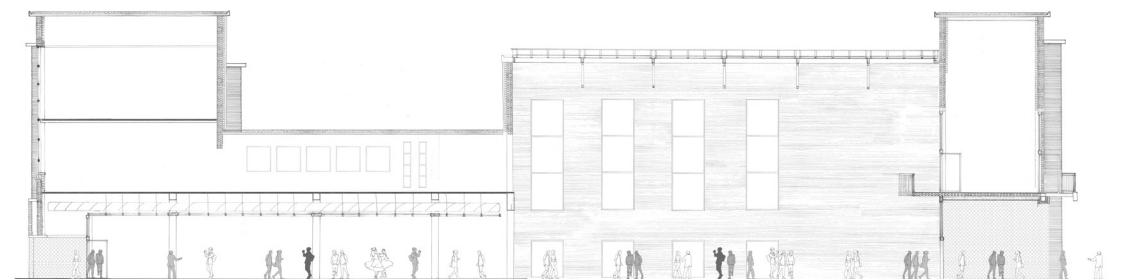
current entrance



Supermarket: directed space



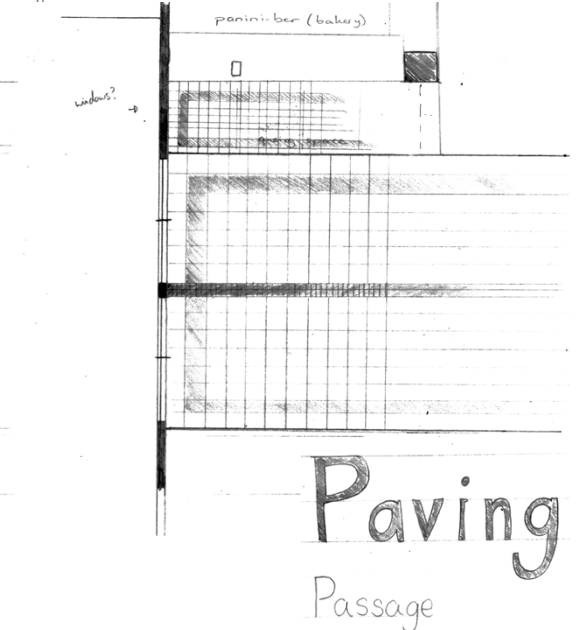
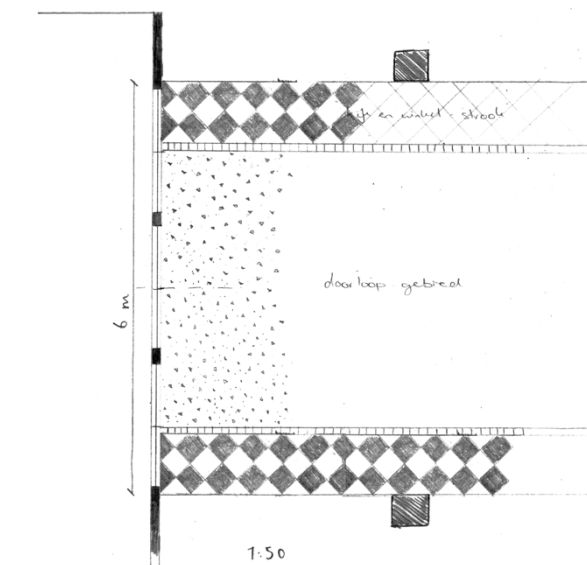
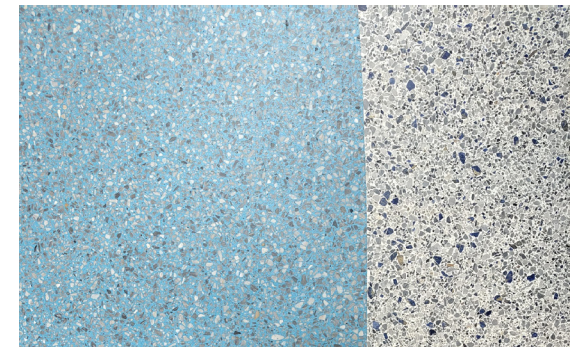
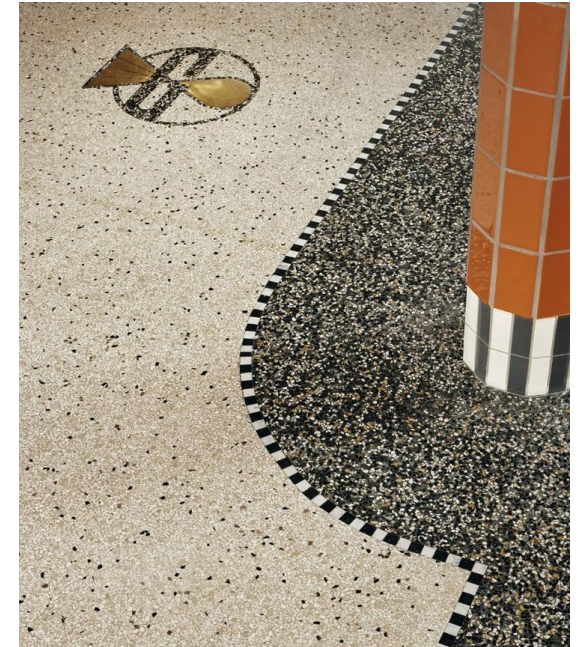
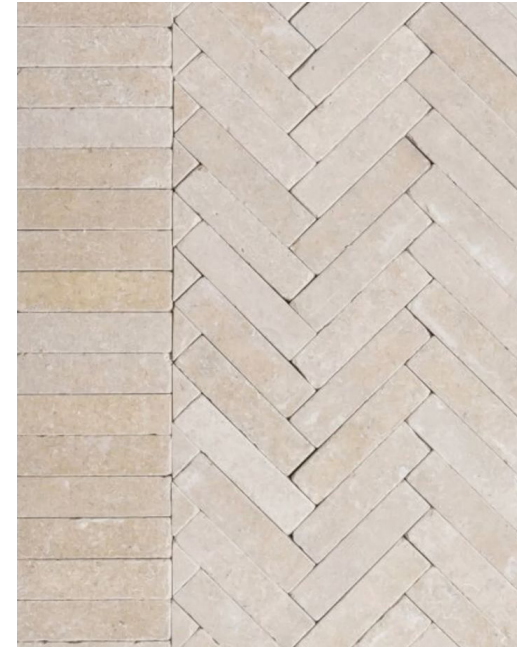
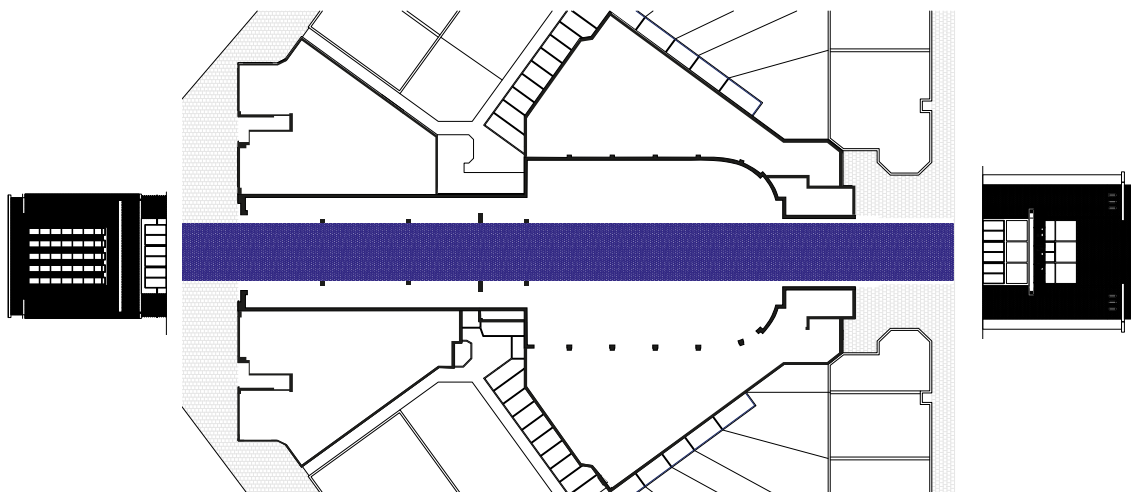
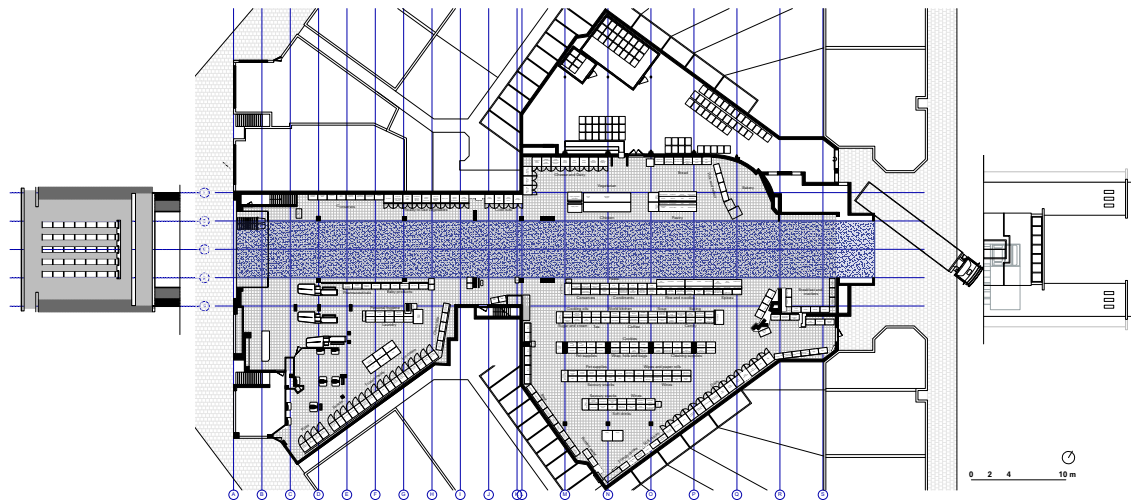
Passage: connecting space

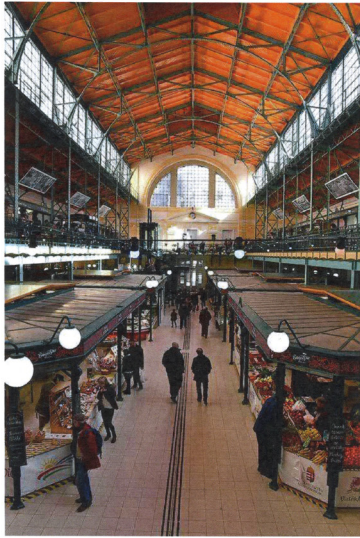


## THE PASSAGE IN PLAN

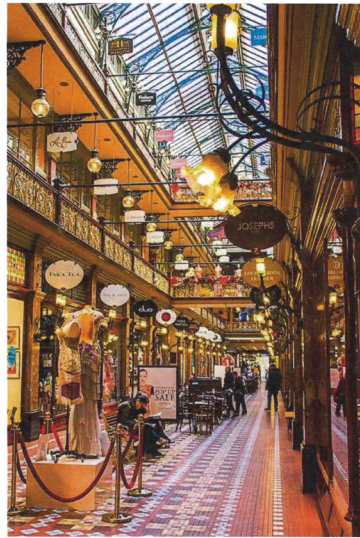
Initially, when I thought about opening the backside to create a new entrance I was still thinking of keeping the supermarket intact. This would need security measures as two entrances also means two exists that have to be considered concerning theft.

As is visible in both plans, the passage spans between the columns on the ground floor. This was the width that the original entrance had and this would lead to the market to situate itself in new alcoves, instead of being obstructed by columns in the way the supermarket is now. In the upper plan, the passage is projected over the current supermarket plan, to see how much meters of products could be maintained. In the lower plan it is projected over a void, which would lead me to take a more open approach towards the possibilities of the space.





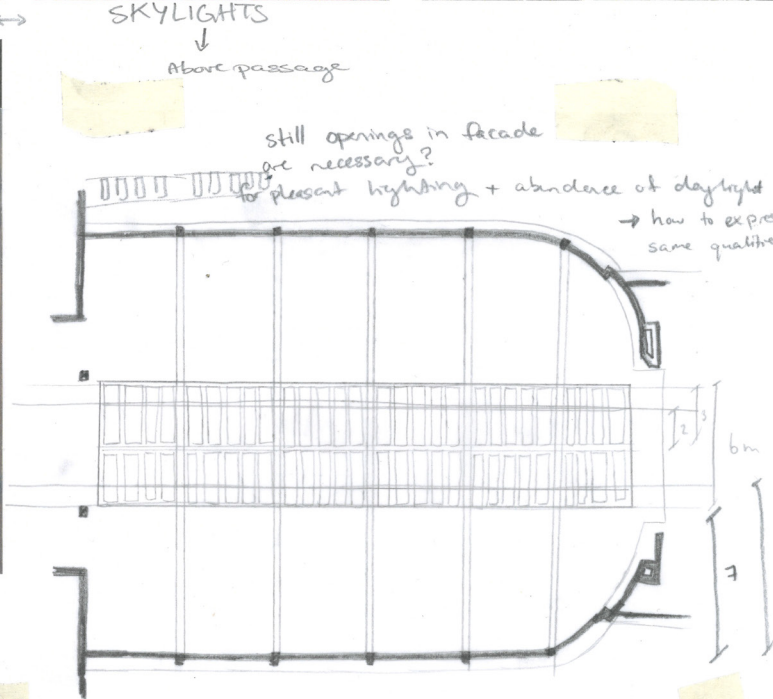
OPENED FACADES



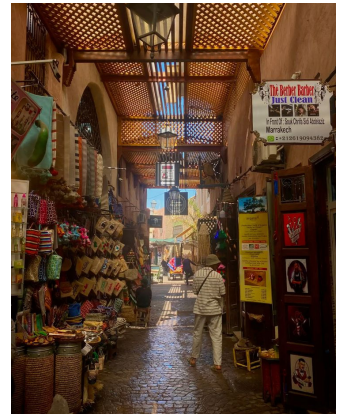
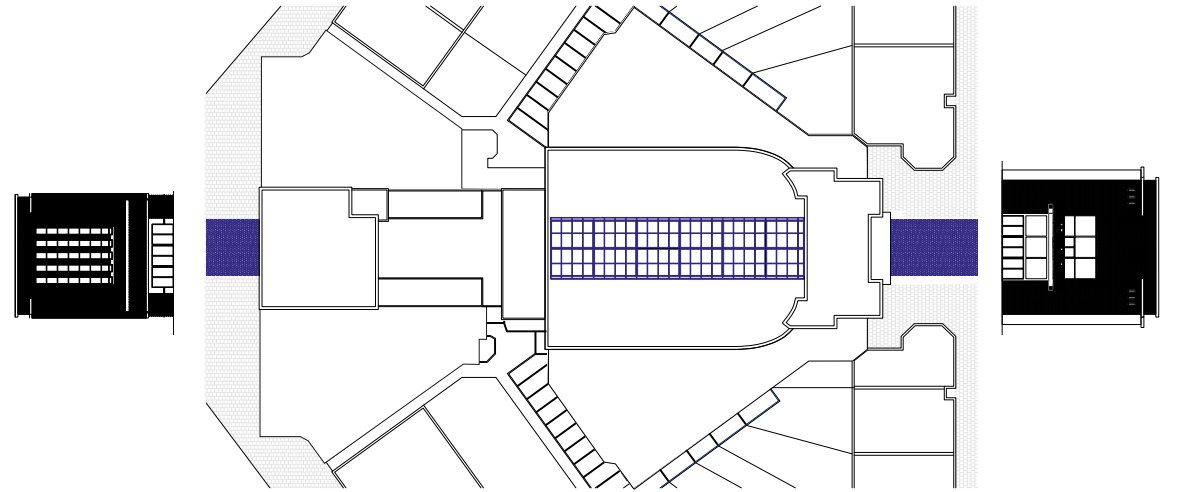
SKYLIGHTS



Many interventions  
→ 1 language → how.



DAGLICHT MET IMITEREN MET KUNSTLICHT  
dan element  
LICHT AMBIENT → kleur  
FOCUS → geometrie  
BRILLIANCE → materiaal  
→ ochin 24 was-schema zien



the roof: open above passage - daylight from the side facades

## THE NEW ENTRANCE ON THE MINCKELERSSTRAAT

Opening the current back of the building does not yet make it an entrance. It should be clear to the neighbourhood and its visitors alike that you are welcome to come inside. It should connect to the neighbourhood on a more personal level than the monumental front facade does, but at the same time it should represent in a way the 'representative function' that is back in the neighbourhood.

For this the current front facade at the Lorentzplein and the neighbourhoods' portieken (ground floor openings with stairs to upstairs housing) are relevant references. Besides this signage, that broadcasts what is happening inside was studied too. Currently the Albert Heijn name and colours are on the front facade. In its time as a cinema, the extension above the front porch was the letterboard, informing passersby which movie was playing.

One of the obstacles in the transformation of this facade was the fact that it is the current back of house and that this could not be practically moved to anywhere else.



New facade Minckelerstraat, model placed in context



new facade Minckelerstraat (left) and updated facade Lorentzplein (right)



portiekwoningen in Laak

## DE PORTIEK / THE PORCH

Embedding the new facade in the neighbourhood is a question of materiality and expression. How to mirror the 'grandness' the original entrance displays on the Lorentzplein within a smaller street, but simultaneously aimed towards the park and on the continuation of the central axis of the Goeverneurlaan.

The grandest entrances within the neighbourhood are found in the porticos of the 'portiekwoningen'. These elevated houses have their own front doors, often found on the first level. Each housing block has a different format for this upstairs entrance, some more open than others. Often glass is placed inside the facade to let in more daylight, but keep out some wind and possibly birds. Nowadays, some of these porticos are closed by a gate on street level to keep out strangers in search of a dry place to rest (inhospitable).

In the relatively simple and sober brick facades in the central neighbourhood of Laak, these are the spaces where architects would play with the brick language, or other elements that give character and some form of decoration.

Taking this language of the vertical elements for the new opening in the facade will allow me to embed the new (brick) facade within its surroundings.

## THE NEW ENTRANCE: ITS GESTURES

Besides the portieken, another reference that came up was that of the city gate. If the interior of this building would become a market hall, a new town square than the entrance would be the gateway to the heart of the city. A welcome sign and a protective barrier perhaps.

City gates are just as well market spaces. As can be seen in the paintings below, this was a place for exchange of news and products from within and outside of the city. The city gate becomes a backdrop to this exchange, while simultaneously showing attributes and cultural importances of the city. A rich or powerful city could show this in the elaborate detailing of the gate.

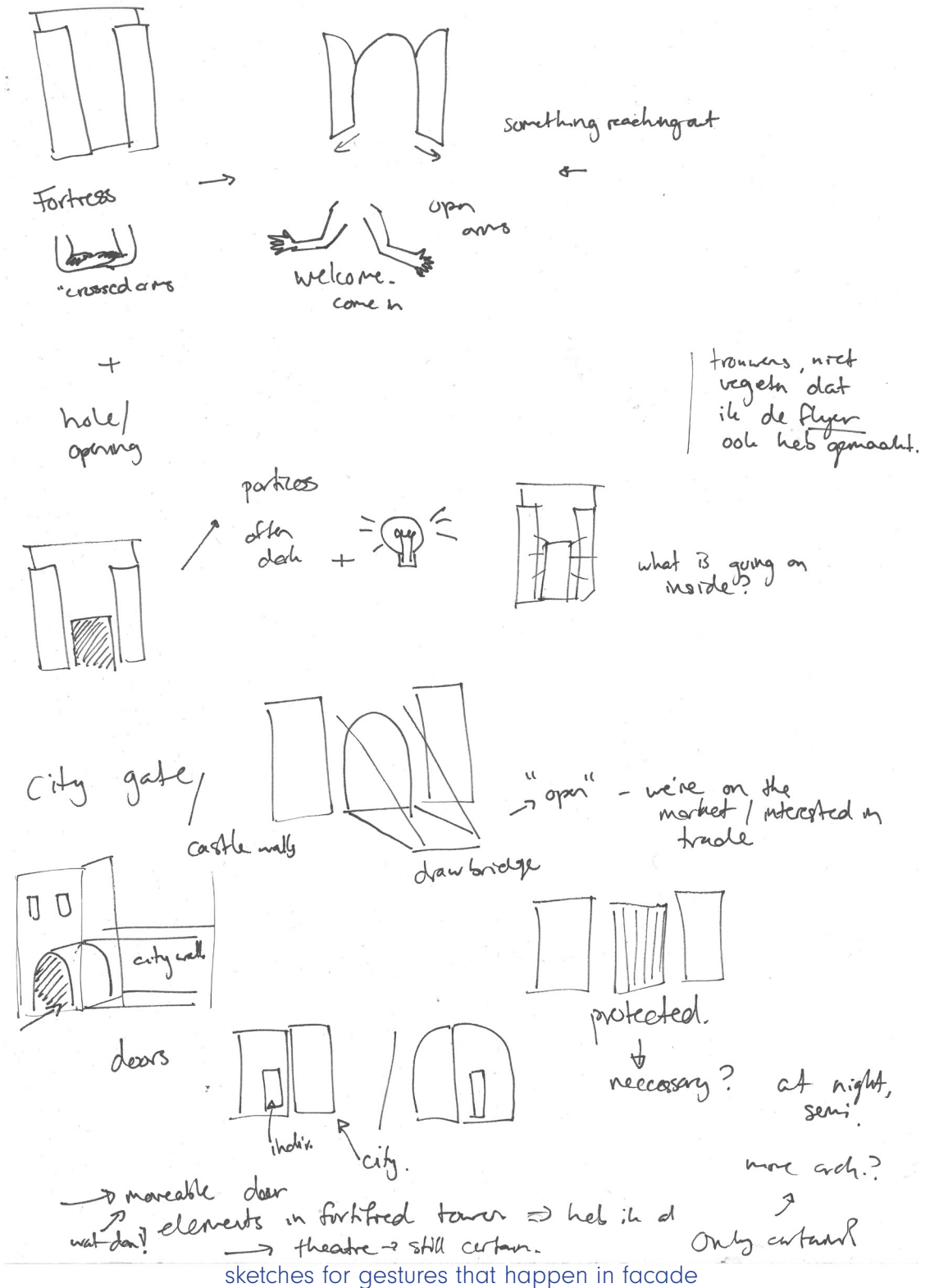
The invitation for the facade has been kept more sober for the Lorentzpassage, as to better engage with its environment, but the invitation still extends through the wide opening, as a puncture in the fortress it was before. Ornamental tiles and the pavement lead you inside, as well as the verbal invitation, that is more understood in our time.

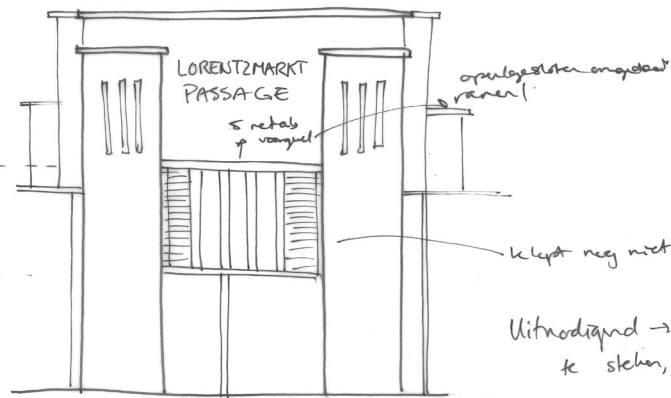


Gate of the Fortress at Agra, India by Edwin Lord Weeks

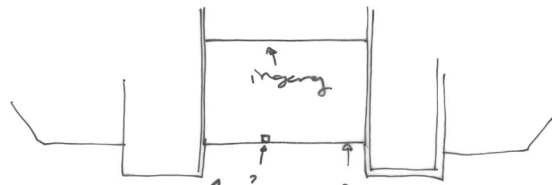


The Gates of the Khalifa, Cairo by William Logsdale, 1887





Uitnodigend → niet door uit te stellen, maar te openen naar binnen te trekken



waar begint vloer?

passage al op straat kan beginnen

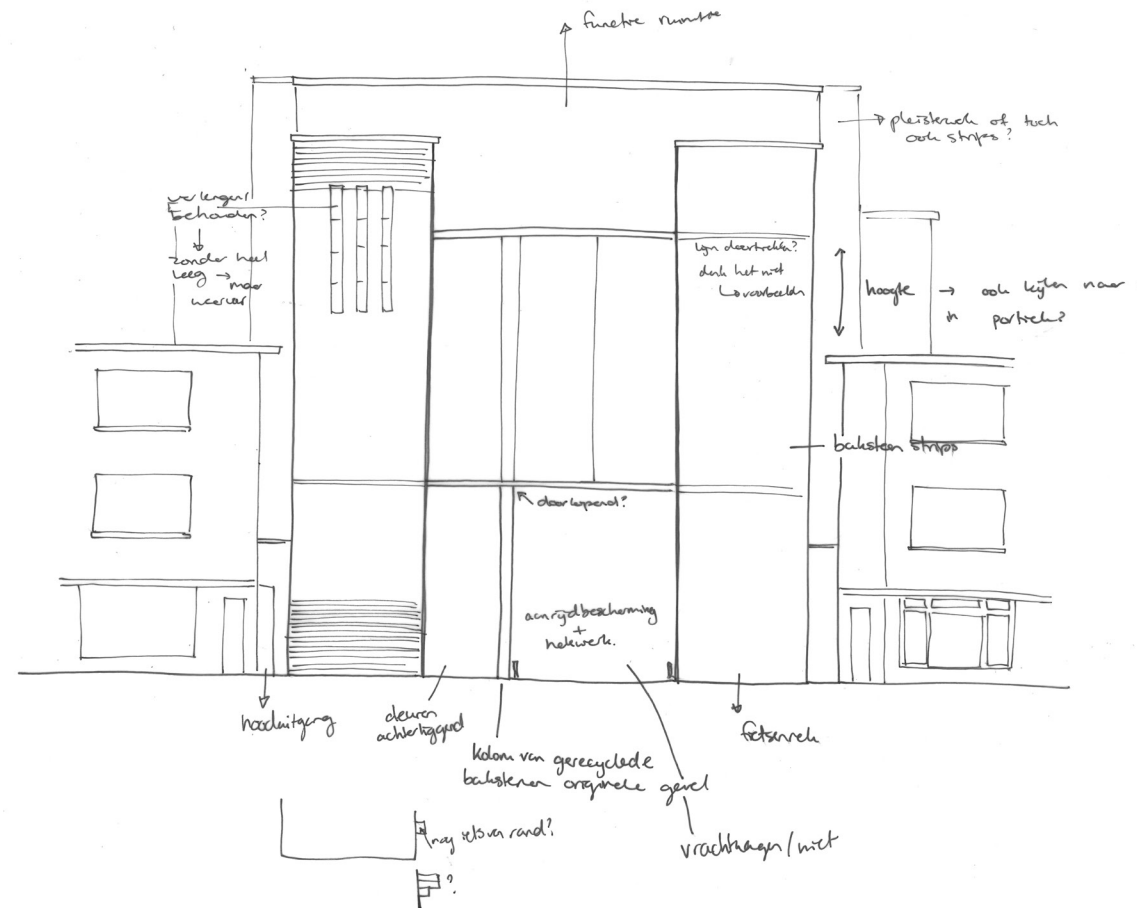
partiek.

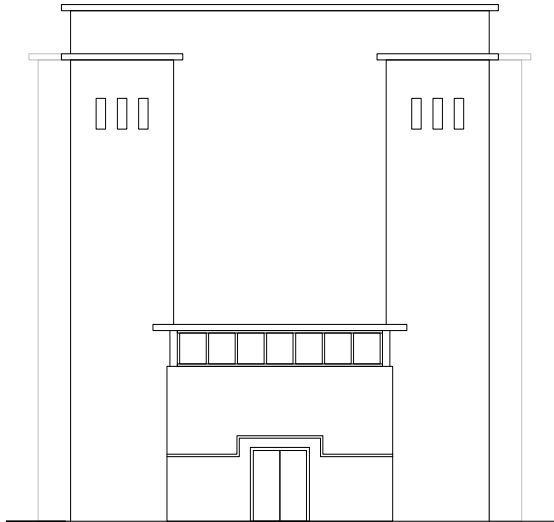
alleen lateri treceerijn  
waer goed ontey open  
was  
→ verhoegen

est nog niet partiek naar binnen kunnen?

metalwerk patroon  
baksteen strips

### "PORTIEK" GEVEL



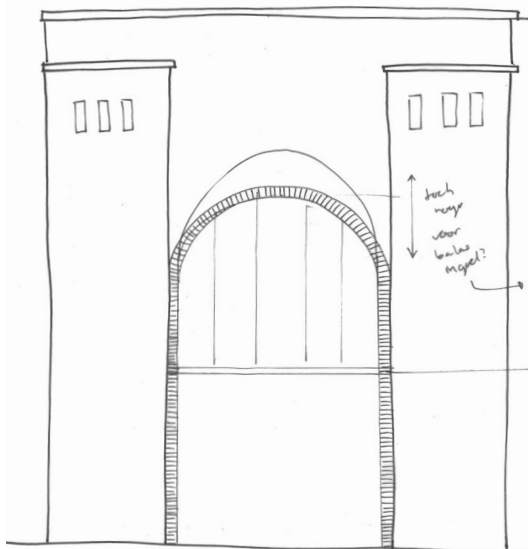


1933 facade: dressing room behind the stage.  
 Monumentality encapsulated in towers

1966-2026 facade: Back of house for supermarket: 6 deliveries a day.



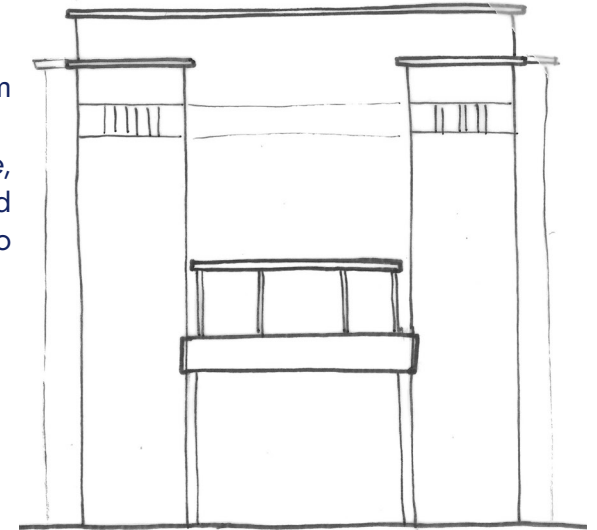
Proposal: height for truck division in entrance resemble verticality front facade through window panes - similar to portieken.



Proposal: arch as reference to some of the portiekwoningen, and as a more literal 'city gate'

Proposal: Balcony

Creating a physical connection from kitchen to outside  
 The balcony becomes a small terrace, people eating can look out over park and can then also be seen. An invitation to come in.



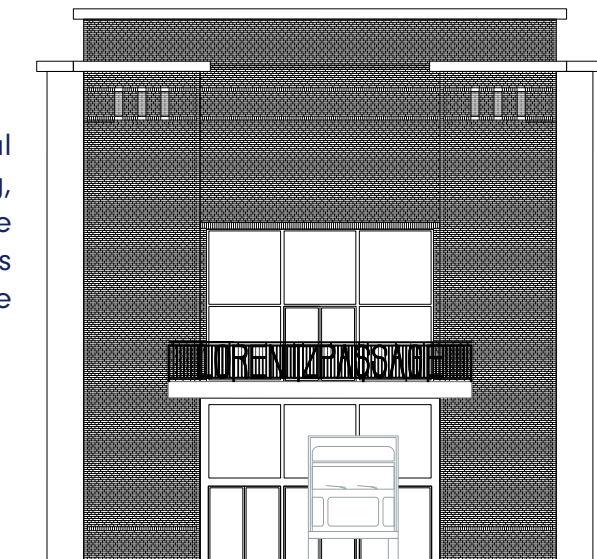
Proposal: text on balcony

Showing the name on the balcony tells people what is happening inside. The building is a passage and becomes a street, part of the urban structure.



Proposal: Final facade

The interventions are refined to their final outcome. The text is part of a steel railing, the balcony resembles the lintels that the portiekwoning have and so emphasis is placed on the horizontal elements in the facade.





back of house, 1981

## THE BACK OF HOUSE

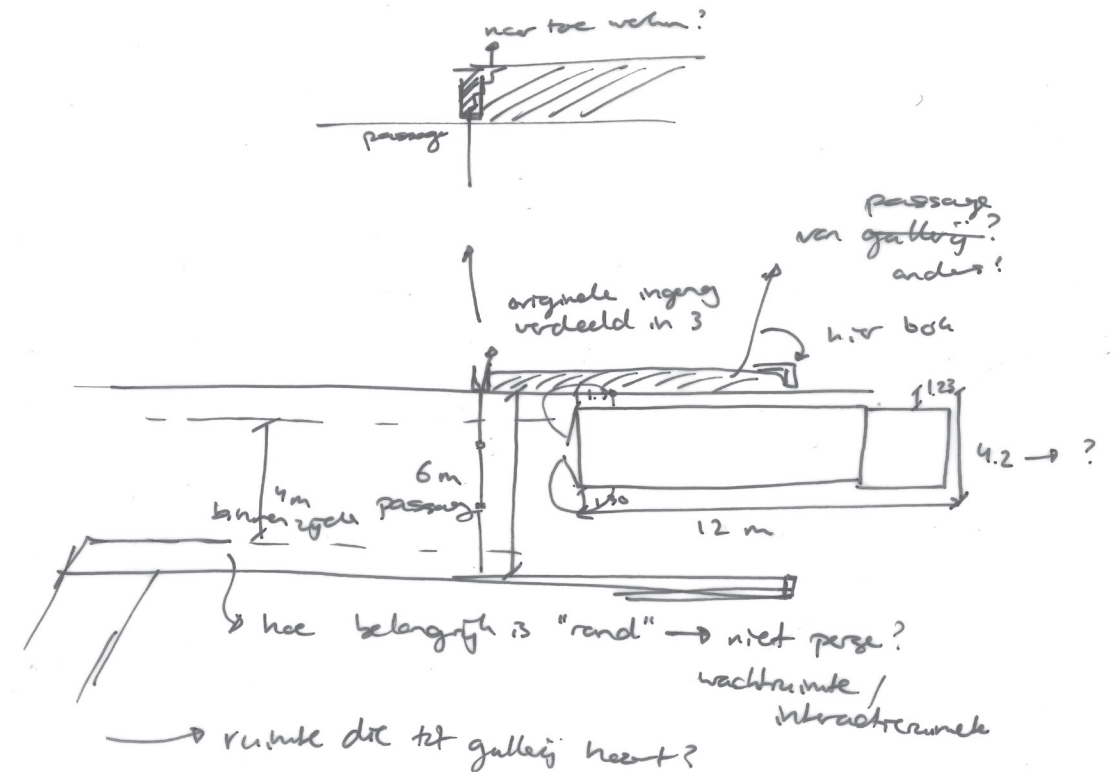
As the building facade on the Minckelersstraat was originally the back of house, it still is the logistical side today. It housed a dressing room behind the small stage during its time as cinema.

As there is not enough space for the supermarket's delivery trucks to stand completely on the sidewalk, its nose will usually be on the street. What I did not want at all was that I would create a new entrance here, which would consequently seem to be blocked off from the street six times a day when deliveries would come. Because of this and the few possibilities to solve logistics on another side of the building (through the alleys that lead to the gardens was at one point a tested option), the solution must be found in working with a place for these logistics in mind.

As the entrance became a generous gesture for this facade, the size of it started to correspond with the trucks height. What if the truck would drive inside? Most municipalities are already arranging rules that require delivery traffic to be electric, so this would lead to no exhausts entering the hall. However, how could this space still be in use as an entrance, simultaneously with the truck's unloading. The passage is then quite narrow...

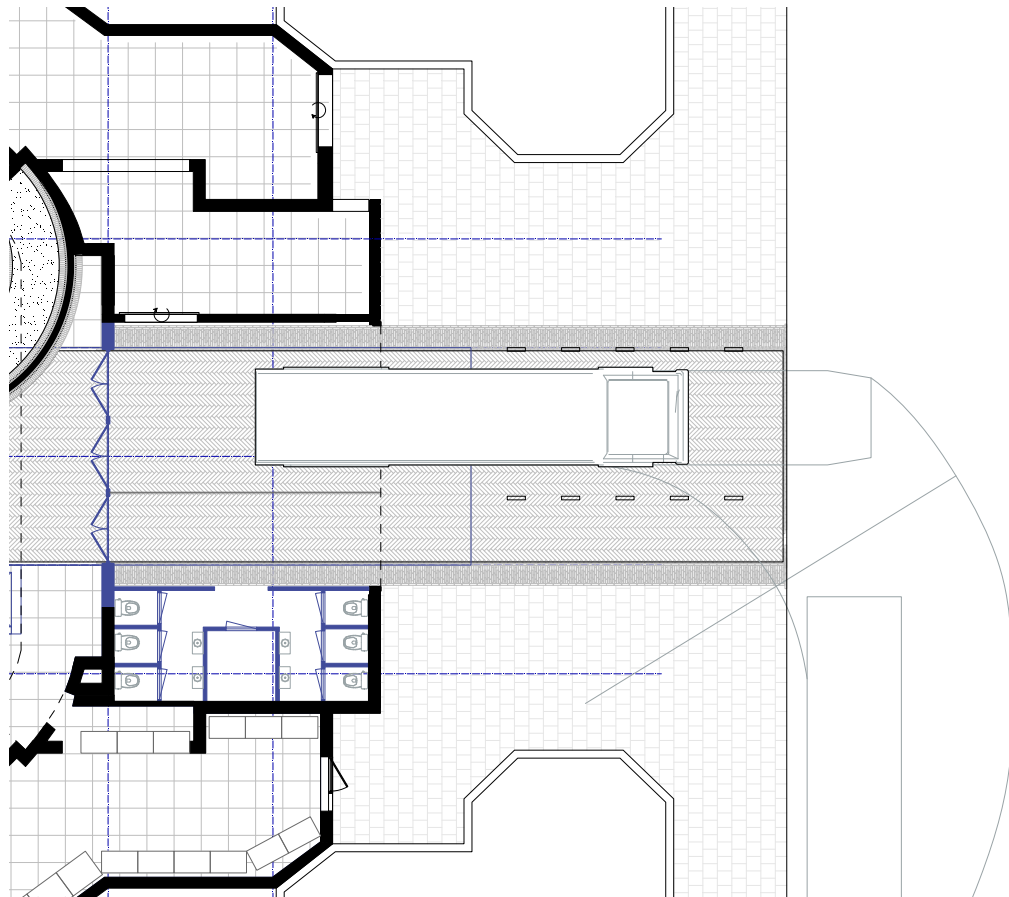
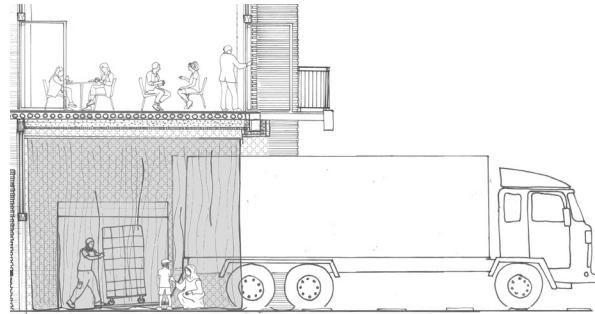


delivery truck Albert Heijn, Google Maps



## THE LOGISTICS AS A PERFORMANCE

The proposition is by separating people from the truck. Lights in the pavement will alert customers and passersby to pay attention. Simultaneously these will work as the yellow guiding lines used to do, to frame the truck's parking space. When the truck is parked a wire mesh curtain can be closed so only one of the three entrances is now available to the public. Separated by the see-through curtain, the market workers can load without needing to keep in mind the passersby. These may however watch and see how the behind the scenes of this building plays out on center stage.



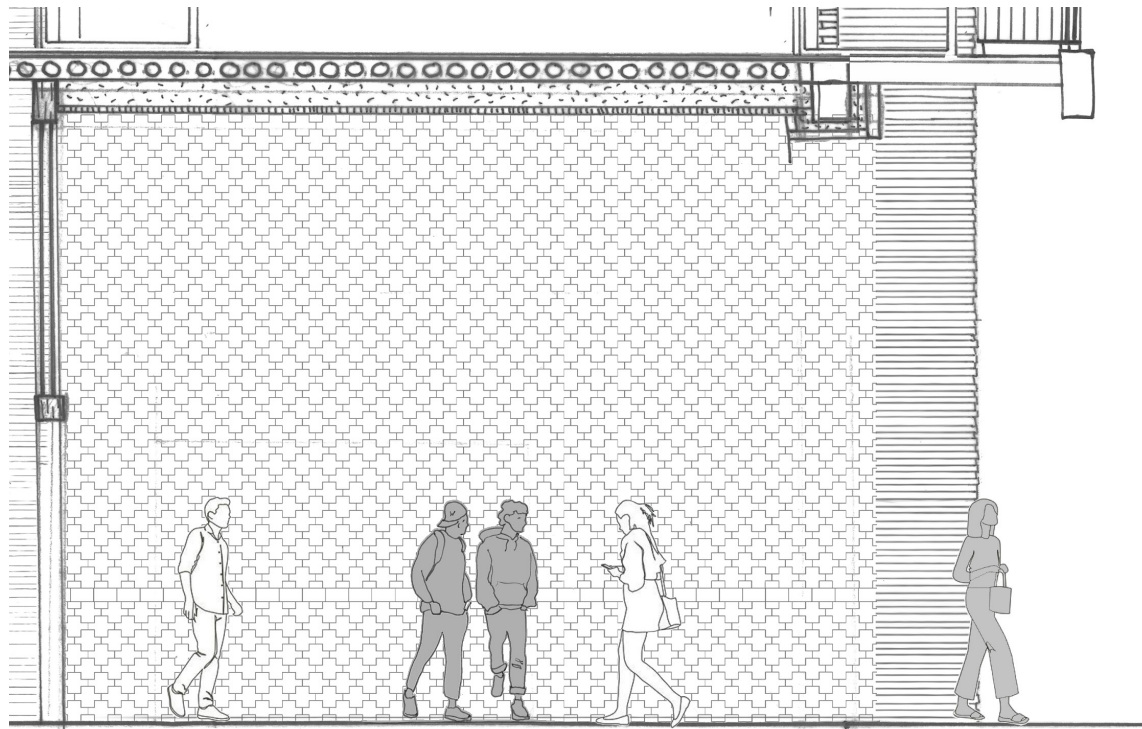
truck and curtain in plan and section



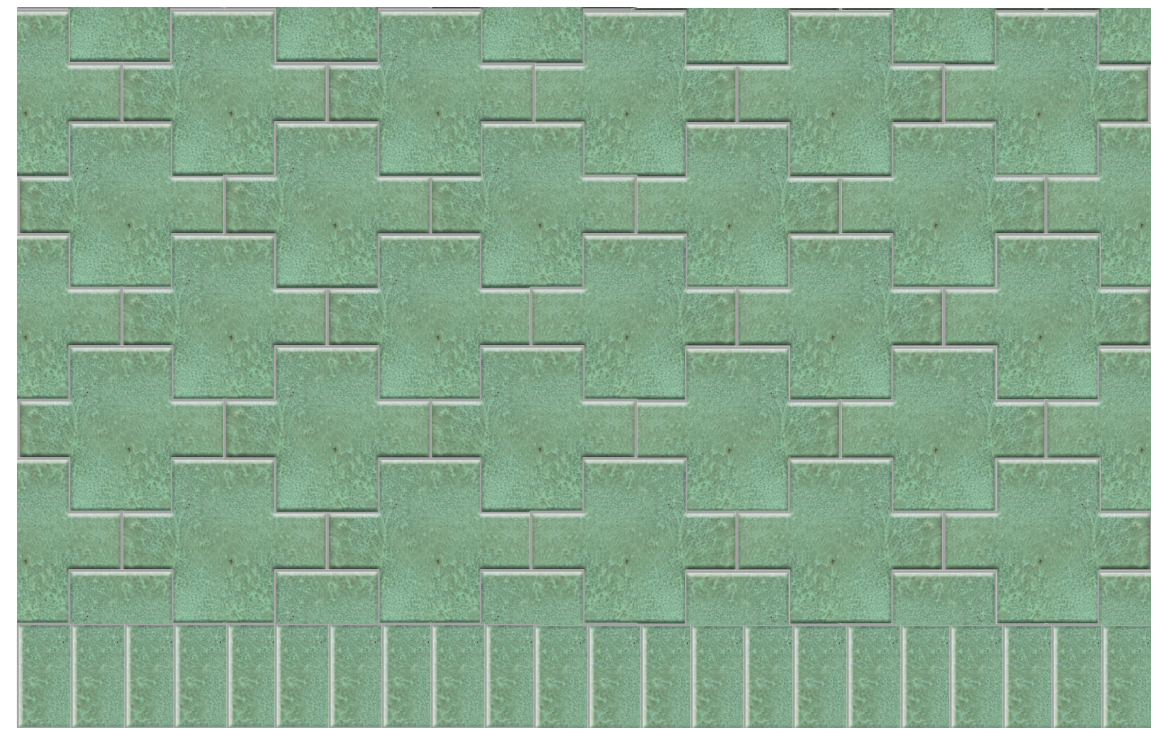
unloading of delivery truck in model

## THE PORCH

The new entrance will be lined with tiles that draw attention to the existing brickwork. Through the 1 meter line that continues here and through the cross pattern that highlights the cross bond in the brick work. At night lights highlight these bricks, and with that this entrance, so as to invite people inside.



the porch in section, detail of daylight situation (above)



detail of porch tiles, detail of evening situation (above)

## THE INVITATION

Through the text on the balcony, the building broadcasts what is happening inside, just like the cinema used to do. To people in The Hague the Passage is familiar as a part of the city centre and as a shopping street.

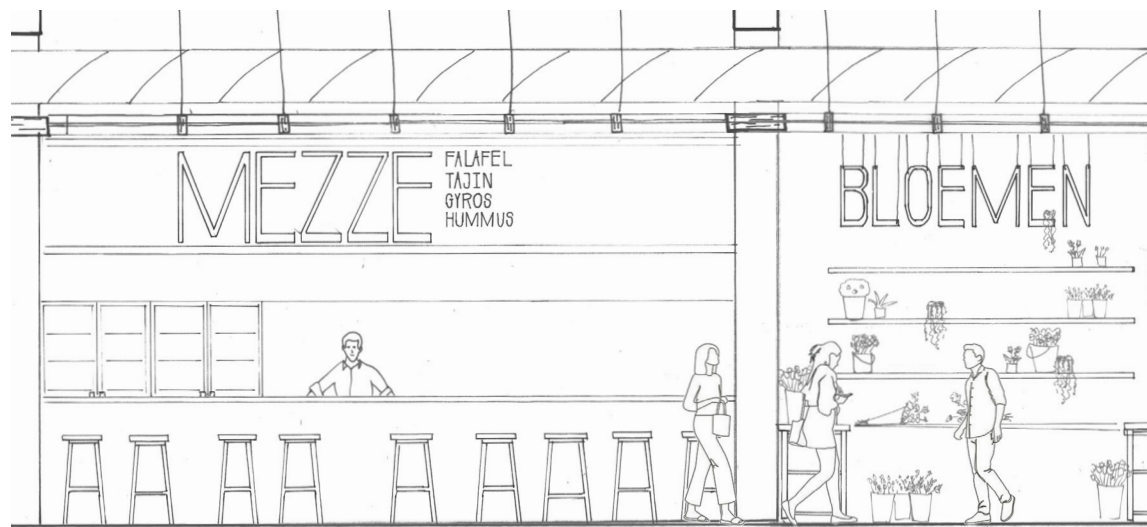
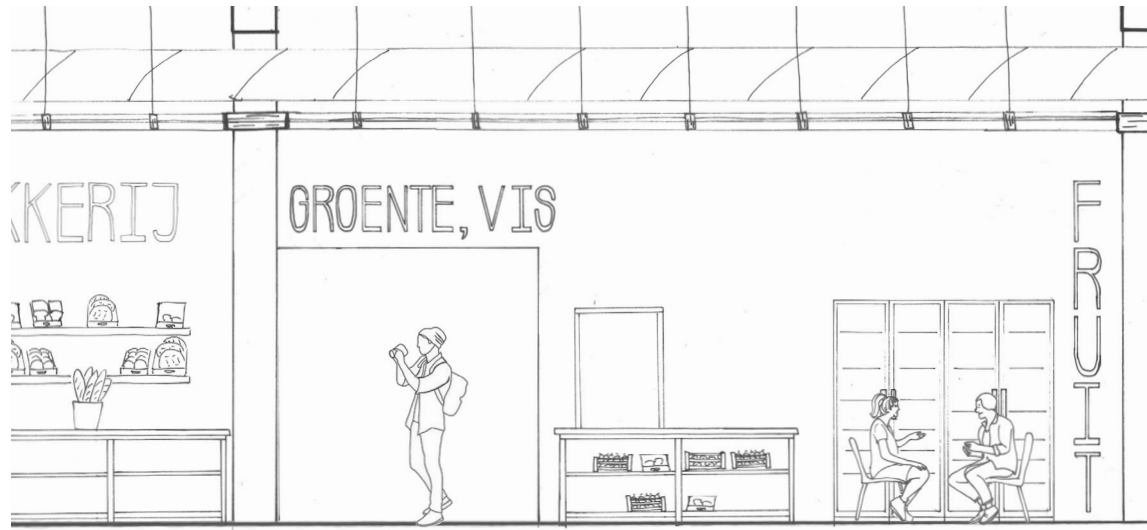
For this railing a font is developed that is similar to the vertical texts familiar from movie posters, as well as a typical font in the 1930s. Here it is arranged precisely so that it follows the dutch rules for railings: No horizontal elements between 20 cm and 70 cm above the floor. This font is then further used throughout the building, for the individual market shops, as well as wayfinding. In contrast to the invitation, when the building is closed the gate tells this message too.



signage on the facade



Film promotion on entrance facade of Rembrandt Theater, ca. 1935



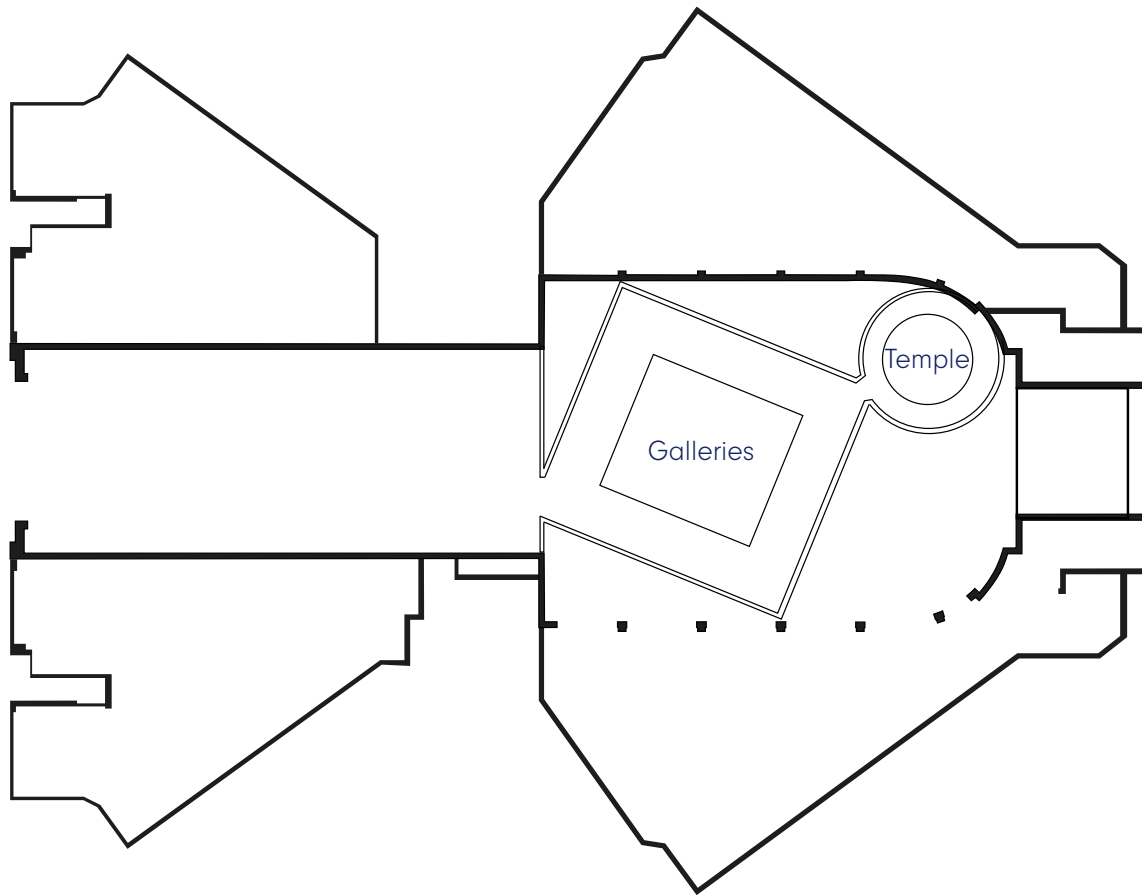
A B C D E F G H I J K L M



N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

elements

ELEMENTS  
interventions in space



galleries : counterreaction to existing structure  
drum: reaction to circle

## THE ELEMENTS AS A WAY OF APPROPRIATING SPACE

As the current supermarket seems to neglect the vast amount of space in the cinema hall, this proposal instead wants to use it. Not in the sense that it should see complete floors and use up all possible space as efficiently as possible, but by accepting that it is there and it is available, and especially that the height gives the floors that are there a certain quality.

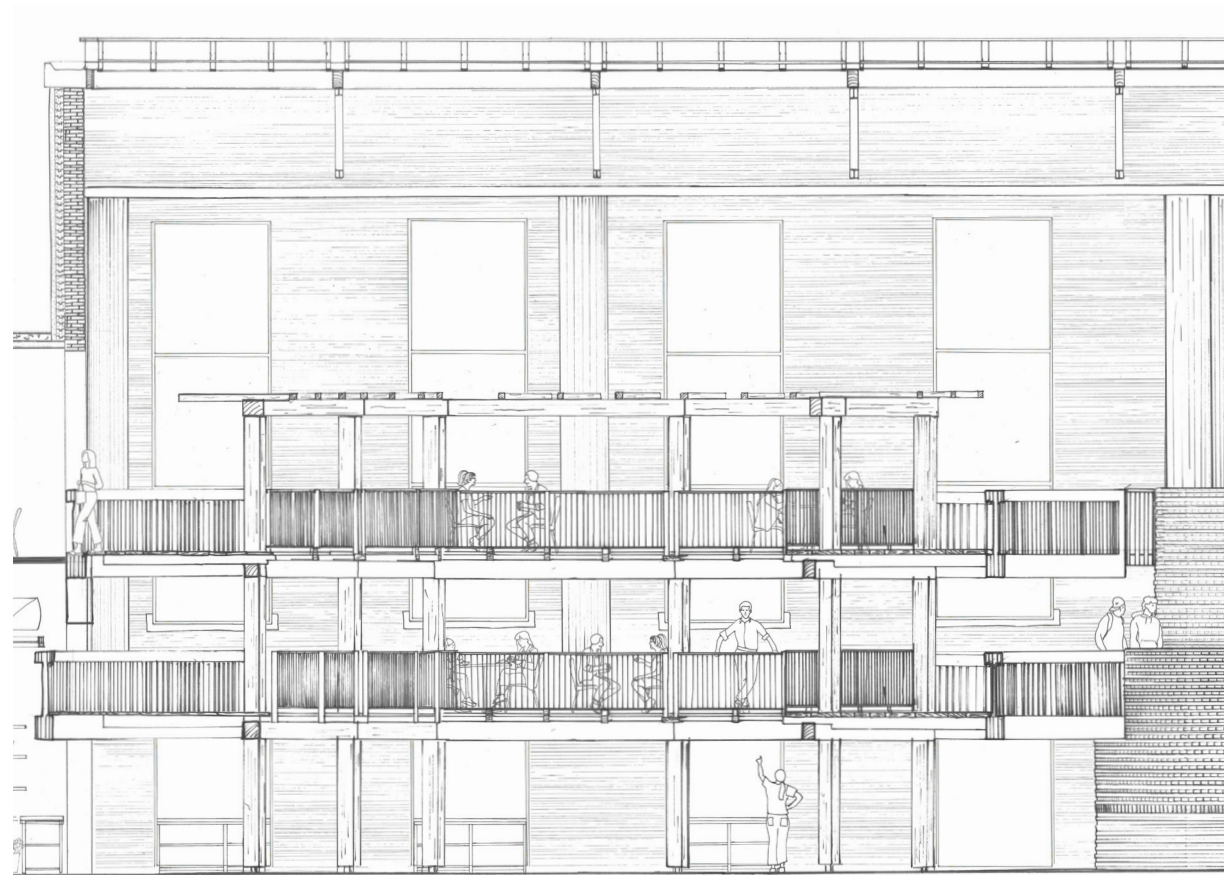
As Herman Hertzberger said in his lecture at the TU: Berlage had ideas about the balance between built and open space.

What is built is necessary to create space. That is what architecture essentially is. Materiality is not the key point of architecture, but the creation of space is.

Here in the big hall is space. However the space is now ignored, or even negated with the current ceiling. By placing elements in this space that interact with the space and contradict it, a dialogue is created. The interventions become theatrical elements that are now introduced in the space, creating spaces of their own. The gallery creates voids, both on its outside and inside - the space that will become a stage. The drum marks the existing curve of the building, and nestles itself inside that geometry, while also touching the galleries, anchoring them where they do not touch the building itself.

These elements are completely their own things, in the way they do not follow the buildings grid or geometry. Through their careful placement that has been meticulously studied, they touch and overlap with the current building to create exciting moments. But they also practically connect floors, forming a bridge between the existing first floor and the new floor on the Minckelersside of the building, as well as a connection between the 5.5 meter high first floor and the ground level.

the galleries



## THE GALLERIES

The galleries are the element that reflect back to the time that the Lorentzplein was a cinema. They are a new embodiment of the balcony and the historical stage. The element makes use of the building's height, creating more floor area and connecting the ground floor with the upstairs level.

But most importantly, they form a stage within the hall and a tribune around it. A space to see and be seen. This is the place where debates can be held and cultural festivities may be celebrated. It is extroverted in the sense that whatever happens here is visible to market shoppers and passersby alike, it extends an invitation to these people too. On a day-to-day basis community dinners can be held, after they have been prepared in the neighbourhood kitchen. Even when no events are planned, this is the place to sit and watch the bustle of the neighbourhood or to catch up over coffee, or a snack from the market. It is the place to take a seat, that the Lorentzplein does not offer.

Both a space for observation and spontaneous encounter, the galleries are inspired by theatres such as Shakespeare's Globe in London and Lina Bo Bardi's Teatro Oficina. Through narrow aisles, spread out over different levels, the public will have to sit on the edge of their seat and gaze down to see all of what is happening on stage: the market square. With a height difference of 2.70 metres between the levels, these become very interactive, in contrast to the original balcony that stopped at 4.5 metres above the floor. This way the distance between the building's ground floor and first level is connected.

As mentioned before, the gallery as element evolved from studies that extended the balcony into the hall and then went on to live its own life as an individual element. First, as a square structure that extended from wall to wall, integrating with the building's structure then as an orthogonal element, placed diagonally, to only touch the building's structure at two of its ends, embedding itself into the existing first floor - floor. On the other side it will lean on the drum, embedding itself on another new structure.

Theatre (see and be seen, references)  
Connection (0-5.5 metres, spontaneous encounter)  
Framing of market square (?)  
Temporary fixture (materiality)

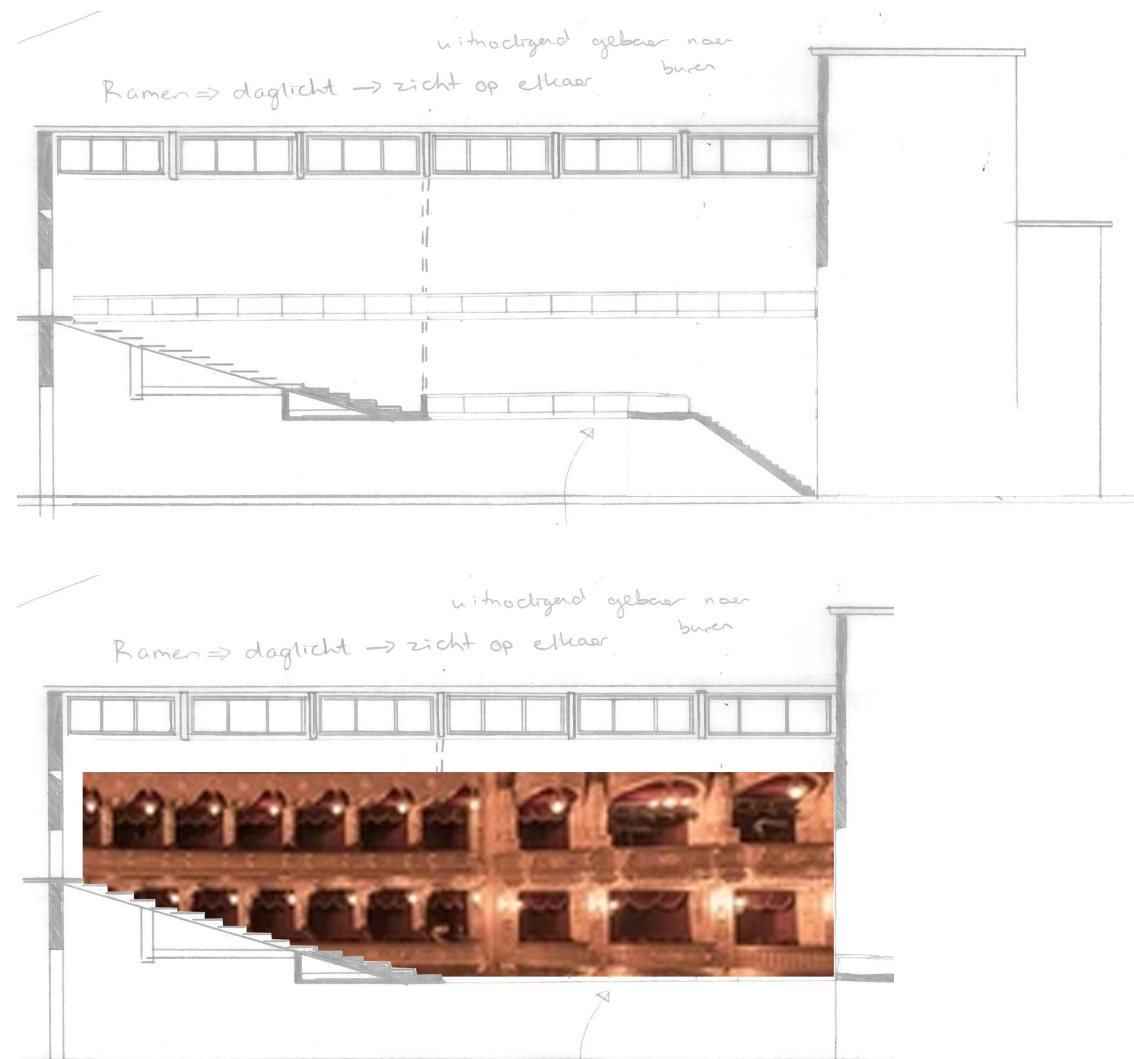


The galleries as theatrical element, from which performances can be seen

## THE GALLERIES - EXTENSION OF THE EXISTING BALCONY

As mentioned earlier, an attempt had been made to extend the balcony into the space, to work with what was already there. Looking at theatres with wrap-around balconies or at theatre boxes, led me to try this. But soon the conclusion had to be made that this would crowd the space that was available, and also obstructed the possibility of opening up the hall to daylight.

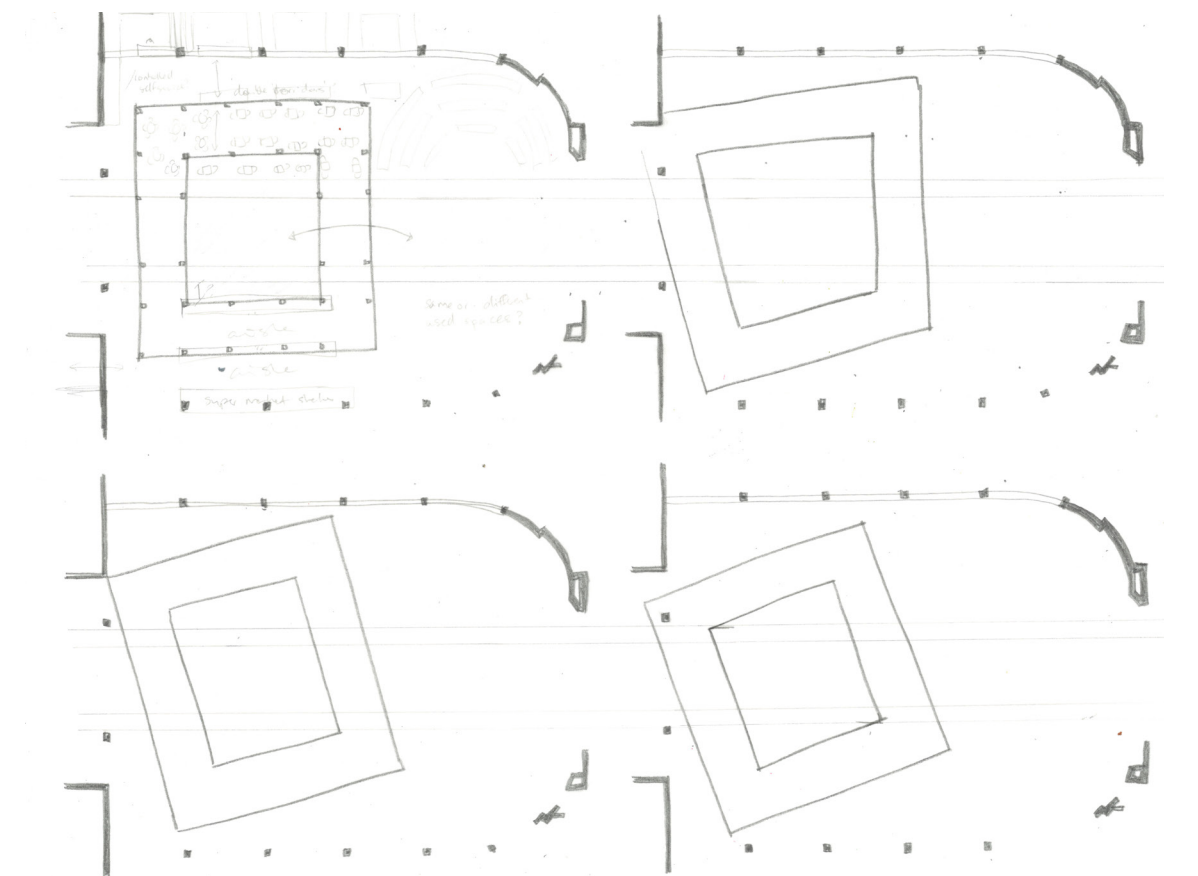
Alongside with this the option to close off the balcony as its own little theatre was considered but this would involve a quite technical curtain-wall solution and what for, exactly?



Galleries as extension of balcon, in section, inspired by box theatres

Once the balcony was removed, more freedom for interventions was found, as the entire hall could be filled in. Starting initially with a wrap-around gallery, that would work similar to Lina Bo Bardi's Teatro Oficina, a sort of scaffolding theatre was considered, at the same time that theatre boxes and theatres such as the Globe were taken as references too. On the next page those and other references for the gallery such as the Greek Stoa (covered walkway between colonnade and interior space of building) and mediterranean courtyards are shown.

Little by little the wrap-around scaffolding made way for an independent geometrical gallery, that did not adhere to the grid of the hall (development seen below). Important in this development was the fact that the gallery embraced the passage, but aimed not to interfere here. As can be seen with the top-left square gallery, the columns surround the passage, which as that point in the design still existed as two 1 meter strips around the 4 meter wide passage. The 6 meter width was the distance between the existing columns in the front-side of the building.



Orthogonal shape in plan, developmental sketches



Lina Bo Bardi's Teatro Oficina, São Paulo



Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, London (right: 75% scale construction from Hamnet)

Particularly enticing about these examples above is the way the public can be involved. Teatro oficina asks an engaged audience, willing to hang over the railing to be able to see the full performance. Shakespeare's theatre has a standing crowd in front of the stage and the performances often have interactive elements. I personally have been victim of a wet shoe shower. Both Globe Theatres shown have different constructions, as the original has burnt down. For the Hamnet film the decision was made to create it on a 75% scale so on camera it would form a more intimate experience. This intimacy is something I want to recreate too. Because the Rembrandt Theatre hall is levels smaller than the Globe, that will probably already be ensured.



Shakespearean Theatre, Gdansk by Renato Rossi



Stoa of Attalos, Athens



Atrium, Fontego dei Tedeschi, Venice by OMA



The Court of the Harem, Albert Girard

## THE GALLERIES - THE THEATRICAL ELEMENT

The galleries provide a stage and a tribune. However it is not a professional theatre. There is no backstage area, and not an abundance of storage space, seeing the rest of the building houses the market. This means that performances put on here cannot be full-production plays. Smaller music or dance performances can be held here, as well as debates, for instance for municipality elections. In that way the galleries again refer to the Greek Agora, where philosophical discussions or political debates were held not only inside the buildings surrounding the market, but also on their borders and beside the market stands.

Options such as a raised stage have been considered, but then the elemental language of the space is quickly lost, as is the fact that everyone walking across the passage could be considered an actor, they are on stage when they walk through the gallery. Likewise, the galleries, can be their own little stage for whoever is looking to people-watch.



### THEATRICAL:

Look at what we have,  
who we are  
Look and see,

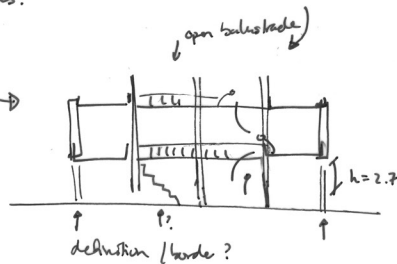
- theatre model (globe theatre / balconies)
- shopping (market model (warehouses))

↓  
no longer a necessity  
market - but nice to  
have, show off wealth. → theatrical

↓  
now in environment  
climate of experience:  
Supermarkets want to  
offer experience, theatricality  
too → more expensive?  
but is theatre not something  
everyone 'desires'  
not basic life necessity,  
but would be good for everyone?

The Galleries I will introduce  
have derived from theatre buildings, but also the  
edges of the greek agora, the threshold between  
market and politics, (stoa)  
and from the courtyard element that many  
east mediterranean and arabic houses share

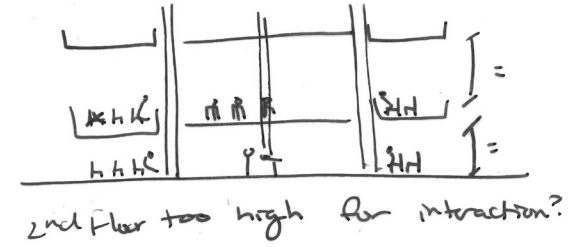
↓  
inside/outside place.  
between houses/rooms/households.  
the most public space of the house



Gallery aspirations

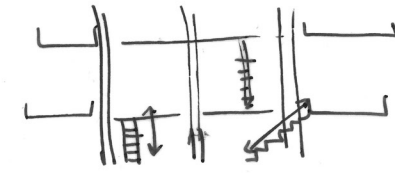
## Theatre

### Cabaret

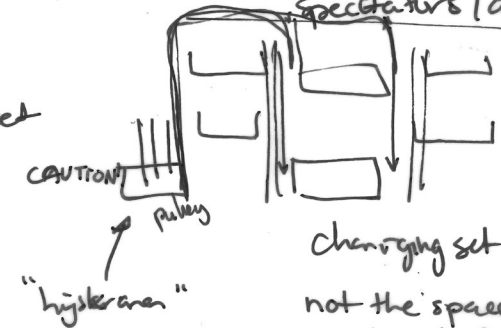


### interactive

?

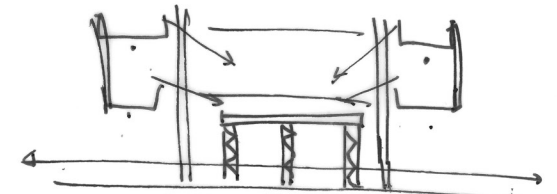


### Classical (elaborate set)



changing set elements  
not the space nor  
equipment for it

### elevated podium? free ground floor

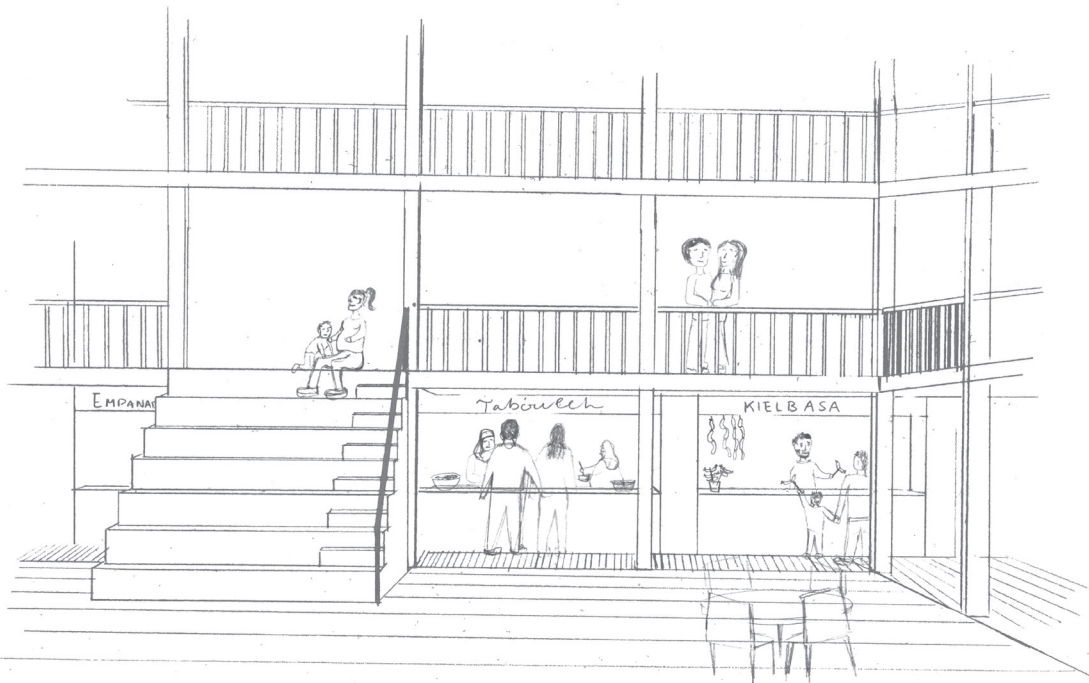


how to  
not lose  
interaction,  
light!

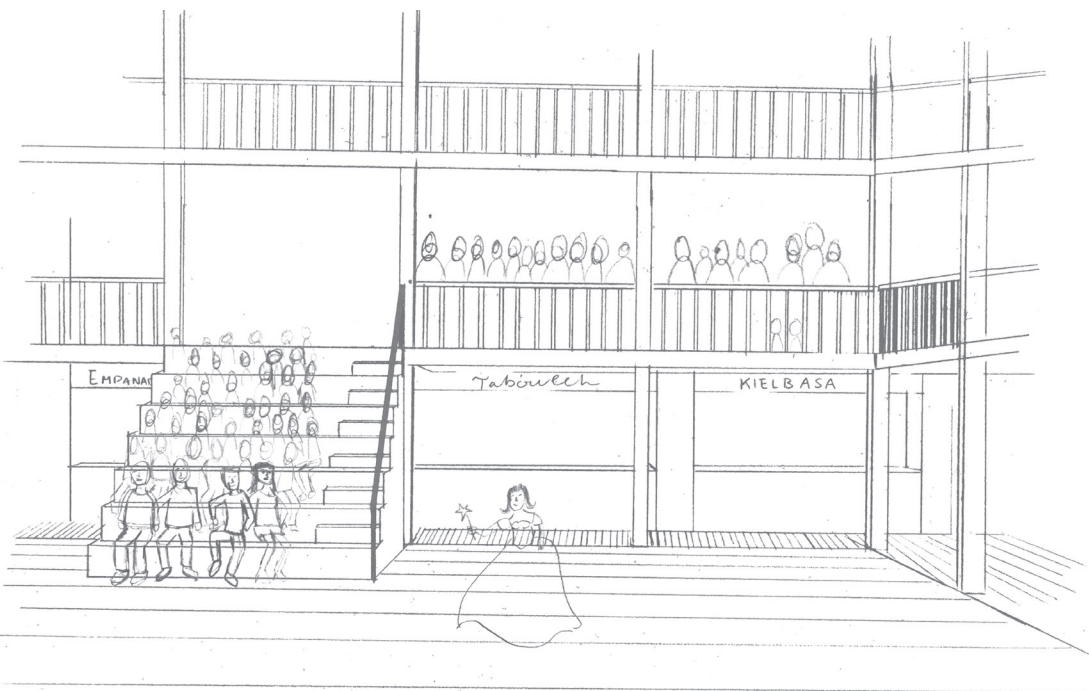
but better for longer-lasting  
performances that need have  
one set that needs to be  
maintained →  
how to transport

Performances and necessities

25-09-23 Aanzicht steiger-gallerij in LORENTZ-HALL - De nieuwe Agora



Sketch market day around gallery



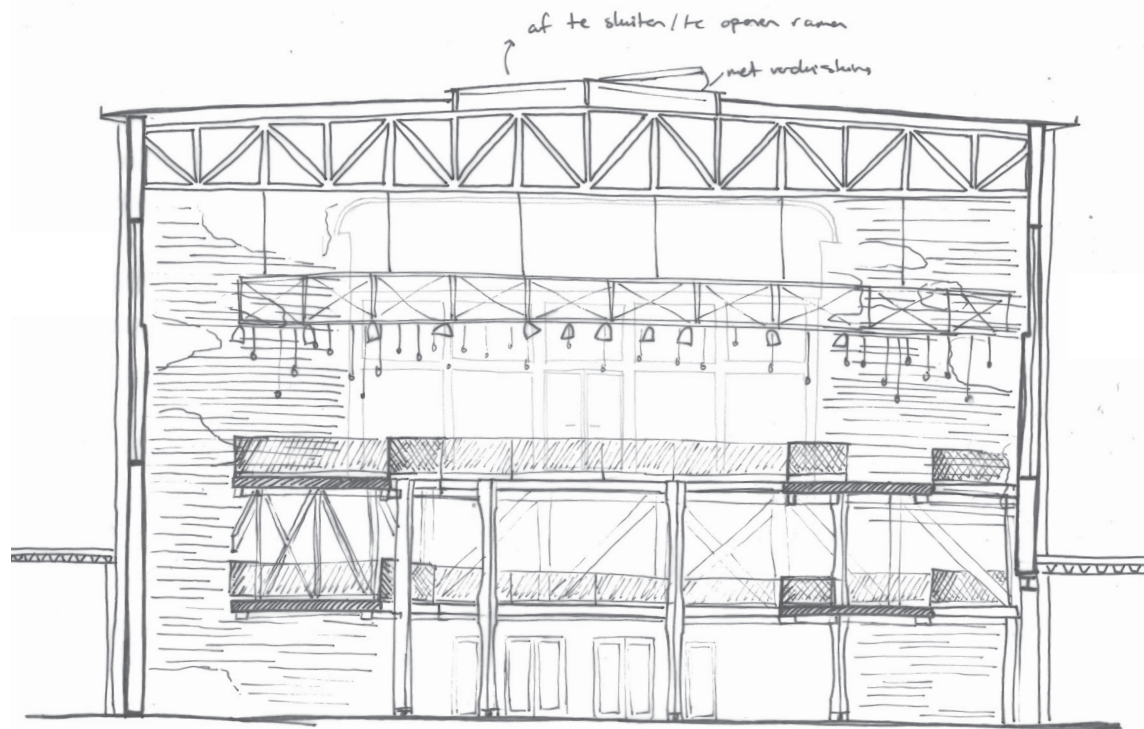
Sketch theatre performance in gallery



Final gallery, atmosphere during events. (Full size in the last chapter)



Theatre boxes can also be seen as small stages on their own, little puppet-shows



Gallery and lighting structure above

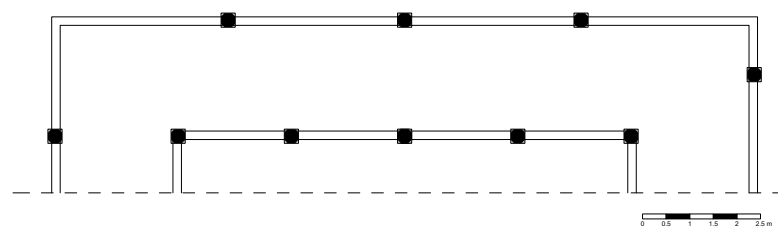
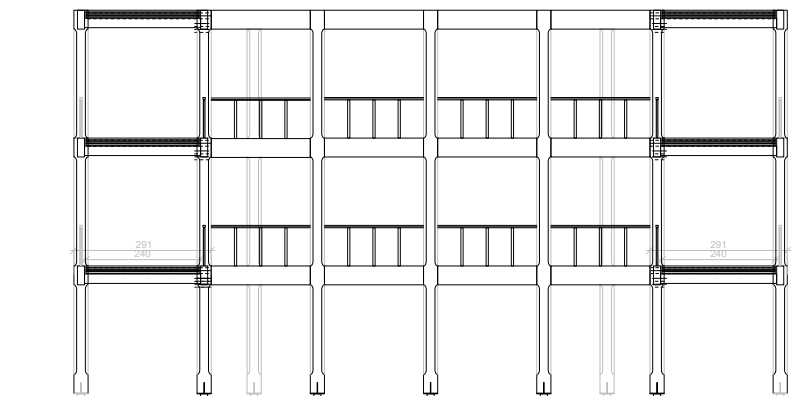
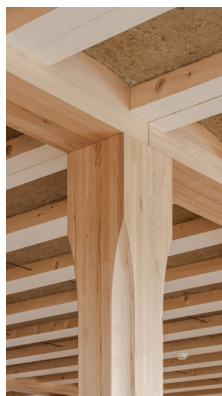
## THE GALLERIES - CEILING STRUCTURE AND LEVELS

One of the biggest questions concerning this element was more or less: where does it end? Is there a structure above, which would be practical for stage lighting, and give the element more of a human-scale upper floor, instead of ending in the vast space. As you can see on the left-hand page, a sketch with a hanging light structure followed the technical drawing that did see a roof. The lower roof was, in my mind, completely closed, which did not feel right, as the connection with the hall in its entirety seemed to get lost.

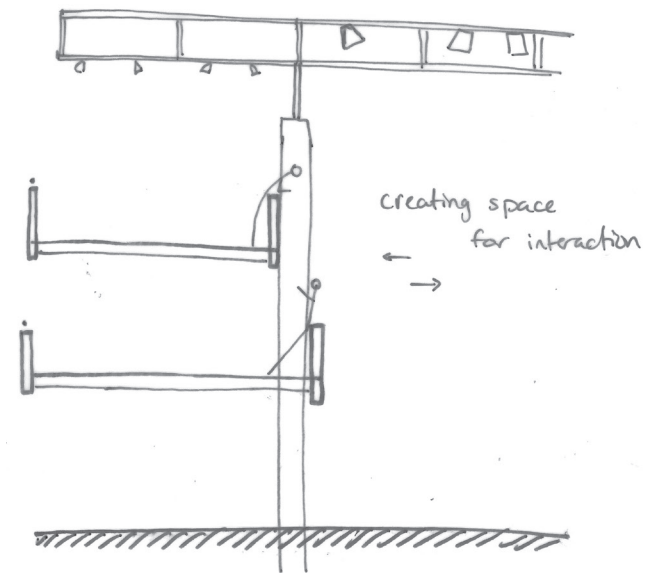
But a structure that was not part of the gallery itself also did not seem the solution.

In the lower sketch another option is shown, in a way the steel stage light structure that was first hanging from the roof is here attached to the wooden structure of the gallery. But the connection is still quite random.

The lower sketch instead shows an idea I had to connect the galleries somewhat more, so communication from one level to the other would also be possible, not only around corners. All in all I decided to do away with this for the clarity I wanted to create in the element, too many different things were happening at once at this point.

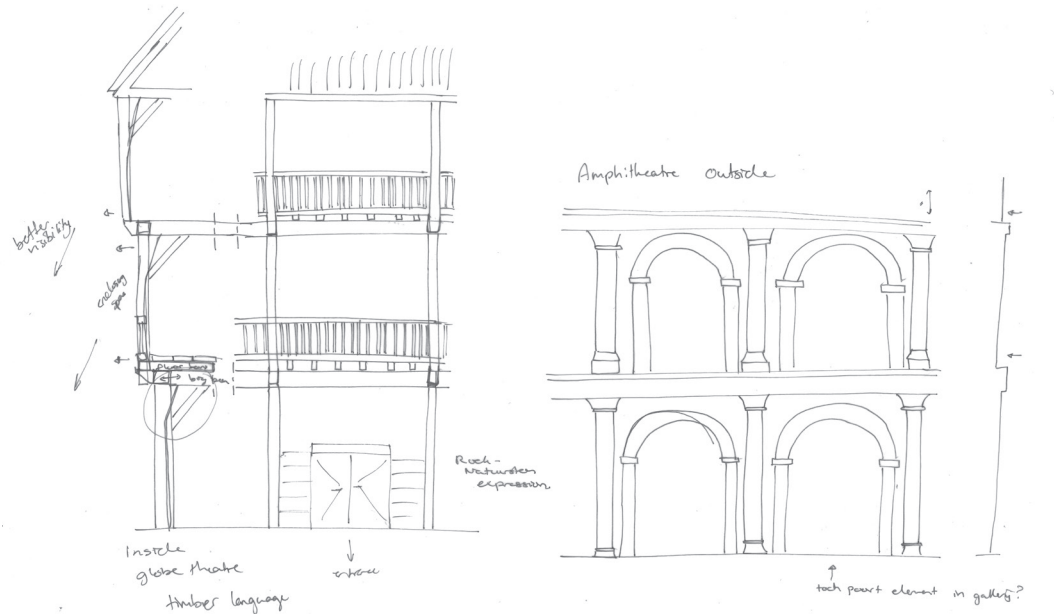


Gallery with ceiling

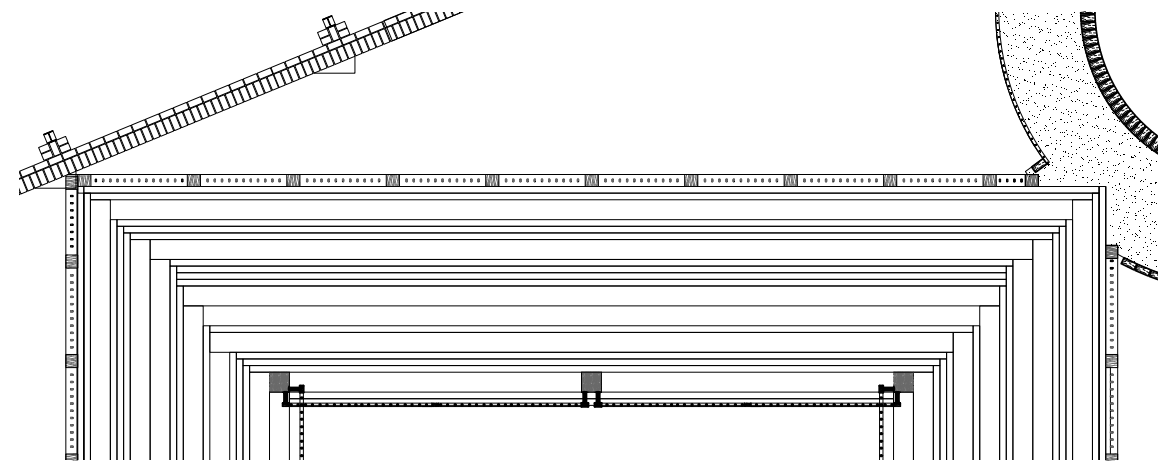


Creating space for interaction: recessed galleries and connected to ground floor in height





Study of construction of Globe Theatre (left), column order in the Amphitheatre (right)

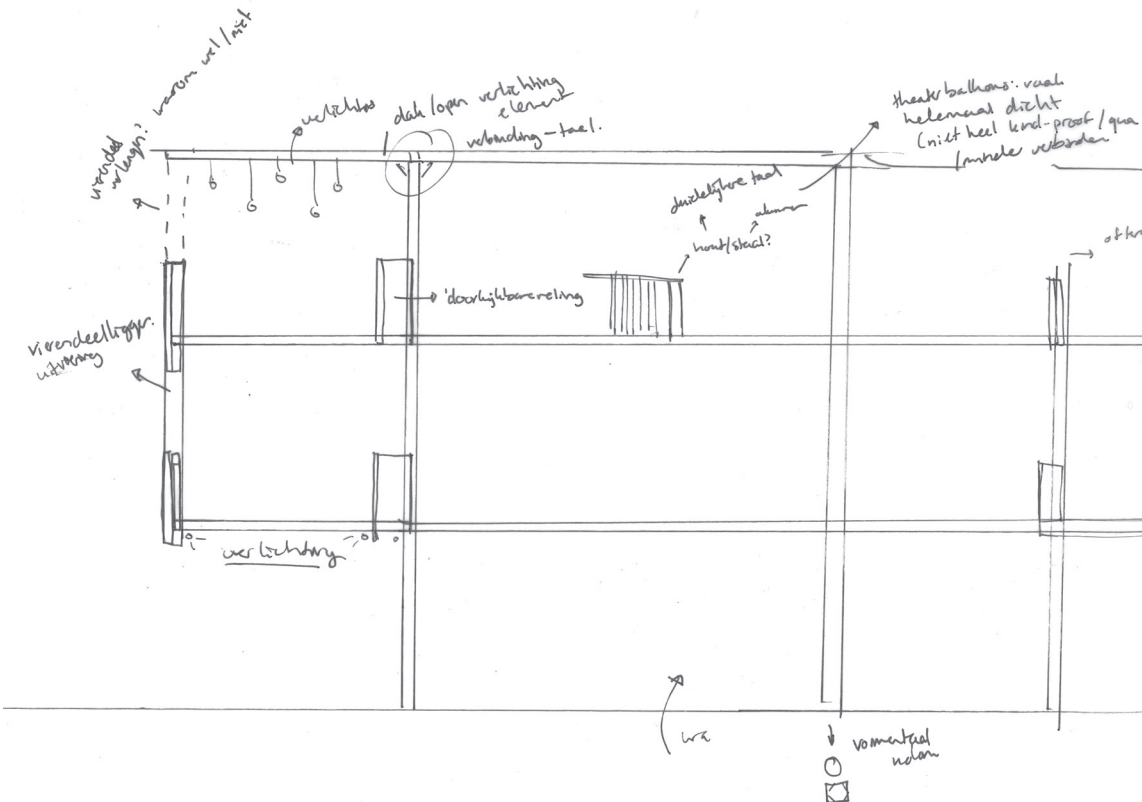


Final section of gallery (above), in plan (below)

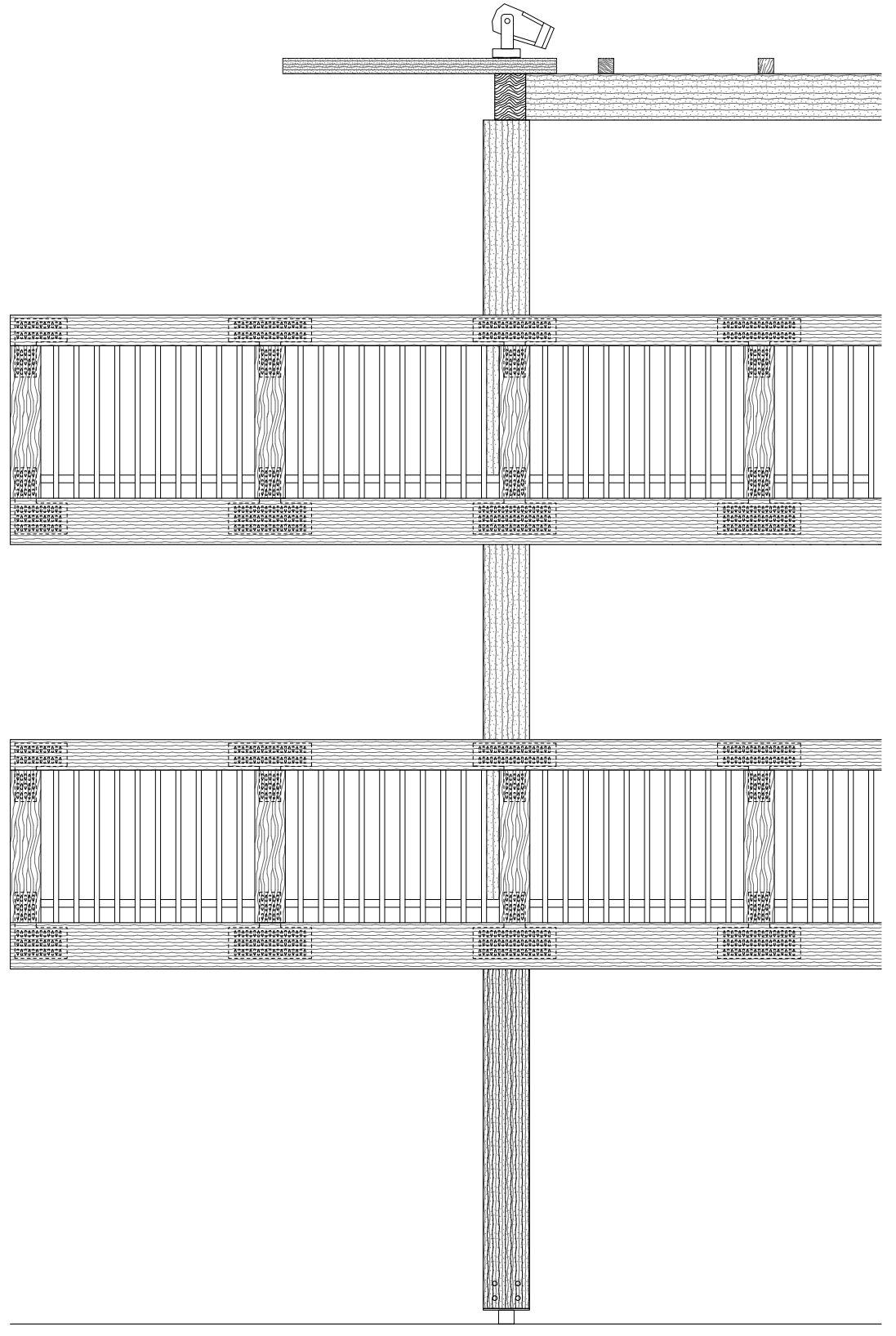
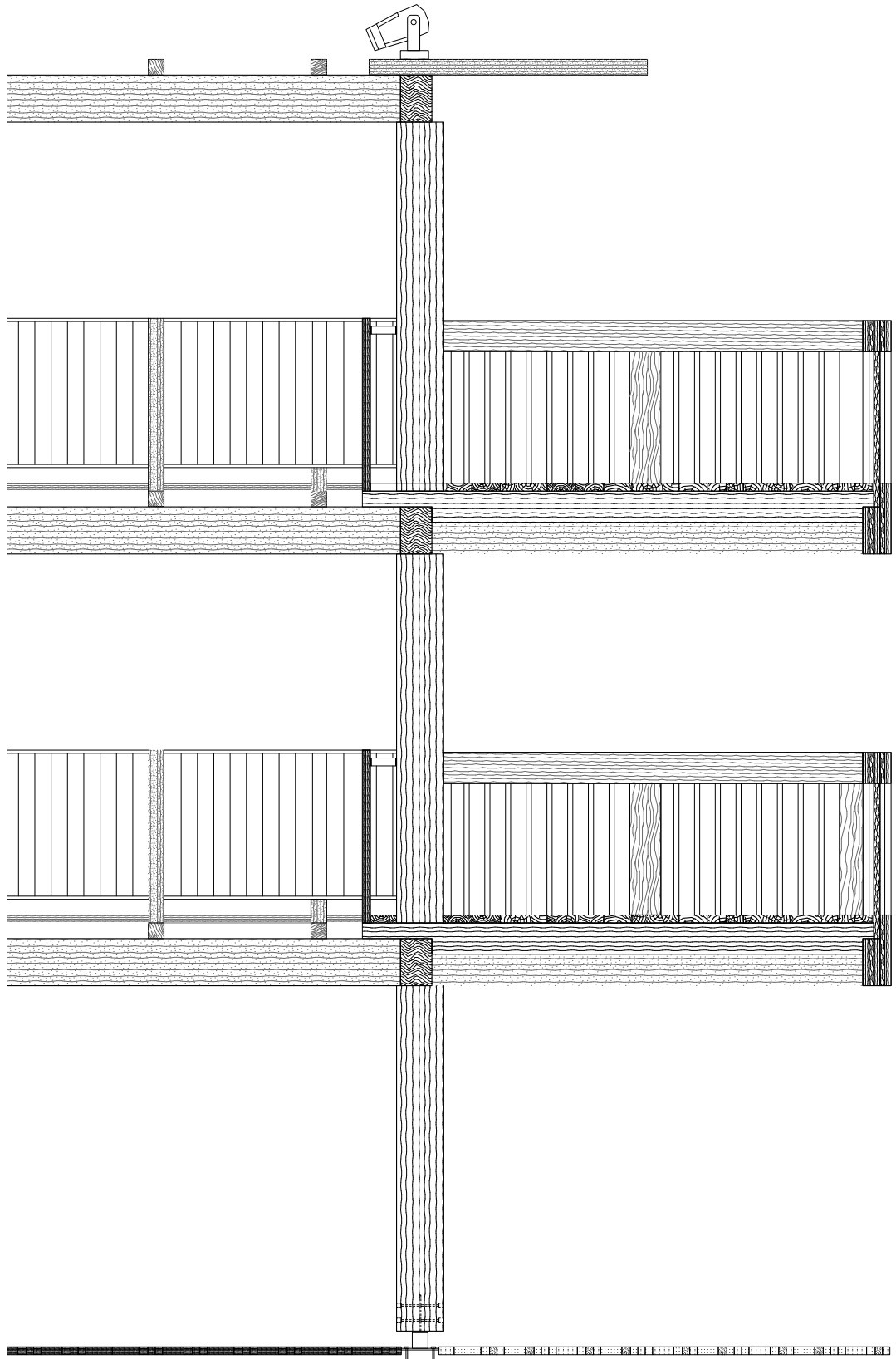
The trusses lean on concrete corbels extended from the wall

The gallery touch the existing building on three points: fixed on both sides where it touches the existing floor, fixed in longitudinal direction on both corbels that reach out from the walls, lifting the trusses. The last corner of the gallery leans on the new drum. As the building's first floor and the floor of the drum that the gallery leans on are different elevations, a steel wire system would be needed to ensure full structural safety.

The corbels created for the galleries' support have been duplicated as lighting fixtures along the wall, as can be seen later in this chapter.



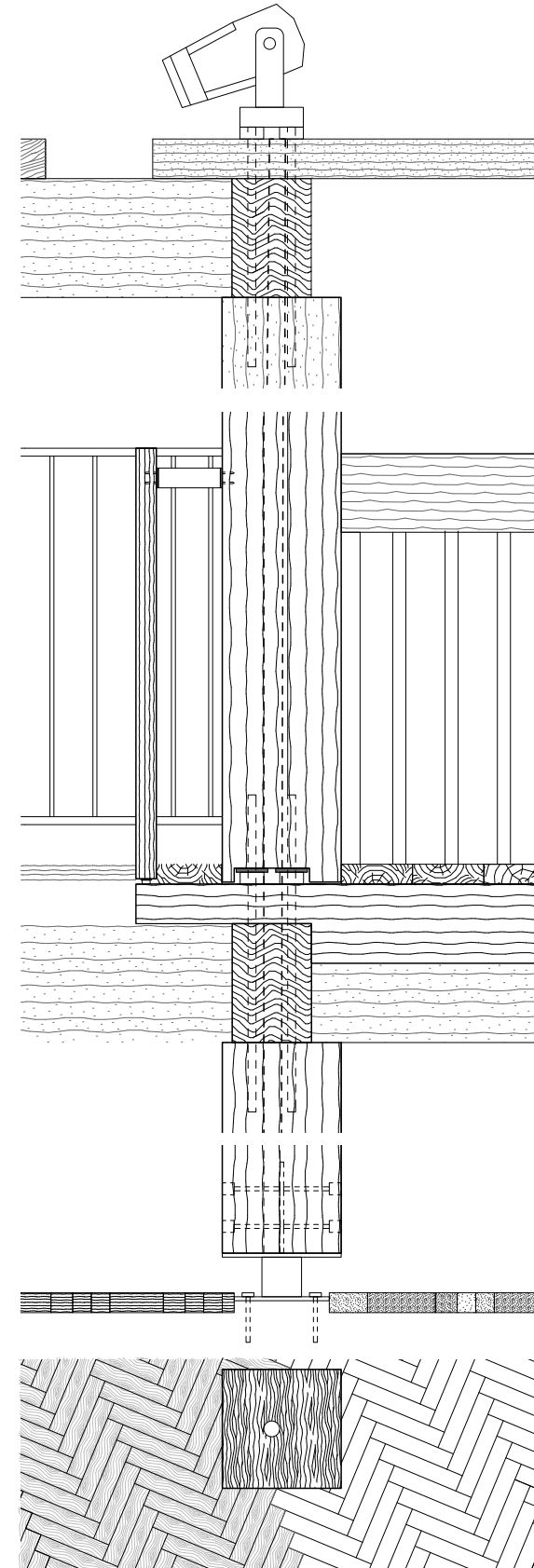
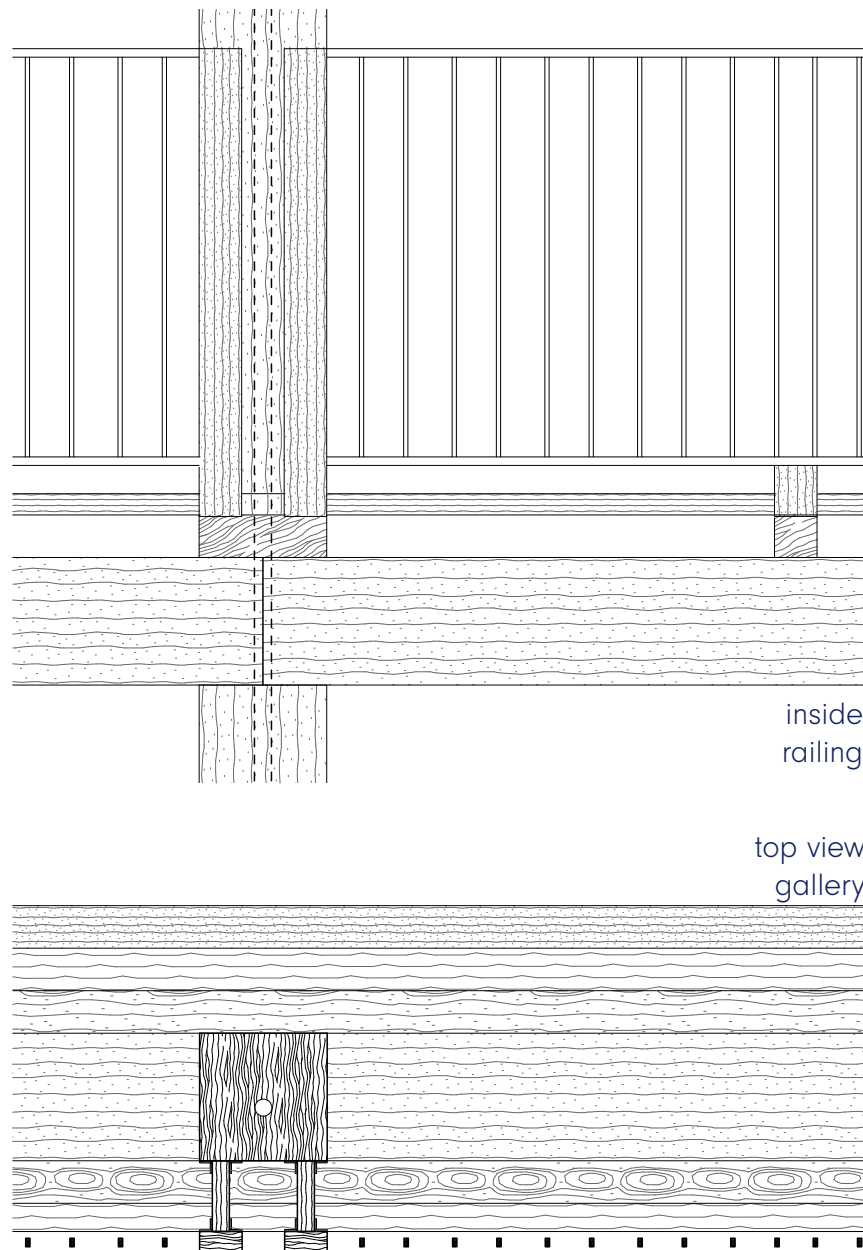
Contrast in railings: outside is a structural vierendeeltruss, whereas the inside allows people to see the stage and this is a very lightweight railing



## THE GALLERIES - DETAILS

The wooden structure of the galleries is derived from the Globe Theatre. It is kept quite elemental in its realisation, showing a clean and clear construction. The columns are made hollow to allow wires for light and sound systems through to the pergola.

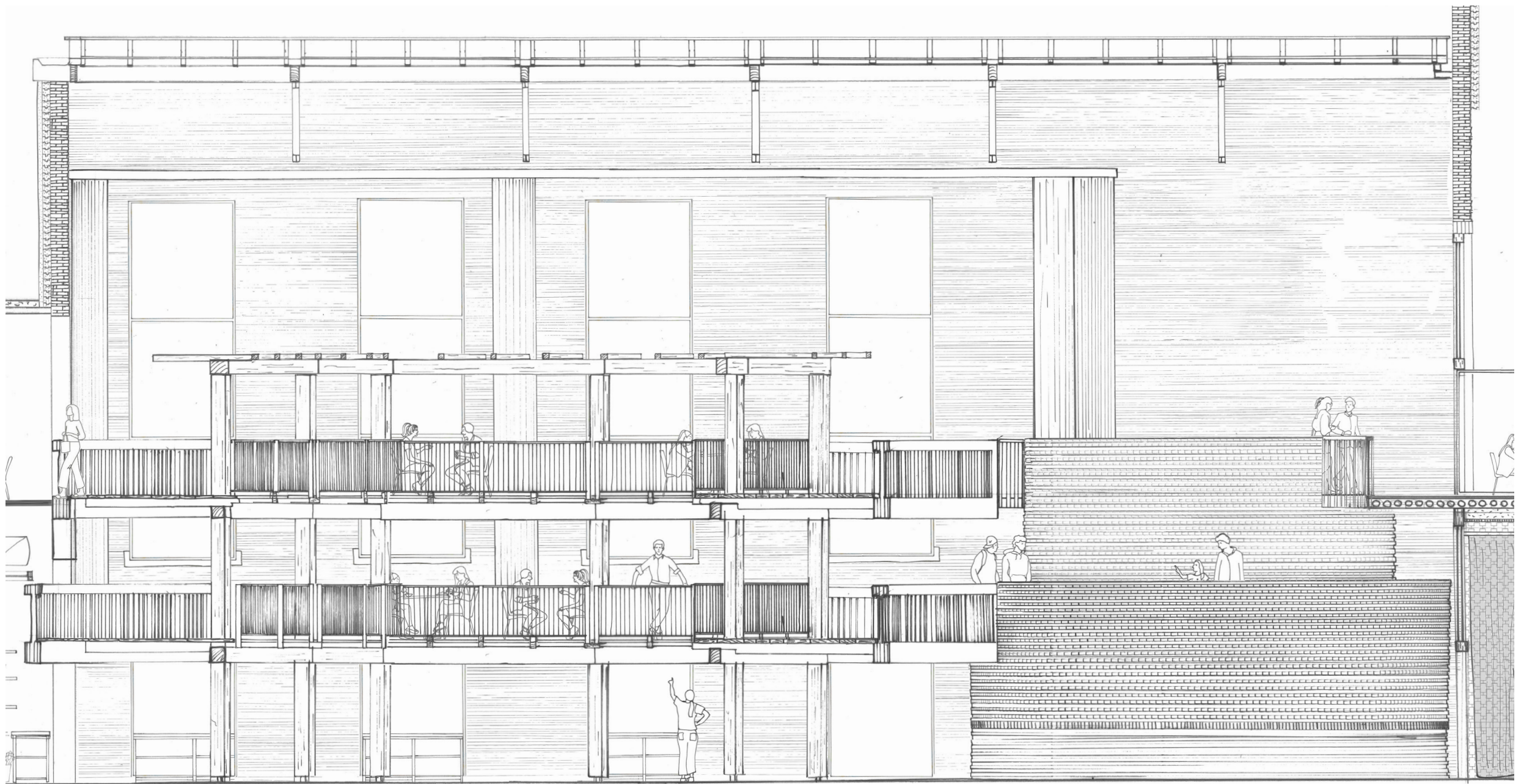
Where the columns and inside structure is made from traditional timber, the outside structure is engineered wood. The 15 meter spanning wood would otherwise require extremely expensive wood. By finching the construction with nail plates the wooden planks of 5-6 meters each can form this large structure without needing glue.



The wood columns do not directly touch the floor, that might be wet when cleaned for instance. This keeps the wood in a better state. The columns are raised with steel feet, allowing for the floor paving to follow through below the column slightly further. This also ensures cleaner-looking corners.

outside truss

Last but not least, the wooden frame of the gallery shows a temporality in contrast to the brick hall. This is a new structure in something old. It is something that at a certain point may be removed again, without having to deconstruct the entire building.

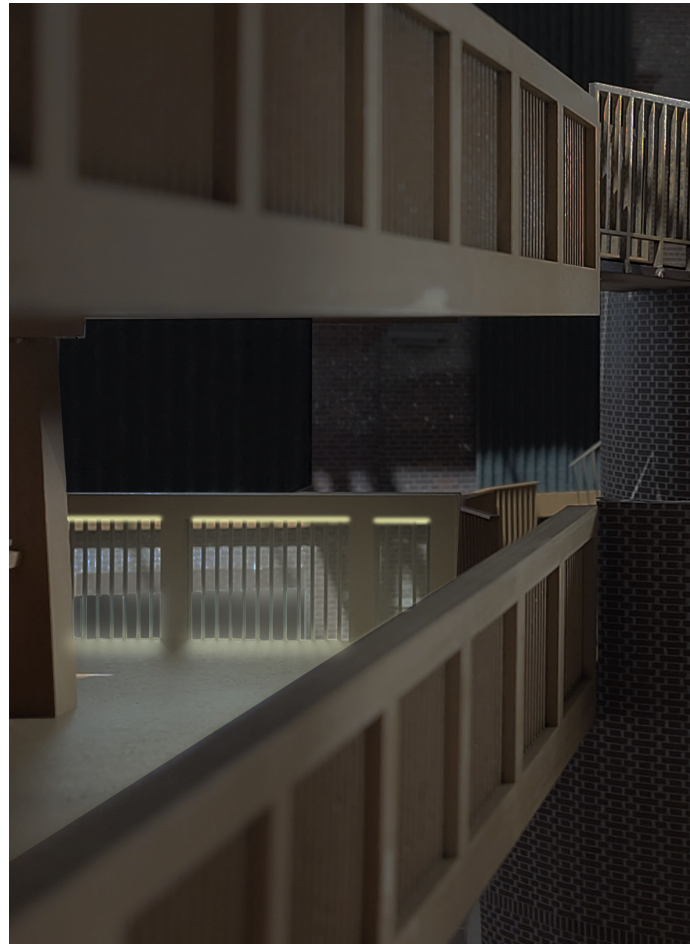


## THE GALLERIES - CEILING STRUCTURE AND LEVELS

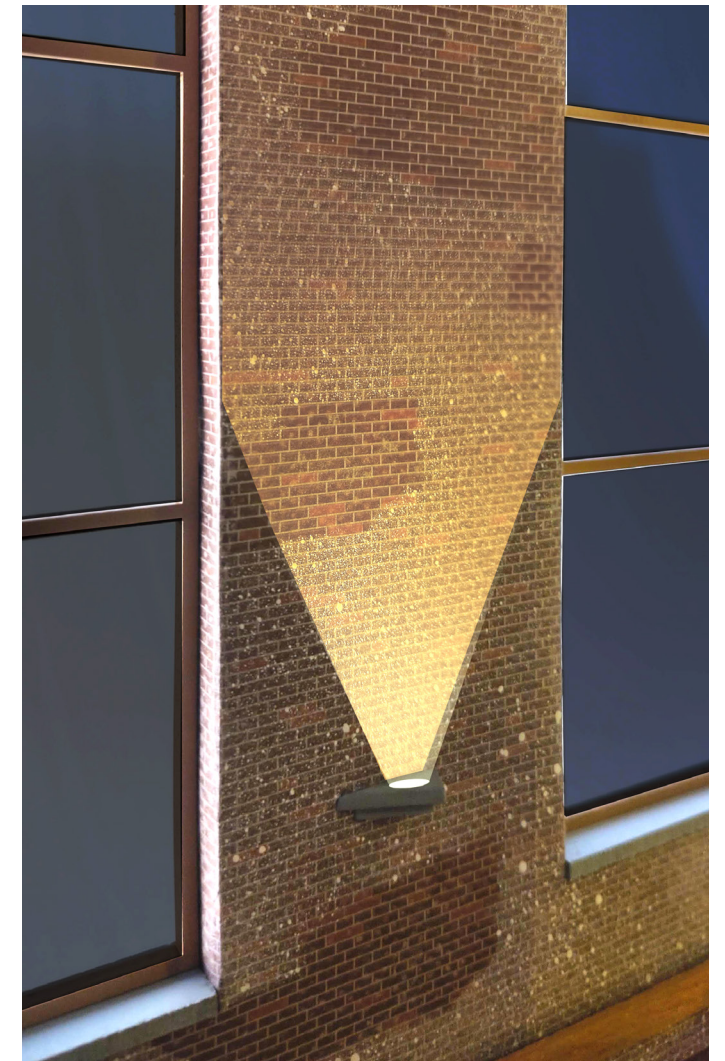
The galleries block out quite some of the daylight through their floors. Especially on the ground floor and on its midlevel, it might be rather dark, even during the day. For this each column has a lighting fixture, that lights up the floor as well as the ceiling.

Besides this, atmospherical lighting is added within the railing, leading you around the walkway. This further differentiates the space between that of standing or sitting and watching the stage on the inside of the galleries and the walking space on the outside. Here you are guided by the light.

Another lighting fixture in the hall that derives in a way, from the galleries are the corbels. Four of these are structurally used to support the galleries, the other twelve are lighting fixtures that highlight the brick and plaster remnants on the walls.

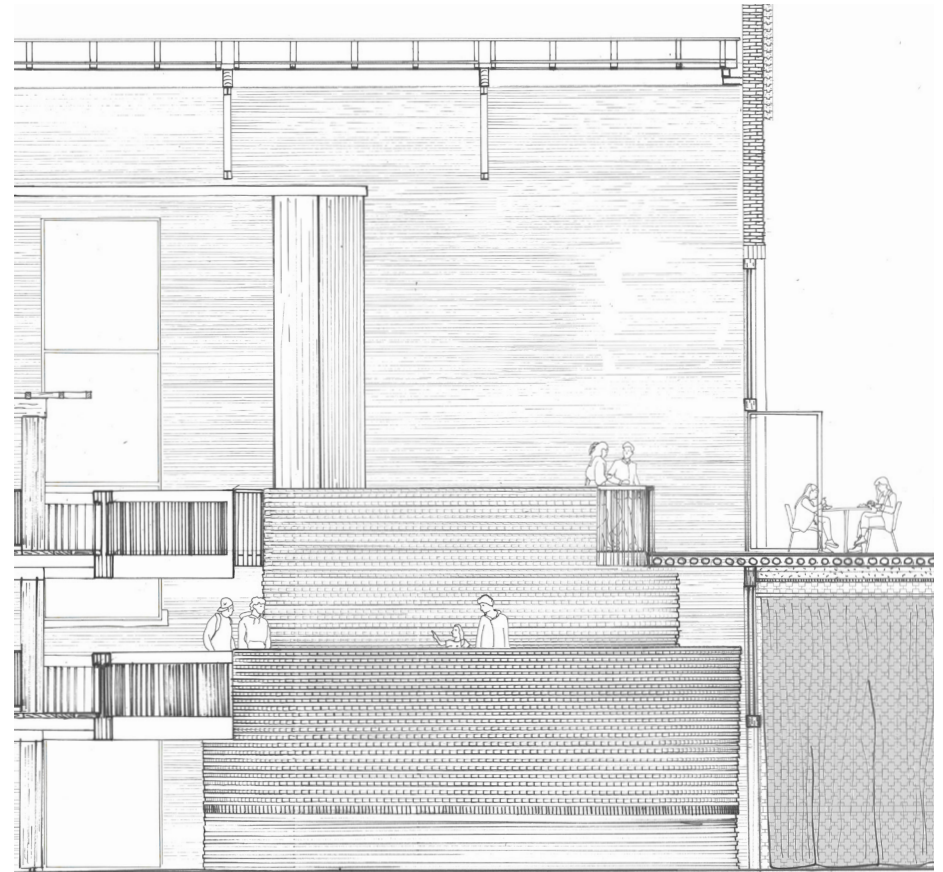


Gallery lights



Corbels

the drum



## THE DRUM - INTIMATE SPACE

Nestled into the existing curving wall, sits the drum. This element responds more directly to its site, taking the geometry and extruding it. The drum becomes the fourth anchor point for the galleries, lifting the first floor truss. It is also what connects the galleries to the ground floor, through the flights of stairs embracing the inner drum.

Initially the drum was intended slightly smaller, as to not invade the passage as much. Now, instead, it overlaps with the passage, and the element cannot be missed while entering. The larger size is necessary to still support the galleries, but also to create an interior space that can be well used as a microtheatre or as a prayer space.

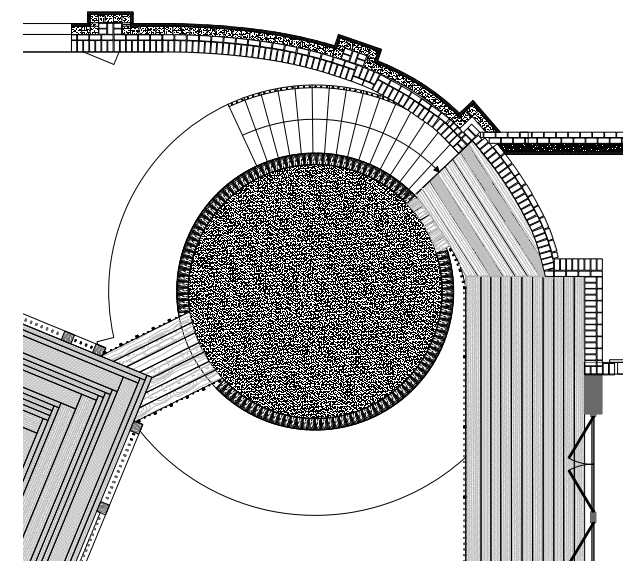
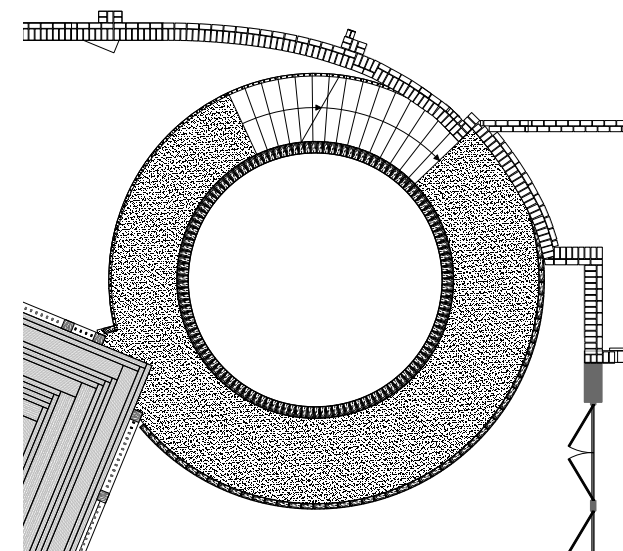
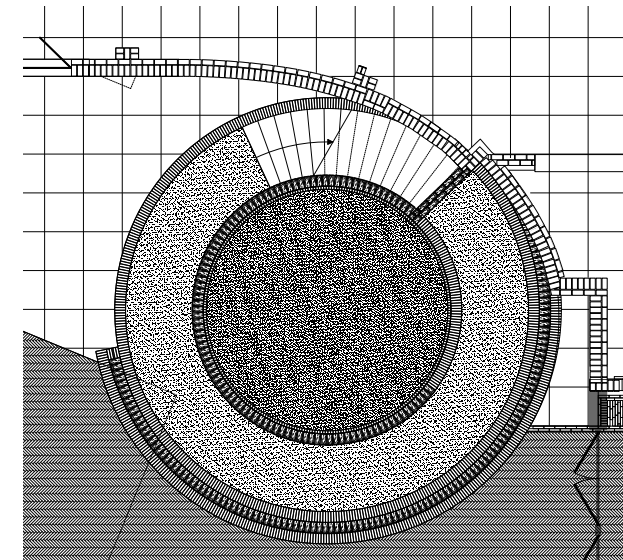
Where the galleries are the extroverted space, for public displays such as dances, festivals, debates and more, this space is its introverted counterpart, that can be used instead for smaller reflections and discussions.

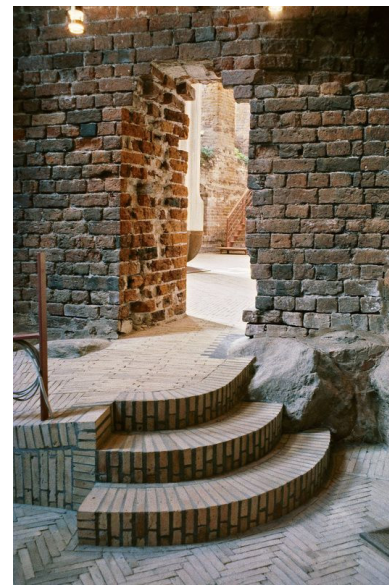
The drum is not only nestled into the brick structure, it is made out of the same bricks too. The bricks that are removed to create the window openings make up around 24.000 pieces, and this element requires approximately 18.000. Once they have been cleaned they can be reconstructed here.

By occasionally leaving a brick out during the constructions, small openings are created, which let light in, or like a lantern, show specks of light in the big hall, when an activity is happening inside.

This rough brick structure is not only familiar to the Dutch roots of Laak, but also to the eastern Europeans, where cheap brick structures are often left unclad, or to the Northern African cultures, where buildings don't necessarily need windows to keep the cold out, and see openings in walls that just let light in.

For this structure the circular shape and its materialisation were much clearer from the start than that of the gallery was. The circularity derives from the wall and its verticality follows the fact that even before the galleries were studied a rounded staircase was present here in my drawings (leading up to the originally extended balcony). The materiality will be covered first, from references to execution in the model. Than some of the developmental thoughts will be shown, before some suggestions for programme will be offered.



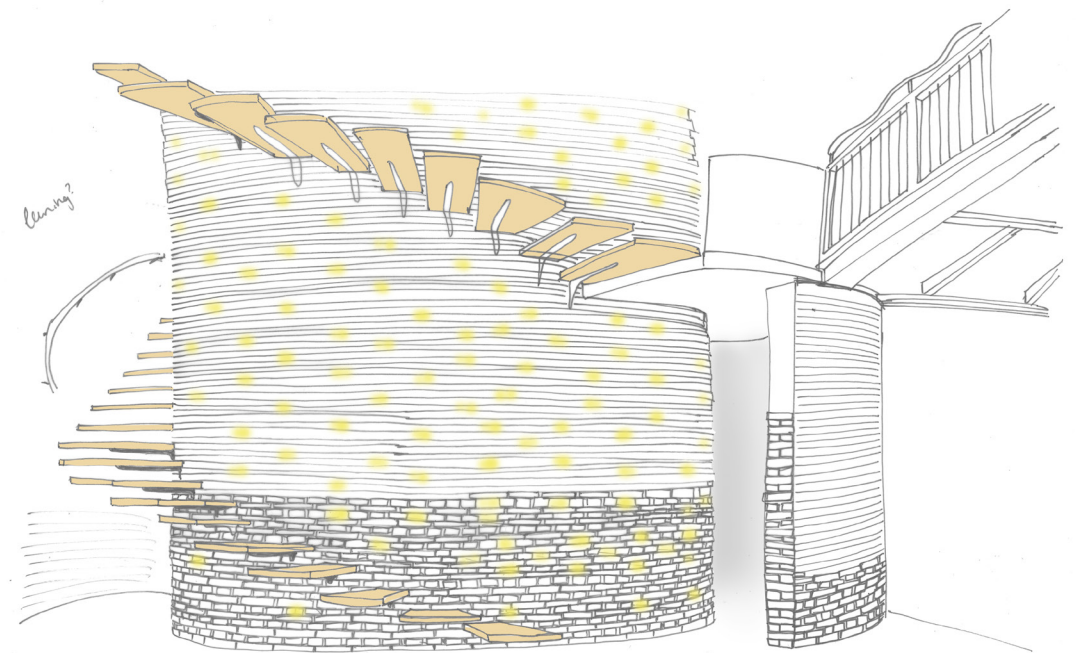


## THE DRUM - MATERIALITY

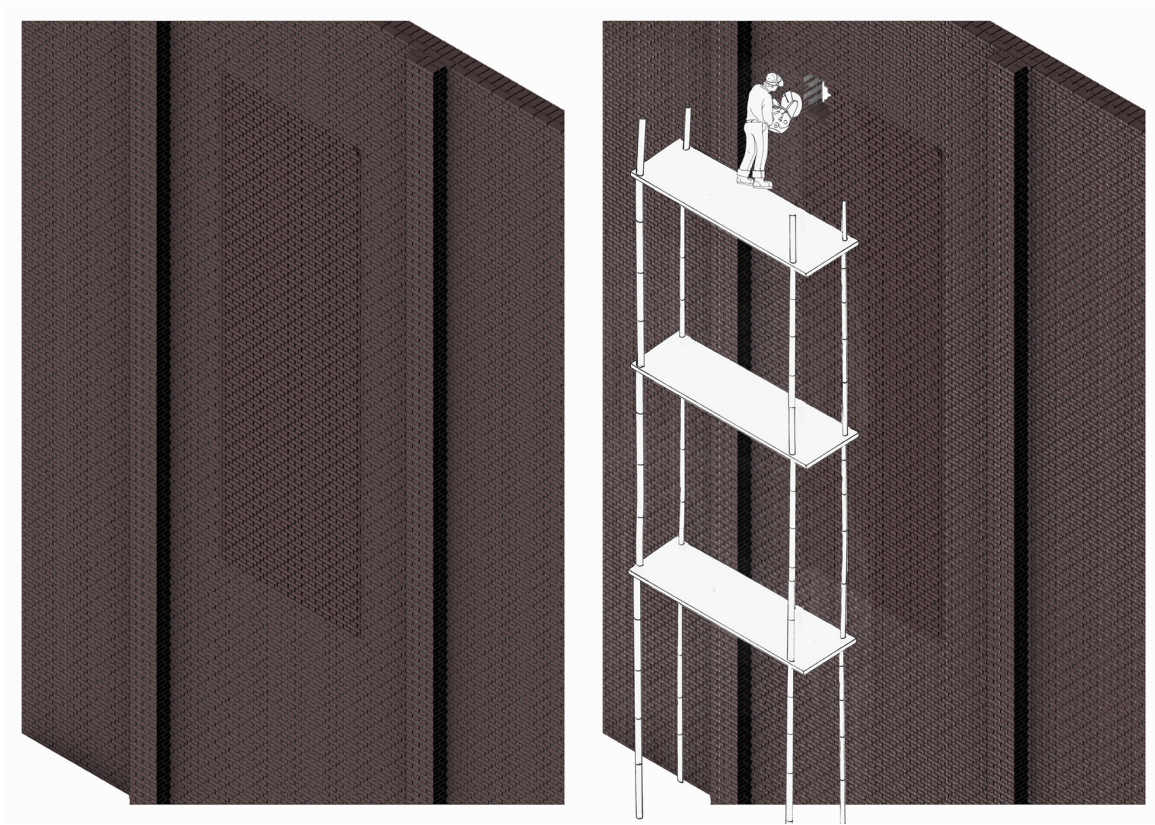
The drum is not only nestled into the brick structure, it is made out of these same bricks. Very early on I felt that this element required something massive. As soon as the stairway was no longer on its own, but framed by an element, it felt like this could become something that would resemble a micro-theatre, a small gathering space separated from the big hall. For this independence it would need something that was strong in its material language, to create a sense of differentiation from the hall that would now be light and open and very public. Brick seemed right from the very start.

The bricks that are removed to create the window openings make up around 24.000 pieces, and this element requires approximately 18.000. By reusing the bricks the element is further anchored in its site, the bricks are only rearranged but they already belong. Once they have been cleaned they can be reconstructed here.

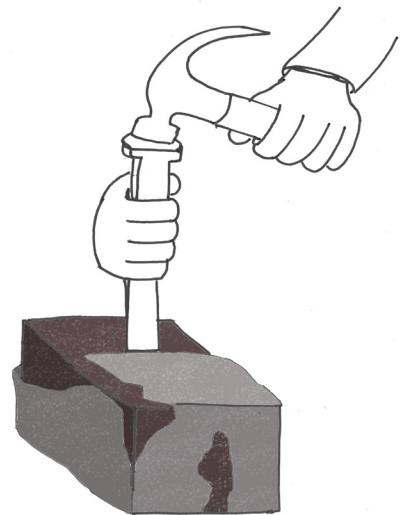
In the construction (shown on the next few pages) occasionally a brick will be left out. This creates small openings that let light in, or like a lantern, show specks of light in the big hall, when an activity is happening inside. In this way the element does not completely close itself off, but still seeks a slight connection, the wall becomes a strong buffer, but a connecting border.



**THE DRUM - REUSED BRICKS**

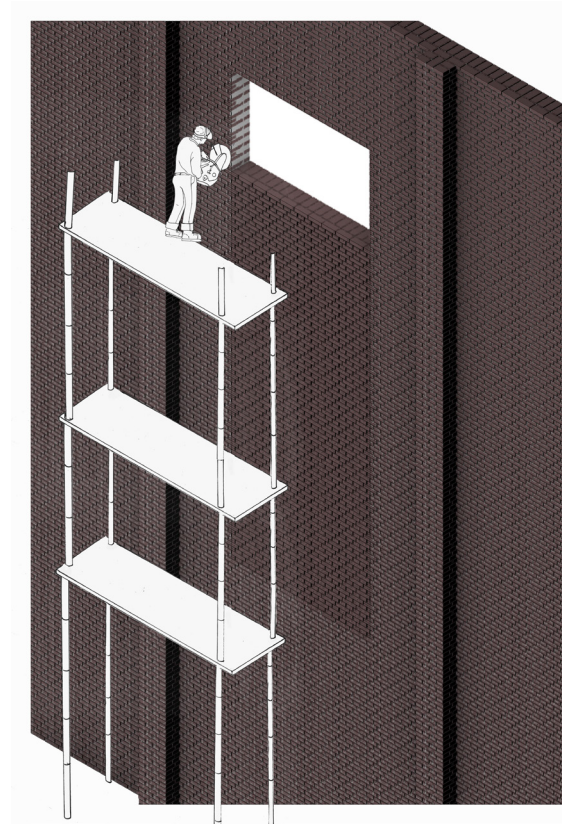
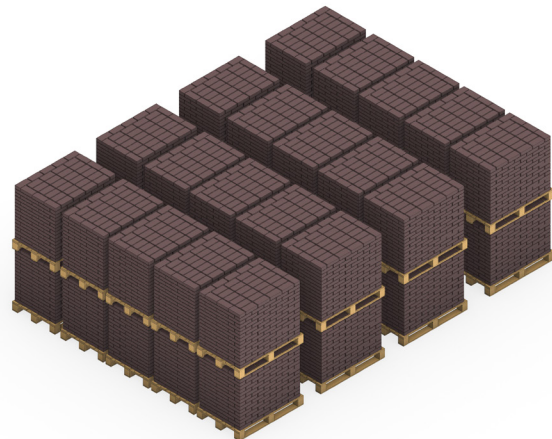


**CLEANING / PREPARING**

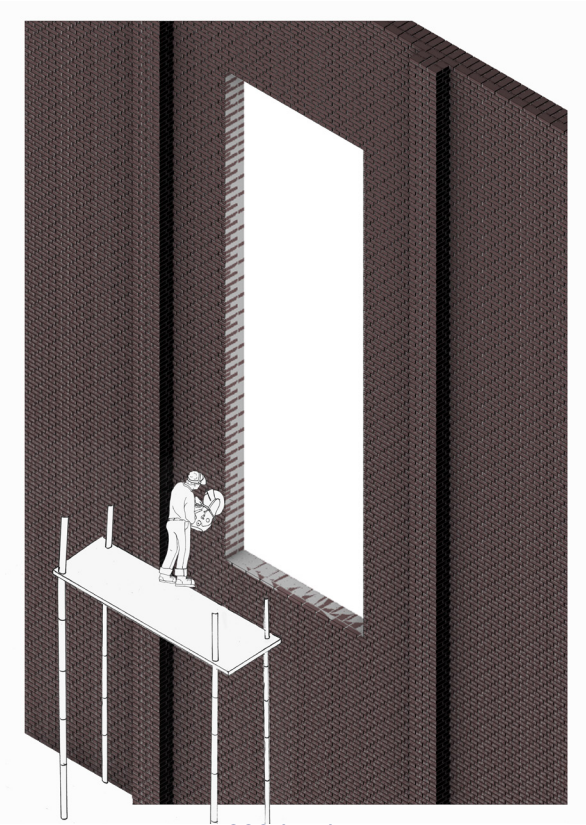
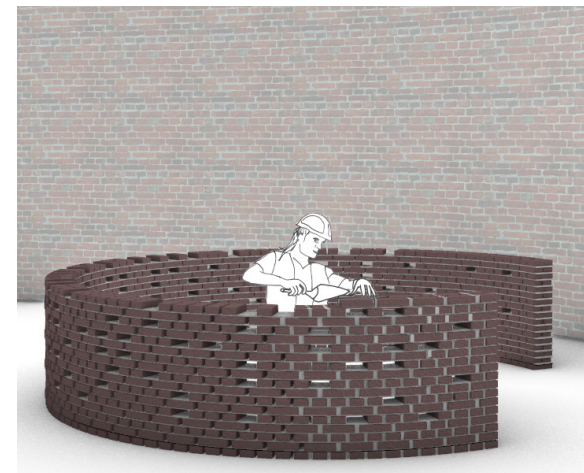


**STORING**

Bricks harvested 24.000+



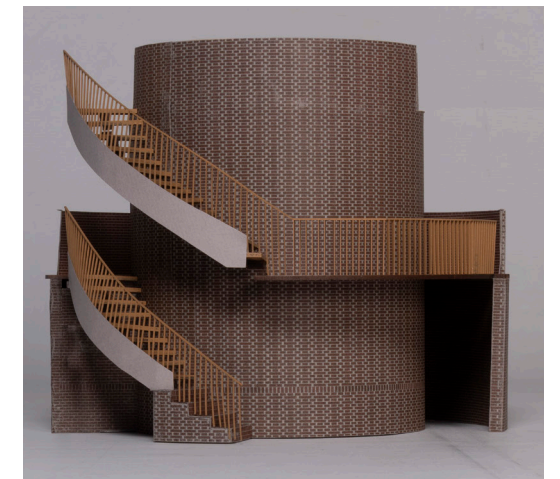
**BUILDING UP**



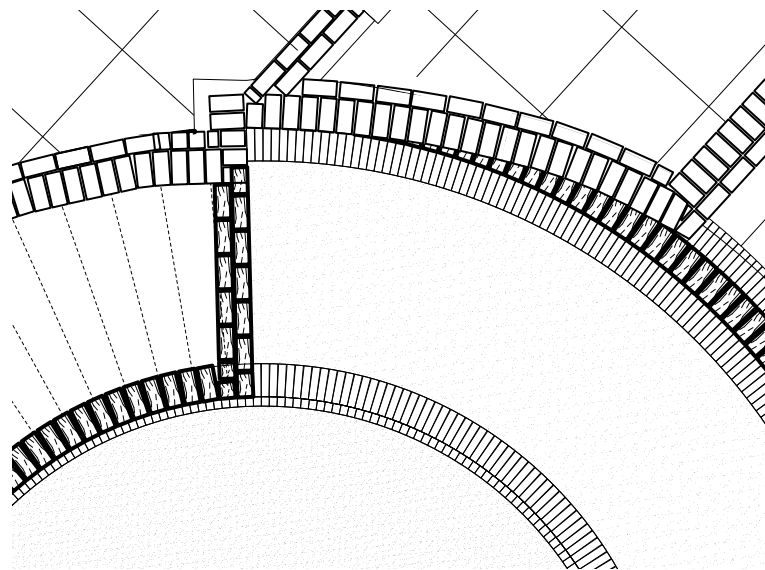
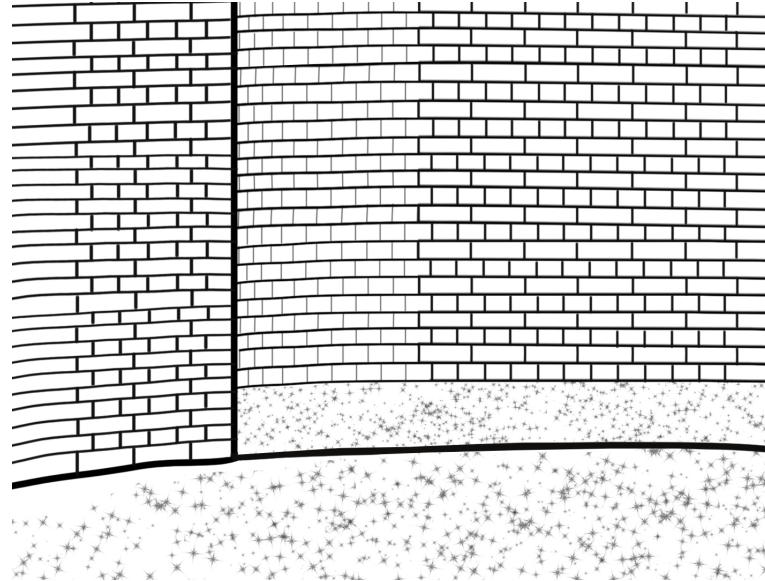
per opening: 3000 bricks

**DRUM**

Bricks needed: 18.000



## THE DRUM - BRICK COMPOSITIONS



New bricks applied as strips to create offset



Brick pattern: 1 meter line accentuated, perforated construction

## THE DRUM - CONNECTING ELEMENT



The drum is the stairway to the gallery and anchors the interventions in the building



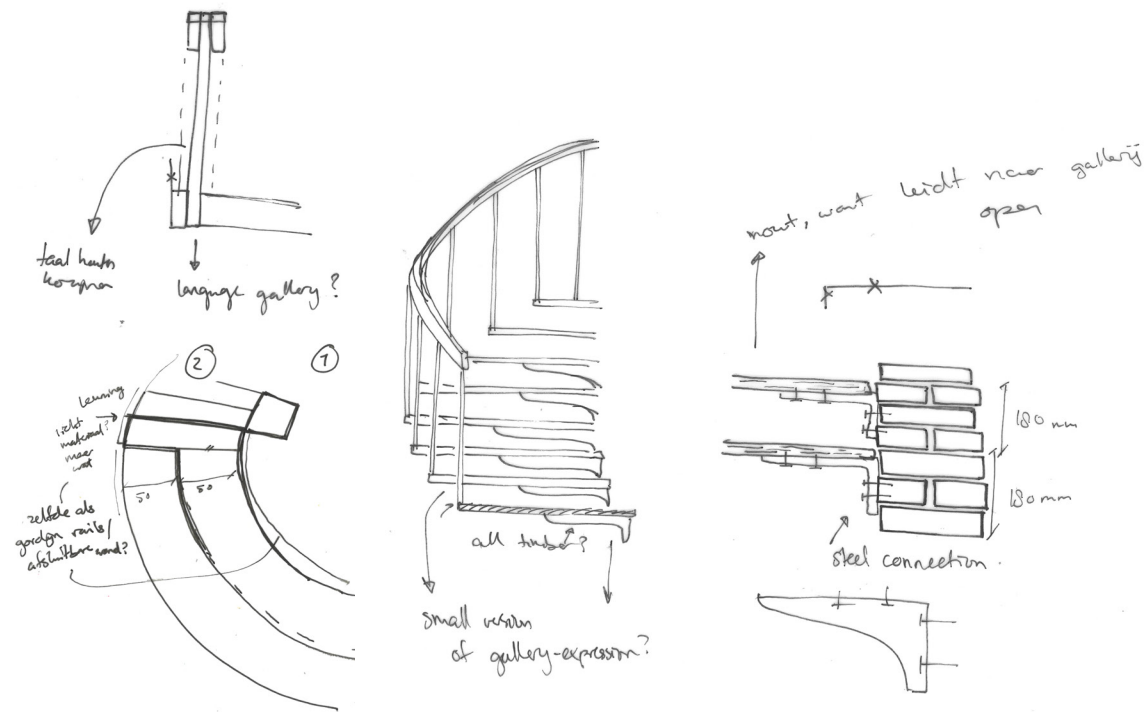
Brick expression: stairs up till 1 meter are brick and perforated wall connects interior

## THE DRUM - DEVELOPMENT

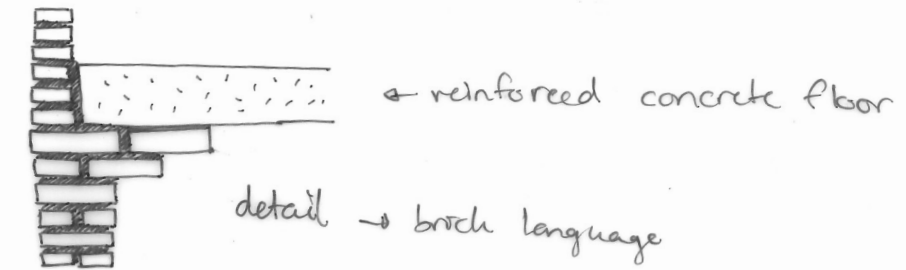
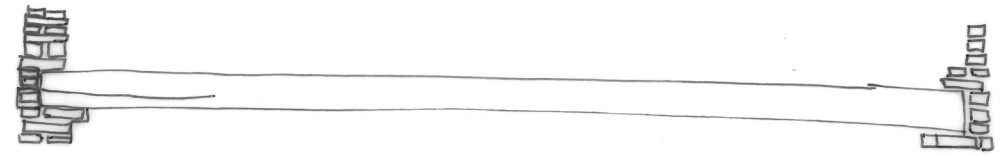
In the creation of the drum a few elements were very important: the accessibility of the stairs - wide enough to let people pass each other, the connection to the existing wall, as well as the connection to the gallery and the expression of the brick materiality. All of these are interwoven, naturally.

The stairs are made of wood, to resemble the temporality of most of the interventions in the way the gallery does too. It also shows that it leads up to the timber gallery as a form of intrinsic wayfinding. However the stair starts with a few brick steps (previous page). This highlights the 1 meter line, the human scale that is present throughout the building. Furthermore the stairs line up with the bricks on each level (sketch on the right), in this way the brick bond is again guide for the interventions.

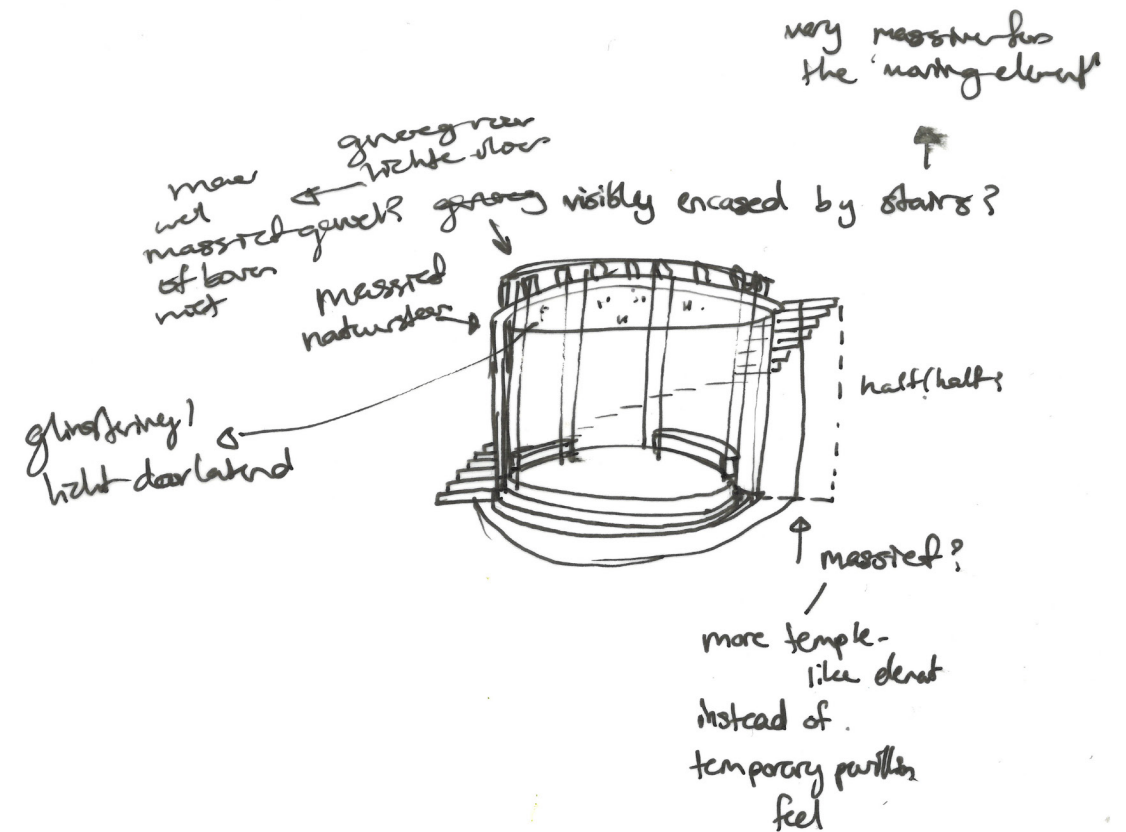
The connection with the gallery is different on both levels, but also transforms from brick into timber where brick is no longer a logical material. The connection with the existing wall instead happens through what are first small strips of brick, applied to the wall, before entire bricks can be placed. This is as not to change the existing structure of the wall, and to show it derives from the wall, but was not always there. In the drum the crossbond is brought back, which for practical purposes was not used in the existing wall, which with the plaster would not have been visible in the past anyways.



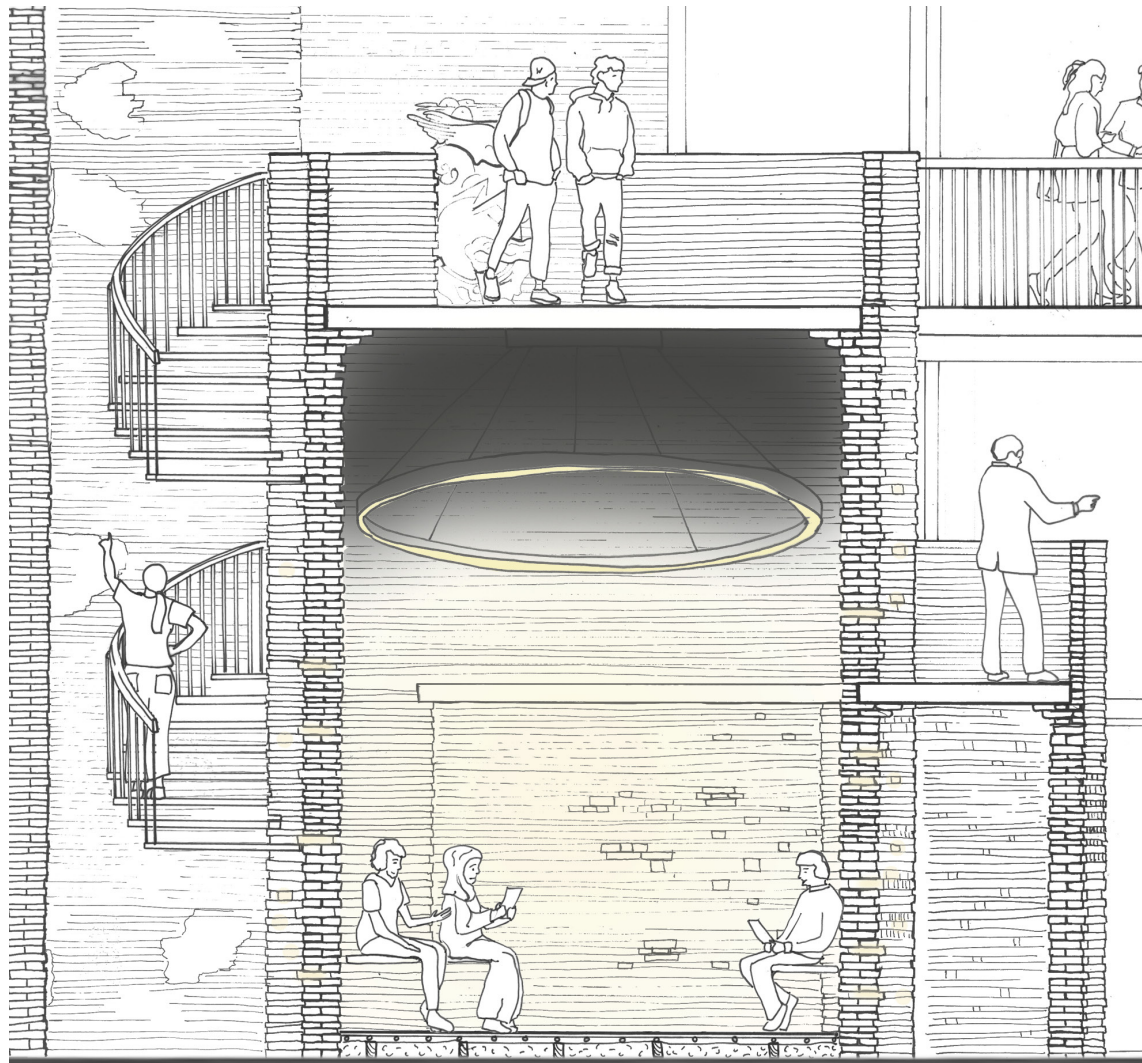
Sketches stairs and thoughts on railing



brick expression to create cornice lifting floor

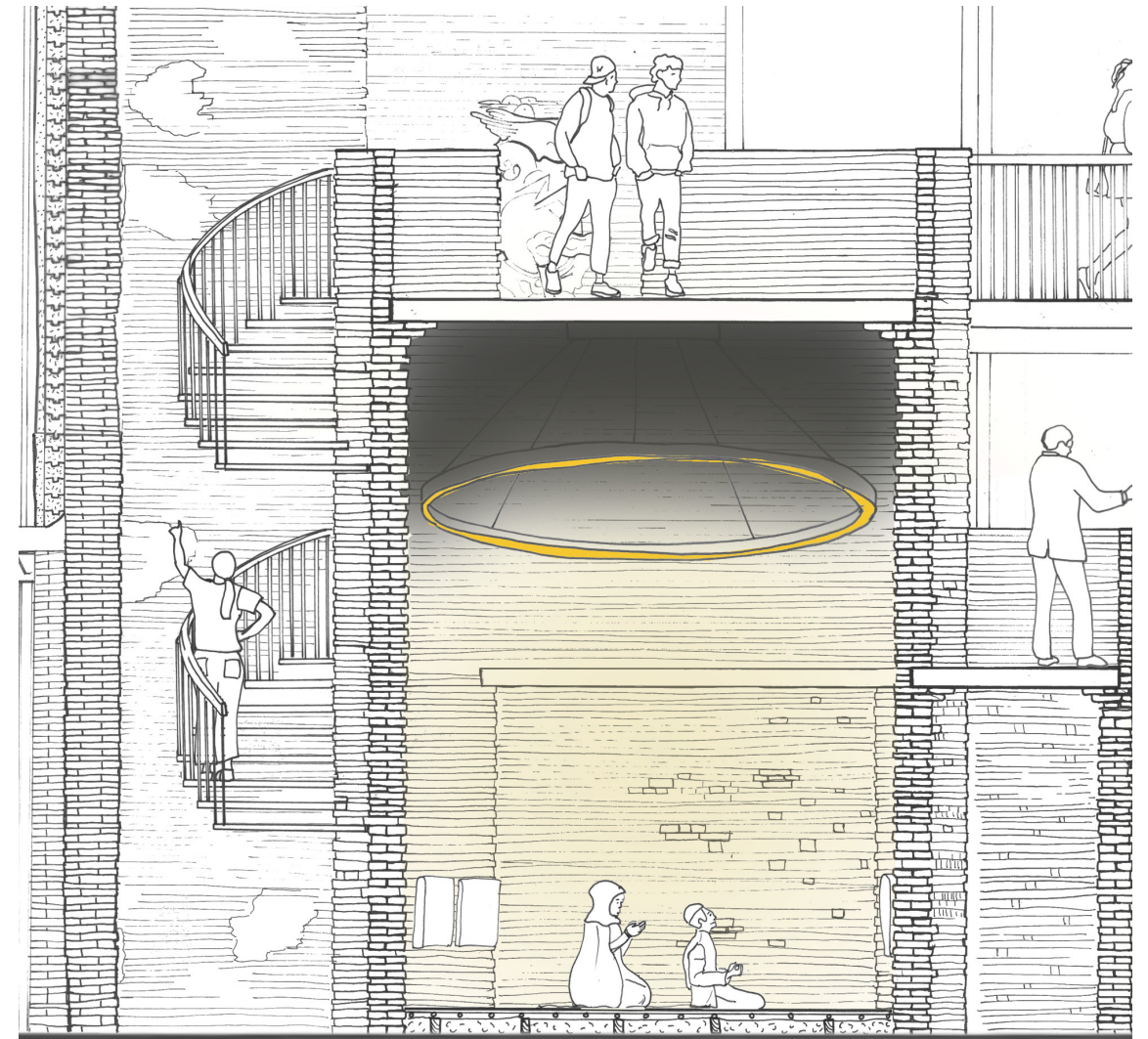


## THE TEMPLE micro-theatre



This space is evenly lit through a halo light, that could shine both up and downwards, and can create direct or indirect light in different temperature colours. As this space will need light the entire day, it can recreate daylight-like light, but also create ambient light for meditative moments, but direct working light when a reading session might happen.

## THE TEMPLE prayer room



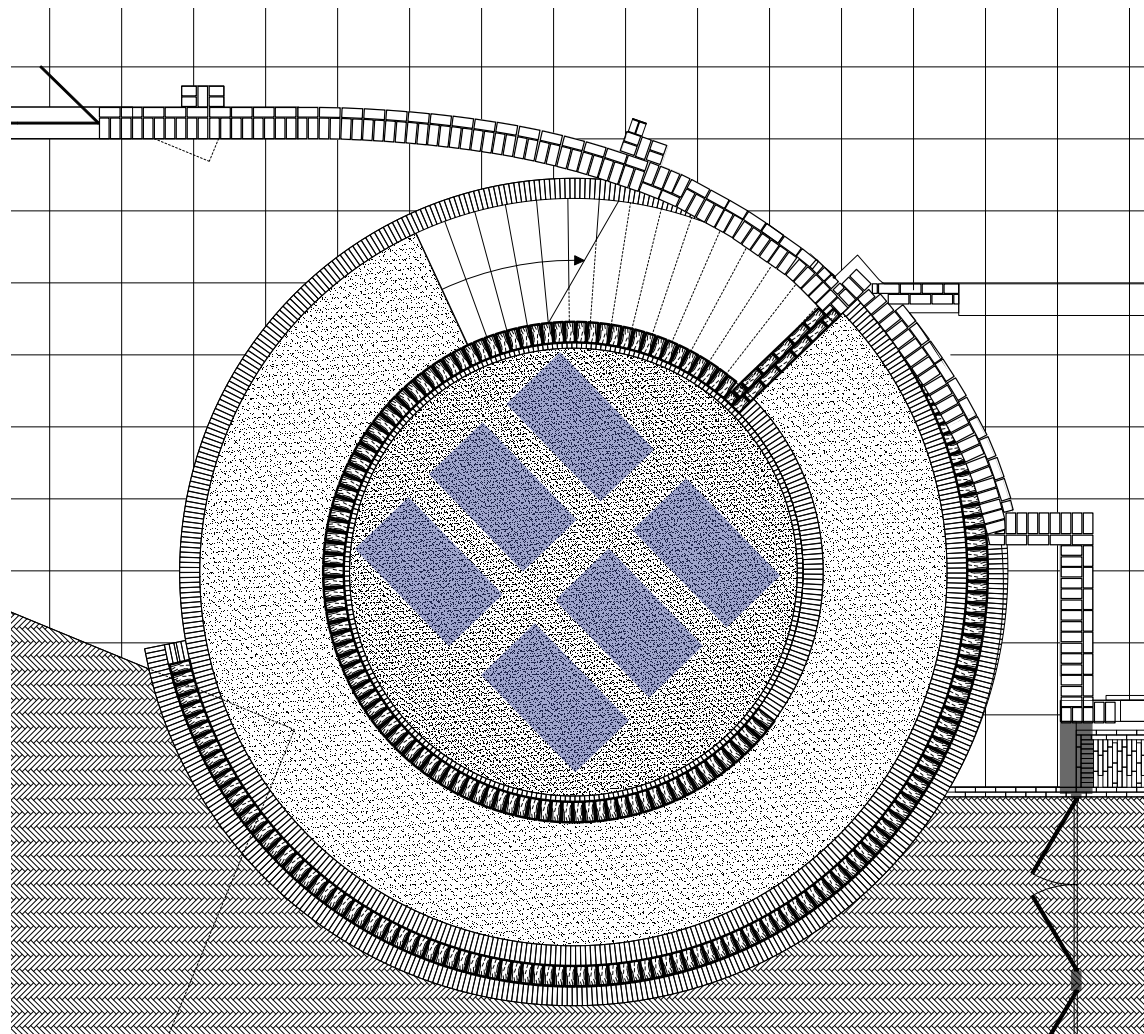
As the current Albert Heijn has a small room designated as a prayer space for their employees, this space could be used in the same way. For that it would be up to the building's exploitant to follow the islamic prayer schedule for planning other activities in this space, as these prayer times change through the year

## THE DRUM - PRAYER SPACE

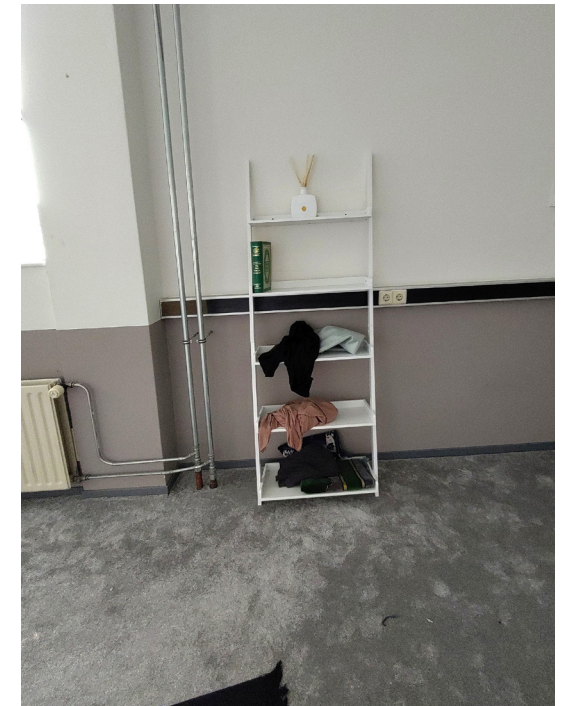
The drum can be envisioned being used as a reflective space and possibly also a religious space. The Albert Heijn currently uses one of the upstairs rooms as a prayer room, especially during Ramadan.

In a neighbourhood where a lot of people follow different religions and some of those people adhere to fixed prayer times this space can be a way to offer people a place to stay here, but also follow their religion and be allowed a moment with their God. For other people it might just as well be used as a place to retreat for meditation or when overstimulated by the bustle of the marketplace.

In developing this space as part of the programme I looked into prayer times, which follow the sun and are therefore not regular. The market's operator may decide to not schedule activities within prayer times or to offer it only when it is free.



Drum as 'temple' six prayer mats would fit simultaneously



1st mrt	zo	14	05:50	07:29	12:55	15:46	18:23	20:06
2	ma	15	05:48	07:27	12:55	15:47	18:25	20:08
3	di	16	05:46	07:25	12:55	15:48	18:27	20:10
4	wo	17	05:44	07:22	12:54	15:50	18:29	20:12
5	do	18	05:42	07:20	12:54	15:51	18:30	20:13
6	vr	19	05:39	07:18	12:54	15:52	18:32	20:15
7	za	20	05:37	07:16	12:54	15:53	18:34	20:17
8	zo	21	05:35	07:13	12:54	15:55	18:36	20:19
9	ma	22	05:32	07:11	12:53	15:56	18:38	20:21
10	di	23	05:30	07:09	12:53	15:57	18:39	20:22
11	wo	24	05:28	07:06	12:53	15:58	18:41	20:24
12	do	25	05:25	07:04	12:53	15:59	18:43	20:26
13	vr	26	05:23	07:02	12:52	16:00	18:45	20:28
14	za	27	05:21	07:00	12:52	16:02	18:46	20:24
15	zo	28	05:18	06:57	12:52	16:03	18:48	20:32
16	ma	29	05:15	06:55	12:51	16:04	18:50	20:34
17	di	30	05:12	06:53	12:51	16:05	18:52	20:36

Prayer space Albert Heijn (above), Islamic prayer times (below)



Drum as connector: brick meets timber



Drum as connector and as backdrop for the market

“If we want to stimulate the spectator to transform his society, another poetics than Aristotle’s system is needed”  
Augusto Boal

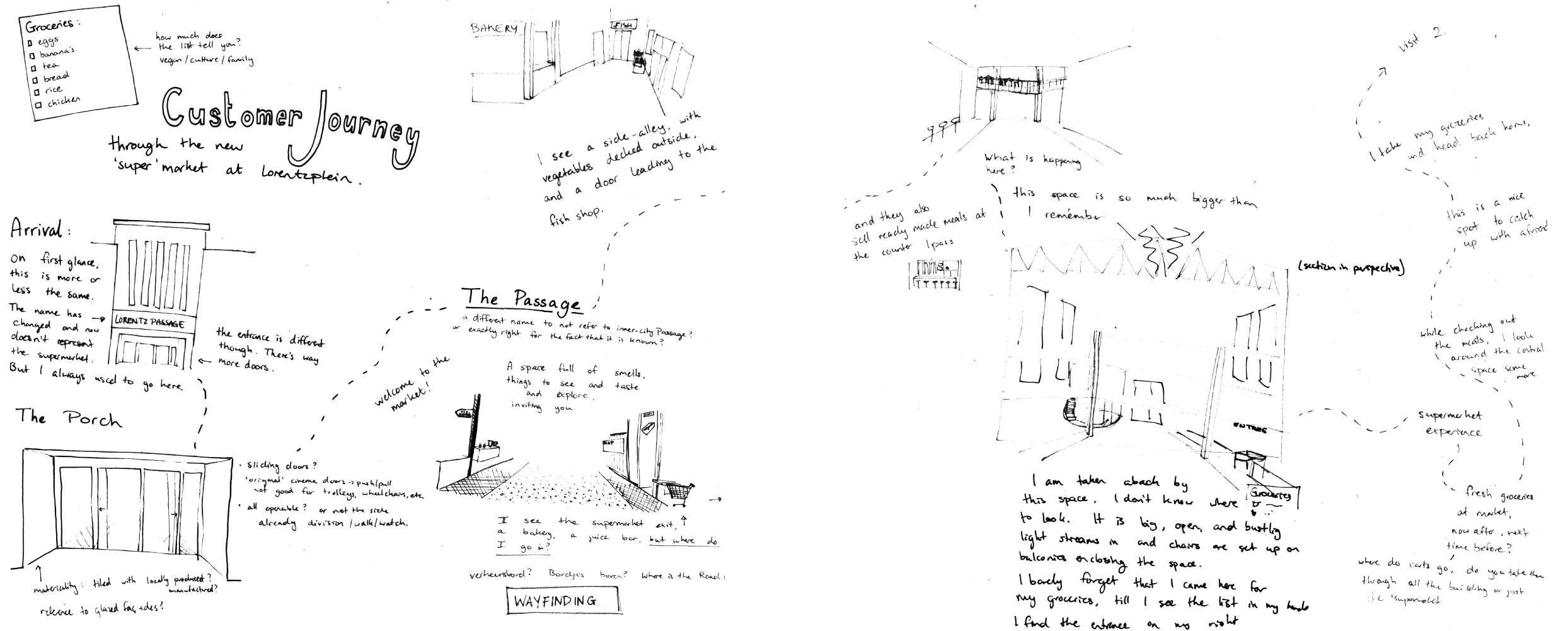
Lorentzpassage as a  
theatrical experience

# THE THEATRICAL EXPERIENCE

With the intention: every space could be a theatre this project has been realised. Many different forms of theatre have been discovered and given a place.

Now starts the invitation for the customers, the people from the neighbourhood and the passersby. Do you dare to step on stage? Are you ready to become an actor, instead of only a spectator?

I envisioned this journey, through the building, but also through personal growth as shown below: First you visit your regular 'supermarket', surprised by the new programme you come back to participate in something new. And at a certain point, you become involved and become an actor, cooking in the neighbourhood kitchen, teaching workshops or performing within the galleries.



# Customer Journey

## Visit 2: Catching up with a friend.

Arrival: I am waiting in the porch for my friend to arrive, sheltered from the wind, this is a nice place to wait.

- porch drawing - → focus on something particular

\* detail in the tiles?



Local/cultural poem?

While waiting, something catches my eye, a poem / text is written on some differently shaped and colored tiles...

My friend arrives and we head in. "we can buy a sandwich or pastry here, or some fruit or juice over there. But I believe we can also get a coffee near where we can sit"

• focus on pastries + juice bar → side alley 'out of focus'

But that's a good thing as here I can see a small bar with a coffee maker on the other side. We order a coffee and find a seat.



We take a circular staircase and find ourself up on a platform that leads to the balcony where we can take a seat.

"Apparently we made it to the second layer" My friend mentions.

staircase (wood / brick)



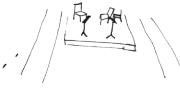
While talking and sipping our coffees it seems downstairs in the plaza they are setting up a stage. There's so much to see: the supermarket employees roll by their carts supply carts, and technicians seem to be testing some lights. My eye drops on the opposite wall: "What would be there?"



We buy a piece of cake and head over to the big hall (agora) to find a seat. On the ground floor there aren't so many so we head up

### BACK IN THE PLAZA

there is now a small stage with a few microphones set up



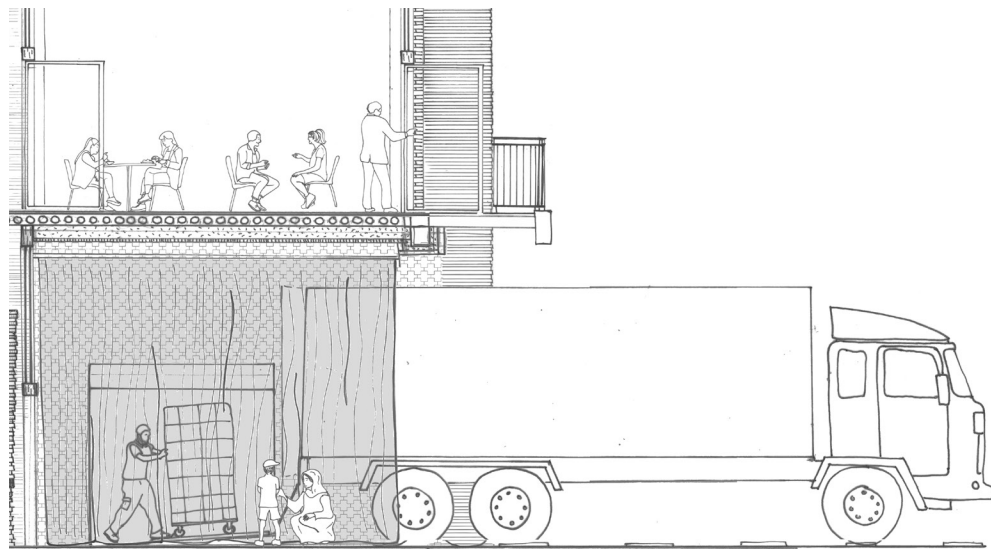
I overhear the conversation: apparently a local representative is coming to inquire after the parking issue in the neighborhood.

I had not expected that to take place here.

On the way back down we pass the space, which is also connected by the circular platform: It looks like a kitchen, or a restaurant

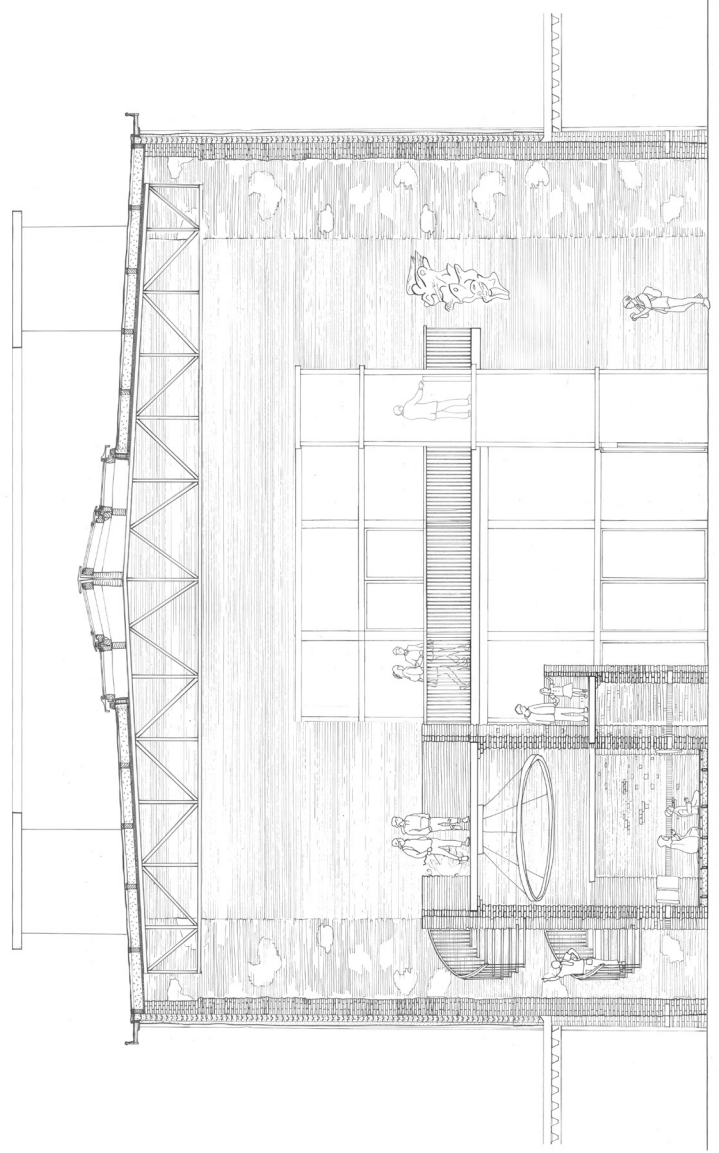
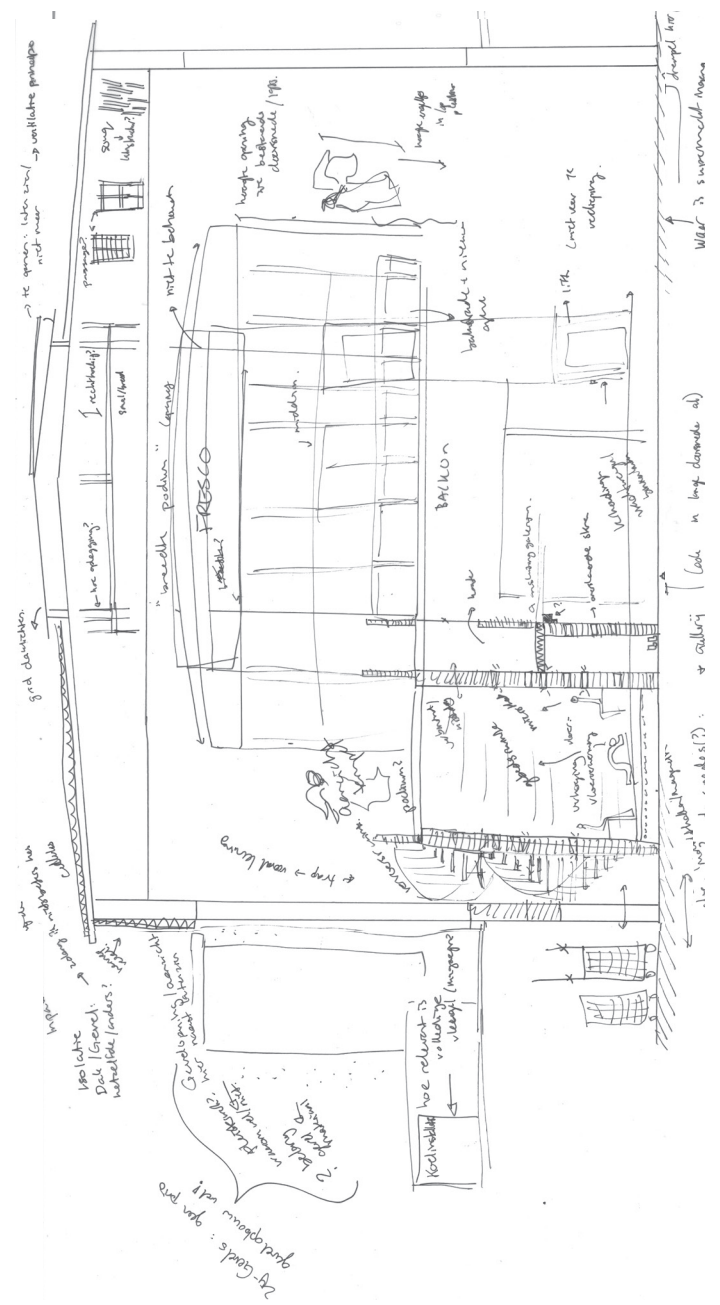


"It is definitely more than just a supermarket now"



Behind the scenes becomes center stage







the elements as backdrop for the market



the elements almost as a theatre set



the galleries during a municipality debate



the galleries during a Polish festival



the galleries during the Koningsdag fair



the galleries during a workshop



the drum for small gatherings



the drum used as prayer space

