

Nikita Ham

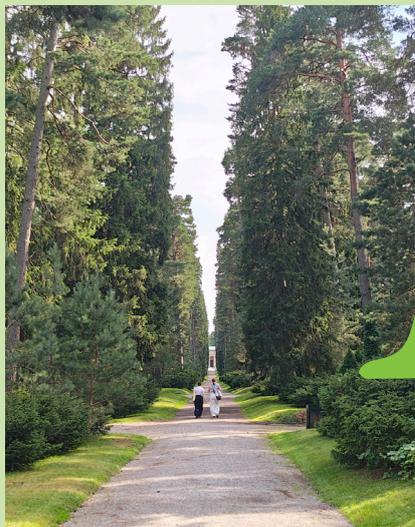


Rest

in



Peace?



Fieldwork Journal

colofon

REST IN PEACE?
The Death and Life of Urban Cemeteries

Masters Graduation Thesis 2025-2026
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All the visual and photographic material has been produced by
the author if not stated otherwise.

I heard you die twice,
once when they bury you
in the grave

And the second time
is the last time that
somebody mentions your
name

- Macklemore (Victorious)

I hate to keep seeing the
same four walls
I've been stuck in the same
Stuck in the same place for
way too long
I hate to keep walking the
same four blocks

And honestly, I'm so sick
of the architect

You won't find
Find my bones here
The blower bed's like a
graveyard
And that kills me (Oh)

- Iris Jean (The architect)

Als je doodvalt op de grond
en niemand post het

Heb je dan maar 1 lijk?

- Sef (Als een boom valt)

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- 5 Zomerlanden, Hoeksche Waard
- 6 Zuiderbegraafplaats, Rotterdam

why this cemetery?

I have to start somewhere!
catholic
museum
reviving a 'dead' cemetery
natural cemetery
multi-cultural

02 fieldwork abroad - 50

- A Highgate, London (UK)
- B St Jacobi, Berlin (Germany)
- C Järva, Stockholm (Sweden)
- D Skogskyrkogården Stockholm (Sweden)
- E Assistens, Copenhagen (Denmark)

tourism-focused
communal garden addition
just opened in 2024
one of the most famous
public park function

in the country

Cemetery Crooswijk St Laurentius De Nieuwe Ooster Bosdrift Zomerlanden Zuiderbegraafplaats

Rotterdam, NL

Rotterdam, NL

Amsterdam, NL

Hilversum, NL

Hoeksche Waard, NL

Rotterdam, NL

1832

1867

1889

1890

2021

1940



English landscape

Catholic cemetery

English landscape

English landscape

natural cemetery

''modernistic



2

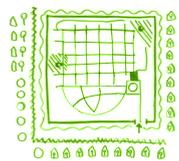
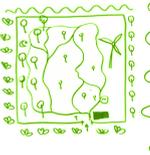
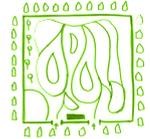
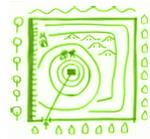
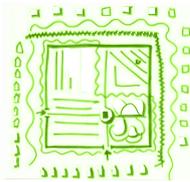
1

2

2

∞

1



no

petting zoo
(goats)

museum,
arboretum

'living room',
workshop space

nature reserve

no



R —◆— U

R —◆— U

R —◆— U

R —◆— U

R ◆— U

R —◆— U



G ◆— P

abroad

NAME	Highgate	St Jacobi	Järva	Skogskyrkogården	Assistens
CITY, COUNTRY	London, UK	Berlin, Germany	Stockholm, Sweden	Stockholm, Sweden	Copenhagen, Denmark
YEAR	1839	1867	2024	1917	1760
TIPOLOGY	forest cemetery	avenue cemetery	landscape cemetery	forest cemetery	garden cemetery
AREA (M2)	150.000	75.000	86.000	1.080.800	197.000
ENTRANCE					
AMOUNT OF ENTRANCES	1	1	∞	5	4
EXPERIENTIAL ANALYSIS					
MULTI-FUNCTIONALITY	 tourist tours, cafe	 community garden, beer garden	 nature reserve	 tourist attraction	 city park
DISTANCE TO CITY CENTRE	5,6 km	5,3 km	13 km	5,5 km	2,0 km
RURAL-URBAN	R —◆— U	R —◆— U	R —◆— U	R —◆— U	R —◆— U
GREEN QUALITY					
GREEN-PAVED	G —◆— P	G —◆— P	G —◆— P	G —◆— P	G —◆— P

01 fieldwork in NL



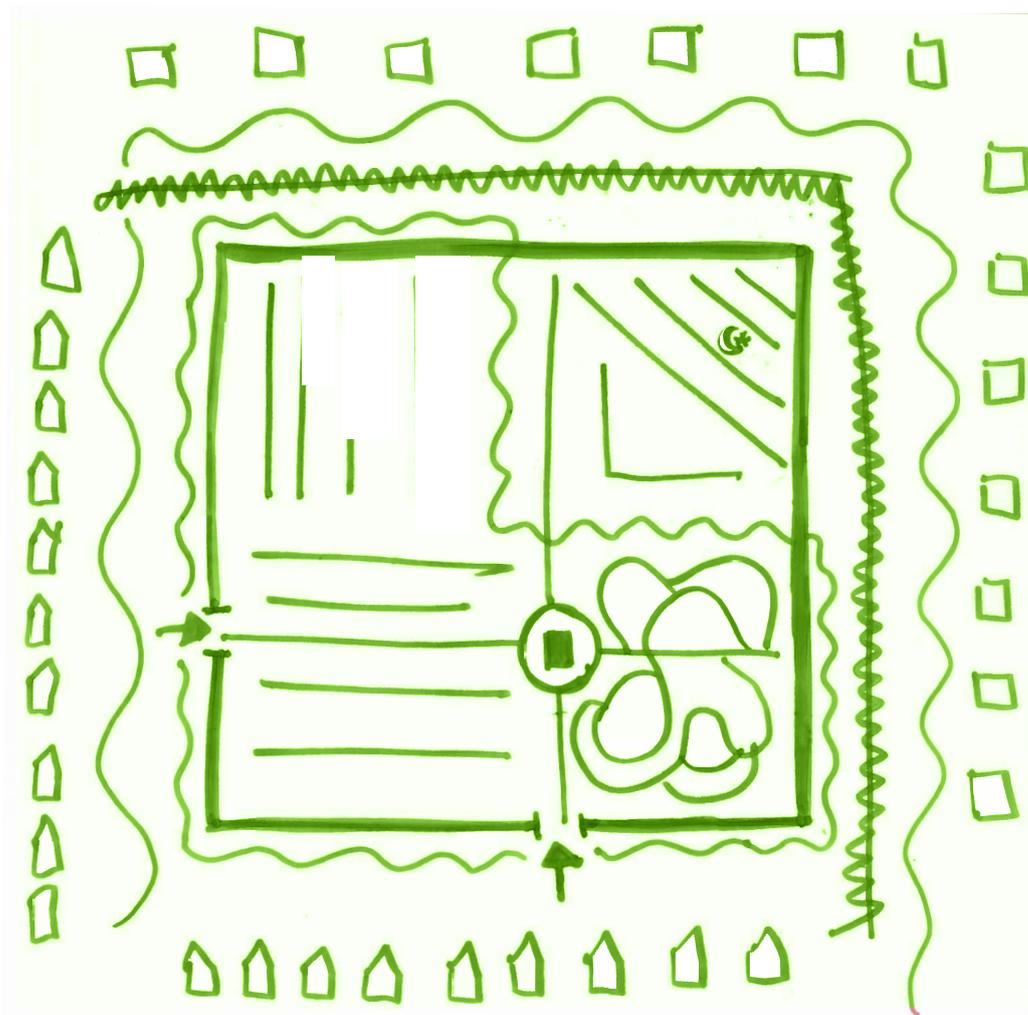
1. Crooswijk

YEAR: 1832
 TYPE: general cemetery
 DESIGNER: P. Adams. Expansion by L. A. Springer (1912)
 CITY: Rotterdam
 AREA: 205.000 m²
 PUBLIC: YES
 MONUMENT: YES
 RURAL ————◆——— URBAN
 GREEN ◆——— PAVED

10/03/'25

Today I am going to the very first cemetery of the fieldwork. After a short bike ride I find an entrance, for a bit I struggle with where to park my bike.

I am overwhelmed with the amount of stones. The landscape seems to change every very corner I take.



Legend

- ~~~~~ small waterbody
- ~~~~~ big waterbody
- |-| entrance cemetery
- building on cemetery
- ☉ Islamic graves

Boundaries / Adjacent functions

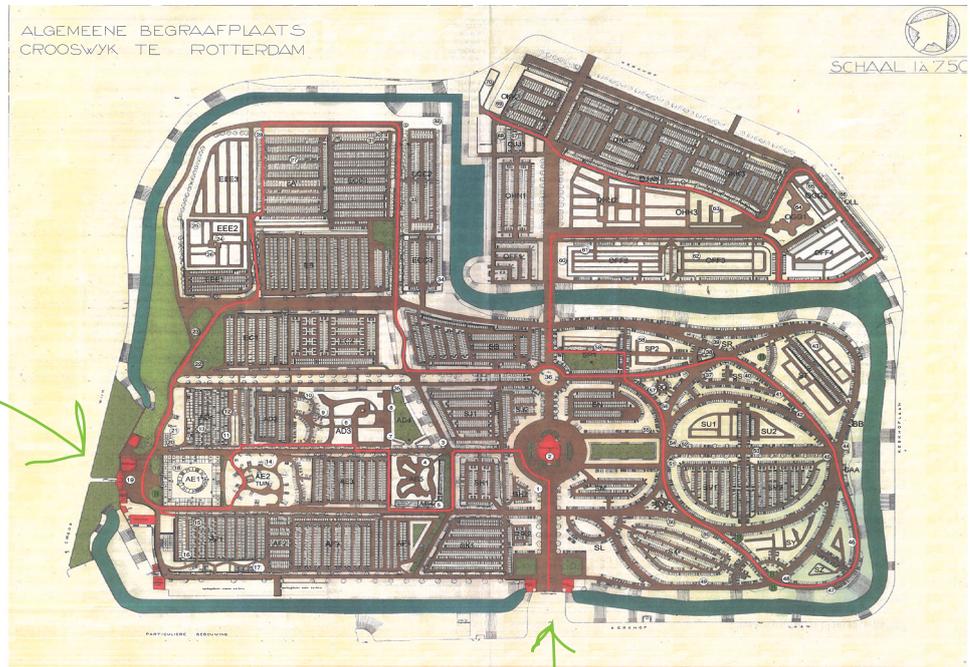
- ~~~~~ Loud motorway
- 🏠 residential building
- 🏡 allotment gardens
- other buildings
- 🌾 crops



Western entrance of the General Cemetery Crooswijk by G. Lengkeek, 1838-1864 (Stadsarchief Rotterdam)



Western entrance today



Copy from an added map in *De stad en de dood* (Kamphuis, 2000). Map by Gemeentewerken Rotterdam afdeling VI Landmeten, 1946



Southern entrance with flower shop

From this point of view, it looks like any other English landscape park



A woman is sitting on a bench on her phone. It's a nice day for March, I wonder if she is here to visit a grave or simply to enjoy the place.

When I ask her, I scare her a bit. She tells me she just visited her mother's grave and now she is recovering a bit. She is nice to me but I think she would've rather been left alone.

Mental note to only walk up to someone when I see they are also looking for interaction.



The chapel in the middle of the cemetery



A man is caring for a grave on the Islamic part of the cemetery



Green maintenance is shuffling the gravel path



Storage



A public toilet!



Space is reserved for art.
It's a beautiful combination
with the graves and heritage
of the place



Apparently, cycling is allowed here

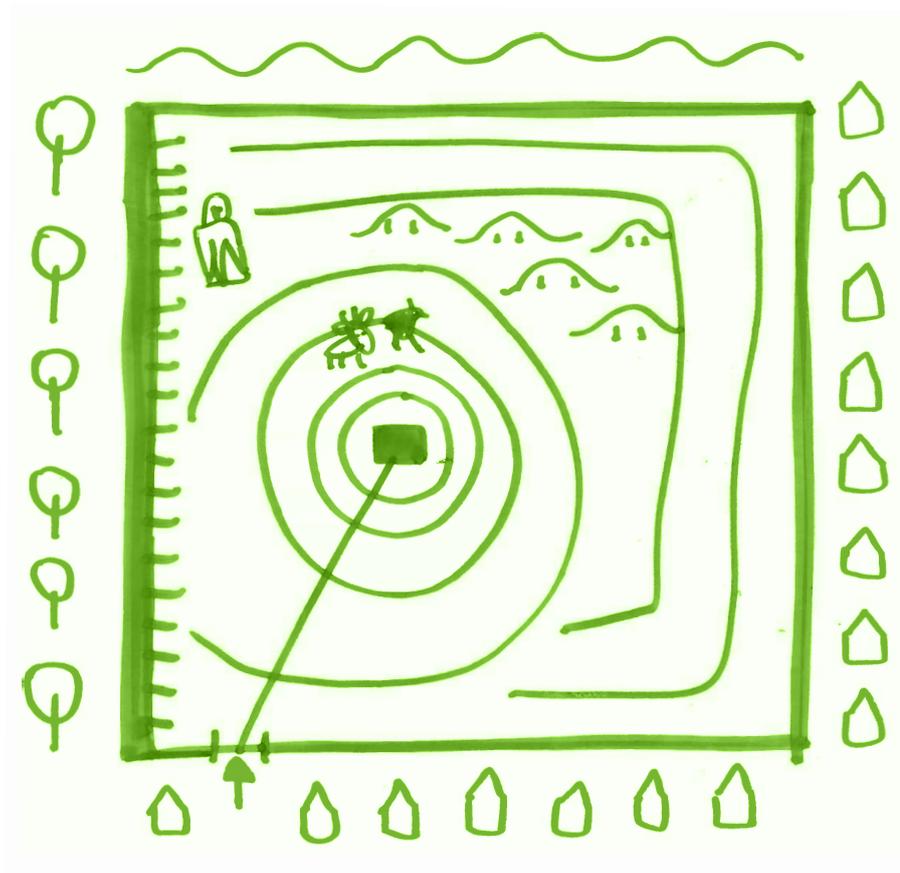
2. St Laurentius

YEAR: 1867
 TYPE: Catholic cemetery
 DESIGNER: H.J. van den Brink
 CITY: Rotterdam
 AREA: 26.000 m²
 PUBLIC: YES
 MONUMENT: PARTLY
 RURAL ———— ◆ ———— URBAN
 GREEN ———— ◆ ———— PAVED

18/03/'25

I am sitting on a movable bench in the St Laurentius Cemetery. It's a sunny day, the first trees on the cemetery are starting to blossom. The grave stone in front of me is a big selfie of a girl around my age, the Snapchat-filter makes hearts around her head. Some bushes are rustling and I see a rat cross the path.

A few weeks later I have an interview with cemetery director Theo van Werkhoven (appendix A1 in the report)



Legend

- ~~~~~ small waterbody
- ~~~~~ big waterbody
- |-| entrance cemetery
- building on cemetery
- ⊙ Islamic graves

Boundaries / Adjacent functions

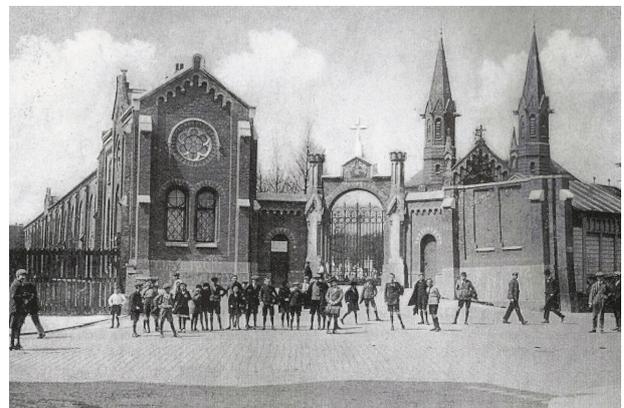
- ~~~~~ Loud motorway
- ⌒ residential building
- ⌒ allotment gardens
- other buildings
- ⊙ crops



An arcade gives the place a classical, maybe kitsch look



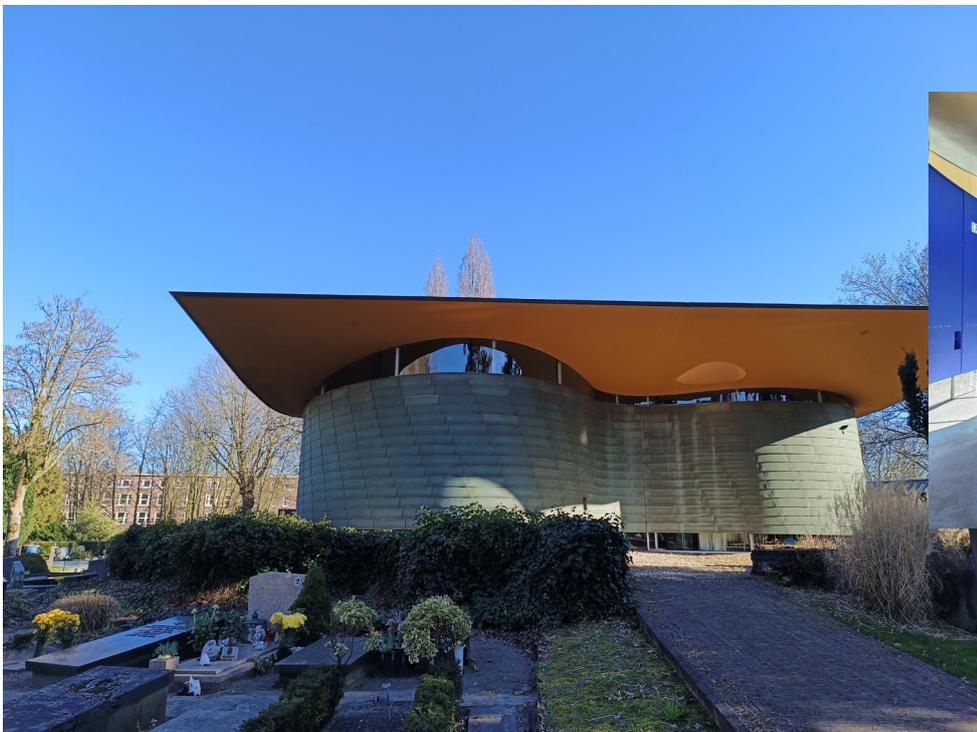
The cemetery is surrounded by walls. On the one hand this obstructs the accessibility of the area, on the other hand it gives me a sense of safety. I know I won't be bothered. Theo van Werkhoven, director of St Laurentius Cemetery, told me the walls are a monument so they can probably not be broken through.



Entrance of the St Laurentius Cemetery ca. 1896.

Entrance today

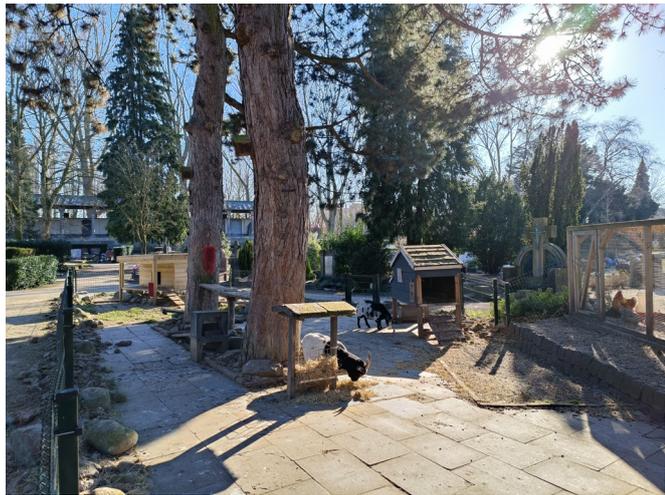
Behind the walls, I hear cars driving past. There is a primary school right next to the wall, the children are audibly playing a game.



Francine Houben designed the chapel centred in the middle of the cemetery. Her family lies on the cemetery

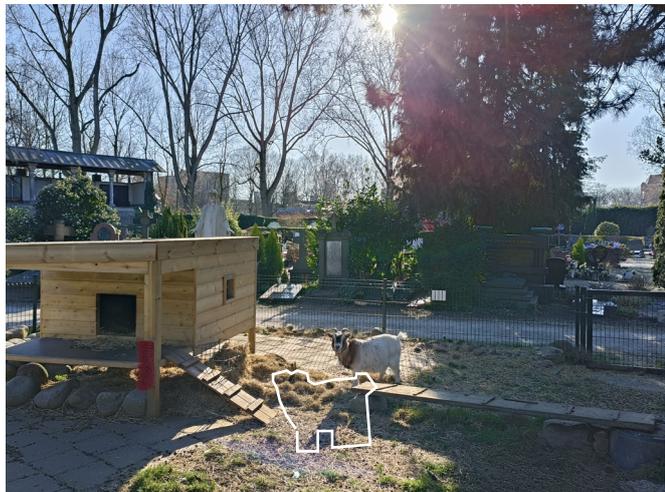


Playful elements at the children graves section



Birds and goats?
On a cemetery?

Theo van
Werkhoven later
explains it's to
give children a
soft introduction
to the cemetery

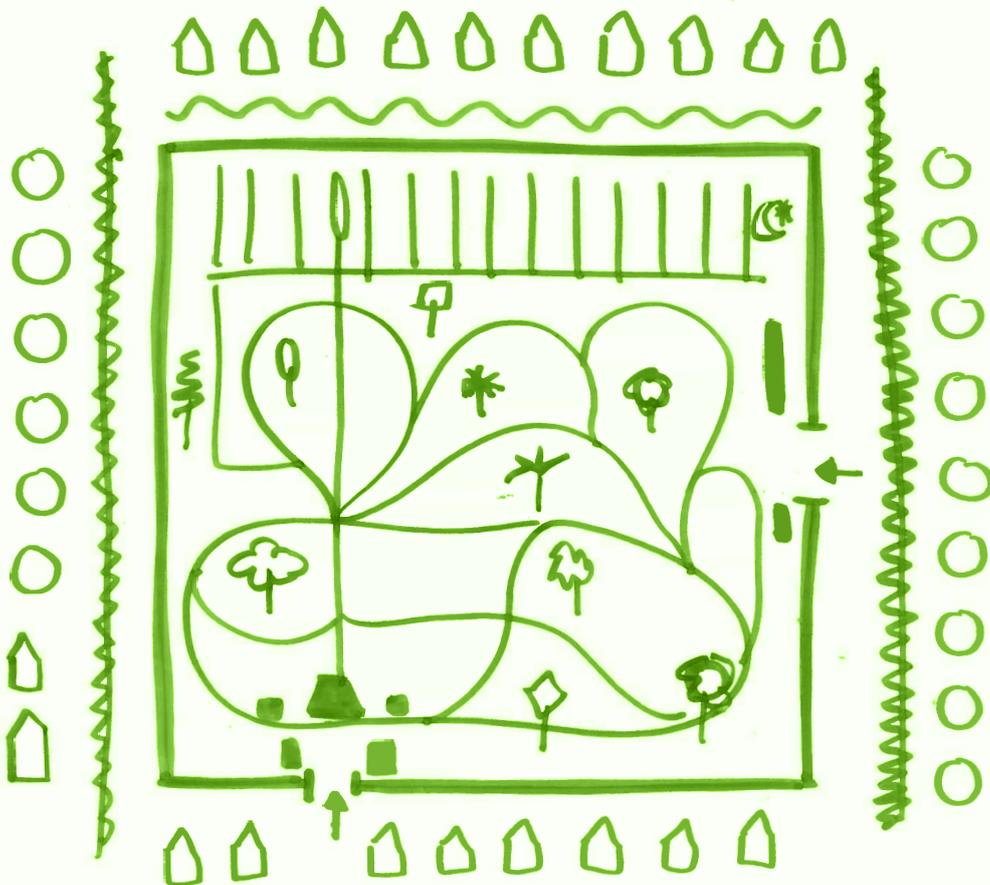


3. Nieuwe Ooster

YEAR: 1889
 TYPE: general cemetery
 DESIGNER: L.A. Springer
 CITY: Amsterdam
 AREA: 330.000 m²
 PUBLIC: YES
 MONUMENT: YES
 RURAL ———— ◆ ———— URBAN
 GREEN ———— ◆ ———— PAVED

16/04/'25

I wanted to go to the Nieuwe Ooster mainly because of the museum that is on the site. It is called Tot Zover (EN: Until so far), the only Dutch museum about death.

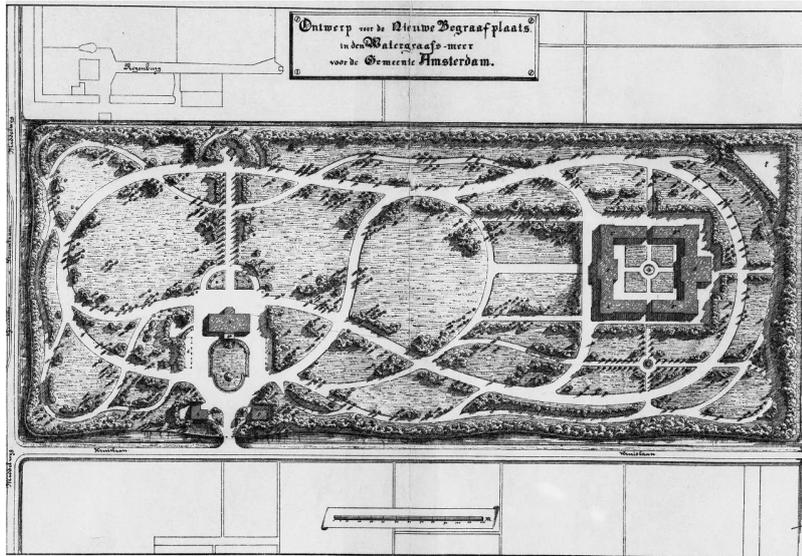


Legend

- ~~~~~ small waterbody
- ~~~~~ big waterbody
- |- entrance cemetery
- building on cemetery
- ☪ Islamic graves

Boundaries / Adjacent functions

- ~~~~~ Loud motorway
- △ residential building
- allotment gardens
- other buildings
- crops



The design of the old part of the cemetery (Springer, 1891). Published in De Opmerker 1891-1

Landscape and urbanism office Karres en Brands designed the structural plan of the cemetery.

A few months later in my interview with Bart Brands, he explained their concept of the “barcode”: ‘We are becoming more equal and at the same time more unique. In the barcode, every person can find the atmosphere that suits them most.’

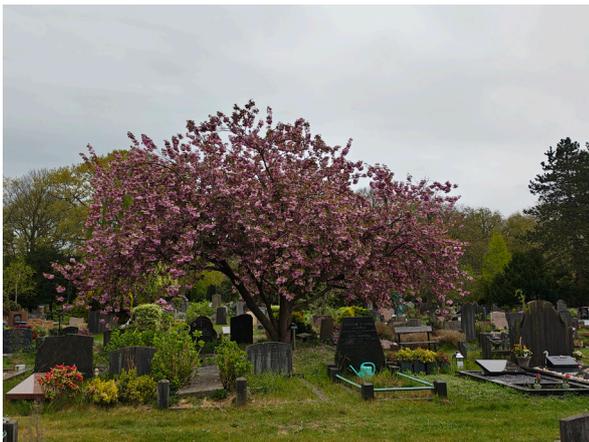
barcode -->



Structural plan Nieuwe Ooster by Karres en Brands



'Some people are afraid to even pass the entrance of the cemetery,' the lady in the museum said



Trees are shaped as umbrella for the graves



All interesting trees have an information necklace



'Please don't move the bench. This rental bench belongs to this grave'



I enter the cemetery first. With extra focus on the facilities of the cemetery. The landscape design with curling paths invites you to get lost and explore. Focusing on the facilities, I notice there is a lot of attempt to control the visitors. Coin locks on the watering cans, banning people from bringing their own chairs, I wonder about what happened for the maintenance team to be so distrustful.





Islamic funeral pavilion

Samen houden we het netjes

Zitgelegenheid

Nabestaanden plaatsen allerlei stoeltjes en dat geeft een wat rommelig beeld. De Nieuwe Ooster plaatst binnenkort een rek leenstoeltjes voorzien van een muntslot. Als het rek er is worden de overige stoelen verwijderd en gedurende een maand opgeslagen om te worden opgehaald.

Zo houden we het netjes

De afmeting van een Islamitisch graf is 100 x 200 cm. We verzoeken u vriendelijk geen spullen buiten deze afmetingen te plaatsen. Materialen die buiten de grafmaat vallen worden vanaf 15 januari 2025 verwijderd en opgeslagen.

Sign at Islamic part asking bereaved not to bring their own chairs and stick to 100x200 cm grave area

The people don't seem to care for the sign

Artificial grass on top of grass...



Traces of use



It's a cold day, so after an hour I go to the museum for a coffee to warm up. They have a cafe with 10+ tables, half of them are occupied.



The lady who works behind the counter can guess every group's reason why they are here: one couple just visited the exhibitions, a group of women must be waiting for a funeral as they are so nicely dressed up and another couple just walked over the cemetery for trees, as the cemetery is also an arboretum. She knows because they told her. The museum cafe is a place where different paths cross, it feels warm and comfortable.



Explanation of funeral practices of different religions



The exhibitions are a mix of heavy (pictures from bodies in coffins), artsy ('urn' awards) and funny (the relationship between death and food). After having seen the whole museum, my head is full.

Aux Raus - Coffin Poser
Stills from the videoclip
Displayed in the museum

4. Bosdrift

YEAR: 1890
 TYPE: general cemetery
 DESIGNER: L.A. Springer
 CITY: Hilversum
 AREA: 26.000 m²
 PUBLIC: YES
 MONUMENT: YES
 RURAL —◆— URBAN
 GREEN —◆— PAVED

16/04/'25

Bosdrift feels like a micro version of De Nieuwe Ooster. That's no surprise as it's drawn up by the same designer. Beside the size, the cemeteries also differ in sounds on the cemetery. In Hilversum, the only car way nearby is shielded by the building. The place is very peaceful and silent.

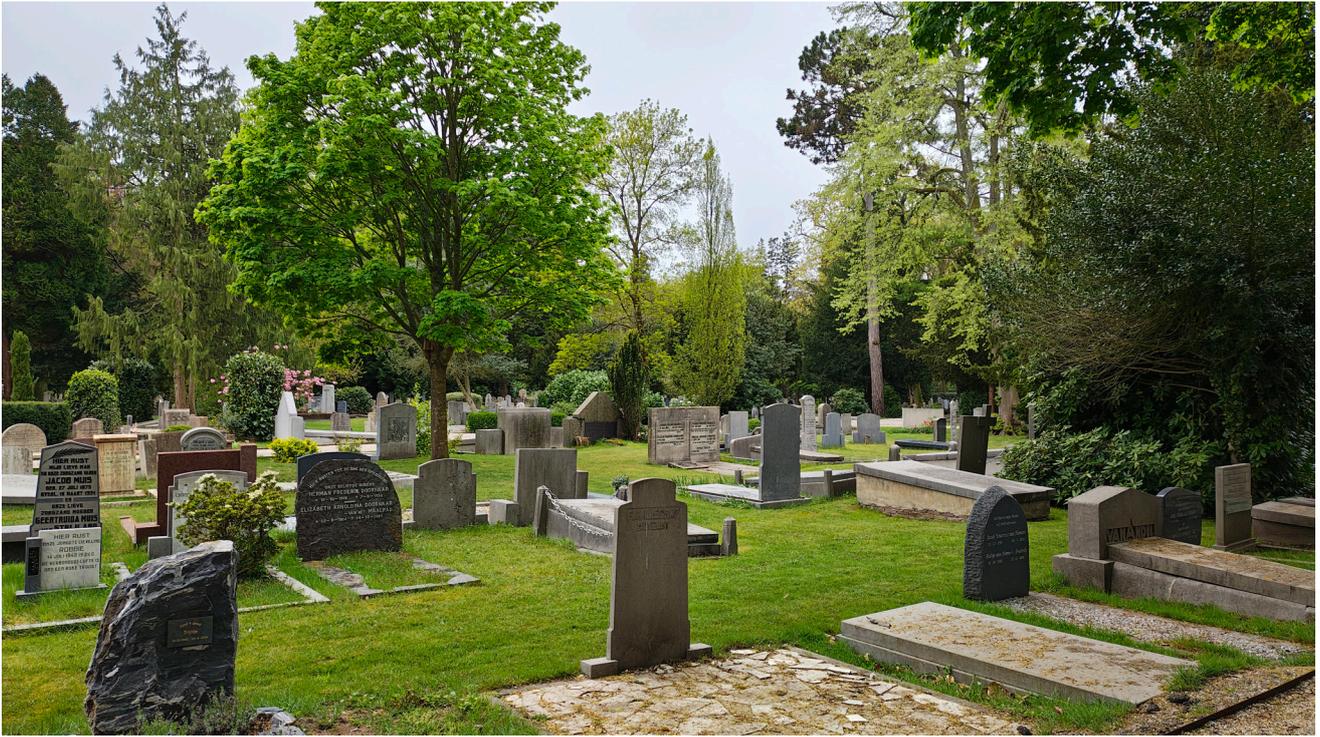


Legend

- ~ small waterbody
- ~ big waterbody
- ↑ entrance cemetery
- building on cemetery
- ☪ Islamic graves

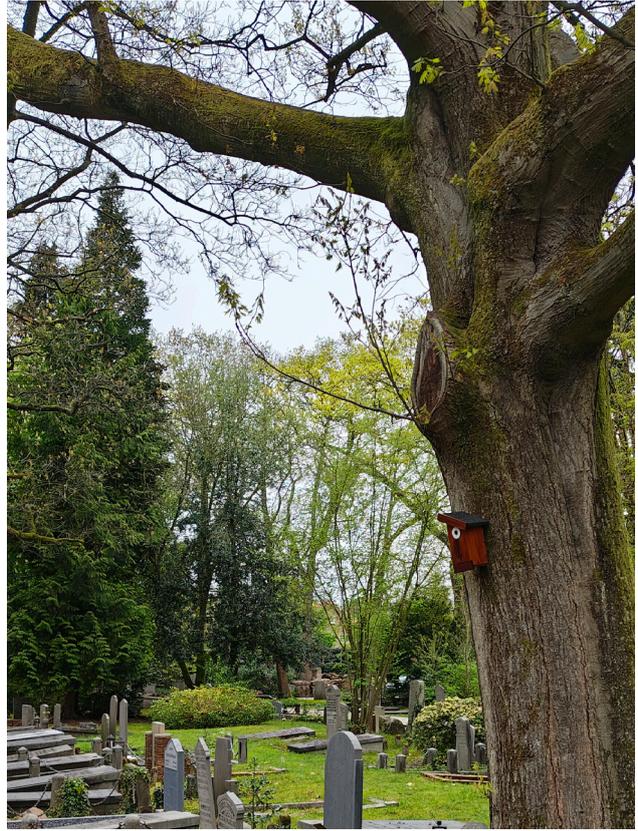
Boundaries / Adjacent functions

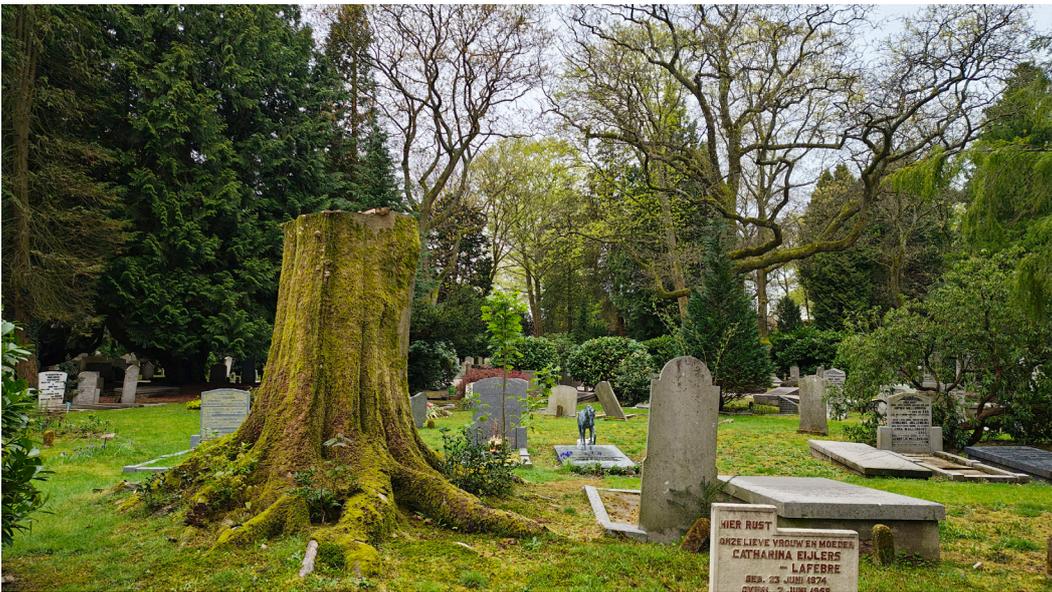
- www Loud motorway
- 🏠 residential building
- 🏡 allotment gardens
- other buildings
- 🌾 crops



We're in Hilversum, of course there is a film production going on at the cemetery

There is also
attention for
other fauna







Taking a stroll, I suddenly see the path changing from small pebbles to wood chips. It's where the natural cemetery starts. Fifteen minutes later, when I am interviewing director Anita van Loon, she will tell me that the natural graves are very popular and sold out faster than she could imagine.

In 2022, Director Anita van Loon initiated to add a natural cemetery. It's already sold out.

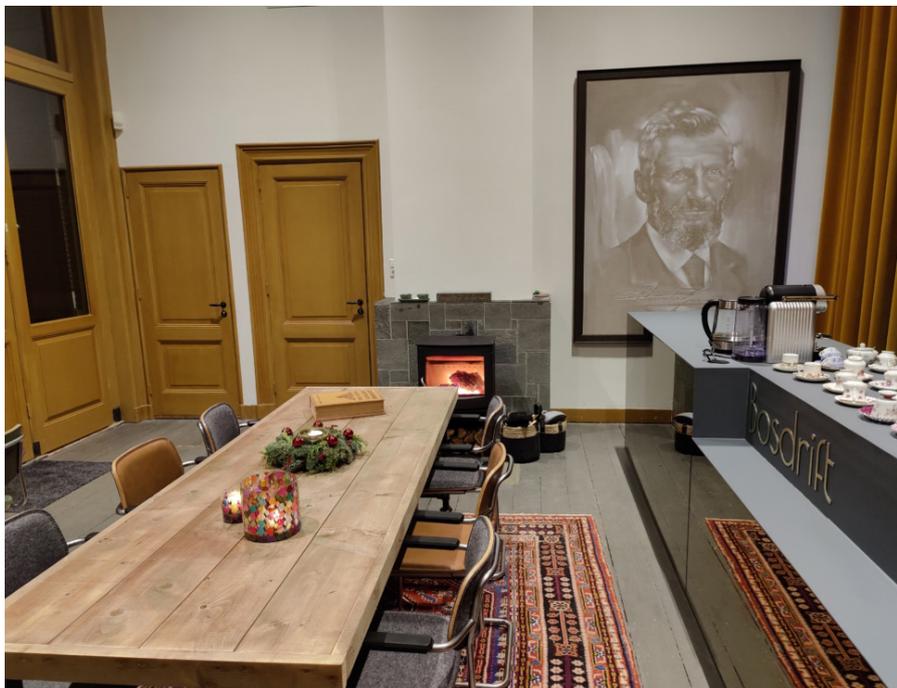


The natural cemetery has beech trees because they are well equipped for our changing climate



The interview takes place in the building, the space is called 'Springer's living room' (after the designer of the cemetery). As a visitor you can get free tea and coffee from a volunteer behind the counter, or you can have a chat.

Anita brought her dog Teun, who is very good at consoling. She says he can feel other's emotions really well and sometimes goes out to the cemetery to sit with people who are sad.



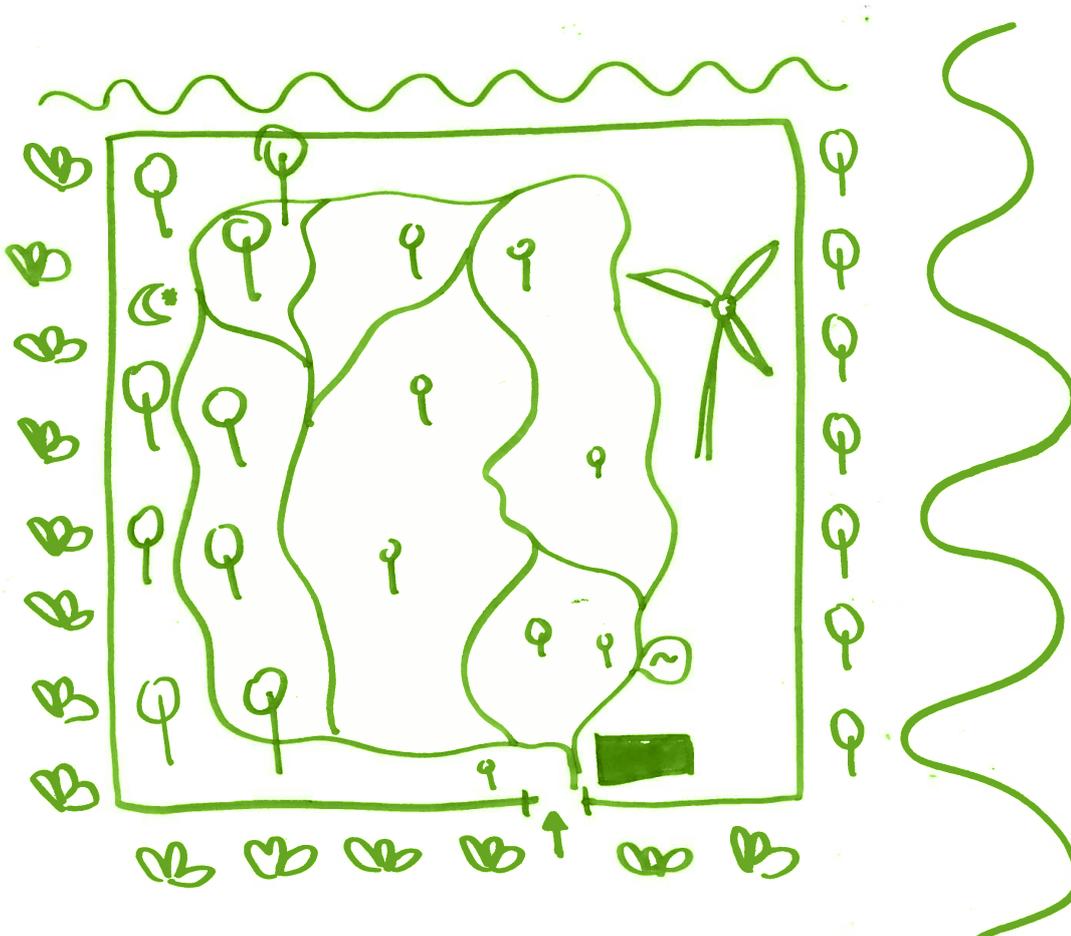
(photo: Uitvaartstichting Hilversum)

5. Zomerlanden

YEAR: 2021
TYPE: natural cemetery
DESIGNER: unknown
CITY: Heinenoord, Hoeksche Waard
AREA: 90.000 m²
PUBLIC: YES
MONUMENT: NO
RURAL  — URBAN
GREEN  — PAVED

20/05/'25

My trip to Zomerlanden is only 20 km but takes 1,5 hours by public transport. From the final bus stop, I have to walk fifteen minutes along a motor way. There are pasture fields on both sides of the road, in the distance is a sudden natural area. I think that's my destination.





The cemetery truly is a natural island in the middle of monoculture crop fields



Memorial for Jack Dawson Green, an American pilot who was killed in Heinenoord in 1945



Info signs with rules regarding your visit

Nearing the cemetery, I hear screaming roosters which seem to be walking around freely. Entering the terrain, rain drops fall down even though there's not a cloud on the sky. Later in the interview with Marina Fidler, I will learn they were tears from a weeping willow. But for now I get a weird feeling, not knowing how this place works and what to expect.



Maintenance or people who have difficulty walking can navigate the cemetery by golf car





Someone was recently buried in the middle of this blooming yellow flower field

I made sure to be too early for the interview so I could explore the area. It's my first time on a natural cemetery. Walking around, I have to get used to not knowing where the graves are. It's actually kind of nice to have stones as 'warning signs', I realise. Scattered around are also small posts, I assume they are already claimed spots for future graves. There are many.

I sense I am tense. The place is so different from the traditional cemeteries I have seen in the last weeks, the place is a colourful oasis and it feels like time slows down. I am tense because for the first time I am faced with a final resting place that I might consider for myself.

This grave was dug for a funeral later in the day. When digging, they keep the humus layer separate from the other soil and when closing the grave, put the humus on top again.



The graves are eternal so that the humus layer can recover



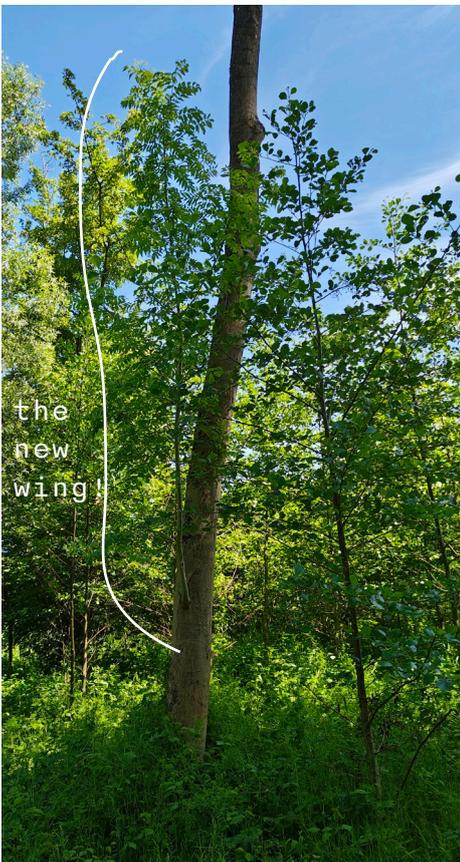
Starting the cemetery,
the existing trees were
unhealthy. You can see it
from the crown.



Now that the tree has more
space, it has started
shooting at the bottom: a
very good sign.

Marina says,

It's spreading
his wings



the
new
wing!



The cemetery had some difficulty in the
water management. They dug a pond which
now flourishes in biodiversity



Throughout the cemetery I see these wooden land posts. These mark reservations for graves.



Ash scattering is not allowed on the natural cemetery, because it's hurtful for the soil. You can opt for an ash burial, if the urn is biodegradable, like this one, Marina shows.



Plants have started growing back on the grave

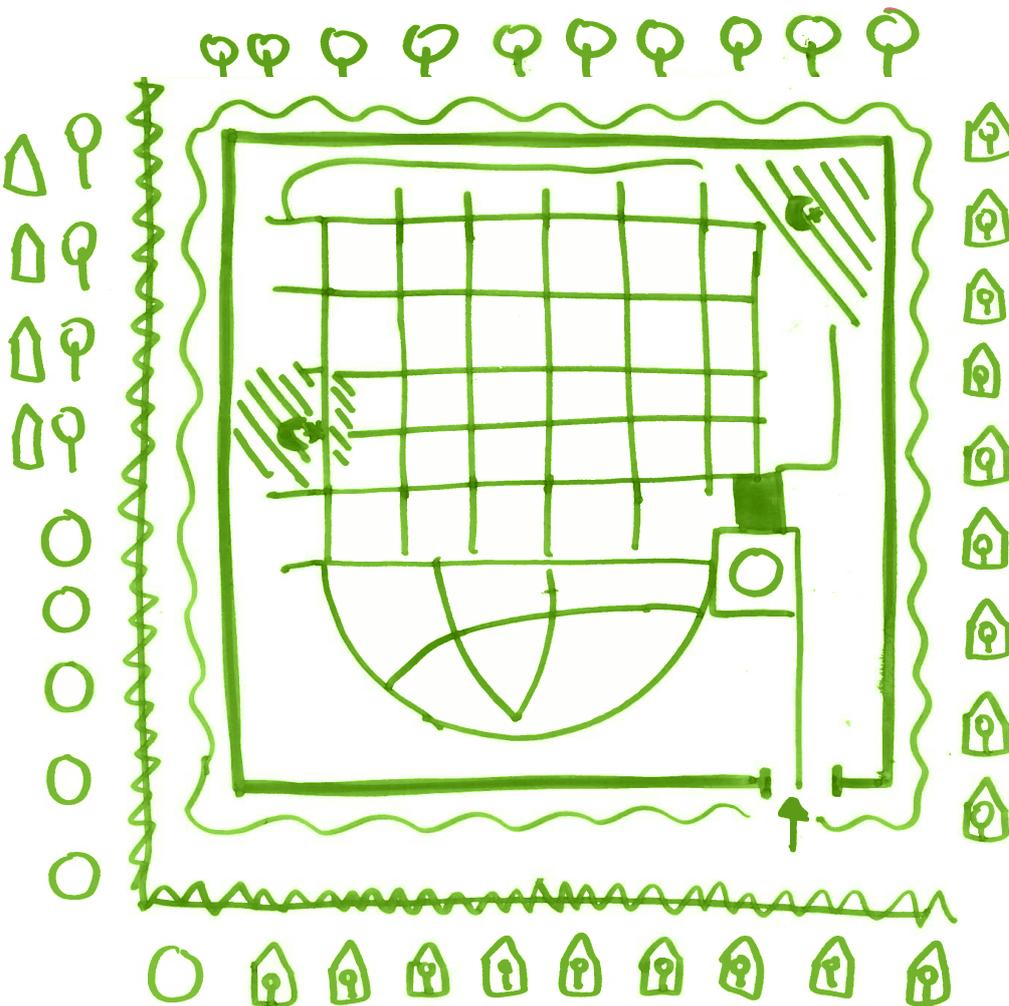


Here someone was buried less than a week ago, because there are still flowers. After a week they clean them

6. Zuiderbegraafplaats

YEAR: 1940
 DESIGNER: F. Theeuwis
 CITY: Rotterdam 09/05/'25
 AREA: 223.000 m²
 PUBLIC: YES
 MONUMENT: NO
 RURAL —◆— URBAN
 GREEN —◆— PAVED

After a half hour bike ride, I arrive at the Zuiderbegraafplaats. The reason is scouting for a possible design location. The cemetery is a collage of the different Rotterdammers, with sections for different Islamic and Christian denominations, a Chinese part and even a special section fanatic Feyenoord supporters. I wonder how much the different groups mingle in a place like this.



- Legend**
- ~ small waterbodies
 - ~ big waterbody
 - ↑ entrance cemetery
 - building on cemetery
 - ☪ Islamic graves
- Boundaries / Adjacent functions**
- www Loud motorway
 - 🏠 residential building
 - 🏡 allotment gardens
 - other buildings
 - 🌾 crops

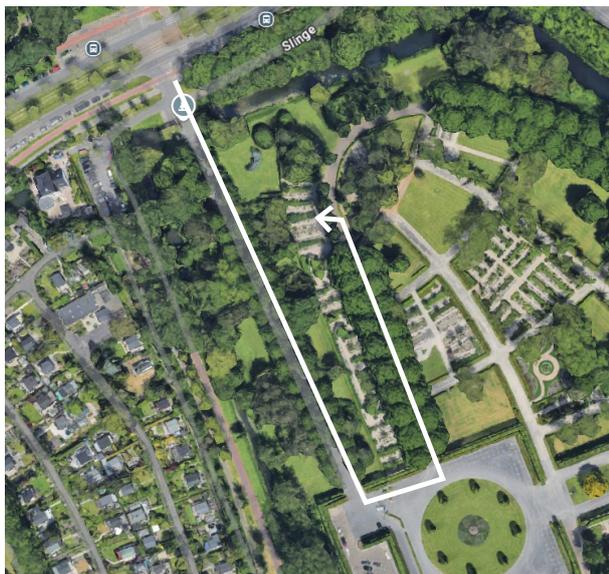


Every Sunday, these two men stall their flower shop at the entrance of the cemetery. They sell to visitors as well as local residents, they say.



a woman cut off the road and walked over the grass. Otherwise she had to walk all the way around:

The main (and only) entrance is a pompous lane with trees on both sides. I feel uncertain of what's waiting for me at the end.



Later I talk to the efficient lady. She says she comes here every week to visit her mother's grave. The man who is with her, notes:

'You have to be careful not to go more often, or it will become an obsession.'



Buse-Rana Basoglu
7 reviews

★★★★☆ 2 jaar geleden

Graag de openingstijden verlengen. Ik heb afgelopen vrijdag (27-10-2023) mijn klasgenoot begraven en wil hem vaak kunnen bezoeken. En de anderen personen kennende en niet kennende een gebed kunnen verrichten tot hen. 🙏🏻 ...

👍 3 🔄 Delen

Lorenzo Aardappel
Local Guide · 16 reviews · 3 foto's

★★★★☆ een jaar geleden

Kom je helemaal uit Groningen en heb je (wat echt mijn fout is) de openingstijden niet gecheckt. Wat een rot tijden. Totaal niet over gedacht

👍 Like 🔄 Delen

On Google Maps, people complain about the opening times. The cemetery would close too early to visit on a working day.



Information at the parking lot that doesn't work (but is still on)



New 'consolation chairs' can be moved when visitors want a moment for themselves



You can take routes on which the view on gravestones is blocked


So-An Ssi
 Local Guide · 401 reviews · 350 foto's

★★☆☆☆ 2 jaar geleden

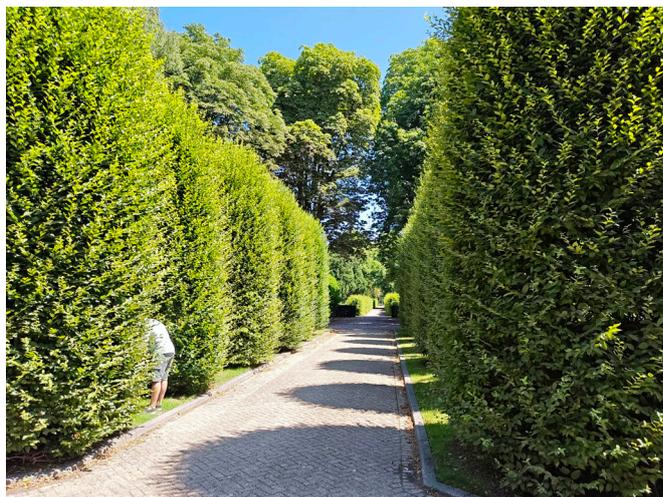
Feedback betreffende de toegankelijkheid.
 De begraafplaats is niet/nauwelijks toegankelijk voor personen die slecht ter been zijn. Door de smalle paden en kiezels is het zeer lastig om met een scootmobiel of rollator naar de graven te rijden of lopen.



At the back of the cemetery, a hidden path leads to a peaceful bench at the water. I would go here to let go of my emotions.

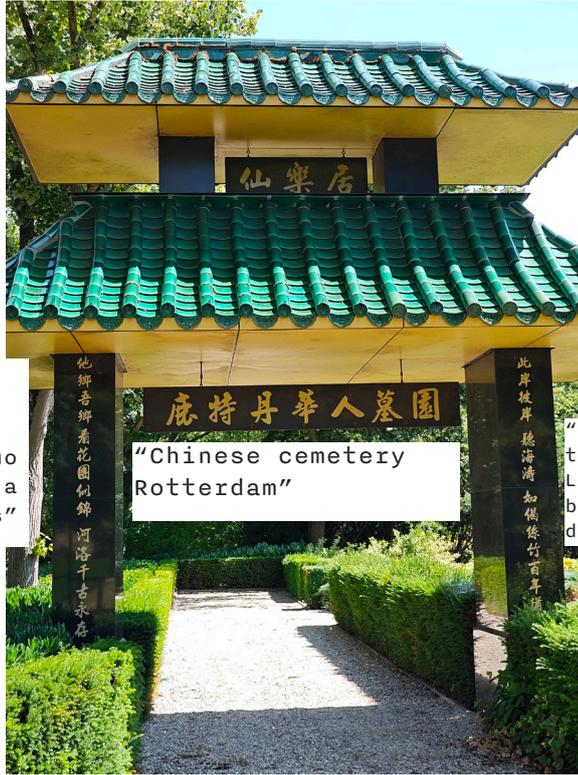
The entrance (roundabout?) of the cemetery is very formal, the green is nicely kept but also useless

Later, the cemetery administrator will say it's the cemetery's 'business card' (visitekaartje).



Someone must spend a lot of time pruning these bushes...

for this pompous lane you would expect a more fitting building at the end



"In the immortal homeland, the flower garden looks like brocade. The He and Luo rivers endure through a thousand ancient years"

"Chinese cemetery Rotterdam"

"This grass listens to the murmuring sea, Like a bamboo reed, bound by love a hundred years deep"

Chinese part on the cemetery



Feyenoord!





Mohammed Rahman
Local Guide · 24 reviews



★★★★★ 3 maanden geleden

Mijn ouders, zus en familieleden zijn begraven op het Islamitische gedeelte. Dank voor de mogelijkheid om dierbaren volgens de Islamitische ritus te mogen begraven. Begraafplaats wordt goed onderhouden.



29/06/'25

Mohammed shares on Google Maps that he is happy with Zuiderbegraafplaats' possibilities to perform Islamic rites

Today on my second visit I have a meeting with two managers of Zuiderbegraafplaats. I'm nervous because I want to ask cooperation from them with my research: I would like to organise an experiment and/or walk along the cemetery work for a day to understand the place better.

Update: they were not very excited about the cooperation, but they said I can e-mail them my proposal. Let's hope for the best.



Stones with numbers, when you turn them around some are part of an old tomb stone



Behind the scenes

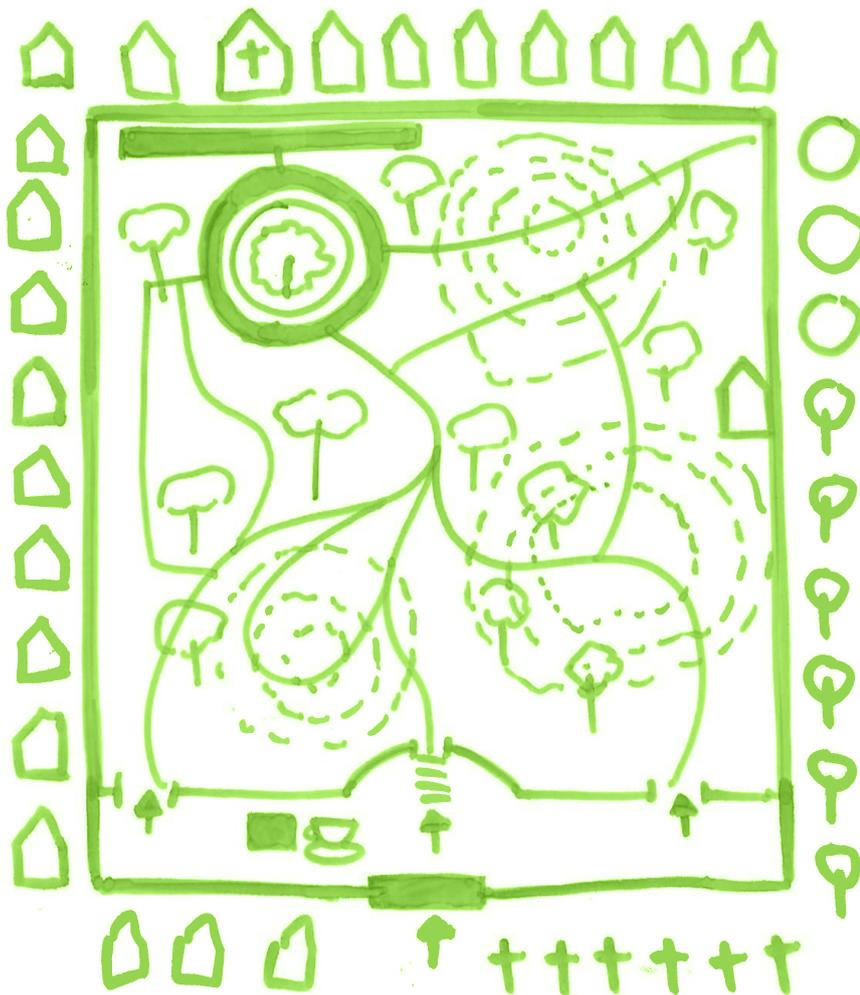


02 fieldwork abroad



A. Highgate Cemetery

YEAR: 1839
 TYPE: general cemetery
 DESIGNERS: Stephen Geary & David Ramsay
 CITY: London, UK
 AREA: 150.000 m²
 PUBLIC: YES
 MONUMENT: YES
 RURAL ——— ◆ ——— URBAN
 GREEN ◆ ——— PAVED

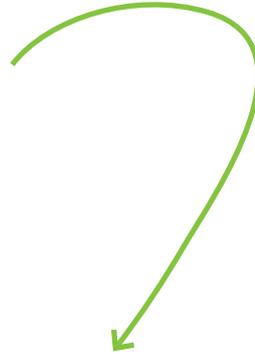


Legend

- ~ small waterbody
- ~ big waterbody
- ↑ entrance cemetery
- building on cemetery
- ☪ Islamic graves

Boundaries / Adjacent functions

- www Loud motorway
- 🏠 residential building
- 🏡 allotment gardens
- other buildings
- 🌾 crops



15/06/'25
Cycling up the
hill, we arrive at
Highgate cemetery.
The open fence gives
us a sneak peek.

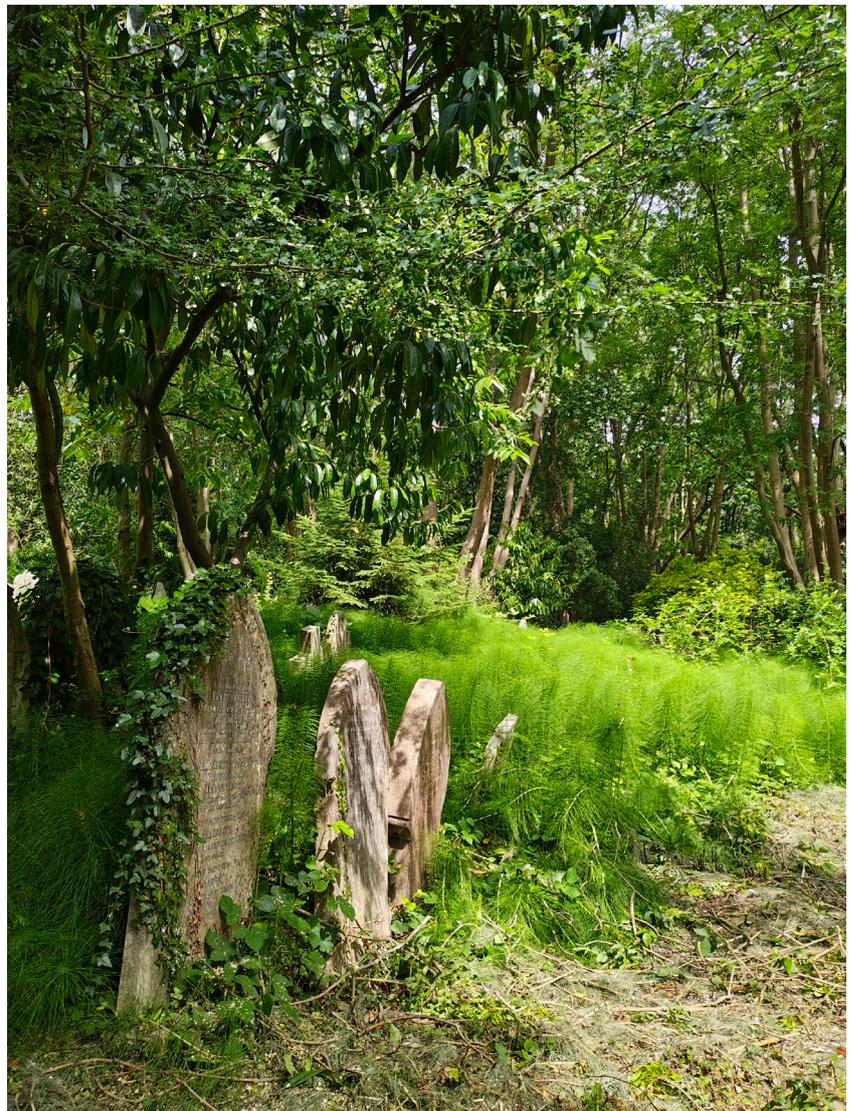


Photo shot from the road

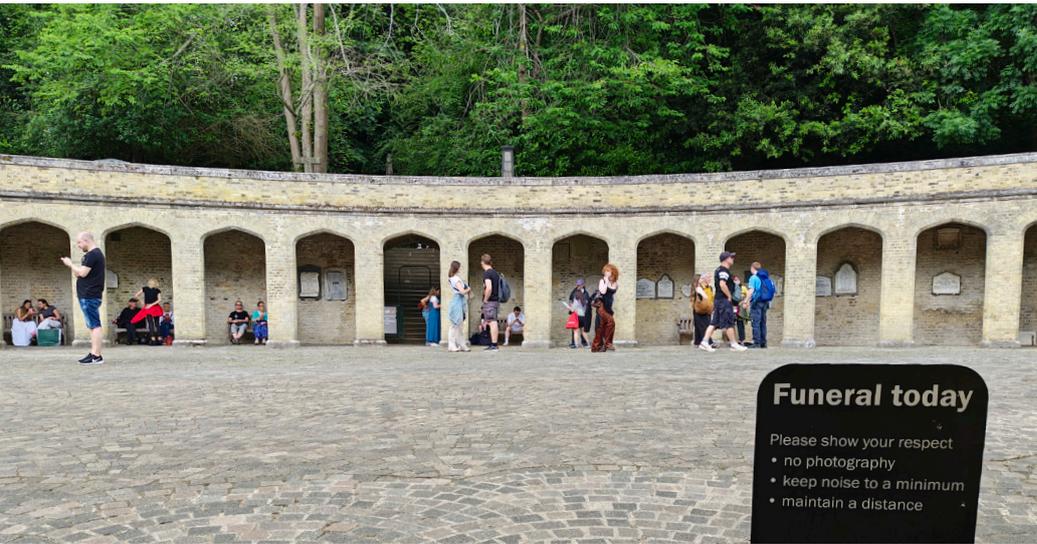


My dad is joining me today. After our ride he is craving a coffee, but I notice a guided tour is starting so I drag him along



This fox lives in the cemetery





Funeral today

Please show your respect

- no photography
- keep noise to a minimum
- maintain a distance

HIGHGATE CEMETERY.

Funeral today

Please show your respect

- no photography
- keep noise to a minimum
- maintain a distance

Combining tourism and cemetery activities, you need clear communication!



Funeral today

Please show your respect

- no photography
- keep noise to a minimum
- maintain a distance

HIGHGATE CEMETERY.



Entering the cemetery



up these steps



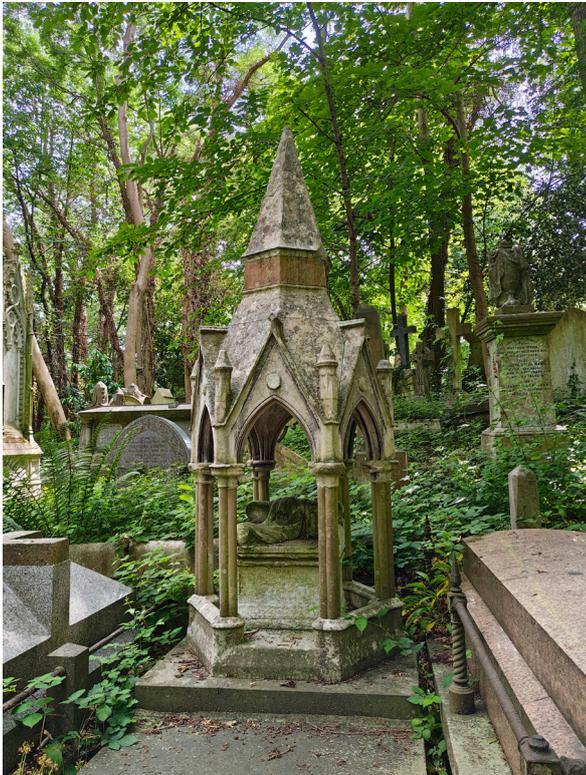
grave Karl Marx



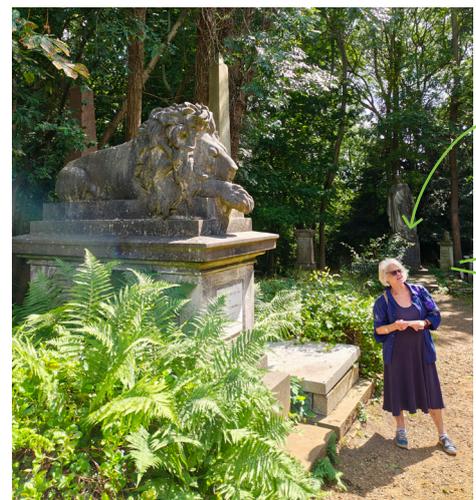
A modest grave for the not-so-modest George Michael



a 'broken' stone symbolises an abrupt ending to a life



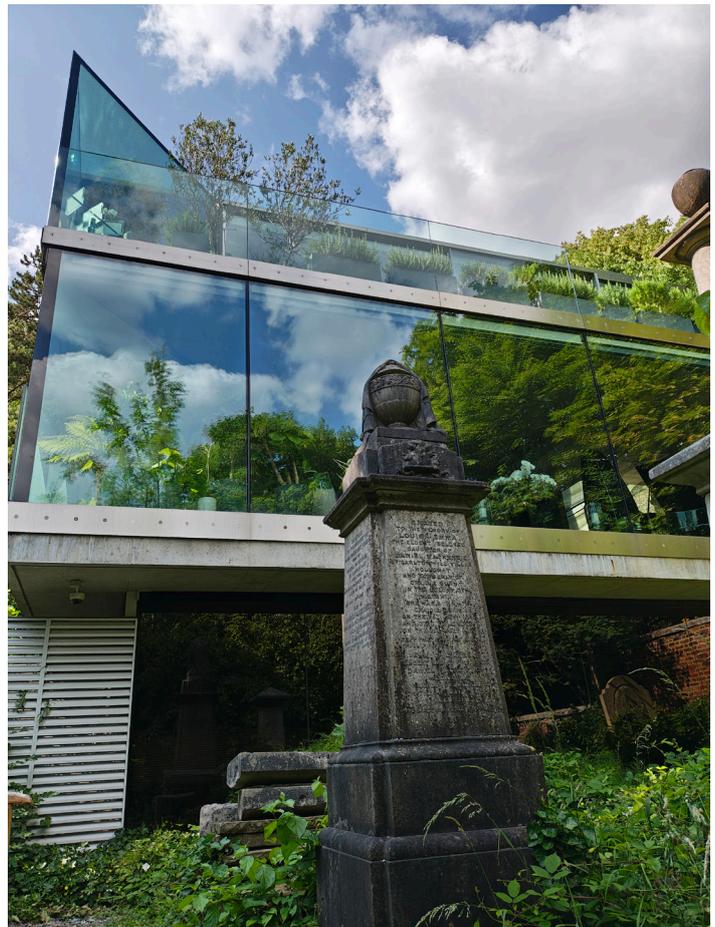
an unmade bed as if the user could come back any second



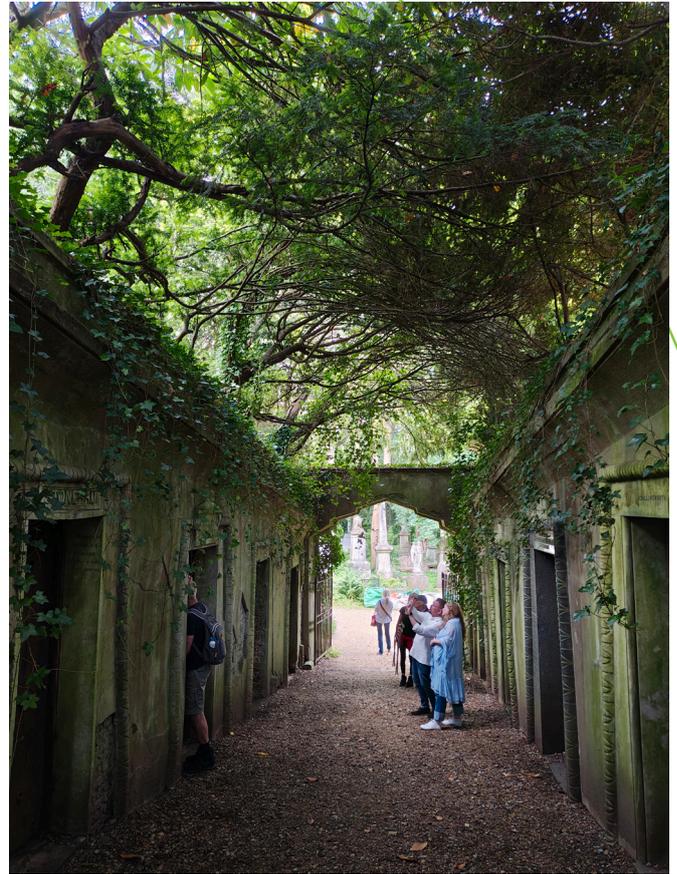


This is our tour guide, all information and stories about graves we learn from her. She is holding cards with the facts handwritten on them.

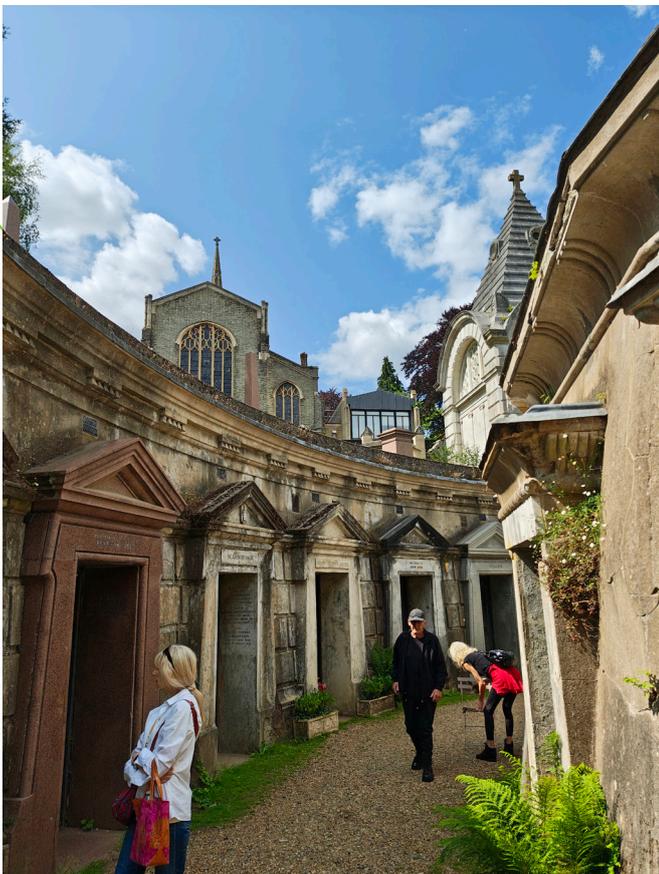
Nero is sleeping on the grave of George Wombwell, a famous menagerie owner from the 19th century. The lion was one of his most popular attractions.



Cemetery as back yard



Egyptian avenue. The roof collapsed a few years ago



Circle of Lebanon



Overlooking the Circle of Lebanon

Highgate Cemetery was definitely the most beautiful cemetery I have ever been to





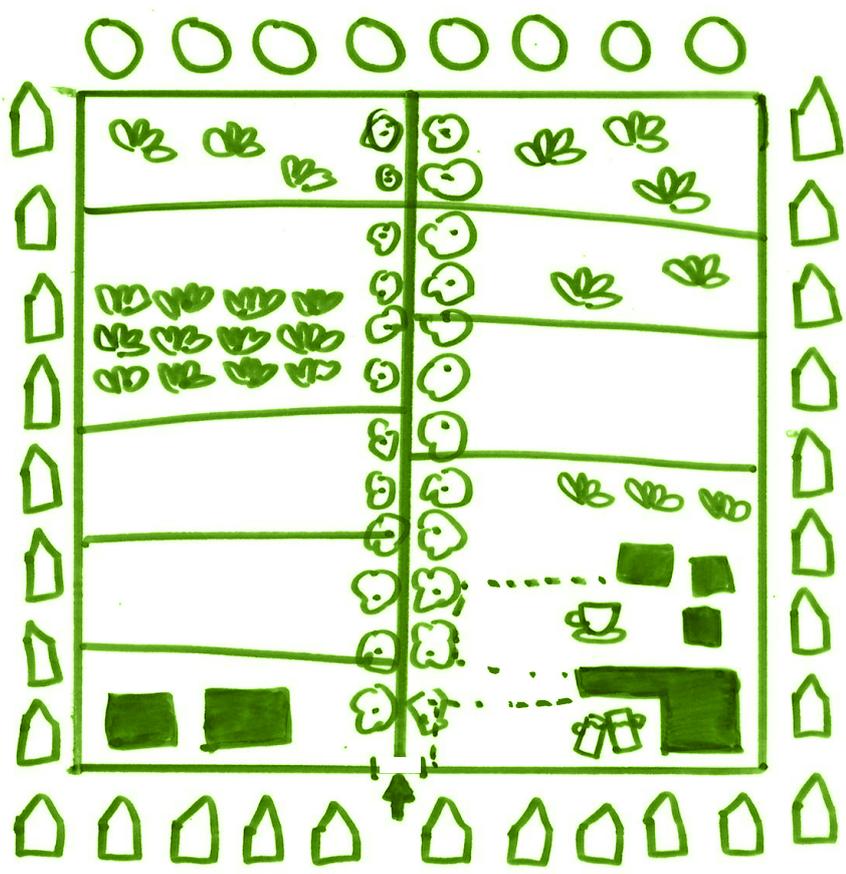
The dog's owner never had a wife or children, but the dog always went where he went. With a life-size statue the dog can watch the grave forever.

At another grave, our guide told us the story of a woman who died at a young age and was buried in a family grave where her husband would later join her.

But he remarried and was buried with his new wife a few meters further at the cemetery. His first wife is still waiting for him.

B. St. Jacobi-Friedhof

YEAR: 1867
 TYPE: Protestant cemetery (inactive)
 DESIGNER: unknown
 CITY: Berlin, Germany
 AREA: 75.000 m²
 PUBLIC: YES
 MONUMENT: YES
 RURAL ———— ◆ ———— URBAN
 GREEN ◆ ———— PAVED



- Legend*
- ~~~~~ small waterbody
 - ~~~~~ big waterbody
 - +— entrance cemetery
 - building on cemetery
 - ☉ Islamic graves
- Boundaries / Adjacent functions*
- ~~~~~ Loud motorway
 - 🏠 residential building
 - 🏡 allotment gardens
 - other buildings
 - 🌿 crops

27/07/'25
a cemetery



and



community garden



Embraced by building blocks, the St. Jacobi cemetery is like a courtyard. The life of the homes are audible and visible from inside. I wonder how many neighbours help out in the community garden?



Interestingly enough, the cemetery has only one entrance.

the main axis is busy with tourists, families and recreators.

here, a man is playing on his guitar

the trees bring privacy. how is the privacy in winter?



here walls fence off the houses, the walls also have a memorial function!



music is coming from a balcony: from classical to techno.

the back gardens are fenced off, but you can see through:



'avenue-cemetery'





underuse + (un)safety -> participation



Jan B.
Local Guide · 21 reviews

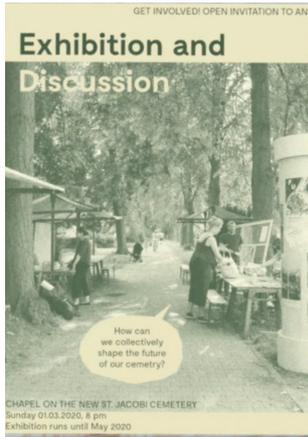
★★★★★ 5 jaar geleden

So schön ist es hier, der Vorteil: durch die Prinzessingärten weniger Junkies

Der Nachteil: der ruhige Friedhof wirkt manchmal wie eine Touristenattraktion, viele Menschen kommen jetzt her... Ruhe findet man trotzdem von Zeit zu Zeit ;-)

According to Jan B., the arrival of the Prinzessinnengarten community garden has led to a decrease of people using drugs ('Junkies' in the review) in this place. Today I see two sitting in the grass.





Poster on site, asking how cemeteries can be transformed into a place where 'sorrow culture' can be discussed.

Posters and booklets collected by Team Dis+Ko about the position of cemeteries in Berlin, asking people to bring their opinions to the table.

Source: @team_disko on Instagram





Be respectful towards the graves!



new use

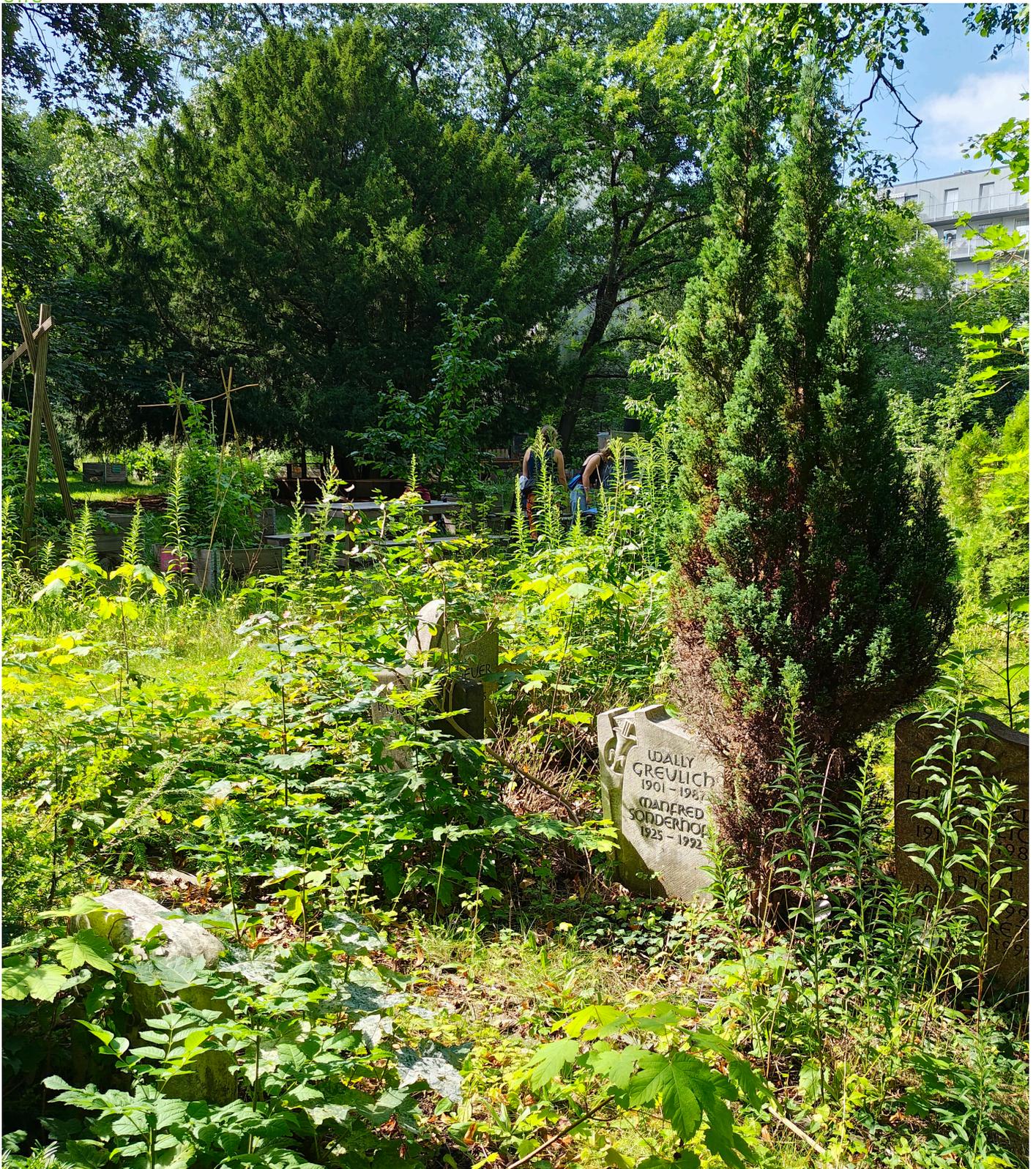


Dump or insect habitat?



Take some succulents!

Garden and graves become
one



C. Järva begravningsplats

YEAR: 2024
 TYPE: general cemetery
 DESIGNERS: Kristine Jensen Tegnestue & Poul Ingemann
 CITY: Stockholm, Sweden
 AREA: 86.000 m²
 PUBLIC: YES
 MONUMENT: YES
 RURAL  URBAN
 GREEN  PAVED



- Legend**
-  small waterbody
 -  big waterbody
 -  entrance cemetery
 -  building on cemetery
 -  Islamic graves
- Boundaries / Adjacent functions**
-  Loud motorway
 -  residential building
 -  allotment gardens
 -  other buildings
 -  crops



Entering the first section of the newly constructed cemetery. The path meanders through, a bit further on you have more authority over the route you take.

For the Järva cemetery, Archdaily promised me 'a new type of burial ground, integrating grave sites as "islands" within a natural landscape of meadows and paths.'



new and very empty...





first traces
of use

The sink shows use of the water
tap. Rain and water have reacted
with the corten steel.

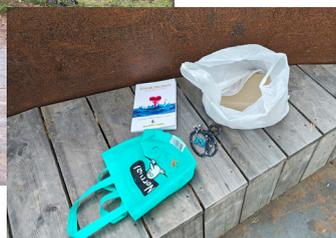




Meditation place



Someone went and left food, jewelry and a book about prayer.





Confusion: to whom belongs
this road? The tracks betray
that there are more often
vehicles than pedestrians
here.



Walking through the cemetery, a hill in the distance caught my attention. I went to climb it.



The Granholmstoppen is a landfill, mainly made from excavated material from the metro construction. Wikipedia says the hill also contains contaminants, and that it is used by paragliders.



Higher up the hill is a disc golf park. During my visit, multiple groups/families were playing a game.



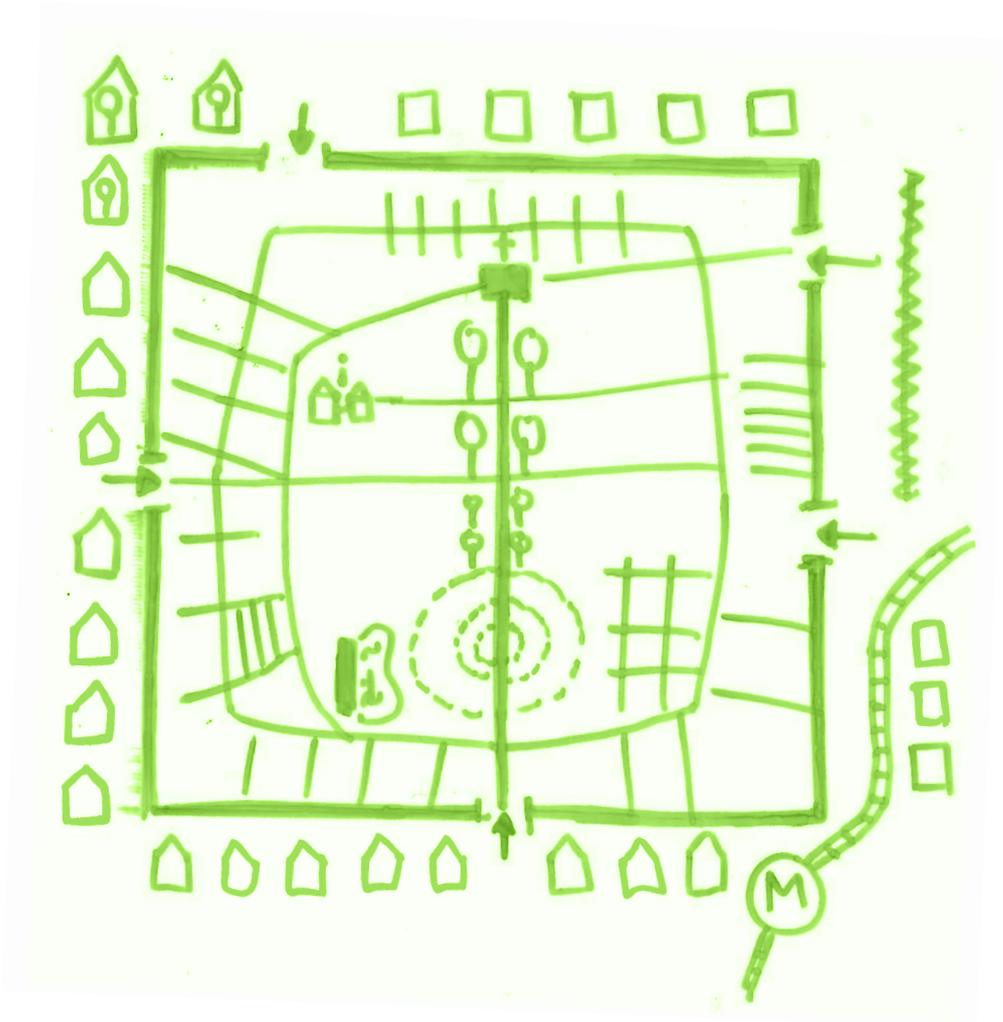




I went down again,
circling back to the
cemetery. From here,
it didn't feel like I
was entering a necropolis.
Going down the staircase,
I felt peaceful and I enjoyed
the beautiful surroundings

D. Skogskyrkogården

YEAR: 1917
 TYPE: forest cemetery
 DESIGNERS: Gunnar Asplund & Sigurd Lewerentz
 CITY: Stockholm, Sweden
 AREA: 1080.800 m²
 PUBLIC: YES
 MONUMENT: YES
 RURAL —◆— URBAN
 GREEN —◆— PAVED



Legend

- ~ Small waterbody
- ~ Big waterbody
- ↑ entrance cemetery
- building on cemetery
- ☉ Islamic graves

Boundaries / Adjacent functions

- www Loud motorway
- 🏠 residential building
- 🏡 allotment gardens
- other buildings
- 🌾 crops



15/08/'25

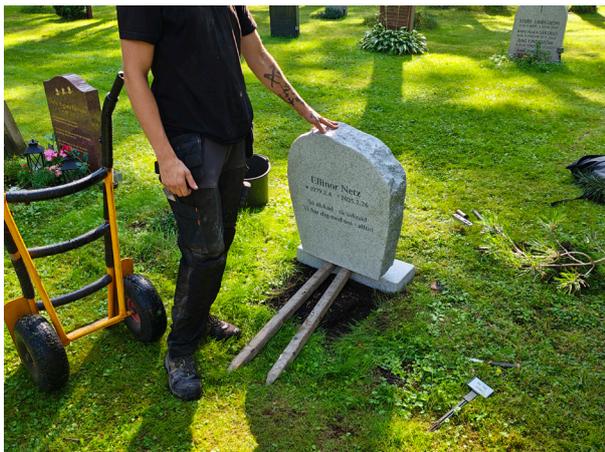
One of the many entrances. This one is closest to the metro station, which is called after the cemetery.

Skogskyrkogården is one of the tourist highlights of Stockholm. Many people (mainly fellow designers) recommended me to go here.





The 'Path of the Seven Wells'
Designed as firebreak in the pine forest. The intended seven wells along the path were never constructed.



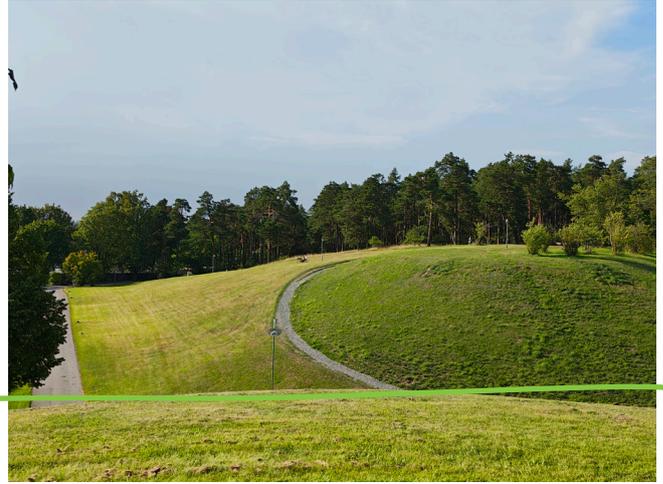
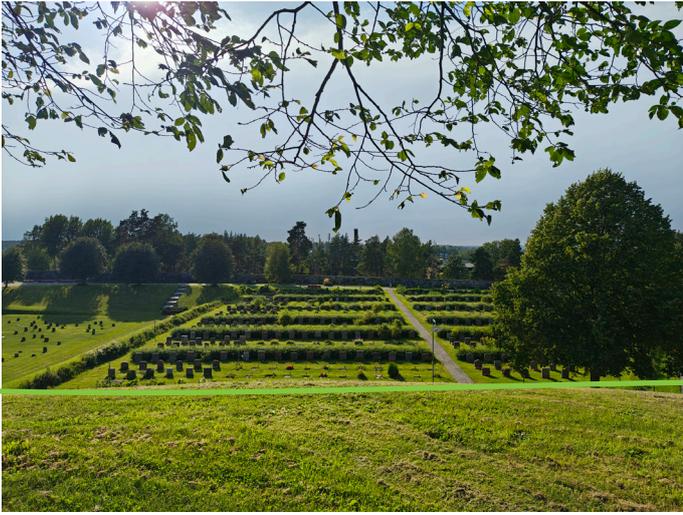
I had a short talk with Max. He has been working at the cemetery for two years now, setting and engraving stones, about five stones a day. He'd drilled the holes wrong and had to go all the way back to his workshop.



Views from the Almhöjden

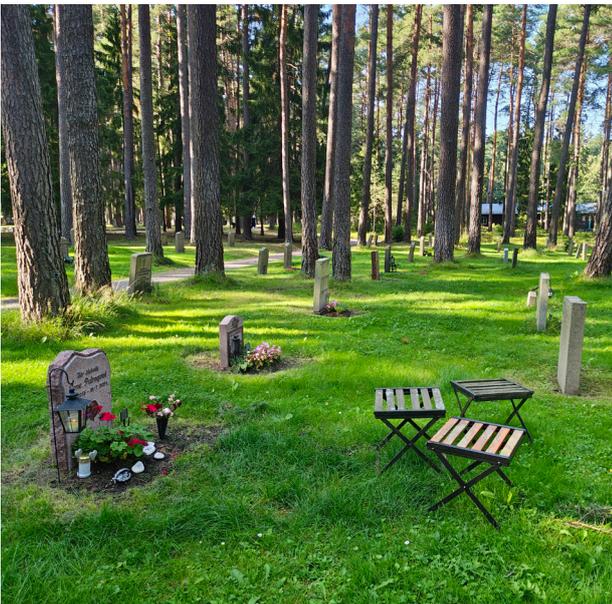


The Almhöjden
(meditation hill)
offers sight over
the cemetery.



On top of the hill, people have appropriated a part of the planters

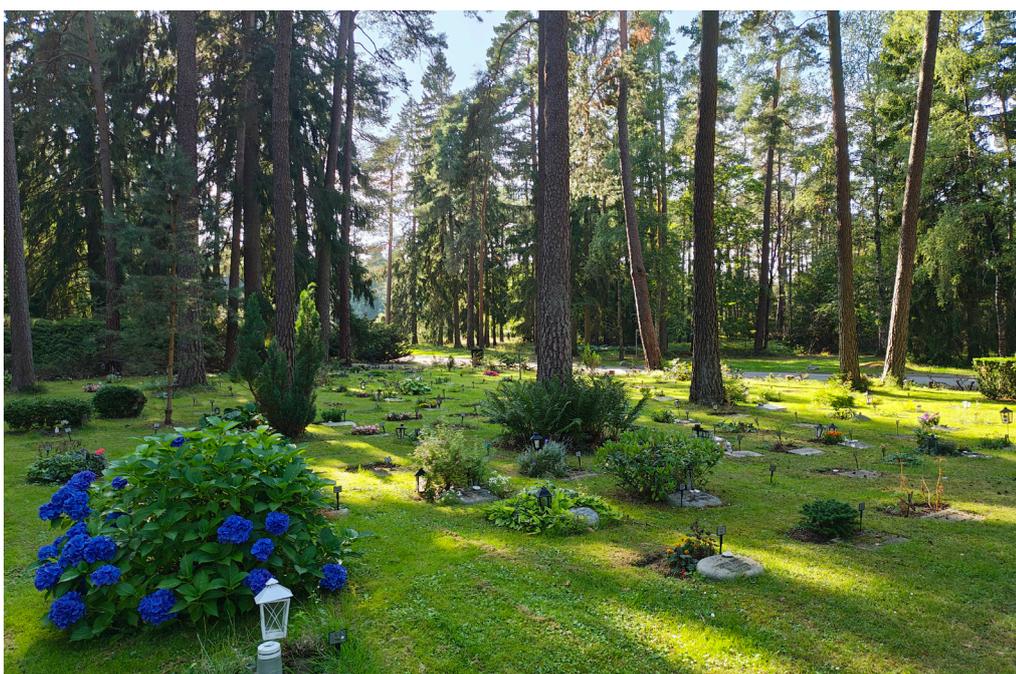




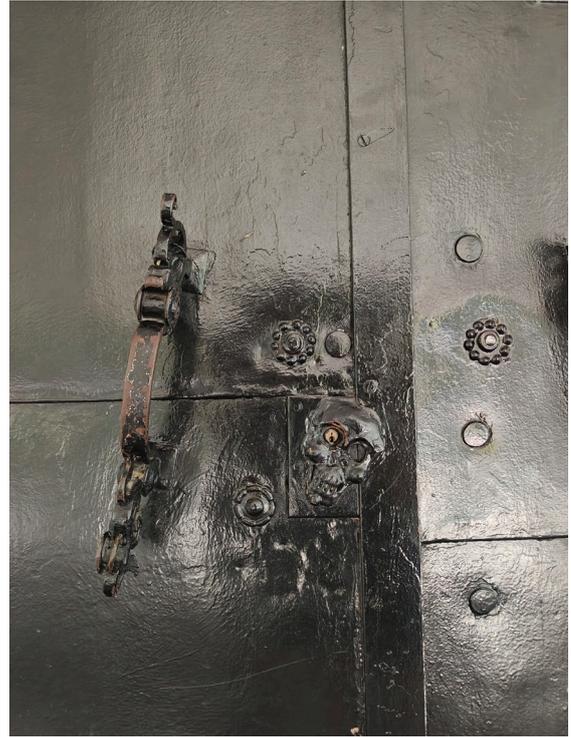
Users of the cemetery



Spotify barcode which links to a personal song







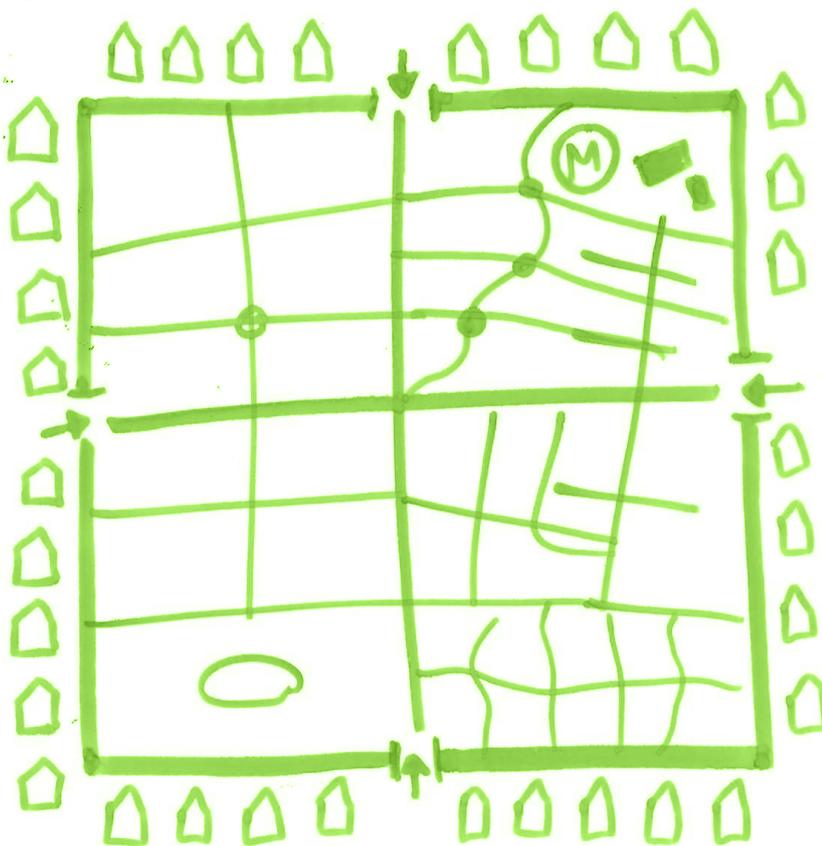
Death is in the detail



After two hours walking around, we needed a restroom. The first one we found was closed, the second building we had more luck!

D. Assistens kirkegard

YEAR: 1760
 TYPE: general cemetery
 DESIGNER: Peter Meyn
 CITY: Copenhagen, Denmark
 AREA: 197.000 m²
 PUBLIC: YES
 MONUMENT: YES
 RURAL ————◆ URBAN
 GREEN ◆——— PAVED

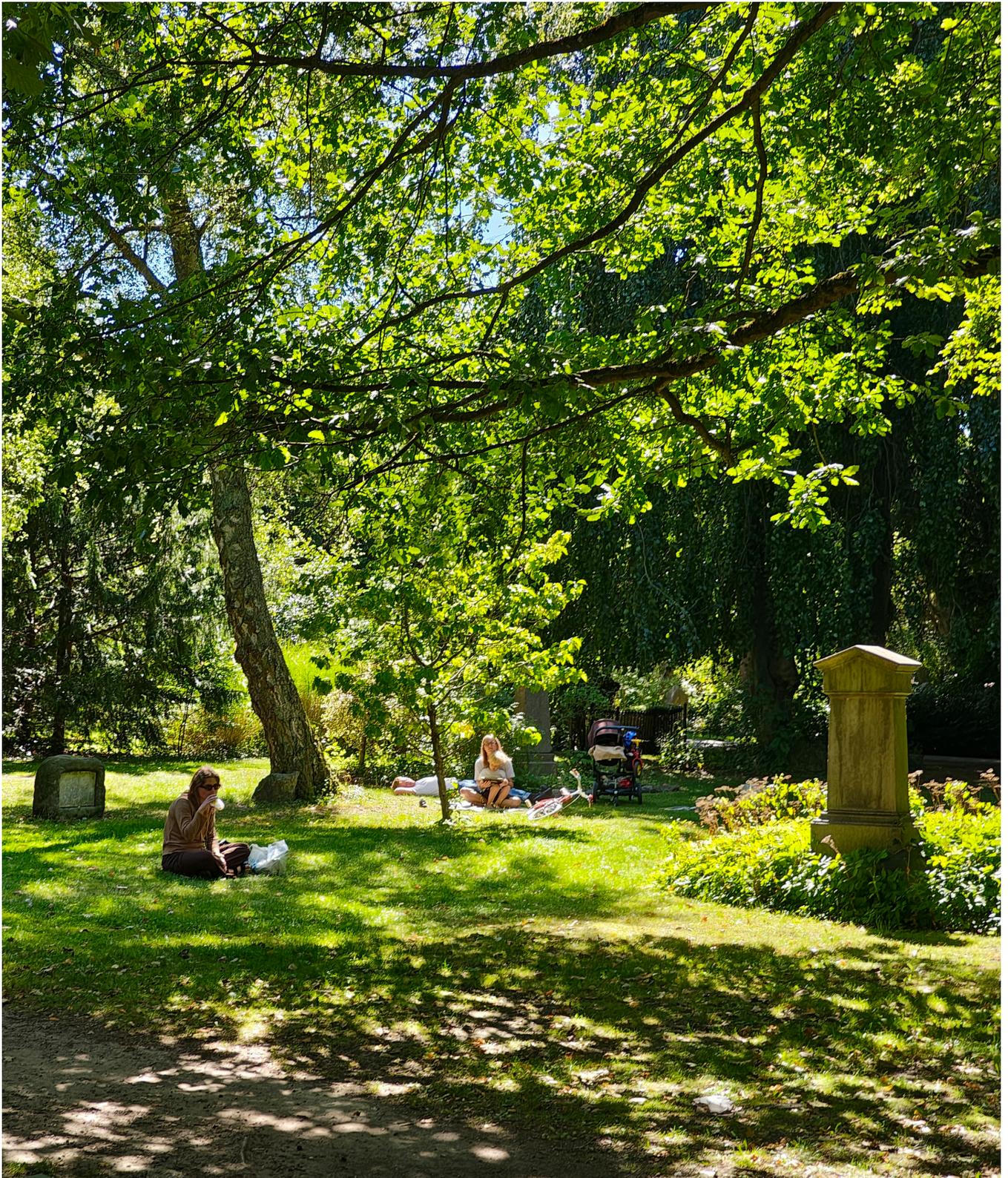


Legend

- ~ small waterbody
- ~ big waterbody
- ↑ entrance cemetery
- building on cemetery
- ☉ Islamic graves

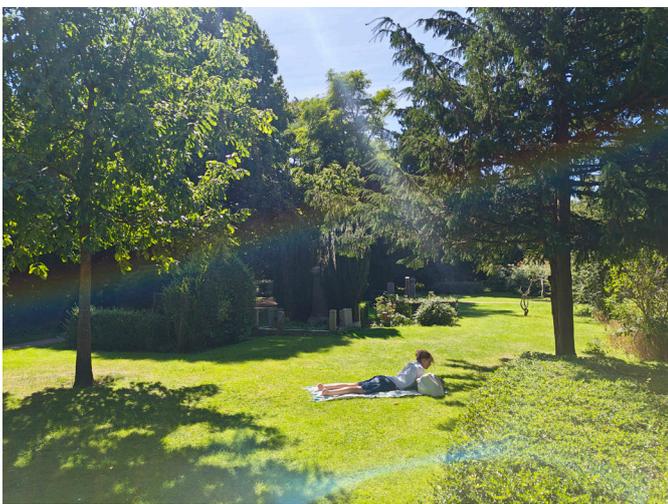
Boundaries / Adjacent functions

- ==== Loud motorway
- 🏠 residential building
- 🏡 allotment gardens
- other buildings
- 🌾 crops



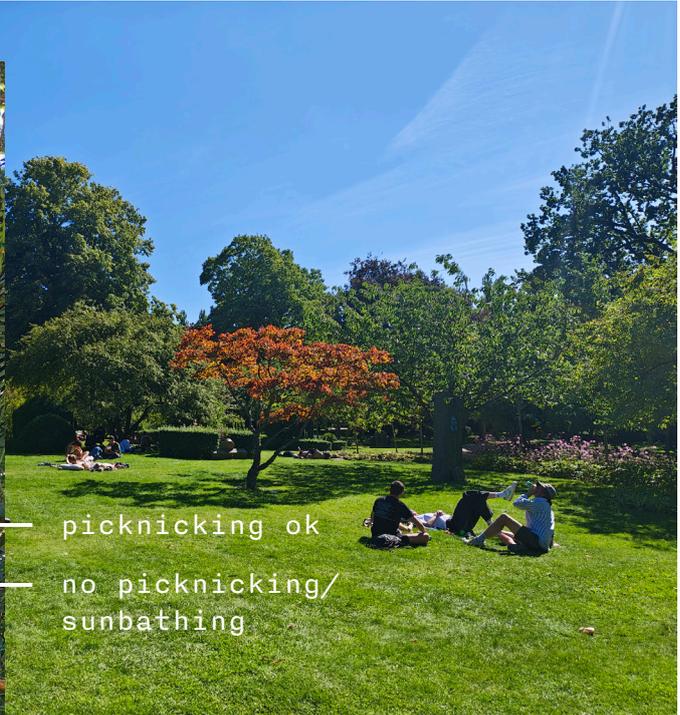
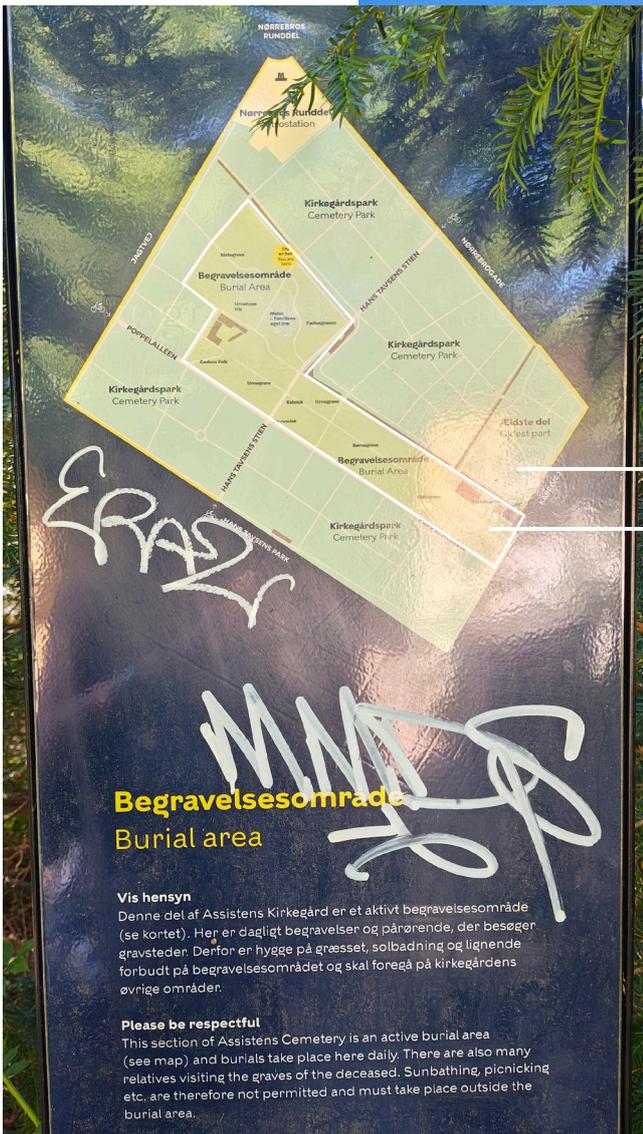
17/08/'25

A public park in the middle of the popular Nørrebro neighbourhood

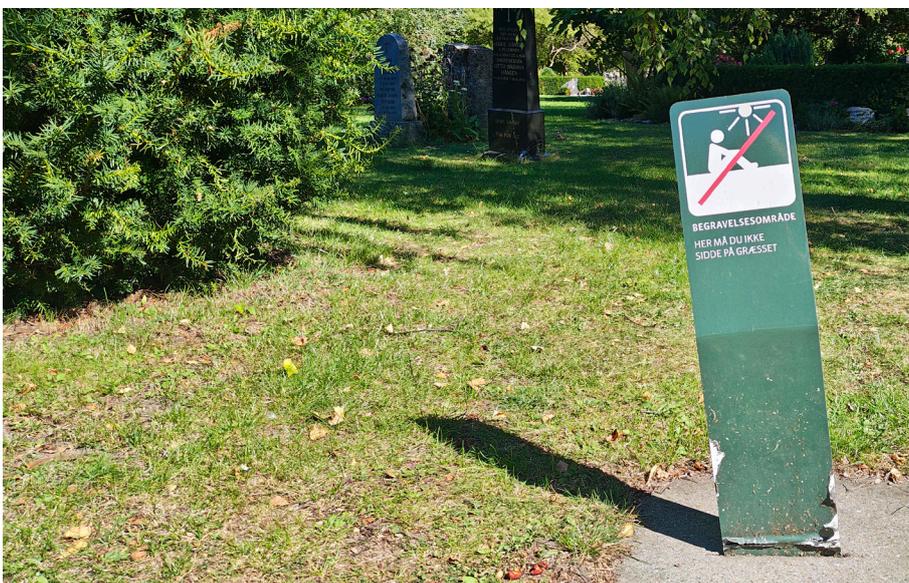


I can't believe the activity in this place





The cemetery is famous for its public life: we see a lot of young people eating, sun bathing and socializing. The weather is amazing today.





Landscape elements
break up the areas,
creating privacy



We also have a picnic (on a
place where it's allowed)
to see how we feel.
Nobody looks weird at us.



Urn graves?



Definitely urn graves.

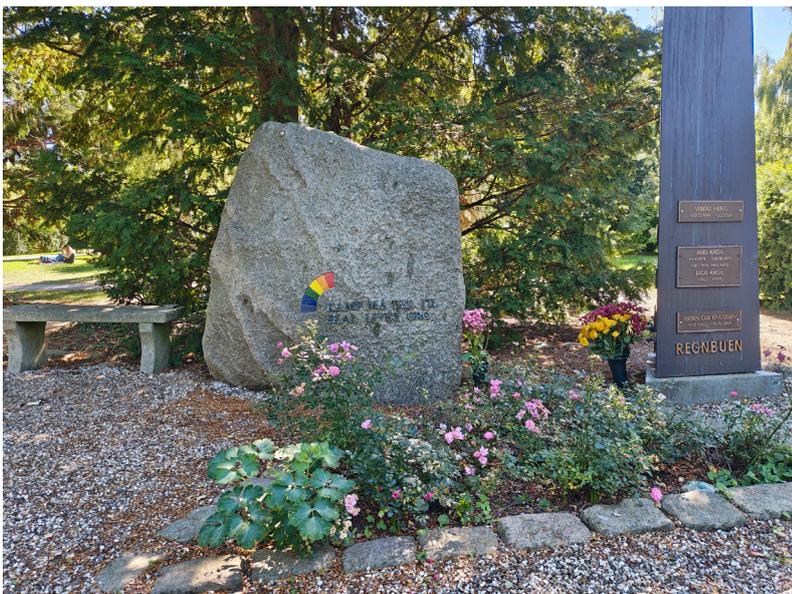


Not a plant sign, but a small grave marker





Separating wall used as
grave inscriptions



Special section 'Rainbow
Burial Place' for people
in the queer community

