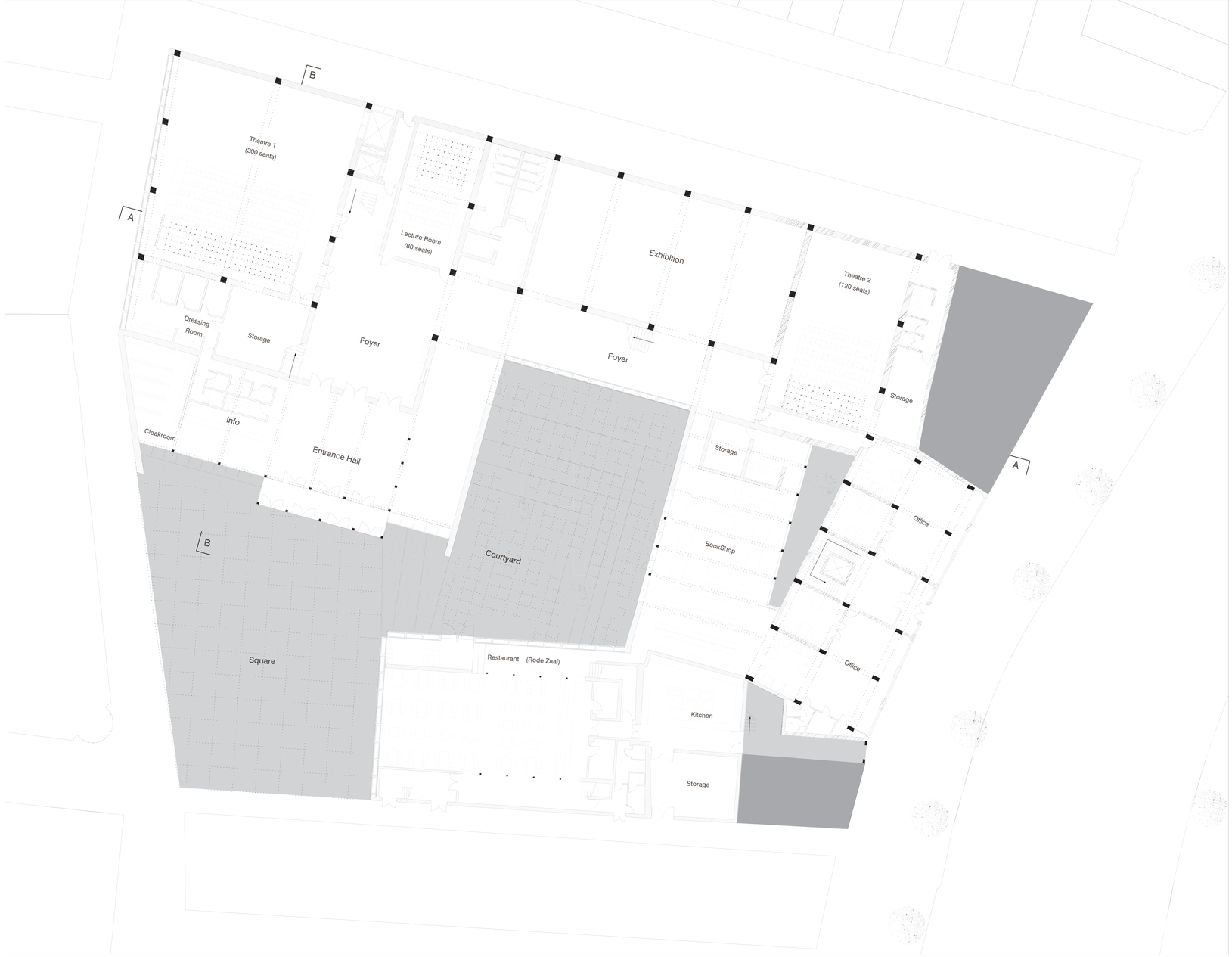
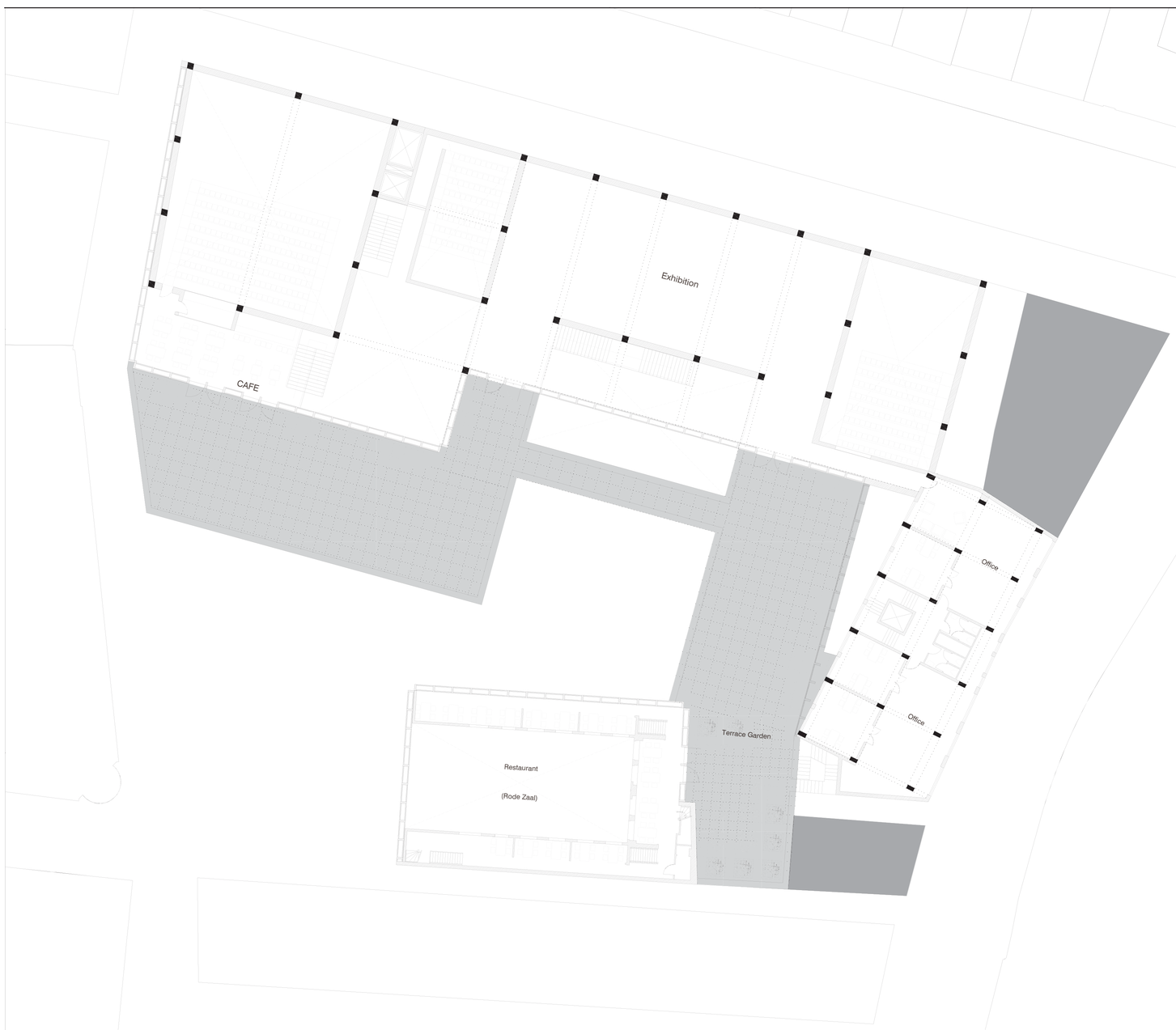
Square Overview from Nes

Overview of the courtyard



Ground floor plan 1:200



First floor plan 1:200

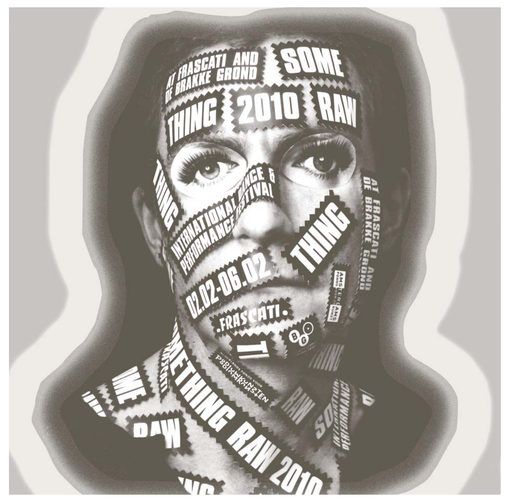
De Brakke Grond as a Culture Center

De Brakke Grond as a Flemish Culture Center in Amsterdam, as my understanding, is for contemporary art and performance, but not for the traditional Flemish arts. That's because of the experimental performances and avant-garde art exhibitions, and also because of the management concepts of the manager. They are focus on Experimental Arts. And considering of contemporary art having a lot of pressure, they are taking a position of De Brakke Grond as an intermediary between society and artist. While Leen Laconte, Director of De Brakke Grond, also thinks that art and Performance should be more accessible for public.Flemish culture which is not yet presented in big theaters or museums.
Based on this opinion, I think a space for contemporary arts and performance should be open enough for people to approach; flexible enough for artists to play or display their works; and big enough for large scale arts. Which means an open-air square or courtyard will be a nice choice.

Traditional gate of De Brakke Grond

Contemporary art/ performance and their displayed space

Since 1950s, contemporary arts never stop develop and improve themselves, new categories emerged in endlessly, and their forms are totally subverting the traditional pattern. Which means new forms need new spaces to display, like some huge installation arts need enormous interior space or open-air space or even tremendous space in wilderness; while video arts always need dark spaces without any nature or artificial lights. Similarly, contemporary performance also has breakneck innovation, which a complete subversion of traditional performance.In contemporary performance, audience is not just the beholder who was plant in a segregate area, but become a part of the play. Artists discover that audience could bring unexpected effect, sometimes even influence the whole performance. In this case, a theater which there is only a practical difference between actor and audience is not a fundamental one.



Programm LOGO, De Brakke Grond

Open-air Experimental plat for contemporary arts

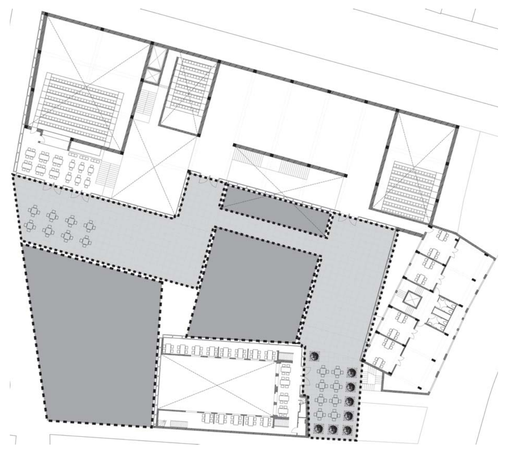
As come to the position of De Brakke Grond, Nes is a "theater congestion area," which has four theatres within half kilometer, and De Brakke Grond is the biggest one. These theaters are keeping a cooperative relationship (learn from Leen Laconte, Director of De Brakke Grond). But maybe because of the land tensions of inner city, there's no open-air space for them. So if there need one, De Brakke Grond is the only one could provide, because the area is big enough. This space should be an experimental plat allows visitors to enter freely, and it's not only for De Brakke Grond but also for other theaters on Nes or even the whole city, because such an open-air space is scarce in the inner city of Amsterdam.

Create an open-air space on Nes

Design proposal- Various pubic spaces

Based on this principle, I am trying to create an open-air public space for contemporary art and performance. This space should be an experimental plat allows visitors to enter freely, and it's not only for De Brakke Grond but also for other theaters on Nes or even the whole city, because such an open-air space is scarce in the inner city of Amsterdam. My original intention of the spatial organization is a half ring-shaped building with an open air space in the center, which I call it as an "open-air experimental plat."

I use nearly 1/3 of the whole area as the open-air space. Besides, there are some parts have only one floor, so the roof could also used as parts of the open-air system. I try to create more types of public space in this building. For instance a square in the corner of street; a courtyard in the middle of building; roof plats on another level to make the whole space lively.



Overview of public spaces

Facade and building typology

In order to approach the aim of openness, I choose glass as the main material of the façade. About the building typology, I choose simple clean box-like shapes of the main part, and then it could achieve a monumental feeling together with the glass façade. Although the building is not open spatially, but it always open visually. About the open-air public part, it is more close to human scale compared to the main building part. I try to create a lively and active atmosphere with a chanceful spatial organization in this space, because I want to make this place could attract different artists to display their works or acts in their own way.

Fagus Works,Walter Gropius

Culture, Identity and Sociability (Design of a Flemish cultural centre) "De Brakke Grond"

Interiors, Buildings and Cities (Tutors: Christoph Grafe, Heike Loehmann, Maarten Meijs, Irene Cieraad) Graduation studio Final Presentation 28-Jan-2011

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